AN EXISTENTIAL-PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING
THE EXPERIENCE OF ROMANTIC LOVE

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this existential-phenomenological study was to investigate the meaning of a romantic love experience. Six adult co-researchers discussed their romantic love experience with the researcher. The co-researchers were asked to recall the time before, during, and after the love experience. Two interviews were conducted. The initial in-depth interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were analyzed according to the method outlined by Colaizzi (1978). Twenty-two themes were explicated from the transcripts. These were written into an exhaustive description of a romantic love experience. The essential structure of the experience was culled from the exhaustive description. The transcripts, the themes, the exhaustive description and the essential structure were validated by the co-researchers. The description of a romantic love experience is a starting point both for future research and for the development of appropriate counselling techniques to be used with clients who are romantic by disposition or by situation.
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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

What is this thing called love
This funny thing called love
Just who can solve its mystery
Why should it make a fool of me
(Porter, 1929)

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the meaning of romantic love by studying human experience. Throughout history every Western civilization has had its own concept of romantic love. The threads from these concepts have been interwoven to form the fabric of romantic love as we know it today. It is important, therefore, to understand each thread and how it changed or refined the concepts of romantic love previously held.

History

The origin of romantic love in the West is generally traced to courtly love in feudal times (Beigel, 1951; Hunt, 1959). However, an examination of the literature shows evidence of it as early as Plato's symposium (1951), which contains a systematic discussion of romantic love.

Plutarch, a Roman in the first century B.C., expressed concern that romantic love was a threat to the family (Hunt, 1959). He feared that a love based on personal attraction was an antagonistic relationship which could exist only outside of marriage. The adulterous, passionate indulgence of desire was also emphasized by Ovid in his Art of Love
(Ovid, 1959). During the decline of the Roman Empire, influenced by the Christian Church and its asceticism, the newly emerging idea of love emphasized sexual restraint. St. Augustine urged Romans to abandon romantic love in favour of a "broader conception of love that places emphasis on everlasting responsibility between husband and wife" (Lantz, 1982, p. 448).

Courtly love in the middle ages deserves particular mention because it is central to modern understanding of romantic love. The ideals of Christian love (agape) and the passionate feelings of Hellenic Rome (Eros) were combined into a new conception of love. Men attached their spiritual longings to women who were sexually unreachable (Hunt, 1959). The prototype for this model of ennobling love is that of Dante's devotion to Beatrice, with whom he had no physical contact. However, in northern France, the version of love which developed was more tolerant to consummation of attraction.

Capellanus (1941) in *The Art of Courtly Love* codified rules governing it. Love, he claimed, was necessarily adulterous, while feelings of affection were more appropriate to marriage. There remains, however, a controversy as to whether this accurately describes the rules of courtly love or if it was meant as a spoof (Singer, 1984).

This period of history has come under considerable debate throughout the ages. Many historians believe that
the courtly influence was positive and that love was purified by the troubadour influence (Hunt, 1959). Denis de Rougement (1956), however, maintains that courtly love had a devastating influence on Western society and its legacy is the source of much unhappiness and the high divorce rate. Biegel (1951) disagrees, concluding that romantic love, inherited from the courtly love tradition, "provides one of the few positive factors in mate selection, allowing relief and emotional gratification in the enormous stress of civilization" (p. 334).

Other theorists emphasize different aspects. Murstein (1974) describes courtly love as an "ennobling, burning passion" impossible between husband and wife (p. 108). Singer (1984) emphasizes the importance of frustrated sexual desire in courtly love, and Beigel (1951) points out the similarity between the experience of the courtly lover and that of a modern adolescent who impresses his girl with peer-defined feats.

Because of the range of emotions which come under the classification of courtly love, it is difficult to describe it by a single component. However, it does appear that this period introduced the possibility of mutuality in attraction. This concept too is central to the modern understanding of romantic love.

Another theme, which emerged during the Renaissance, was the dichotomy of man's attitude toward women (Hunt, 1959). Woman was idealized for her beauty, yet lusted after
and despised for her sexuality. Perhaps related, persecution of witches grew to a feverish pitch because of the belief that certain women had cohabited with the devil in order to gain power over men (Hunt, 1959).

In 16th Century England, King Henry VIII placed passion over reason, thus establishing a break from traditional concepts of love and marriage. For love of Anne Boleyn, he defied the Roman Catholic sanction against divorce. While sex and love were not tolerated outside of marriage, both were acceptable within it (Hunt, 1959).

The Enlightenment, which dominated 18th century thought, saw the aristocracy and upper middle-class scorn emotion. The ideal was to separate love from sex by allowing free play of carnal desire (Hunt, 1959). Yet, it was the era which fostered an obsession with the social rituals of gallantry, flirtation, seduction and adultery. These excesses found literary expression in the myths of Don Juan and the violent eroticism of the Marquis de Sade.

The modern version of romantic love began to flower in the pre-modern world of industrialization and urbanization. Stone (1977) and Trumbach (1978) documented the decline in patriarchy and the rise of domesticity which resulted in greater value being placed on individualism (Lantz, 1982). As a result, in early 19th century Europe, it was acceptable for both sexes to choose their mates on the basis of romantic attraction. In North America, where the rights of
the individual and romantic love were interlocked, even greater emphasis was given to choice.

Victorian love was considered to be a defence against the changes brought by the industrial revolution (Hunt, 1959). Romantic feelings towards woman tended to merge with filial love. This caused a prudish attitude to re-emerge in the face of potentially incestuous temptations (Hunt, 1959). However, as in other eras which separated sexual feelings from a love object, there co-existed a perception of a decadent class of women with whom men satisfied their sexual attitudes. Freud's analysis of love in this period identified a direct relationship between frustrated sexual feelings and the tendency to idealize (Hale, 1985).

**Modern Period**

Romantic love in contemporary Western civilization is a synthesis of the trends which began in antiquity. It combines the spiritual goal of sexuality from early Greece, the medieval idealization of the love object, the Puritan view that love is essential to marriage, and the Victorian stress on the emotional aspects of love (Beigel, 1951; Goode, 1959; Hunt, 1959). The modern romantic love relationship has become a psychological package encompassing "a combination of beliefs, ideas, and attitudes" (Johnson, 1983, p. xi). It is expected to fulfill all the individual's needs.
Kilpatrick (1974) defines the romantic love ideal as the belief that "for every girl there is a boy; one day they will meet and fall in love and live happily ever after" (p. 25). However, it is not for everyone. Weber (1987), in an article entitled "Alone at Last", reports that a generation of Americans view romantic love as a barrier to their careers. They are pragmatic and distrust the "chemistry". As a result, they try to suppress and control it. Yet, even they see it as inevitable. The romantic bond has become one of the few meaningful relationships which provide a sense of belonging in an alienating world.

Significance of the Study

Social scientists have traditionally regarded romantic love as too mysterious, too trivial and too ephemeral to warrant scientific investigation (Praxedi, 1982). The belief that love, per se, is not scientifically respectable as a subject for study has long acted as a deterrent to the study of romantic love (Berscheid & Walster, 1978; Gaylin, 1986). In 1975, United States Senator William Proxmire objected to grants given for the study of romantic love on grounds that "not even the National Science Foundation can argue that falling in love is a science" (Tennov, 1979). As a consequence, few researchers have wanted their names linked with love research (Rubin, 1980).

Because the significance of romantic love is frequently dismissed, researchers and clinicians fail to acknowledge
its importance for Western society. Yet, it is the primary rationale for marriage. According to Johnson (1983), Western society lives with the belief that marriage can only be based on romantic love. This is contrary to other societies which prefer choice of marital partner to be based on birth, economics, religion or politics (Goode, 1959). Walster and Walster’s study (1978) indicates 97% of Americans fall in love at least once during their lifetimes, and that one in three divorce (Weitzman, 1985). The high rate of family breakdown, divorce and remarriage, suggests that relationships based on romantic love are doomed to failure. The cost of divorce to society is devastating, both in economic terms and in the psychological effects on people. There is a need, therefore, to know more about a phenomenon that has influence on the actions of a society’s members. How then can this knowledge be obtained?

Love cannot be understood only in terms of its behaviors, and the technology does not exist to measure the experience physiologically. One way to more fully understand the phenomenon would be to place emphasis on what sets it apart from other human experiences (Pope, 1980).

A complete investigation of the subjective experience of love before, during, and after the relationship has not previously been undertaken. This study will attempt such an investigation. Common themes will be explored in the relationship between the image of love in popular culture and the actual experiences and attitudes of individuals. A
better understanding of what it means to fall in and out of love may help individuals make sense of their experience (Pope, 1980). Furthermore, insight into the process might make it possible to plan therapeutic interventions for people in this state who are experiencing difficulties.

**Purpose of the Study**

Early scientific studies on love concentrate on interpersonal attraction that can be directly observed, measured, and replicated. Hess and Polt (1960) studied "pupil dilation" as a measure of attraction; Newcomb (1965) "reciprocity of liking"; Byrne (1971) "attitude similarity"; and Argyle and Cook (1976) "frequency of glances". These social scientists relied on questionnaires, rating scales and personality studies.

Concentration on psychosocial and demographic correlates of falling in and out of love leaves relatively unexamined the matter of how lovers experience the phenomenon (Pope, 1980). As a result, some researchers (Gaylin, 1986; Praxedi, 1982; Tennov, 1980) have discarded the laboratory method in favour of anecdotal reports which focus on the subjective world of the individual.

Different investigative techniques are required. Pope (1980), in his review of the methodologies for examining romantic love, states that a "more complete evaluation of our notions about romantic love depends on the development of a wider variety of investigative strategies" (p. 329).
Farber (1977) concludes that there is a need for more diverse research techniques which describe the experience of romantic love in adult populations.

Despite the limitations of current empirical methods, there is a hesitation to adopt a qualitative approach because of the lack of rigorous control. Many qualitative approaches, however, are suitable for the study of romantic love. The existential-phenomenological method is particularly applicable to the study of romantic love because it places emphasis on its meaning as understood from the inner world of the individual (Solomon, 1981). This approach corresponds with Ruben Fine’s belief (1985) that the researcher needs to be involved with the research in order to give meaning to the experience being explored. By asking individuals what the experience of romantic love means to them, the researcher gives consideration to the individual’s thoughts and feelings (Branden, 1977; Gaylin, 1986; Person, 1988). The researcher can then isolate "clusters of themes" (Colaizzi, 1978, p. 59) from the individual descriptions of romantic love and identify an essential structure of the love experience. Using the existential-phenomenological approach, this study will attempt to answer the question: What is the meaning of romantic love?
Definitions

A satisfactory definition of romantic love has so far eluded scientific researchers (Sternberg & Grajek, 1984). Although there are similar themes running through many definitions of romantic love, it is not a clearly understood phenomenon (Pope, 1980). There is considerable controversy over its meaning. At one extreme of a continuum, it is identified with sexual impulses (Freud, 1963; James, 1950); at the other it is viewed as ephemeral (Praxedi, 1982).

Romantic love is described by one writer as an emotion that implies choice (Solomon, 1981) and by another as a feeling which occurs without choice (Peel, 1978). Johnson (1985) views love as a mass phenomenon that has supplanted religion in man’s search for meaning, while Tennov (1980) views love as having an aspect of madness.

Love, in its most negative definitions, is a disease (Burton, 1963), an addiction (Peele & Brodsky, 1976), a neurosis (Askew, 1965), a fever and passing fancy (de Rougement, 1956), narcissism (Freud, 1957), and a folly of the mind (Walster & Bersheid, 1971).

Others have given love positive attributes. Fromm (1957) identifies in love an intensity and enhanced vitality that results in a productive orientation. Aberoni (1983) views love as enabling the individual to transcend oneself. Rizley (1980) sees love as the breaking down of social, economic, and political boundaries and Branden (1980) says
it is one of the great experiences and challenges of a lifetime. Branden and Branden (1987) define love as a "passionate spiritual emotional-sexual attachment that reflects a high regard for the value of each other's person" (p. 2). Kephart (1973) stresses physical attraction and idealization in "a strong emotional involvement" (p. 92).

Pope (1980) acknowledges both positive and negative aspects associated with the phenomenon:

A preoccupation with another person. A deeply felt desire to be with a loved one. A feeling of incompleteness without him or her. Thinking of the loved one often, whether together or apart. Separation frequently provokes feelings of genuine despair or else tantalizing anticipation of reuniting. Reunion is seen as bringing feelings of euphoric ecstasy or peace and fulfillment. (p. 4)

At this point, there does not exist an exact definition of this extraordinary human experience. In fact, as Person (1988) points out, romantic love cannot be fully communicated by any single theoretical viewpoint. However, it may be possible to develop a definition based on the meaning of romantic love to individuals who have lived the experienced. Similarities in emotional content between individual experiences are likely to emerge through dialogue.
CHAPTER II: Literature Review

Understanding the mystery of love is something one can reach for, but no definition of love is going to provide a definitive answer. Nevertheless, the reader may find it is worthwhile to explore the subject in a way that initiates a process of inquiry that leads to further questioning and intermittent understanding (McCready, 1981).

The existential-phenomenological approach to research requires that the researcher, as well as the subject's assumptions and preconceptions, both implicit and explicit, be made apparent so that their impact on the findings will be recognized. Furthermore, these preconceptions define the manner in which one approaches the subject.

One may begin to understand romantic love by examining the current models found in philosophical, psychological and popular forms in our society. Following is a table of the various models of romantic love. Each presents its explanation or romantic love and the implication attached to this view. The assumptions of the model are discussed in more detail at the end of each section. A critique of each model summarizes this chapter.
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<th>Model</th>
<th>Definition of Romantic Love</th>
<th>Implications for this Definition</th>
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<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Addresses emotional aspects according to meanings supplied by our Western Culture.</td>
<td>Emphasizes romantic love as structured by society.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limerent</td>
<td>A feeling state comprised of its own set of characteristics.</td>
<td>Postulates twelve emotional components that occur within the person.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chemical</td>
<td>A biochemical approach to the love experience.</td>
<td>Explains emotional attachments from a neuroscience and chemical framework.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Addiction</td>
<td>A dependency need characterized by an individual’s inner desperation.</td>
<td>Presents romantic love as attachment hunger rooted in childhood experiences of helplessness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinicians</td>
<td>Sets forth love as central to an individual’s well-being. This enables the clinician to gain insight into problems of loving</td>
<td>Explains love from a therapist’s viewpoint.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psycho-social</td>
<td>Identifies love as specific observable characteristics</td>
<td>Analyses concrete behaviors in individuals to facilitate understanding of this complex emotion.</td>
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THE CULTURAL MODEL

This approach addresses the emotional aspects of romantic love, and how it has been defined by Western culture. Robert Solomon, the leading proponent of this model, believes that romantic love reflects society (1981). Baron (1983) notes that our love emotions are shaped, molded and organized through meanings supplied by our culture. Western culture teaches us how we are supposed to feel when we are in love and how to identify love emotions. These thoughts are echoed by Rizley (1980) in her assertion that romantic love is the cultural expression of the environment in which it is originally adaptive. According to Solomon (1981), love is an emotion surrounded by myths and metaphors peculiar to the cultural concept within which the emotion exists. In his writings, he addresses the metaphors that permeate our culture and influence our perceptions and views of romantic love, and its accompanying emotions.

In tracing the development of romantic love historically, Solomon (1981) has elicited several preconditions for its existence. These are (a) an emphasis on the concept of individuality and (b) personal choice as the core of the mating and marriage ritual.

The cultural pressures of western tradition create a double bind for those who are aware of the fantasies, yet acknowledge longing for the emotion. Tweedie (1979) states this bind succinctly,
we die of love and die without it . . . love, true
love is the rarest of all emotions and one that
has been conspicuous by its absence since mankind
dropped from the trees. (p. 90)

Solomon (1988) emphasizes that love is an ordinary non-
cosmic emotion that is not essential to the well being of
all individuals. Solomon further defines romantic love as
having an "innateness". Romantic love, for Solomon, is
reciprocal, sexual and is associated with a particular
person, characterized by a shared identity. The "love
emotion" perceived by Solomon has an intelligent
construction and is structured by concepts and judgement
which give meaning to the experience. Knapp (1963),
however, notes that the emotions may be so interwoven with
the other behavioral processes that they cannot easily be
split off into a separate compartment.

Knapp (1963) observes that emotions are determined by
the prevailing cultural stereotypes, early learned patterns
and inherited differences. Solomon (1981) details the
metaphors society uses to describe the love experience and
criticizes each for its failure to fully explain the
emotional content. Yet these metaphors are the verbal
expressions of our emotional experiences within a defined
cultural context.

The metaphors of love reflect the society in which we
live. The words used to discuss business, politics,
religion, and communication are also used to describe love.
Solomon's (1081) twelve distinct metaphors are as follows:
a) The economic metaphor promotes love as an exchange, a sexual partnership, a trade-off of interests, concerns and especially of approval. The economic metaphor gives a detailed account of the concrete motivations for love. It ignores, however, the experience of love (p. 17).

b) The work metaphor views the love relationship as a challenge. The relationships takes on a life of its own as both partners "work" to maintain the relationship (p. 19).

c) The dramatic metaphor implies that love is a very serious enterprise in which each partner has a defined role to play (p. 20). Solomon notes that those who engage in the dramatic model tend to keep their relationship in the public eye (p. 19).

d) Banality as metaphor refers to the tendency to discuss love in terms of relationships and relating. This is a throwback to the late sixties and early seventies when the emphasis on meeting one's own needs and expressing one's own needs was considered a key element in relationships. Open discussions of love, work, anger, sex all came under the topic known as "relating" (p. 20).

e) The communications metaphor discusses love in the electronic terms that permeate our language. For example, a love relationship could be considered to have good vibrations or the partners might
engage in positive feedback to one another. Love itself is not expressed: the individuals communicate about love (p. 21).

f) The poet, Rilke, writes of love as "two solitudes reaching out to great each other." The notion of love being a cure for one's loneliness is a negative view of love. Solomon feels that love is a positive experience which arises out of an already full social life (p. 22).

g) The metaphysical model of love implies that love is the realization of bonds that are already formed. This approach does not allow for the development of a relationship. It assumes that the love relationship will exist in full upon the meeting of the two destined individuals (p. 24).

h) In his brief overview of love as a medical metaphor, Solomon refers to Peele's work on love addiction and Fromm's writings on the absence of love in our culture. Defining love in terms of a "sickness" model denies the positive experience that the emotion does provide (p. 25).

i) The aesthetic model is similar to the idealization of romantic love. The emphasis is on unrequited love: admiring the beloved from a distance (p. 26).

j) The contract model of love is based on the notion of commitment and obligation. Commitment is
essential to the contract even though emotion is not required (p. 27).

k) Solomon discusses the biological metaphor of love noting that love is not an instinct, but a particular attitude toward sex and pair-bonding (p. 28). Solomon also notes that where sex and love come together it is in the realm of expression specific to a culture which specifies the meaning of love and sex (p. 28).

l) Solomon supports the metaphor that love is an emotion. He queries the descriptions used to describe the "feelings" of love (p. 31).

Solomon’s concern is with how society aids or hinders the experience of romantic love. It is his opinion that the myths and metaphors of love fall into twelve categories. The value of romantic love and its basis is determined, to some extent, by the researchers of romantic love.

Assumptions of the Cultural Model

1) Love is an emotion.

2) Love is influenced by cultural and societal expectations.

3) Theorists working with this model have definite assumptions which stem from their own culture.

4) Love in a cultural context concerns itself with the mating (external ritual) versus loving (the internal process).
THE LIMERENT MODEL

The limerent approach to romantic love holds that limerence has its own distinct characteristics. This section will explore the nature of limerence and the experience of romantic love with special emphasis on the work of Dorothy Tennov.

In defining limerence, Tennov (1980) lists twelve emotional components that occur within the limerent individual. These are:

1) Intrusive thinking about the object of passionate desire (the limerent object or L.O.) who is a possible sexual partner (p. 23).

2) Acute longing for reciprocation (p. 23).

3) Dependency of mood on L.O.'s actions or, more accurately, the interpretation of L.O.'s actions with respect to the probability of reciprocation (p. 24).

4) Inability to react limerently to more than one person at a time (exceptions to this occur only after limerence is at low ebb - early on or in the last fading) (p. 24).

5) Some fleeting and transient relief from unrequited limerent passion through vivid imagination of action by L.O. that means reciprocation (p. 24).

6) Fear of rejection and sometime incapacitating but always unsettling shyness in L.O.'s presence,
especially in the beginning and whenever uncertainty strikes (p. 24).

7) Intensification through adversity (at least up to a point) (p. 24).

8) Acute sensitivity to any act or thought or condition that can be interpreted, and an extraordinary ability to devise or invent reasonable explanations for why the neutrality that the disinterested observer might see is in fact a sign of hidden passion in the L.O. (p. 24).

9) An aching in the heart (a region in the centre front of the chest) when uncertainty is strong (p. 24).

10) Buoyancy (a feeling of walking on air) when reciprocation seemed evident (p. 24).

11) A general intensity of feeling that leaves other concerns in the background (p. 24).

12) A remarkable ability to emphasize what is truly admirable in L.O. and to avoid dwelling on the negative, even to respond with compassion for the negative and render it emotionally, if not perceptually, into another positive attribute (p. 24).

As a consequence of her interviews with limerents, Tennov (1980) notes "that limerence, rather than being an event, is a process of thought, an interpretation of events" (p. 18).
Limerence may begin as a barely perceptible feeling of increased interest in a particular person. "A new someone takes on a special meaning or an old friend is seen in a different light" (p. 17). This distinctive moment which the French call "coupe de foudre" (thunderbolt) when the eyes lock in a tremulous gaze, "is the beginning of a state ... unlike anything else that has ever happened" (p. 19). Thoughts focus on the object of desire (a certain look, a special smile). The fantasy life of limerents overrides all other activities. Reciprocation of feeling from the loved object becomes the main goal and an extraordinary amount of time is spent daydreaming about the love object. This emotional state has its own set of characteristics differentiating it from the other types of love. Physiologically the person caught up in a limerent state experiences heart palpitations, trembling, pallor, blushing, and a general weakness in the presence (real or imagined) of the loved one. The emotional and behavioral correlates attached to the process are: awkwardness, shyness, fearfulness, apprehension, nervousness, and anxiety that one's actions may bring about a negative change in the limerent object's behavior.

Tennov (1979) states that limerence with all its joys and pain is a positive experience that affects many people of both sexes over their lifetime. Tennov is most emphatic that limerents, as a group, are "fully functioning, emotionally stable, non-pathological members of society" (p.
She acknowledges, however, that the nature of limerence is such that it eclipses other relationships and can lead to self-isolation on the part of the limerent.

Tennov considers sexual attraction to be an important aspect of limerence. However, she notes that anxieties and shyness experienced by the limerent person in the presence of the beloved may interfere with sexual functioning. Limerence does not appear to be compatible with the "immodest behaviors" that arise in sexual situations (Tennov, 1980, p. 79).

Other theorists have identified a state similar to Tennov's limerence, but they vary in the value they place on the experience. Ellis (1954), as a result of his research on sexual mores, disdains romantic love for its exclusivity, irrationality, and idealization of the beloved other. He notes that romantic love tends to create an artificial situation: the beloved is perceived as possessing certain necessary characteristics. In reality, according to Ellis, it is the relationship that requires these characteristics in order to exist and not the loved one. This peculiarity of romantic love - the idealization factor and the need for mutuality can cripple a budding relationship.

Stendhal (1975), in his collection of essays, De l'Amor, describes passionate love as a crystallization: an enhancement of the existing features of the loved one. Crystallization differs from idealization in that the perception of defects ceases to be an impediment.
Idealization molds the image of the beloved to fit the needed conception of the individual.

Peck (1978), in *The Road Less Travelled*, describes romantic love as creating a feeling of oneness between two people. The loved one is seen through a tissue of illusion. Johnson (1983), in speaking of romantic love, notes that life becomes intense, enormous with buoyant feelings and empty and flat without it. Berscheid and Walster (1971) use the term passionate love to describe limerence. The characteristics which they assign to this emotional state are: intensity, absorption in one person, tender as well as sexual feelings, elation and pain, anxiety and relief, altruism and jealousy, physiological arousal and a longing for complete fulfillment which can only be granted by the love object.

**Assumptions of the Limerent Model**

1) Limerence is an elevated sensation encompassing buoyancy of feelings, acute longing, and an aching of the heart.

2) Limerence is an overwhelming feeling that governs behaviour.

3) Limerence is a normal experience.

4) Limerence is time-bound to approximately two years.
THE CHEMICAL MODEL OF LOVE

This approach is based upon the view that romantic love is a biochemical product occurring within a social, cultural and biological context. This view overlaps with the limerent, emotional and addictive perspectives. Leibowitz (1983) notes that biochemical responses might be the basis for intensity experienced by some individuals in their emotional attachments. "A giddy high similar to an amphetamine boost invariably accompanies the state of falling in love" (p. 102). Research has definitively shown that a neurological and chemical process underlies the various activities which have been found to be addictive (Pargman & Baker, 1980; Peele, 1985; Weisz & Thompson, 1983).

It has been noted that people in love have reduced levels of lactic acid in their blood, they are less tired, have higher levels of endorphins and, therefore, are more euphoric (Money, 1980).

The love experience might be considered to have two components: a feeling component and a bodily arousal component. The physiological determinants or bodily arousal created by the love emotions are fast breathing, feeling of euphoria, rapid pulse, compulsion to talk and comfortable aggression (Fast & Bernstein, 1983). This set of responses in a given situation allows each individual to feel in a unique emotional state. Leibowitz (1983) provides a
detailed definition of the feeling aspect of romantic love and indicates that these feelings have a biological basis:

a) a sense of intense excitement (p. 88);

b) great calm or greatly enforced well-being in the presence of the other (p. 88);

c) a desire to be with, to reveal oneself to, and to be known and understood by the other (p. 88);

d) a strong desire for sexual intimacy whether acted upon or not (p. 88);

e) possessiveness in regard to attention and affection from the other (p. 88);

f) a strong concern for the welfare of the other (p. 88); and,

g) an element of idealization which involves seeing the other as more attractive, noble and intelligent (p. 88).

Studies indicate that extreme biological changes, whether induced through drugs or other heightened experiences, can lead to patterns or states of exhilaration (Milkman & Sunderwirth, 1983). Therefore, the biological principle that governs how drugs affect us also applies to romance. Certain brain neurotransmitters are involved and these neurotransmitters create surges in the brain’s chemical system upon meeting someone attractive (Milkman & Sunderwirth, 1983). Hence, addiction can be defined as self-induced changes in the neurotransmitters of the brain (Milkman & Sunderwirth, 1983). The pleasure centre in the
limbic area of the brain is stimulated by norepinephrine which is triggered by the body upon encountering a pleasant memory, fantasy or experience. Leibowitz (1983) notes that love and romance is seen as the most powerful activation of the pleasure centre. Consequently, the romantic state has much in common with a drug-induced state (Leibowitz, 1983). In order to maintain stimulation of this centre, individuals continuously seek out romantic and rewarding experiences.

Winarick (1985) considers the factors involved in the choice of a lover to be complex, unconscious, compulsive and almost uncontrollable. Fast and Bernstein (1983) link the apocrine glands to a perception of odors: this same link is between smell, emotion and sexual chemistry. The hypothalamus is now regarded as that part of the brain which enables us to respond to another’s subliminal scent messages.

Assumptions of the Chemical Model

1) Love has both a psychological and a physiological basis.

2) Love can be characterized by a physical change manifested by observable symptoms.

3) Love is elicited by a significant other (real or imagined).

4) The significance of love is governed by biological determinants.
THE ADDICTION MODEL

This section presents the leading proponents of the addiction model and sets forth the relationship between romantic love and addiction.

Romantic love is perceived as all-encompassing, a submerging of the self with the other. Peele & Brodsky (1975) write extensively on addictive behaviors covering medical research and bio-chemical aspects of addiction, as well as the socio-economic conditions that can lead to addiction. Love is one of the many expressions of these behaviors. Peele (1975) redefined this particular experience of love as a "dependency need" noting that the intensity of the experience was fueled by an inner desperation rather than a desire to know the other. The individual who is in the grip of this intense emotion goes to great extremes to ensure constancy of the partner's reciprocation as well as being dependent on the maintenance of the relationship.

Research illustrates that addiction arises not from substance abuse, but as a consequence of the individual's search for a certain experience (Milkman & Sunderwirth, 1983). For example, studies conducted with Vietnam veterans (Zinberg, 1971), as well as medical patients (Zinberg & Robertson, 1974) indicate that drug use was confined to a specific situation in the individual's life, and did not continue once the situation had changed. When drug use continues, it can be considered addictive. Similarly, when
a relationship takes on a controlling aspect it also assumes an addictive quality. Russianoff (1956), in her medical practice, notes that women tend to pursue marriage and family to the detriment of their own self and career development. In other words, even prior to the relationship, the notion of marriage exerts a control as to how some women conduct their lives and structure their lifestyle.

Addiction is perceived as having a socio-cultural base, its genesis being early childhood experiences within the familial setting (Diamond, 1989; Money, 1980; Peele, 1975). For example, non-resolution of conflicts around such issues as autonomy and dependency may be viewed as contributing factors in adulthood to addictive behaviors (Milkman & Sunderwirth, 1983; Peele, 1975; Saheebey, 1985).

Peele (1975) notes the addictive experience is assumed to have five basic criteria:

1) The experience absorbs a person's consciousness so as to eradicate all awareness of pain and anxiety (p. 65).

2) The experience dominates the person's life to the extent that the person is unable to derive satisfaction from other involvements (p. 65).

3) The experience gives the person the feeling of power that he/she is in control of the environment and that he/she is a worthwhile person (the
feeling of being out of control becomes the
impetus to continued involvement) (p. 65).

4) The experience ceases to be pleasurable (p. 65).

5) The experience is predictable – predictability of
the experience is used to forestall the anxiety
that novelty and challenge of a new experience can
create (Peele, 1983, p. 65).

Peele (1975) presents three basic premises which
specifically describe love and the addictive relationship:

a) when a person's attachment to a sensation, object
or another person is such as to lessen his/her
appreciation of and ability to deal with other
things in his/her environment (p. 56); or,

b) in him/her self (p. 56); or,

c) that he/she becomes increasingly dependent on the
experience as his/her only source of gratification
(Peele, 1983, p. 56).

Halpern (1982) gives the term "attachment hunger" to
this particular type of love. Attachment hunger, like
addictive behaviors, is a product of childhood experiences
and displays the following characteristics:

Compulsivity, panic if loved one is absent,
withdrawal symptoms, a post-mourning period which
contains an element of liberation, triumph, and
accomplishment. (p. 5)

The degree of love addiction experienced by an
individual is based on the degree of attachment hunger felt
by that person. Halpern (1982) notes that the attachment is
more intense when the attraction is also limerent. Those individuals who do experience a limerence based addiction have a compelling need to connect with and remain connected with the idealized "other".

Marcia (1975) concludes that the phenomenon of transference in connection with romantic love is also rooted in those childhood experiences of helplessness and dependence. As love addiction permits the individual to feel in control of his/her environment, so transference enables the individual to experience meaning, power and salvation. Transference (Silverberg, 1948) indicates a need to exert complete control over external circumstances. One way to achieve this is to invest the other with certain qualities and power enabling the lover to relate objectively to those aspects of self with which he is unable to identify. The giving over of oneself, or parts of oneself, have been variably labeled transference/counter-transference (Freud, 1914); displacement, projection and identification (Freud, 1955); projection perils and striving for superiority (Adler, 1963).

**Assumptions of the Addiction Model**

1) If the individual's life has little meaning, love becomes the only source of gratification for that individual.
2) This model has phases which are similar in
description to the limerent model such as acute
longing for the partner and idealization.

3) Addictive love is motivated by the lover's own
needs for security.

4) Jealousy and possessiveness are characteristics of
addictive love.

5) The intense passion associated with addicted love
arises out of desperation. The relationship is
used to protect the lovers from a frightening
world.

6) Theorists working with this model view childhood
dependency needs and poor family relationships as
a cause for love problems.

7) Not all love is addictive. This model indicates
one variant love could take.

**Romantic Love and the Clinicians**

As an experience romantic love lends itself to general
conceptualizing. Therapists have access to numbers of
people who willingly recall their most private experiences.
Consequently, over a period of time these moments
collectively allow the clinician to develop general concepts
concerning a given experience. This chapter will set forth
the concepts of Freud, Fromm, Maslow and Branden that relate
to romantic love.
**Sigmund Freud**

Freud considered romantic love to be a subliminal form of sexuality. "Man having found by experience that sexual love afforded him his greatest gratification it becomes a prototype of all happiness to him" (Freud, 1963, p. 69).

Love was perceived as a sexual phenomenon and, therefore, an outlet for sexual tension. "Surplus sexual energy can be converted into a number of things, feelings of tenderness and admiration which are components of romantic love" (Freud, 1955, p. 112). In Reik's opinion (1941), Freud viewed love as a "washed out and anemic version of sex" (p. 20).

Freud (1983) asserts, on the one hand, that romantic love could only be expressed by someone who has developed an ego ideal (is mature). On the other hand, he asserted that the love object is a substitute for our own unattained ego ideal.

"Early family influences establish the blueprint for all later loves, romantic and otherwise" (Freud, 1955, p. 111). The task of adolescent development is to integrate sexual and affectionate feelings and then to be able to direct these toward a unique other outside the family unit. During adolescence issues of childhood are opened up and integrated into consciousness. The state of being in love connects the budding young adult to his past experiences. The "oneness" of the child with the Mother is linked to the "oneness" of two lovers. In the same manner that a Mother
is considered to be able to enter into the child's emotional and physical state so to lovers are able to put their egos aside and enter into the emotional and physical state of the other (Mahler, 1968). Freud equates this state of being in love to a hypnotic trance, noting that there is the same humble subjection, the same compliance, the same absence of criticism and the same sapping of initiative towards the hypnotist as towards the beloved (p. 114). Freud refers to this dissolution of boundaries and defenses as the "oceanic state". McCready (1981) defines Freud's oceanic feelings as an empathic connectedness to others - a choosing to empathize with the struggle of another person as if it were one's own. If this state is pervasive (as it is in some people), the emotional fields of the two lovers may overlap to the extent that each knows, feels and thinks for the other.

One of the salient features of being in love is idealization. The beloved is stylized into a unique being. The qualities of the loved one are over-valued and uncritically accepted. Freud feels that love itself is an irrational phenomenon verging on the abnormal. He views love as an investment of energy. As there is only a certain amount available, there will be less energy for oneself or one's creativity (p. 91). The "love" state for Freud is an illusion. As illusions dissipate, lovers tend to discontinue their relationships upon returning to reality.
Assumptions of Freud

1) Not all people have the capacity to experience "oceanic" states.

2) Idealization of the lover heightens love.

3) Illusion has an enhancing effect on love. Fantasies, wishful thinking and possibilities for the future may become "illusions" that people hope for in love (McCready, 1981).

4) Romantic love is rooted in the individual's early familial history. The fusion of the child with the mother is linked with the fusion of two lovers.

Erich Fromm

Love is the concern for life and the growth of that which we love. (Fromm, 1956, p. 25)

Unlike Freud (1963), who perceives love as diminishing the creativity of the individual, Fromm (1956) views love as having the potential to be all encompassing, productive, and growth-oriented. Mature love is a mystical, almost religious experience. The transcendent status of oneness with the universe and with God are perceived as similar to the oneness achieved through union.

I love from the essence of my being and experience the other person in the essence of his or her being . . . we are
all part of one, we are one . . . (pp. 44-45)

The individual involved in a relationship based on mature love experiences love as rich and deeply satisfying. He stresses that individuals need to achieve maturity and independence before being capable of experiencing true love. True (mature) love is defined by Fromm as a decision making act.

Fromm (1956) is most emphatic about the necessity of viewing the other without embellishment or illusion. In order for this to occur he believes that it is very important "to know the other person as he exists objectively" (p. 28). In this manner, Fromm's views of the other are similar to Freud's notion of the strong ego ideal as a prerequisite for a mature relationship. Fromm feels that many of the problems that occur in relationships are a consequence of individuals uniting to meet their own unmet needs and without forethought.

Fromm's (1956) definition of immature erotic love is similar to Tennov's limerence: "Erotic love is the craving for complete fusion with one other person and by its very nature is the most deceptive form of love there is" (p. 42). Intimacy is achieved solely through sexual contact. Yet on the basis of this sudden intimacy the beloved is presumed to be "known".

The separateness of the individual, rather than being valued, is viewed as a barrier to be overcome through physical union. In those situations sexual desire is seen
only as relief from painful tension and not an act of discovery through fusion. Erotic love is illusory - the other is "little known" rather than known and the relationship is based on each individual striving to evade confrontation with his/her own insecurities. In this manner, it is similar to addictive love where one or both lovers have dependency needs that can only be met through exclusive union with the other.

Assumptions of Fromm

1) Love has both mystical and religious qualities.
2) For love to transpire, it is important to "objectively" know oneself and the other before "union" can occur. McCready (1981) notes that knowing a person's inner nature through love is what writers are referring to when using expressions like "union", "oneness", and "essence" or what Shakespeare referred to as "the marriage of true minds" (p. 112).
3) Only through "union" can love transcend thought and reach the lover's essence.
4) Love is strengthening to one's life. In the act of giving and receiving joy is created.
5) True love can only be experienced by lovers who are considerate, caring and respectful of others.
Abraham Maslow

Maslow (1968) notes that most of the data available on relationships between men and women arises either out of the literature or as a consequence of the collective studies of various psychotherapists. The information revealed by clients to their therapists, focuses on the destructiveness rather than the enhancing potential of relationships. He points out that this particular knowledge provides a distorted view of relationships and love in general. Maslow believes that it is important to illustrate what romantic love and an open relationship would be like for the healthy individual. He postulates that by learning about the peak experiences (of which one is love) from healthy self-actualizing individuals a balanced concept of love and relationships can be developed.

According to Maslow (1968), man contains within him two forces: one that is risk-oriented, spontaneous, expansive and delights in exploring and manipulating the environment; and the other which fears parental separation, risks, and growth.

The characteristics of the healthy self-actualized human are:

a) more efficient perceptions of reality (p. 109);
b) more openness to experience (p. 109);
c) integration, wholeness and unity of the person (p. 104);
d) increased spontaneity (p. 107)
e) a real self with a firm identity, autonomy and uniqueness (p. 106);
f) increased objectivity, detachment, and transcendence of self (p. 114);
g) recovery of creativeness (p. 108);
h) ability to fuse concreteness and abstractness (p. 105);
i) democratic character structure (p. 113);
j) ability to love (p. 113).

Maslow (1968) defines this healthy individual as a self-actulizer. The self-actualizer is perceptive of reality, attracted to the unknown, tolerates ambiguity, and accepts himself and the unalterable. He is spontaneous, autonomous, and democratic. Within the self-actualizing individual desire and reason are in harmony.

An important aspect of self-actualization is a particular kind of cognition which Maslow (1968) perceives as basic to the healthy love relationship.

Love involves fascination with the love object and seeing with care . . . under certain circumstances love is more perceptive than non-love. (p. 78)

Maslow divided the love experience into two categories: B-love and D-love. B-love stands for love of the Being of another person. It is unselfish and is experienced only by self-actualized human beings (p. 42). D-love stands for deficiency love. It is selfish and is experienced by less
mature individuals (p. 12). In the state of B-love the loved one receives total attention.

The B-lover can be more acutely and penetratively perceptive. (Maslow, 1963, p. 73)

This is not the same possessive attention that the limerent has towards his lover, however, nor is it the casual glance of one person encountering another. The beloved in this situation (as perceived by Maslow) is central and the "ground" is not importantly perceived.

It is as if the figure is isolated for the time being from all else as if the percept had become for the moment the whole Being. (Maslow, 1963, p. 74)

Maslow concludes that the difference between B-love and D-love is developmental in nature, although he notes that not everyone goes beyond the D-stage (p. 42).

There are nine characteristics to the B-lover:

a) B-lovers have the ability to love and be loved;

b) B-lovers are more perceptive - they see the qualities and the flaws of their lovers;

c) B-lovers are able to accept the individuality, independence and achievement of lovers without jealousy;

d) the chief aspect of B-lover is admiration;

e) B-lovers have a strong sense of self-identity;
f) B-lovers do not feel the need to impress but are able to be forthright about weakness and shortcomings;

g) B-lovers enjoy sensuality and are free to express their sexuality. At the same time, there is not the overriding need to "perform" sexually;

h) B-lovers are able to empathize with the needs of their loved ones;

i) B-lovers are able to enjoy themselves in their loving.

The notion that B-lovers only can truly experience love is similar to Fromm's (1956) assertion that "true love" can only be experienced by mature (independent) individuals.

The characteristics of D-love are dependency on the love object, anxiety, hostility due to fear of rejection, susceptibility to jealousy, readiness, tendency to be demanding and self-centred. Love hunger and dependency needs of D-love are similar to addiction.

**Assumptions of Maslow**

1) Love is intimately connected to self-actualization.

2) Creative love can result in a peak experience.

3) Peak love experiences make life worthwhile.

4) Love has the potential to enable lovers to "see" one another in a sense that is not possible with non-love.
Nathaniel Branden

Branden (Branden, 1980; Branden & Devers, 1982) draws on his own personal experiences, those of his clients, as well as the available historical and sociological data to illustrate his theory of romantic love. He defines romantic love as a "passionate-spiritual-emotional-sexual attachment between two people that reflects a high regard for the value of each other's self (Branden, 1980, p. 5).

Branden (1980) believes that romantic love has been denigrated as a consequence of the impossible demands made upon the love relationship by modern society's expectations. He notes in his book The Psychology of Romantic Love that too much attention has been paid to those who have experienced only negative relationships and too little attention to those couples for whom romantic love is a source of joy and contentment (p. 11). He suggests that in order to acknowledge the importance and the value of romantic love in our lives we need to rethink its meaning, its experience, what it fulfills, and what conditions it requires to continue (p. 33). Branden's views on romantic love correspond to those of Fromm, Maslow and Solomon.

Similar to Fromm, who believes it is important to have a strong ego ideal in a relationship, Branden states that love requires personal maturity and the attainment of a reasonably mature level of independence and self-responsibility.
Various views held by Branden (1980) are a product of the human potential movement.

The human potential movement helped to create a fresh intellectual climate in which to approach the subject of romantic love. (Branden, 1980, p. 53)

In the same manner as the human potential movement supports the growth and self-actualization of the individual, so love is perceived as an exquisite human opportunity, and unique pathway to this self-actualization. Aspects of the human potential movement contribute to the perception of romantic love as egoistic, individualistic, and motivated by the desire for personal happiness. In looking at couples with healthy relationships that have lasted over a long period of time, Branden (1980) notes the following characteristics:

a) tendency to express love verbally (p. 12);
b) tend to be physically affectionate (p. 12);
c) tend to express their love sexually (p. 12);
d) express appreciation and admiration (p. 13);
e) participate in mutual self-disclosure (p. 13);
f) offer each other an emotional support system (p. 13);
g) express love materially (p. 13);
h) accept demands and put up with shortcomings (p. 13);
i) create time to be alone together (p. 13).
Unlike Freud who perceives passionate love as limiting to one's growth and creativity, Branden (1980) believes that our uniqueness and individuality are enhanced through romantic encounters. Branden also comments that romantic love could be and should be the basis for marriage rather than a diversion outside of marriage.

Romantic love, according to Branden (1980), is an emotional response to that which we value highly the commitment to a relationship is a source of stability and security. Branden notes that the psychological needs satisfied by romantic love have survival value. These are:

a) human companionship;
b) need to love;
c) need to be loved;
d) need to experience psychological visibility;
e) need for sexual fulfillment;
f) need for emotional support system;
g) need for self awareness and discovery;
h) need to experience ourselves fully as men or women;
i) need to share our excitement in being alive and to enjoy and be nourished by the excitement of another

Branden perceives these needs as being essential to the well-being of all individuals and available to those with the wisdom and courage to reach out to their ideals.
**Assumptions of Branden**

1) Passionate attachments between a man and a woman generates both ecstasy and suffering.

2) Sexual attraction is not representative of romantic love.

3) Romantic love is not omnipotent; yet, irrational and impossible demands are often made of it.

4) To succeed in a relationship, romantic love needs the lovers to have good self-esteem.

5) Success in love is related to psychological maturity.

**Social Scientists and Romantic Love**

This chapter explores the ways in which social scientists have perceived, assessed and evaluated romantic love and its attendant behaviors.

The investigation of the "mysteries" of romantic love through the analytic lens of the objective researcher is considered to be a more recent path of enquiry. In the early years of the social science studies love was not examined because (a) it was thought that researchers could not penetrate the mystique of love; (b) it was taboo to study love and sex, and (c) researchers had not yet devised the necessary scales and measurements to study it (Berscheid & Walster, 1978).

Over the past two decades the taboo receded and researchers developed an assortment of tests, scales and
questionnaires to explore the phenomena of love. As in all scientific research, the object to be studied requires an operational definition - a definition that can be broken down into smaller units permitting each unit to be examined in isolation from the total. The essence of romantic love consists of three components: (a) a strong emotional attachment toward a person of the opposite sex; (b) the tendency to think of this person in an idealized manner, and (c) a pronounced physical attraction the fulfillment of which is reckoned in terms of touch (Kephart, 1973).

Research has elicited a member of variables that are perceived as increasing or decreasing one's level of love. These are value similarities (Curry & Kenny, 1970); physical attractiveness (Aronson & Linden, 1965; Byrne & Nelson, 1965; Gerard & Mathewson, 1966; Insko & Wilson, 1974; Levinger, 1964); dependency (Rubin, 1970); parental interference (Driscoll, David & Lipetz, 1972); self-esteem (Walster, 1965); emotion and belief (Schacter, 1964); self-disclosure (Jourard, 1971); bonding (Kernberg, 1974; Mahler, 1968); reciprocation (Homans, 1961; Krebs, 1970); internal/external locus of control (Dion & Dion, 1973); and social interaction (Insko & Wilson, 1977; Munro & Adams, 1978).

The development, transaction and maintenance of love is given different emphasis with each diverse theoretical perspective that is presented. The social scientists discussed here have each formulated their own models or
theories to explain their perception of the occurrence of romantic love.

The reinforcement model of interpersonal attraction asserts that stimuli can be identified as rewarding or punishing (Byrne & Clore, 1970). Certain behaviors occur to encourage the repetition of rewarding stimuli, other behaviors occur in order to avoid punishing stimuli. The Byrne-Clore model is premised on the notion that stimuli which reward arouse positive feelings and stimuli which punish arouse negative feelings. Accordingly, since a neutral stimulus acquires the same capacity for arousing positive or negative feelings as the reward or punishment stimulus, it follows that if the neutral stimulus is a person he/she will be liked if associated with rewards and disliked if associated with punishment (Berscheid & Walster, 1978; Lott & Lott, 1961).

This particular model of interpersonal attraction has been well documented and supported by extensive empirical research (Byrne, 1961a; Byrne, 1961b; Byrne, 1971; Byrne & Buehler, 1955; Byrne & Close, 1970; Byrne & Griffith, 1966; Byrne & Nelson, 1965). The model underscores the general theme of all theories on interpersonal attraction: we like those who reward us and dislike those who punish us. In romantic love this model could be used to extrapolate on stimuli that encourages or discourages the pursued of a romantic liaison.
Tesser and Paulhus (1976) proposed a "causal" model of love relationships based on the following assumptions: (a) love, and thought about the loved one affect one another; (b) the frequency of dating and love affects each other, and (c) the frequency of dating affects reality constraints and can create negative feelings (Smith, 1978). In developing this model, Tessler and Paulhus assume reciprocal causation among the variables chosen when the same variables could be influenced by such reinforcing factors as value similarities (Curry & Kenny, 1974) and physical attraction (Berscheid & Walster, 1974). There is no basis in the research conducted to indicate that the chosen variables alone influence each other.

Social constructionist theory proposes that all emotions are the product of three essential interacting factors: (a) physiological arousal, (b) the social context, and (c) cognitive labeling (Baron, 1983). This particular perspective holds that the same physical sensations could be accorded divergent meanings in different historical, cultural or social contexts (Averill, 1980; Gordon, 1981; Hochschild, 1975a, 1975b, 1979; Katz, 1976, 1981; Schacter & Singer, 1962; Shott, 1979a, 1979b).

Social constructionists, Berscheid and Walter (1978) propose a two component theory of romantic love: body and mind. Western culture, according to Berscheid and Walters (1978), teaches not only that love exists but also when it is appropriate to feel love and when it is not appropriate
(Berscheid & Walster, 1978). Any situation in which physiological arousal occurs can contribute to the individual's emotional state and be labelled love (Dutton & Aron, 1974; Walster & Berscheid, 1971). According to this reasoning, since both mind and body impact on emotions, we should be vulnerable to love anytime our inconsistent ideas on love combine to tell us "this may be love" at the same time as we are physiologically aroused - for whatever reason (Berscheid & Walster, 1978).

The investment model/theory proposed by Rusbult (1980) has much in common with both exchange theory (Blau, 1967) and interdependence theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). Rubin (1973) notes that in the case of love, the dual theme of what we can get and what we can give remain closely intertwined. Both interdependence theory and exchange theory assume that the relationship between two individuals is dependent upon the reward/cost ratio of spending time with the person. The model itself is designed to predict degree of commitment to and satisfaction with a variety of forms of relationships including romantic love (Rusbult, 1980) while minimizing costs. Research based on this model suggests that a relationship's cost and value does predict commitment in friendships and business associations exclusive of romantic love.

In order to explain love in everyday life, Sternberg (1986) developed a triangular theory of love which delineates three components of love: intimacy, passion, and
decision/commitment. In the context of Sternberg's theory, intimacy refers to feelings of closeness, connectedness, and bondedness in a loving relationship; passion refers to romance, physical attraction, sexual consummation and related phenomena in loving relationships, and decision/commitment refers to (a) the decision that one loves another and (b) the commitment to maintain that love. These components interact and combine with each other to formulate different levels of love. Intimacy is perceived as a consequence of emotional investment in the relationship, passion is an outgrowth of motivational involvement and decision/commitment derives from a cognitive decision to commit to the relationship. Research conducted by Sternberg shows that the intimacy component may be experienced as an overall feeling and that this particular component forms a common core in all loving relationships.

These operational definitions of love and the paring down of love to discrete, observable units of interaction as posed by social scientists have encouraged the development of various scales and questionnaires to objectively measure love.

Rubin (1970, 1973) devised a love scale and a liking scale. These scales were offered as solid measures of romantic love despite the statement of Rubin (1973) who averred that researchers rarely isolate love as a topic of investigation. The three major components of Rubin's love scale are (a) an affiliative and dependent need, (b) a
predisposition to help, and (c) exclusiveness and absorption. Further investigation of what the scale measures indicates that on the liking scale it may in fact be admiration that is measured and on the love scale perhaps the definitions are more appropriate to compassionate love rather than romantic love (Baron, 1983).

Dion and Dion (1973) conducted a study designed to measure the degree to which some individuals (called externals) are susceptible to the cultural myth of romantic love. Externals tend to be influenced by their surrounding environment whereas internals view events as being under their personal control.

Bardis (1978) developed a measure called the erotometer which is designed to measure heterosexual love, that is, the love a person feels towards another person. The erotometer, on further investigation, seems to measure levels of satisfaction within a relationship, raising the question of its reliability for measuring romantic love.

Morais and Tan (1980) investigated the male-female differences towards conceptions of romantic love. They asked both male and female students to judge hypothetical role pairs along 28 role differential scales. The defining factors of the test were growth and bond formation, respect for partners and independence, similarity to partner, superficiality vs. depth, approach-avoidance and warmth without idealization (Morais & Tan, 1980). Morais and Tan (1980) felt that the completed study gave some support to
the notion that the content of romantic love relationships is a function of economic roles.

Assumptions of the Social Scientists

1) Love can be reduced to discrete units and measured.

2) One can evaluate one "facet" of love behavior and draw conclusions concerning the "totality" of the love experience.

3) Romantic love is multi-dimensional and requires several indicators to adequately measure it.

4) The quality of the love experience is determined by the interaction of intimacy, passion and commitment.

Critique

There are various and diverse approaches to romantic love. The critique of these approaches focuses on two aspects of each model: (a) any inconsistencies that might exist within the model in regard to the meaning of romantic love and (b) clarification of the assumptions and their underlying expectations.

The cultural model of romantic love puts forward a perspective of purpose versus meaning. Myths and metaphors of love are perceived by Solomon as a weak substitute for the emotional aspects of love. However, Solomon's discussion becomes circular as he also resorts to
verbalizations such as "love is grand", "love is dialective", and "love is self-love" in order to expound and explain his basic premise that love is an emotion.

The limerent model is considered to be wholly experiential. The limerent condition is rooted in the individual's emotional, physiological and feeling state. The limerent individual seems to be passionately attached to the idea of being in love. The weakness of this model appears to be that the recipient of the limerent's ardor is merely a vehicle for his/her passion.

The chemical model seems to provide the underpinnings for the limerent viewpoint. It perceives romantic love in biological as well as physical terms. Its limitation is that romantic love, in this model, becomes merely a neurotransmitter for the various bodily reactions. The physiological responses created by love are not unique to this state but are due to previous acculturation.

The addiction model, like the chemical model, is based on medical and biochemical research. Addictive love is considered to be chemically based but retains a number of similarities to limerence. Love is viewed as one aspect of addictive behavior within the model rather than being the total behavior. Love is discussed in drug-related terminology - the thirteenth metaphor - addictive love.

The therapeutic model, represented by Freud, Fromm, Maslow and Branden, discusses the concept of love as inferred from case studies and personal stories. Freud
asserts that one learns how to love or experience love within the family setting, whereas Fromm, Maslow and Branden see love as experienced by the individual upon maturity. White (1978), who believes Freud’s perception of love is limiting, speculates that Freud’s love life must have been less than ideal because Freud seemed to lose his creativity and energy when caught up in an intense relationship. Fromm, Maslow and Branden perceive love as growth enhancing. Fromm’s description of erotic love is somewhat similar to the romantic love idealized in literature whereas mature love is more symptomatic of compassionate love. Mature love requires knowledge and with knowledge romantic love diminishes (Fromm, 1956). The tendency has been to perceive romantic love as passive. One waits to be noticed by the beloved whereas true love or mature love is an interactive process (Branden, 1969).

While Fromm emphasizes knowledge as being central to mature love, this knowledge is not defined. Fromm also speaks of love as two beings who become one, and yet remain two. He does not define what fusion or oneness is. Both Maslow and Branden equate romantic love with compassionate love - an emotion that can only be experienced by the mature individual.

The social scientists purport to present an objective assessment of romantic love. However, the results hinge on the criteria applied to romantic love. In nearly all studies sampling is not random and there is a tendency to
recruit through a captive audience (students) and through self-selection. Furthermore, the research may not test what it has been designed to test or may use inappropriate data analysis for results. The literature reveals several approaches to defining love, but little work has been done on exploring its subjective meaning to the individual. An existential-phenomenological approach, because it takes into account the meaning of the experience to those who have lived it, should help us to fill the gaps in our understanding. The existential-phenomenological approach will be described more fully in Chapter 3.
A qualitative approach that is well suited to the study of romantic love is existential-phenomenology because it places its emphasis on the meaning of the experience as understood from the inner world of the individual (Solomon, 1981). Existential-phenomenology combines two fields of discipline: (a) existential, a philosophy "which seeks to understand the human condition as it manifests itself in our concrete lived situation" and (b) phenomenology, a method which allows us to contact phenomena as we actually live them out and experience them" (Valle & King, 1978, pp. 6-7). In this way, existential-phenomenology looks at the structure of human experience to understand its essence (Valle & King, 1978).

The relationship between an individual and his world is not one of cause and effect, where one can be controlled to determine its influence on the other. Rather, individuals and their world are seen as an inseparable unit. This concept of "lebenswelt" is central to existential-phenomenology which seeks to focus on the consciousness that individuals have of their own experience (Giorgi, 1970; Valle & King, 1978).

This approach also assumes that although aspects of each individual experience may be unique, similarities will also be apparent. Dialoguing with several individuals who have lived the experience is expected to reveal patterns or
"clusters of themes" (Colaizzi, 1978, p. 59) that point to a common underlying structure: "through description the prereflective life world is brought to the level of reflective awareness where it manifests itself as psychological meaning" (Valle & King, 1978, p. 17). The subjects of existential-phenomenology, according to Colaizzi (1978) citing Freire (1970), are considered to be co-researchers. Research subjects are regarded as having equal status and the exchange of information is cooperative rather than controlled by the researcher (Giorgi, 1970).

Because one’s biases affect the way in which information is interpreted, researchers using the existential-phenomenological methodology must be alert to their own preconceptions and presuppositions. Yet romantic love is so common an experience in Western society and interpretations of it so pervasive that all the descriptions as discussed in the previous chapter are likely to strike a chord. As Colaizzi (1978, p. 52) points out, "objectivity is fidelity to phenomena". The only reasonable way to avoid colouring the experience of any co-researcher with my own preconceptions is to trust the "dialogal approach" (Colaizzi, 1978, p. 69) and rigorously attend and be present to the experience being related. For the existential-phenomenologist, the source of information lies within the immediate experience of the individual (Biela, 1985).
Role of Co-Researchers

I selected my co-researchers by talking with friends and acquaintances about romantic love. I spoke with six individuals who were able to articulate (in English) a past romantic love experience. Distance from the love experience is an important criteria as it allows for the before, middle and end phases of the story to unfold. The romantic love experience is then described in full. As researcher, I created an environment of comfort enabling each co-researcher to freely elaborate on his or her experience. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. I then analyzed the transcripts for common themes. An exhaustive description and essential structure was written based on these themes. The themes, the exhaustive description and the essential structure were given to the co-researchers for verification. Those changes recommended by the co-researchers were incorporated into the results.

Demographic Information

The demographic information presented here was elicited from each co-researcher after the interviews were completed. Two males and five females were interviewed. At the time of the interviews, their ages were 30, 40, 44, 48, 50 and 53. One of the co-researchers was American and five were Canadian. Their ethnic backgrounds included English, third generation American, Jewish and Russian. The co-researchers described their socio-economic status as either "middle
class" or "upper middle class". Their occupations were accountant, business woman, psychologist, therapist, student and cameraman.

**Phenomenological Interview**

There were two interviews with each of the co-researchers. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and occurred over a period of five months. The first interview involved the co-researcher describing to the researcher his or her experience of romantic love.

Prior to the interview, a telephone call was made to each co-researcher to set up an appointment and to describe the format of the interview. A letter of consent was then mailed to the co-researchers (Appendix A). Before each interview I discussed the nature of my research to put the co-researcher at ease and to establish trust.

The interviews were unstructured. Open-ended questions were asked to enable the individual to reflect upon and describe his or her experience more fully. I opened the interview by asking the co-researchers to recall in as much detail as possible what was happening in their life before, during, and after they met their romantic love partner. They were asked to describe their experience as if they were telling a story.

In addition, during first interviews, the following questions were asked if they were not answered in the description:
1. Is there a part of the experience that stood out for you?

2. In what way was this love experience different from other love experiences?

3. How do you feel about this experience now?

4. What did you learn about yourself?

5. Has this experience had an effect on future relationships?

It was important to me to be fully attentive to the person during the interview. I responded to the co-researchers by reflecting their own words whenever possible. Questions such as "Can you elaborate on that?", "What was happening for you at that time?", and "Tell me more about that?" helped to stimulate dialogue. The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed.

For the second interview I returned to each co-researcher with the transcribed interview (protocol) of their romantic love experience, the themes, the exhaustive description and the essential structure for validation. The second set of validating interviews were not tape-recorded but detailed notes were taken regarding any changes to the themes, exhaustive description or essential structure.

Copies of all transcripts are presented in Appendix B. In these protocols, names and locations are identified by single letters or alternate place names for confidentiality.
Analysis of Protocols

The protocols were interpreted phenomenologically using descriptive methods outlined by Colaizzi (1978). Each protocol was read many times in order to more fully understand the co-researcher's experience and be aware of the nuances of the experience.

The next step in interpretation involved extracting specific phrases from the transcripts that were directly related to the experience. Each key phrase was written on an index card with the initial of the co-researcher for identification.

In those statements where the meaning was clear, I was able to directly quote the co-researcher. For example, A mentioned that "it was if I didn't have control, it felt like I was being hypnotized." She was describing explicitly her feelings of being out of control in the relationship. U described her lack of control as "being out of my mind". In some cases, "the researcher must go beyond what is given in the original data and at the same time stay with it" (Valle & King, 1978, p. 59). For R his lover's ability to "speak" his mind implied that he felt understood at a deep level.

Each theme that represented the specific phase was written on an index card. The cards with similar themes were filed together. Themes were clustered according to whether they occurred before, during, or after the experience. The protocols were re-read in order to ensure I had not deviated from the experience or missed any themes.
A list of the themes with accompanying descriptions was then made. These themes were written into an exhaustive description of the romantic love experience. The exhaustive description was then condensed into the essential structure.

In the second interview, I gave each co-researcher the protocols, the themes, the exhaustive description and the essential structure for verification. The following questions were then asked:

1. Was anything distorted or left out?
2. Is there something you would like to add?
3. Is there anything you wish to clarify?

The original themes, exhaustive description and essential structure were re-adjusted to accommodate the changes. The co-researchers validated these changes.
CHAPTER IV: Results

Explication of Themes

Twenty-two themes evolved out of the six transcripts. Each theme signifies one aspect of the romantic love experience. As much as possible themes were formed on the basis of quotes from the co-researchers. For example, theme 11, oneness/fusion were the words used by co-researchers to articulate an aspect of the experience. B described his "abandonment to that fusion". M spoke of being "at one" with her lover.

Initially, some of the themes appeared to restate and reinforce each other. For example (Theme 4), Intimate glance, and (Theme 5) Instant bonding, appear somewhat similar on first reading. However, the glance takes place on a physical level whereas the bonding occurs on an emotional level supporting the fact that each of these experiences requires its own theme.

On re-reading the protocols, the notion of obstacles seemed to be connected to, or based upon, the emotional swings experienced by the co-researchers. These were combined and retitled Emotional extremes (Theme 16), which more clearly represented the emotional seesaw the co-researchers seemed to experience.

The co-researchers were given the 22 themes to read at the second interview. Even though all the themes were validated by the co-researchers, two individuals queried the
theme Incompleteness. U acknowledged experiencing a lack and described this lack as being "unfulfilled" in addition to being incomplete. M felt that it is "more transcendent, not just like a piece missing and now I feel whole". These changes were incorporated into the theme Incompleteness. One theme, Readiness, was reinforced with comments such as "there really is a certain emotional and mental predisposition for this - a readiness".

In the exhaustive description, R wanted to change the word "handle" to the word "generate", when discussing entering another relationship because he was not willing to risk the preliminary steps necessary to start a relationship.

After reading the essential structure, B objected to the word "inject". He felt that rather than fusion, connectedness and understanding appearing to "inject" a dimension of spirituality, they are "as one" with spirituality and not separate entities.

The themes are listed according to their occurrence before, during, and after the experience. They seem to follow one after another in order. Although the themes tend to fall within one of the three phases, the order of the themes within each phase was not static. The linear structure of language inhibits the description. Some co-researchers experienced the themes simultaneously, whereas others experienced them differently. Each contributes to the overall experience. Within this study, every theme is
teased out and described. As Claspell (1984, p. 88) noted, the themes are "temporarily suspended" in order to "single out and focus" on their meaning. The exhaustive description and the essential structure which are presented further in the chapter draw the themes together and clarify the experience.
Themes

Initial phase

1. Incompleteness: As the in-love feelings commence, people experience a conviction that something has been missing from their lives. They realize that they were previously incomplete and in some cases unfulfilled. Some experience incompleteness before they meet the person whereas others do not. However, for those individuals, the feeling of wholeness and completeness is so overwhelming after meeting their partners that, in retrospect, they wonder whether they were in fact complete. Reflecting back on 18 years of marriage, A. says, "and I think I must have known that it was missing all the time."

M. expressed surprise at feeling a lack. She described herself as having a good social life and not missing anything. "I wouldn't say I was lacking anything." But after meeting her lover, she "felt that [her] world had never been...that [she] must have been greatly lacking something."

2. Readiness: Experience of the in-love state is preceded by an attitude of active searching and a readiness for change. People are receptive emotionally and mentally to the transformation that will take place. Self-realization fostered readiness for A., who had begun to
see herself differently, "in a way that I'd always dreamed about seeing myself."

The need for passion in his life was the impetus for B. His wife had recently left him, and he was unhappy in his present relationship. When E. entered his life he was ready for a romantic involvement.

For U. and for N., there was a restlessness and a longing for more than their marriages provided.

3. **Sense of attraction**: People are drawn towards their love because of some special attribute(s) of their lover. It can be either in a physical or in a mental sense. This engages their attention and abets the infatuated process. For U. it was her lover's profession and his voice: "I heard his voice and I heard him speak, and that was a real seduction in itself." For N. it was her lover's looks--"He was such a gorgeous man"--in combination with intellect and his profession.

For B., ethnicity is important. Jewish people have been "influential" in his life. He finds attractive his lover's confidence and outspokenness, characteristics he associates with her Jewishness.

R. was fascinated by his lover's "insight," her intuition, and her ability to speak [his] mind, like [he] didn't know [his] mind."

4. **Intimate glance**: Intense emotion is experienced by gazing into the lover's eyes. An enchanting moment is captured in time. The eyes lock in an exchange of
acknowledged intimacy that offers access into the lover's selves. The look is an interchange of information that can say "I want you" or "I know you." U. said she experienced desire emanating from her lovers' look: "He really sort of devoured me with his eyes." N. described it as follows: "I couldn't take my eyes off him, he couldn't take his eyes off me...Both of us knew that eventually we would have an affair." For M., on the other hand, it was more a sense of being "known": "His eyes looked like he could see right through me."

5. **Instant bonding**: Although similar to "intimate glance" and occurring often simultaneously, "instant bonding" deserves a separate category. The feelings that surround and underlie instant bonding are several. There is a sense of connectedness, physical desire, yearning and neediness. These emotions occur in concert "immediately". For example, M. noted that "it was instant...I had never had that happen to me before." In a similar manner N. said, "I was really almost speechless." She opened the door and saw this man standing there. "We just stood there looking at each other without realizing that there were people there....It was like electricity."

R. states that both he and his lover immediately recognized their "talking potential," and he said, "I was drawn to her that strongly."
6. **Feeling out of control and swept away:** People have a sense of being caught up in an emotion that has a life of its own. Feelings can be neither controlled nor stopped. N. and her lover "could not keep away from one another." B. expressed a fear that "these passions of mine would just take over" and he would be "swept away" by his ardor.

U. felt "fragile", and described her lack of control as "being out of my mind." She remembered running out of a conference to answer the telephone in case it was her lover calling, "things that I would never do in my right mind."

For A., her "overwhelming" feelings were a catalyst to the break up of her marriage. "It was as if I didn’t have control....I think it felt like I was being hypnotized."

M., who read romance novels and went to romantic movies, accepted the cultural norm that people "fell" in love. For her, part of the fall was an inability to control feelings, so it was acceptable to feel "helpless".

**Middle phase**

7. **Recognition of a distinct kind of love:** Although features of the experience may differ in each case, people recognize the in-love feeling and are able to
distinguish it from other love feelings. Lovers believe the experience touches the core of their inner being. For A., it was as though she was tapped at a "deep and unconscious level". For R., it was an intellectual connection. He described a "mental stimulus" that set his relationship apart from others.

8. **Euphoria**: As romantic love feelings blossom, so does a sense of euphoria. People experience extremely good feelings of joy and well-being. There is an increased vitality, as if somehow the love feelings empower people to become more vibrant. Life takes on an added dimension which gives increased meaning to their world. A. described it as a "euphoric walking on clouds, kind of up in the air. You know, you could be spaced out just about in half a second." For U., her heightened sense of feeling "alive" spilled over into "this glow, just sort of a feeling of excitement." For R., life was a "source of constant joy," something he "never... had felt before."

9. **Exclusive relationship**: The in-love experience is characterized by its spontaneous exclusivity. The fascination with each other makes a similar relationship with a third party unlikely. The lover's sensitivity to their surroundings and other people diminishes. It is as though the lovers have entered a different reality, one in which they exist only for each other. M. recalled that "it felt like he and I..."
were the only ones in the world. All these other people were dancing around us, but we were the only ones that really were in each other's eyes or in each other's heart."

10. **Intimacy**: A sense of intimacy characterizes the mutual trust necessary to risk revealing innermost thoughts and feelings. It is an important component of the in-love experience. People explore their similarities and differences, resulting in an exchange of self-disclosures. The intimacy of these exchanges creates a sense of warmth, comfort and mutual understanding.

R. experienced a depth of "richness" in his relationship. He and his lover played together, swam, walked and cooked together. M. commented on the lack of tension with her lover, and described him as being like a "brother". She said there was no need for "put ons," so that she felt she could be "comfortably [her]self."

11. **Oneness/fusion**: People have a sense of coming together in an explosive fusion. They perceive a strong bond of connectedness. B. described his "abandonment to that fusion...the spirituality and the sexuality, the intensity of it...."

Lovers often express the feeling as having a sense of their "other half". As M. observed, "it almost felt like the other half of myself." She was "at one" with her lover: "I just felt I had known this person all my
life." U. experienced this fusion with her lover as being "stuck together", and as "a sense of completeness".

12. Sexual transcendence: People have a strong desire for sexual union with the beloved. However, it is the yearning for union that needs to be satisfied and is a more powerful force than mere sexual satisfaction. The sexual experience is described as encompassing both mind and body. R. concluded that a relationship based on sexual attractiveness "doesn't work out." Authentic sex-in-love is a unique combination that includes "both physical attraction and spiritual growth." A. described the sexual aspect as not only being "physically powerful," but also as having elements of the spiritual, the emotional and the psychological.

13. Vulnerability: The in-love experience is marked by a willingness to surrender and become vulnerable with the lover. Responses tend to soften, and attitudes are open towards each other in the early stages of the in-love experience. This facilitates adjustment to the needs and interests of the beloved.

R. risked sharing the delicate parts of himself that he was "scared of": "You start seeing, you know, parts of yourself that you're scared of, or the things that are holding you back, or fearful parts of yourself, negative parts of yourself."
A. describes this opening up of herself as an awareness that "all my barriers were going to totally fall down, and I would just be totally exposed and raw."

14. **Idealization of lover:** The ability of the lovers to judge reality is impaired. The lovers tend to ignore negative qualities in their lover while idealizing what they perceive as their mate's virtues. In retrospect they recognize that these qualities have been exaggerated. M. was "put on a pedestal" by her lover, who "pictured [her] as a princess." N. was glorified by her "gorgeous" lover, who thought her the "brightest" and the "prettiest" of women.

15. **Obsessive/intrusive thinking:** Thoughts of the loved one become all-consuming. A feeling of helplessness occurs as the individual is lost in obsessive daydreams of, or about, the lover. Fantasies interfered with concentration, career, and, for M., "everything else in [her] life." She felt like a "zombie," and "daydreamed all the time."

B. described this state of total involvement with his lover as follows: "She would be like a constant, a constant thought, a constant..." He would stop what he was doing and focus his energy entirely on his lover, "really just revel and...just be totally involved with her," to the exclusion of everything else.
N. was "absolutely obsessed." She had her only car accident while lost in thoughts of her lover. "I ate, drank and slept thinking of this man, and throughout the day I would just think about him, constantly."

16. Emotional extremes: The in-love state is distinguished by an intensity of feeling, a passion that seems to be fueled by either delight in the lover's presence or pain due to absence. People vacillate between great joy and despondency, or even experience both at the same time. B. is immersed in the fervor of romantic attraction, but, at the same time, "has the brakes on full." He described his message to E. as saying "Yes-Yes, No-No," equally strongly. M. described her emotions as swinging from "elation to depression."

It appears that impediments to the relationship also play havoc with people's emotions. Lovers experience intensified longing in the face of obstacles. Distance from the lover was identified as keeping the feeling alive. B. moved to another city, and the "fire" died down. The flames would ignite and fan the blaze when E. flew out to visit him. Anticipation of the next encounter created a state of euphoria which helped to maintain the passion.

While U. reveled in the "ego-high" of love, she also "pined" for her lover because of his
unavailability. U. existed as though on an emotional see-saw.

17. **Intuitive understanding of lover:** People have an almost magical sense of being understood, rendering speech unnecessary. They perceive each other as "fitting" their image of a perfect partner. It is a mutual recognition that does not require self-explanation. The lovers feel a powerful empathy with, and acceptance of, each other. Communication flows as if from the depths of their souls. R. was attracted by his lover's ability to know his character and thoughts without "explicit foreknowledge": "her remarkable insight into me...She could articulate an emotion that I was feeling but couldn't articulate, and do it intuitively, I suppose, without enough information about my past or present or ideals at that time."

A. felt trust for her lover, who recognized and anticipated her thoughts. "He knew what I was going to say....It was...this understanding of each other somehow."

For M., it was as though she and her lover were on the "same wavelength. We had this understanding between us."

18. **Spirituality and transcendence:** As the relationship progresses, people describe the connectedness with their lover as having a profound spiritual dimension that sets it apart from other relationships. It was
difficult for people to verbalize more precisely what spirituality meant to them. However, attaching the word "spiritual" to this significant dimension of the in-love experience was not difficult. For A. there was an all-embracing sense of being understood—transcending the ordinary—that was hard to find words for: "It was...this understanding of each other somehow...I felt so...I don't know, I'm not good at verbalizing these things." R. referred to this preternatural or ineffable quality of his relationship as "spiritual psychology."

19. Obscuring of the future: Inklings of an uncertain future which results in the death of the relationship are characteristic of intense in-love experiences. Plans for the future may be discussed, but they are not implemented. In the initial stages of the relationship, the wondrous sense of the moment is fueled by uncertainty and mystery. Ultimately, however, it leads to frustration and a resolution to end the affair. Although U. knew that her lover would not leave his wife, she expressed this "weird hope that maybe something would happen and [she'd] have this impact on him and he would." She eventually broke with her lover. For B., his fear of committing to the future resulted in E. leaving the relationship.
Final phase

20. **Suffering:** Although lovers experience the transforming high of romantic love, there is also a dark side to these impassioned feelings. The loss of a lover is experienced as intense sadness, depression and emotional confusion. R. described himself as suffering from "the deepest pain and sorrow that [he’d] ever felt—[his] heart was just in agony." He explained: "I just felt lonely, I felt confused, I felt totally lost." B. plunged into despair. He lost his appetite and spent hours crying over the loss of E..

M. felt confused and grieved over her loss. She believed that she "would never feel that high again": "I was very confused on what love is, and I kind of didn’t think it was this wild passion anymore. I just thought it was sad."

21. **Guardedness:** After a failed or painful romance, people become cautious, and are more fearful than ever of vulnerability. M. never permitted herself to really fall in love with the man she eventually married, never allowed that fervent feeling to take hold again. R. has not experienced the same deep feeling in later romantic relationships.

U. has not met another lover who had the same impact on her and does not believe she could "subject" herself to that kind of relationship again. She
described herself now as having a tendency to "withdraw."

22. **Self-understanding**: The in-love experience and its aftermath expands insight. It becomes a vehicle for understanding oneself. The lovers felt that they had attained a new level of awareness. They were able to crystallize their wants. N. came to accept her value system. She recognized her need for a lover who was of the same religion—"I need the cultural tie"—and who was "financially independent." For R. the relationship had many "dimensions" to it, including "coming to understand myself."

B. gained insight into his pattern of "saying No, but behaving Yes." Since he is now more aware of his feelings, it is "no longer terrifying for him to be open and direct with his lover about his feelings." M. reached a new level of maturity. She acknowledged her fear of rejection and learned to be more direct about her feelings. In a subsequent relationship, upon sensing a change in her lover's feelings, she was able to confront him with: "Have your feelings changed for me?"

**Clusters of Themes**

The twenty-two themes drawn from the interviews are divided into three sections. Those themes occurring at the onset of the relationship, during the relationship and in
the aftermath of the relationship are grouped together. Within the sections the themes are ordered in the sequence in which they were experienced by the co-researchers. Many of the themes occur simultaneously and not necessarily in the same order for each of the co-researchers. The opening section contains themes 1-6: the feelings initially experienced on meeting the lover.

The middle section, containing themes 7-14, consists of two parts. The themes constituting the first part (7-13) reflect the emotions the individual experiences in direct response to the existence of the lover. When each of the co-researchers experiencing vulnerability spoke about these feelings there seemed to be a turning-point, not away from the lover, but as a need to both understand the experience and affirm the relationship with the lover. The second part of the middle section (themes 14-19) seems to address this "turning point."

The denouement or final phase contains themes 20-22. The overall experience of romantic love is not sequential, but it has been divided in this manner to promote ease of understanding.

**Three Phases of a Romantic Love Experience**

**Initial phase**

1. Incompleteness
2. Readiness
3. Sense of attraction
4. Intimate glance
5. Instant bonding
6. Feeling out of control and swept away

Middle phase
7. Recognition of a distinct kind of love
8. Euphoria
9. Exclusive relationship
10. Intimacy
11. Oneness/fusion
12. Sexual transcendence
13. Vulnerability
14. Idealization of lover
15. Obsessive/intrusive thinking
16. Emotional extremes
17. Intuitive understanding of lover
18. Spirituality and transcendence
19. Obscuring of the future

Final phase
20. Suffering
21. Guardedness
22. Self-understanding

Context for Viewing the Exhaustive Description
The exhaustive description is a narrative of the theme descriptions. It contains a beginning, middle and end, and
describes the experience of romantic love as it was experienced by the six co-researchers.

Movement can be seen within the narrative. The overall experience, however, is not a linear phenomenon, and the various emotions described need to be viewed as having occurred simultaneously on some occasions.

**Exhaustive Description**

Prior to the romantic love experience the co-researchers indicated feeling an unaccountable restlessness. R. was running his affairs "without any external schedule or sense of goal." U. reported that she "had reached a very negative state, a very depressed sort of state in my marriage and was feeling quite hopeless about that in a way." N. noted that her move to a new city gave her a feeling of freedom. "I could almost do anything that I wanted." The restlessness is accompanied by a feeling that something is missing in their lives. There is a sense of incompleteness. A., reflecting on eighteen years of marriage, says, "I must have known that it was missing all the time." M. expressed surprise that after meeting her lover, she felt that her "world had never been...that [she] must have been greatly lacking something." U. experienced being "unfulfilled".

The feelings and emotions that are experienced in this introductory phase induce a state of readiness for new experiences to occur. The need for passion is his life was
the impetus for B. His wife had recently left him and he was unhappy in his present relationship. When E. entered his life he was ready for a romantic involvement.

For U. and for N. there was a longing for more than their marriages provided.

This introductory phase sets the stage for the encounter. The encounter is initiated by a sense of attraction to a particular other. The attraction usually confers on a specific attribute of the individual that engages the individual's attention and abets the "falling-in-love" process. U. said, "then I heard his voice, and I heard him speak, and that was a real seduction in itself." N. noted that she "looked at his face....This was the most gorgeous man I have ever seen." B., on the other hand, initially experienced a strong negative reaction to his future lover: "She was too loud, too sure of herself, too confident."

Accompanying this initial attraction is the intimate glance. The glance foreshadows future intimacy and exchanges. The look is an interchange of information that can say "I want you" or "I know you." A. noted that she "spent four hours...with this man, and something clicked. It felt like I was hypnotized by this man." U. found that "he really sort of devoured me with his eyes...and I remember just feeling...really emotionally connected somehow." N. states that "I couldn't take my eyes off him and he couldn't take his eyes off me."
Simultaneously with the intimate glance instant bonding takes place. The feeling of connectedness, physical desire, yearning and neediness occur together and "immediately." M. noted, "It was instant....I had never had that happen to me before." N. states that "we just stood there looking at each other without realizing there were other people there." R. stated that on meeting his future lover both immediately recognized that "we had some talking potential."

This first phase of the romantic lover experience is often characterized overall by feelings of being swept away and out of control. The emotions set free through the intimate glance and bonding flood the individual. A. noted that "it was something deep and unconscious....It was like I was out of control." N. couldn't define the emotion, only that "it was some spark; we could not keep away from one another." U. noted that she "didn't have that control" that her lover had, and this was excruciating for her. She engaged in actions that she would "never have done in her right mind. I was totally out of my mind."

The relationship moves from this initial drawing together to a realization that this experience is different from others--this relationship is unique. A. recalled that "it was so powerful, and so scary....I'd never experienced anything like it." N. stated that she "never was drawn to any person as [she] was to him....I'd never experienced those kinds of feelings before." M. noted that she "felt at
one with him....I never ever dreamed I would feel so wonderful."

The second phase is a time for readjustment and getting to know one another. A number of themes constitute this particular period in the relationship. Again, while the description is necessarily linear, many of the feelings expressed occur simultaneously or as part of other emotions.

The feeling accompanying the recognition that this love is different is one of euphoria. B. noted that once the relationship was established, he could "really just revel ...and just be totally involved with her....At times it would be euphoric." R. noted that "it was a sense of constant joy....We both gave each other joy to be in each other's company." M. noted that "all [her] fantasies, all [her] thoughts...he just fit all of it." A. described it as "kind of euphoric, walking on clouds, kind of up in the air."

The headiness of this new involvement is characterized by its spontaneous exclusivity. The lovers exist only for each other: sensitivity to their surroundings and other people diminishes. M. recalled that "it was like a little cocoon....He and I were the only ones in the world." N. noted that she wanted to be with her lover "all the time, to touch him constantly....Thinking back I don't think we were ever in a a room where we could talk to other people without looking at one another."
The lovers become more intimate. They reveal their innermost thoughts and feelings with one another. The intimacy of these shared self-disclosures creates a sense of warmth, comfort and mutual understanding. U. notes, "we were very close, and there was a lot of sort of emotional intimacy."

The lovers experience a sense of coming together in an explosive fusion. B. described his "abandonment to that fusion...the intensity of it." Lovers experience the fusion as a sense of discovering their other half. M. said, "I just felt I had known the person all my life." U. experienced a "sense of completeness."

A major part of the relationship is the strong desire to unite sexually with the other. It is a more powerful experience than mere sexual satisfaction, and is described as encompassing both mind and body. A. described her experience with her lover as "spiritually, emotionally, psychologically and physically powerful....I was absolutely freaked out by this man." B. recalled that his lover was taken aback by his expression of passion. "I was...very passionate....She was startled by my physical expression of it." N. remembered that the minute he touched her she "was on fire--it was just a matter of time before we would have an affair."

With expression of intimacy and oneness vulnerability makes itself felt. The lovers are open and greater risks are taken. R. risked sharing the "hidden" part of himself
that he was "scared of": "You start seeing...parts of yourself that you're scared of, or the things that are holding you back, or fearful parts of yourself...and...these things start coming out." A. describes this opening up of herself as an awareness that "all my barriers were going to totally fall down...total devastating vulnerability that I'd never experienced before." U. expressed how she felt "incredibly vulnerable....That if you have some kind of disagreement... that feeling [occurs] of losing the relationship."

The feelings of vulnerability mark an increased awareness of the relationship and its meaning within one's life. The lovers ignore the negative qualities in their lover while idealizing what they perceive as their mate's virtues. M. was put "on a pedestal" by her lover, who pictured her as a "princess." N. glorified her "gorgeous" lover, who thought her the "brightest" and the "prettiest".

Thoughts of the loved one become all-consuming. M. noted that the fantasies interfered with "everything else in [her] life." She daydreamed all the time. "I couldn't stop the thoughts." N. noted that she was "absolutely obsessed," having her only car accident while lost in thoughts of her lover. "I ate, drank and slept thinking of this man."

The obsessive thoughts and the feelings of vulnerability combined to produce a roller coaster effect of highs and lows within the individual. B. noted that he was "behaving Yes and saying No...both equally strongly....I
didn’t want to lose that passion, that intensity." U. recalls that "it was very exciting, but also very frustrating, because I couldn’t see this person as much as I wanted to."

The closeness experienced in this phase—the constant thinking about the other—led to an intuitive understanding of the lover. The lovers feel empathy with, and acceptance of, each other. R. expressed awe that his lover "could see things about me that I couldn’t see that I felt about myself." A. remembers that. "It was as if he was just like reading my mind or something all the time....It was this incredible understanding between us."

The feeling of being understood gave the two lovers a sense of connectedness. The experience was felt to have a spiritual dimension. B. said that the Jewish aspect of E. was a large part of his attraction to her. "Spirituality is like a basic foundation to my life....I think a lot of the spirituality would have been hooked up with the sexuality also." R. noted that relationships occurring after the significant one never had that spiritual dimension—"It’s never materialized in that same way again."

In the moment that the individual is at one with the lover, paradoxically there is a fear and then an awareness that this may not realistically work—that the future will probably not be experienced with the other. R. stated that he "didn’t want...things to proceed any differently than they were." N. felt that "deep down I knew that we
wouldn’t...wouldn’t be a good marriage." B. noted that "if I had been listening to my body I would have known that...there’s a future....I really had such a powerful struggle between that Yes and No."

With the decision to pull back and end the relationship a lot of soul searching occurs, and the individual goes through a period of intense shock and grief. R. recalls that he "felt lonely, confused, felt totally lost....[Nothing] helped in terms of allaying the kind of pain I was going through." B. "was very afraid for [him]self....I couldn’t eat all that time....Things go into a nice long dark depression for about six months." U. recalls being in a social situation with her lover and his wife and friends and feeling, "This is it....It was very demeaning. It was a very very kind of down kind of feeling....I became increasingly more dissatisfied with just having it like that and resolved to end it."

In the aftermath of the sadness and hurt the individual becomes more wary in approaching new relationships. M. felt that no one could make that kind of impact on her again: "It would have to be Superman for me to feel--to idealize the person in that way." R. recalled that he didn’t have another relationship after that for two years. "I wasn’t able to handle another relationship."

The diminishing of grief and sadness allows the individual to look at the relationship and achieve self-understanding. B. felt that his lover helped him to learn
more about himself. "One very clear thing is to simply have more courage, to be more direct." U. noted that "it was a real fulfilling kind of experience for both of us." R. stated that he had become "much more forgiving...not nearly so demanding on myself or other people."

**Context for Viewing the Essential Structure**

The essential structure is a shortened description of the romantic love experience. The basic components of the exhaustive description, forming a pattern which is the core of the experience. The purpose of the essential structure is to describe the meaning of the experience as succinctly as possible.

**Essential Structure**

Before the romantic love experience people felt an unaccountable restlessness. A sense of incompleteness and a feeling that something was missing in their lives accompanied the restless feeling. The feelings induce a state of readiness for new experiences. People have an expectation that something new will enter their lives.

These feelings of expectation and readiness are rewarded by people experiencing a sudden and unaccountable attraction to a particular other. The initial attraction could be voice, touch, or external appearance. The specific attribute would be such that people could readily differentiate the lover from others.
Following and almost accompanying the initial attraction is the intimate glance. The intimate glance, the instant bonding, and the feelings of being out of control and swept away occur simultaneously. People seemed to be "flooded" emotionally by the experience. Within this short space there is a feeling of connectedness and an experiencing of completeness.

People experience this new relationship as being unique from previous encounters. This particular encounter is characterized by feelings of euphoria, exclusivity and intimacy. The shared self-disclosure reinforces their togetherness to the exclusion of others and creates a perpetuating atmosphere of warmth and mutual understanding.

People speak about discovering their other half. The feelings of connectedness are likened to an explosive fusion. This occurs on the emotional and on the physical plane. The sexual experience transcends the bodily act to encompass the mind and the soul.

The intimacy and sharing bring on feelings of vulnerability as greater risks are taken and secrets are shared. The feelings of vulnerability intensify, and in order to protect themselves people choose to ignore the negative qualities a lover may have. The tendency is to idealize the virtues of the lover and to enhance the role of the lover within one's life.

The loved one becomes central to a person's existence. Thoughts of the loved one become obsessive and all-
The emotional stability of people is tied to the actions, interactions and reactions of the beloved. The togetherness, the closeness even when not together, leads to feelings of empathy and acceptance of the beloved as well as to feelings of being understood intuitively by the beloved. The fusion, the connectedness, and the intuitive understanding are as one with spirituality in the romantic love relationship.

At the moment of greatest closeness the realization occurs that this relationship may not be "forever". The decision to terminate the relationship is fraught with difficulties. People experience intense shock and grief and enter into a mourning state.

Relationships are no longer regarded casually or as lightly. A certain wariness and caution exemplifies the attitude toward new relationships. The passage of time heals, and people found that they could begin to look at the relationship and engage in the necessary soul-searching without experiencing the pain. The understanding gained from the experience enabled people to move forward with greater awareness of what being in a relationship involves and what is required should a new opportunity arise.
CHAPTER V: Discussion

An analysis of the interviews of the six co-researchers elicited twenty-two (22) themes that were common to their experience of romantic love. The themes (as presented in Chapter IV) are the foundation upon which an exhaustive description of the love experience was written. The co-researchers validated the description and the twenty-two themes.

The description of the love experience as it evolved through "dialogue" with the six co-researchers is a beginning: as further investigations of the romantic love experience take place, the implications of the present findings for practical purposes such as counselling, and for further research, will be more clearly defined.

Personal Dialogue

The experience of romantic love as revealed through the study emphasizes the commonality of the love experience.

The concept of romantic love has always held a fascination for me. From early adolescence I questioned how different people could be brought together as a consequence of one emotion: romantic love.

Did being a lover or loved one require certain definitive characteristics? Could anyone fall in love or was it confined to a certain personality type? Could the experience of being-in-love occur within the marital
relationship? Having experienced "instant bonding" (meeting a person and experiencing a sense of "knowing" beyond words) outside the martial relationship, it seemed that the very nature of romantic love (its passion/its intensity) were contrary to the stability of the marital relationship. A review of the literature on love illustrated that with each additional story or anecdote the differences in attitudes and styles of love were more apparent than their similarities.

Romantic love is a liberating, energizing emotion, yet an emotion that unfolds in a predetermined and recognizable pattern. This particular pattern of the love experience has a defined beginning, middle and end. In researching the experience of romantic love as it is lived, a new dimension has been added to what is already known about the phenomena of love.

**Theoretical Implications**

The literature presented assumptions drawn from six models of love. This study reaches beyond these models to encompass individual experiences. Out of these individual experiences a description of meaning is formed which takes into account the complete experience of being in love.

The results of the study illustrate how each of the models restricts the investigation of romantic love. When romantic love is defined in terms specific and complementary to the given model, only certain aspects of the phenomena of
love are revealed. In the models, the total experience is not considered and is missing.

The existential-phenomenological approach unfolds a full description of the experience before, during and after the event. As this approach allows the phenomenon to be examined as it is experienced, it takes into account several of the models previously examined.

In the cultural model, verbal and behavioural expressions used to define the emotional experiences of love may also be used to define other behaviours. Solomon (1988), the main proponent of the cultural model, asserts that personal choice (albeit defined by the cultural milieu) plays a large part in the selection of one's love. For example, M, who admitted to reading romance novels, accepted the cultural norm that people "fall" in love (Theme 6). In the initial stages, it seemed that none of the individuals interviewed felt that they had control or choice in their mate selection (Themes 4, 5, 6).

Solomon puts forth a rational discussion of romantic love. Implicit in his discussion is the notion that two lovers who come together are matched emotionally, physically and intellectually. The experience of the co-researchers seemed to negate the rational approach - their recall was of irrational behaviours (Themes 6, 15, 16). The only time that choice came into the relationship was when the co-researcher recalled his/her decision to terminate the relationship (Theme 19). In the case of the cultural model,
the experiences, as related in the study, challenge the notion of basing a theory on observed behaviours only.

"Limerence," Tennov (1980) notes, "is a process of thought, or integration of events" (p. 18). This aspect of limerence which defines love through the emotional interplay of certain behaviours in a specific context is reflected in some of the co-researcher's experiences.

For example, in the limerent model, thoughts focus on the object of desire. Without exception, the co-researchers spoke of being hypnotized. U states that "he sort of devoured [her] with his eyes". A noted that it was something "deep and unconscious". N had "never experienced those kinds of feelings before."

Unlike the individuals who shared their experiences with Tennov, the co-researchers did not experience the negative emotions of shyness, fearfulness and anxiety. All the co-researchers exhibited exclusive behaviours (Theme 9) towards their lovers, and found that the emotional experience enhanced rather than inhibited the sexual functioning of the lover.

One of the most compelling outcomes of the study was the after effect of the experience - the time it took to recede into the distance and for the individual to be able to objectively assess the experience. The notion of using a specific allotment of time to define the beginning, middle and end of the event is contrary to some of the experiences of the co-researchers.
In the chemical model many of the feelings discussed by Leibowitz (1983) were experienced by the co-researchers (Themes 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15). The fact that chemical and biological changes affect the way individual behave in romantic relationships emphasizes the importance of understanding the total experience of romantic love. For example, A described being "kind of euphoric ... up in the air". N noted that she was "obsessed" and M "daydreamed most of the time, [she] couldn't stop the thoughts".

In considering the overall experience, the fact that these behaviours might have been chemically induced reinforces the notion that (a) behaviours alone are insufficient indicators of the accompanying emotions and (b) the context within which the behaviour occurs (in the case of the chemical model) is a factor for Leibowitz in defining the chemical reactive behaviour.

In defining addictive love, Peele (1975) notes that the intensity of the experience is fueled by an inner desperation rather than a desire to know the other. The experience described by the co-researchers spoke to a need to know the other. For B "we both gave each other joy to be in each other's company". For U, "there was a lot of sort of emotional intimacy". The co-researchers indicated an overwhelming need to connect with the idealized "other" (Halpern, 1982). This need, unlike the "needs" expressed as indicative of addictive behaviours, did not take precedent over their emotional and physical well-being.
Freud (1955) viewed love as an illusory experience. In the state of "love" Freud held that the individual put aside their rational behaviour and took on irrational behaviours. In the study, several co-researchers saw, and continue to see, their beloved through a different frame of reference. Many of the co-researchers also engaged in irrational behaviours. They did not, however, see themselves as de-energized by the experience.

Fromm's (1956) definition of mature love aptly describes the experience of the co-researchers, particularly the transcendent state. For A, there was an all-embracing sense of being understood - transcending the ordinary that was hard to find words for, "it was ... this understanding of each other somehow".

Fromm (1956) dismisses fusion with the "other" as being the product of mature love. The co-researchers all felt that fusion was a very important part of the relationship, enhancing and intensifying both the physical and the intellectual aspect of the relationship.

Both Branden's (1980) and Maslow's (1986) perception of love appear to be outside of the romantic love experience, as defined by the co-researchers. The co-researchers seemed to experience self-understanding with the termination of the relationship as opposed to it occurring during the life of the relationship.

The existential-phenomenological approach explores the experience of love in its totality. The experience from the
beginning to the end is an integrated whole, the parts of which cannot be assessed in separation from each other. The social scientists seek a definition of love through the exploration of various parts of the overall experience. This approach diminishes the experience, weakening the impact the experience has for the individual.

This study is the first to explore the full meaning of the romantic love experience. The exhaustive description and essential structure can be seen as a beginning step toward the development of a theory of romantic love as well as furthering research on love.

**Limitations of Study**

One of the limitations of this study previously noted in both the cultural and the limerent models is the inadequacy of the language used to discuss love.

Malone and Malone (1987) indicate that linguistic research illustrates that our language contains far more than rendered meanings. It contains both structural and spiritual meaning about ourselves as persons. "There is meaning and 'meaning within meaning' and...there may even be meanings between meanings" (p. 34).

Hendrix (1988) notes that the word "love" is used in so many contexts to describe so many emotions that "love" the word has no distinct meaning (p. 282). The context defines whether one loves chocolate, a certain book, or a certain person.
Hendrix (1988) believes that this usage of one word to cover many aspects of a particular experience/emotion creates difficulties within the therapeutic context. Person (1988) suggests that language is a library of stored cultural wisdom and therefore words are fraught with inherent cultural insights (p. 82). Freud (1921) also noted that "language has carried out an entirely justifiable piece of unification in creating the word 'love' with is numerous uses" (p. 91). Person further states in her book *Dreams of Love and Fateful Encounters* (1988) that the word "love" both unifies dissimilar phenomena and conveys the unifying aim of love (that is, the bringing together of the lover and the object of his love).

In the diversity of experience there is a common underlying unity defined as love. The interviews display this incredible variation in the emotions that underlie the experience, yet each of these romantic love experiences were interconnected through common themes. It should be noted that during the interviews the co-researchers expressed difficulty in finding the "right" word to match a certain emotion.

A second limitation of the research presented is the manner in which the situation is discussed. The experience described is an incident which consumes a goodly part of the individual's life, taking place in some instances over a ten-year period. Yet it is discussed without reference to
previous love experiences of the individual or familial experiences.

Winarick (1985) notes that the first experience of love and of oneness is found in childhood, and that these first experiences exert a profound influence throughout life. Person (1988) asserts that the lover, in the act of falling in love, draws upon his past experiences. Kevles in the May 1990 article on "The Origin of Mother Love" states that this preference for one individual may be in the origin of the emotion we call love. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the ability of two individuals to love began with mother love and then evolved, in human culture, into the kind of male-female attachments we recognize as romantic love (p. 65).

As noted in the introduction to the paper, the romantic love experience seems to be specific to Western society (Buehler and Wells, 1981; Goode, 1959). All six co-researchers were from North America. Whether or not these experiences would surface in other cultures or other societies would require that both cross-cultural and intracultural studies be undertaken in order to assess possible similarities and differences.

As discussed previously, each of the models presented captures an aspect of love. The essence of the experience is hidden within the models—as the essence is to be found in the meaning of each unique experience.
In analyzing the themes presented by the six co-researchers, a pattern begins to emerge that for these six individual constitutes the core of the love experience.

**Implications for Counselling**

It was significant during the interviews that the co-researchers, at various times, commented on their need to share and discuss the experience as it happened. During the second interview, co-researchers expressed that reading the protocols and the themes validated their experience. All six co-researchers mentioned that the telling of their story and, in particular, the reading of their transcript, had provided a relief and a lightness, further clarifying important issues for them.

The majority of counsellors are not trained to discuss "love" and its attendant behaviors (Buehler and Wells, 1981; Leibowitz, 1983; Person, 1988; Tennov, 1980). The themes elicited in this study, as well as the study itself, will contribute to the awareness of the counsellor.

In the counselling situation the counsellor has the opportunity to become a co-explorer with the client (Claspell, 1984). Based on the feedback from the second interviews, story-telling as a technique, including recording and transcribing the co-researcher's experience, would be a valuable counselling tool.
The counsellor, as listener, is available for the individual to unfold his/her concerns without feeling embarrassed, judged, or defensive.

The counsellor needs to be fully present with the client as he or she describes the love relationship, using techniques such as reflection, clarification, open-ended questions and summarizing. Buehler and Wells (1981) cite three components of which a counsellor, dealing with one who has undertaken the "lover" role, should be aware. The first is respecting the client's claim to the role of "lover". According to Buehler and Wells, a person "in love" tends to exhibit certain behaviors and expects certain behaviors in response to his role. The counsellor (in this situation) must then decided how he/she will interact with a client in their role. Using the phenomenological-existential approach, trust between the client and the counsellor is essential, otherwise there will be a hesitancy on the part of the client to disclose feelings or to gloss over what happened for fear of being misunderstood. This approach does not require that the counsellor undertake any assessment as to how or why the client is "in love".

Buehler and Wells (1981) further cite the importance of ascertaining the cost and reward that the lover role holds for the client. In using the phenomenological-existential approach, the experience is not open to interpretation by the counsellor. The behaviors of the client within the situation have no particular value other than as
clarification. The client needs to feel fully free to explore the meaning of the experience.

Lastly, Buehler and Wells (1981) suggest that the counsellor analyze the various elements of the lover role, especially as idealization (of the loved one) can have both negative and positive consequences for the client.

The phenomenological-existential approach is holistic in character, and as such, counsellors working with this approach are facilitators.

Instead of encouraging the client to analyze the present love situation, he/she is encouraged to place the incident in such a manner that it relates not only to previous significant experiences but also within the familial concept. The experience of love thereby becomes an integral part of the growth process rather than a moment in time to be lived through.

**Implications for Research**

The themes elucidated in the study, separately and taken as a whole, may be used as a starting point for further research.

In considering future exploration of the essence of love, one could query the themes themselves. Are they culture-specific, or would similar themes be found in other cultures? Would the essential structure found in the exhaustive description of this study be the same, or would a culture-reflective structure emerge?
The co-researchers, with one exception, initially experienced their significant "love attraction" between the onset of adulthood and their mid-twenties. Is it part of one's life stages to experience a strong connection to a significant other? If the experience does not occur in early adulthood, will it occur at a later time? Is the experience a necessary part of one's "passages" through life? Are there specific male/female responses to the romantic love experience? For example, the two male researchers expressly mentioned that smell was important to them. Also, the two male co-researchers continued to discuss their lovers in idealized terms. On reading the protocol, R. said "it was what I said then and what I think now." B. commented that he still thinks E. is "the brightest person I have known".

Colaizzi (1978) states that the existential meaning of the phenomenological thesis is that research can never be complete. Further exploration into the area of romantic love can only add to our understanding of the experience.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the meaning of romantic love before, during and after the termination of the love relationship. This was done using the phenomenological-existential approach.

The six co-researchers interviewed had each experienced a significant romantic love relationship and were open to
sharing their experience with the researcher. The interviews were tape-recorded and then transcribed.

The transcripts were analyzed using Colaizzi's method (1975). Significant statements were pulled from the transcripts and themes were then formulated around each statement. The themes were used to prepare an exhaustive description. The researcher returned to each co-researcher for validation of the transcript, themes and description.

Person (1988) noted that romantic love is one of the most "significant crucibles for growth" (p. 23). In order to make sense of the experience, one needs to see what sets it apart from other human experiences (Pope, 1980).

It is hoped that the results of this study will be seen as an opportunity to further investigate the phenomenon of romantic love.
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APPENDIX A: LETTER
K: Could you please describe in as much detail as possible what was happening to you before, during, and after your romantic love relationship, as though you were telling a story?

M: Okay, I think I've got to go back two years before I met this fellow, and I'll tell you why. I was eighteen at the time, and I'd entered university. And I roomed with two women--actually, four women--from N.A.. And throughout the year, you know, I was going out with other people--you know, I was eighteen, I was going out with a lot of interesting people--and they would keep going back and forth to some of their male friends that they knew in a fraternity at S.. And they'd come back always, all of them in unison, and they would say, "Oh, you must meet this fellow at S.. I mean, you two are so right for each other, you've got to meet him. Come up with us some weekend." And whatever. Well, you know, that was fine. I mean, I didn't think anything of it, because, well, I'm going out with other people, and I'm doing other things. And then in the spring, I went up to N.A., stayed at somebody's house, and went to S.. And this woman wanted me to meet this fellow. But instead I met another fellow, and he came down later, and that was, you know, that was really nothing. But it was funny, because, again, that connection with S.. Next year, these people continuously went up to S. again, and would be saying the same thing. I don't think they told this fellow about it. I mean, I think they just, you know, yakked amongst themselves, the girlfriends. And then one of my roommates was going very, very steady with this fellow's best friend. You know, he was this fellow's best friend. The fellow was I., that I was going to meet. So his best friend went with one of my roommates. And so maybe they talked about it a bit, who knows. Anyway, I went to T., and U of T and then went to R. for my third and fourth year. I got to R. in my third year. I went through rush, and joined a sorority. Just because there were twenty-eight thousand people there, I felt I'd be too lonely and whatever. So all of us joined sororities, my roommates and I. And they joined other sororities, and I joined one. I guess, one of my roommates and I joined one, this one. And I got into that sorority, and one of my pledge class members of this sorority was I.'s sister (laughter). When I think of it! And then when I met her, I thought, "Oh my God!", I said. I went up to her, and I got to know her. And then she became my roommate in the sorority. Out of a hundred women, she's my roommate. And I thought, "This is really ridiculous." So she was my roommate in the spring, and I didn't tell her anything about this. And she said to me, after rooming with me for a couple of weeks, I guess it was--her name was K.---she said, "You know, M., you have just got to meet my brother." And I
thought, "Oh my God, I might as well tell her this story." I said, "You, too?" And she said, "No, really, I can’t believe it, how much you really would get along." Okay. So I was really primed for this guy. She had a picture of him in her room. I went down to her house for her dinner, down to S.A., from R., we’d go down for the weekend, and there he was. And her mother said to me, "You must really meet my son!" (laughter) So I thought, "Oh!" And I did see a picture of him, and he really—it was interesting—because I looked at his picture and I really liked him. I thought he was very handsome. He seemed like a fine fellow. The family was really nice—very, you know, really congenial. I felt very much at home with that family. Both the mother and father, and the sister. It was like my second family. So June came around, and K. wanted me to stay. She had it set up. She and her mother wanted me to stay at her house for the week, because I was K.’s friend. And her brother would be there. I said fine. You know, I mean, I was thinking: "This is really funny. You know, you’ve got to really follow this through. I mean, if people all think that this guy’s for you and...Well, what have I got to lose?" So I remember coming...I was taking third-year Spanish then, because I was writing to a fellow in X. And he was writing me letters in Spanish, so I figured I should, you know...He was an American living in X. for the year, a biology student. Anyway, so I took Spanish for him. So after my Spanish class was finished, I was walking up the road—and I’ll never forget it—I was walking up the street back to the sorority house. And there was a little balcony. And there was this tall, really very fair, I’d say—not blond hair, but sandy-coloured hair, I’ll never forget it—and he yelled at...Nobody had told him anything. So we talked about this later. Nobody had said a word to him about me, because they just wanted to see what would happen. But I knew all about him. He just knew a friend of K.’s, a friend of his sister’s, would be staying there for a week. And he stood out the balcony. I forget what he...I’ll never forget the moment, but he yelled out to me, all the way down the street in a wonderful, you know—"How did your test go?" or something to that effect. As if he always knew me, you know. And I said, "Oh, what a neat guy. What a nice fellow." And he said, "Come on up." You know. "We’re getting ready to go, and I’d love to meet you." Or whatever, you know. He was very congenial. And we talked about it afterwards, that it was really odd. I mean, even when he saw me, he said, walk up the street. And when I saw him from a distance on the balcony—I guess my eyes were better then; now I wouldn’t even be able to see him!—that he just, he really immediately liked me. And I guess I immediately liked him. And we went upstairs and I thought, "Oh my God!" I walked in the room and there he was. I thought, "Oh my gosh. Oh!" I was really almost speechless. He was, like, my ideal that I had always fantasized about, standing right there in front of me. It almost felt like
other half of myself. I mean, there was no...It was just, we stood there, just sort of looking at each other.

K: It sounds as though it happened instantaneously for you.

M: It was. Instant. It was instant. And I thought, I never had that ever happen to me before.

K: Can you describe the feelings that were happening for you at the time?

M: (pause) I felt I'd met my husband. I felt that, "This is it."

K: In what way was this it?

M: I just felt I had know this person all my life. That this really fit. This person fit. The way he interacted with me, he fit all my values. I felt secure with him. And that instant, he fit my image of my type, you know, the type I would be attracted to. He looked like an Ivy League university fellow, but at the same time, strong ideals on a social consciousness of things. Like, he came from a very well-off family, very well brought-up, but very strong ideals. And just really my type. You know, by strong ideals I mean really going out and helping the world. You know, I mean, I was only twenty-one (laughter). I guess, I was a little bit idealistic then or something. So he fit everything. He fit every single thing I'd ever thought I wanted in a person.

K: So it wasn't as though something particular stood out for you?

M: Oh, I really liked his smile, his eyes. His eyes sparkled. His eyes had a lot of kindness in them. His eyes looked like he could see right through me. I felt immediately understood, like he's always known me.

K: Can you elaborate on this feeling of being understood?

M: That's a hard one. (pause) I know we didn't really have to fill in a lot. That we were right on the same wavelength. And something I said, he would come right back and answer it. It was just really direct communication. But there was just so much kindness in his eyes. So much warmth, intelligence. It was just really, you know...He wasn't at S. at that time. I should say that also. I was at R., and he was back at G. University getting his Master's. And so, I mean, that's why I didn't see him that whole year. He came home for the summer.
K: Well, in what way would you say your meeting with him, in this romantic way, was different from your feelings for other people?

M: (pause) I felt at one with him. I felt we were a couple immediately. I felt I could laugh with him, I could do anything with him, that we had this understanding between us. And, I mean, I had a lot of women friends. It felt like having a really, really good friend who's always known you that I could confide in, but yet having that attraction at the same time, too. It was like the best of all worlds.

K: You're describing this in a very positive way.

M: Uh-hum. Yeah, I mean, it was just the most wonderful feeling I ever experienced. I never, ever dreamed I would feel so wonderful. At that moment...I mean, I'd seen a lot of romantic movies and all that, where people, you know, saw each other from across a crowded room, but I'd never felt it. I think when you feel it, it's so overwhelming. One moment you're finishing a Spanish test, feeling perfectly fine. You know, and okay. I mean, I wasn't an unhappy person, and I wasn't depressed. I really, really had a good social life. I had good friends. I had everything. And I wasn't attached to anyone at the time. Writing to that fellow in X., but I really wasn't attached to him. I wouldn't say I was lacking anything. I didn't feel like I was lacking anything. But at that moment, I felt that my world had never been...that I must have been greatly lacking something. I felt that it was complete. That I never wanted to be with anyone else again, male-wise. This was it. How could anything top this?

K: So he seemed to fill all your desires for the moment.

M: Just...it fit. All my fantasies, all my thoughts on who I would marry that I spent all my teenage years and college years, maybe—you know, college years, I think, I spent less thinking about...maybe more marriage-wise I thought...He just fit all of it. And then to really be attracted to someone at the same time. I mean, I'd been attracted to people before, where you like a certain way they hold their head, or a certain way they move, smile. But this was everything! It was like I couldn't narrow down what it was.

K: And was this in the beginning of the relationship?

M: You mean, did it last?

K: Yes.

M: Well, we had a long-distance romance. So it never ended. That feeling never went away. If we had seen each other...By long-distance, we saw each other, you know, then,
for that week, we saw each other again in the summer for a week, I came up to N.A., we wrote letters almost every day, and then in the fall we saw each other for a week, and then the next Christmas for two weeks. So that's it.

K: Well, it sounds as though the distance kept this euphoric feeling.

M: Oh, yeah. I mean, I don't know what it would've been like. Actually, I had fears of that. Not that--I always had fears that my feelings wouldn't go, that maybe his feelings would go. And I don't know quite why. Because it seemed too bizarre. And I'd known people that were, you know, really, had had those feelings for somebody, and gone out with them, and then they really still kept the love going, but it wasn't that initial Wow!...strong attachment feeling. So, yeah, we had this long-distance romance. And so I think that kept it alive. Now, we spent every day together for the next week. And it was just so amazing, because everything that would occur seemed to confirm that first moment. I mean, we did not express our feelings for each other that week. We just spent time together. We went out together. Not on dates, but we went out together driving around, we spent time in the garden together, we spend time in the evenings together--because I was living at the house for a week. And he was just so much fun. We had so much fun. We would just be completely--I was completely myself with him. I mean, there was no put-ons. He saw me with eye make-up, whatever, off. He saw me with rollers on. He saw me with everything, and it didn't seem to matter. That was really neat, too. He was like a brother to me.

K: What do you mean, like a brother to you.

M: (pause) Well, I mean, I know that that sounds very unromantic when you say somebody's like a brother. It's just that, I never met somebody that I could be with, be attracted to, have this marvelous feeling of falling in love--I really definitely felt I was falling in love with him--and yet, I felt so comfortable with him, and could laugh and joke as if he was a pal, a really good friend. And, I guess I was with his sister, so it felt like we were two sisters and a brother, too.

K: Very comfortable.

M: Very, very comfortably. Yeah, that's right. No tension. I mean, I thought romantic love would have the tension. This didn't have the tension at all. It had complete relaxation, if anything. Just really at ease. It was great. Yeah. Do you want me to continue? Should I continue, maybe, time-wise? Should I continue?

K: Uh-hum.
M: Okay. Should I maybe go on and tell you what happened?

K: Uh-hum.

M: Okay. After that first week, I went back to N.G.. And then he wrote to me and said that his cousin in S.A.—N.Q.—was having her debutante ball or whatever. So he wanted to know if I would come up for the party. And I thought, "Oh, that would be fun, actually." And he sent me a lot of letters saying, you know, "Love, I.," and all that. And he would write these letters. He would start the letters, "Dear Princess." It's very interesting, because I liked that, because I felt I was put on a pedestal, but, to me, that didn't fit that one week were together. Now I'm analyzing it from a distance now, but I remember then even thinking...I think that's why I didn't know it would last, at that time. Because writing "Dear Princess"—I'm certainly anything but a princess (laughter).

K: So you felt he was idealizing you.

M: He was idealizing me! And I thought, "Well, God, he saw me all different ways, every which way, in June. And what's he doing calling me 'Princess' for?" That just really didn't fit. And my mother said, "Well just accept that the man's in love with you, he's falling in love. Let him have this." And I said: "Oh, well, I'm going to fall off my pedestal." And I was, even at twenty-one, worried about that.

K: Worried about?

M: Well, I didn't want to fall off a pedestal. What I really liked about this was that he saw me who I was.

K: You felt you didn't have to put on any pretensions for him?

M: That's right. But here I am being a princess? Oh-oh. Like, what's happened here? Is it that I've left this relationship, gone home, and now he's idealizing me from afar? I didn't really know, you know. And I left it at that. He would express his feeling for me. Gee, I wish I still had those letters on me. Anyway, I went up for that week in the summer, and it was even better than June. It was wonderful. But there was a difference. In June, when we were together, if I remember back, I don't think we ever kissed. We never kissed.

K: Not during your relationship at all?

M: No, the first week—oh yeah, during the relationship -- but that first week in June, we never kissed at all. We
were not telling each other our feelings. And I think through letters, the feelings became stronger.

K: How did you feel about not telling your feelings?

M: (long pause) I felt okay, because, in a way, he had...Okay, now this is, you know, just my upbringing then. At the time, I felt it was a man's thing--I wouldn't feel that way now--but I felt then it was a man's thing to first express the feelings.

K: So if he declared his feelings first--

M: Then I could, then I could. So I let him take the reign there. So, in areas like that--I mean, we were equal in every way, as far as in June, and just being myself, and yakking away and all that--but, as far as the matters of being intimate, revealing what we feel for each other, I allowed him to do that first.

K: I get a sense that you might have been feeling some fear around expressing your feelings first.

M: Oh, definitely. But that wasn't done. Women just never did that. Because you wouldn't allow a man to know what you felt, because you could be rejected. Yet I realize that men can certainly be rejected, too. But that's how we felt. And that's how I felt, you know, definitely. So, I figured, "Well, it's up to him." And he certainly seemed to be starting to reveal a lot of feelings. Like, I can't remember exactly then, but I knew that certainly he was feeling very, very strongly. And he did sent a big Peanuts card saying "I love you" on it. Did he say "I love you"? He said something to that effect, I remember. But anyway, the feelings were strong. Then I went up there for a week, and then we did start spending time with each other in a romantic way. The relationship changed, I would say, a bit.

K: Changed?

M: Well, changed in that it became more intense. Romantically. Because he revealed his feelings for me. He didn't say he loved me, in person, but he revealed his feelings for me.

K: In what way did he reveal his feelings?

M: Oh, he just said he was feeling strongly with me. He thinks he's falling in love with me. I think he did say that. I can't remember then. But I know he did fall. I remember the moment when he finally said he loved me.

K: And how did you feel about that?
M: About the summer?

K: His declaring his feelings for you.

M: Oh, I loved it. I thought, "Well, this is great. This is the way it should be. You know, this was bound to happen. You know, this is the next step." That he was being open with me about his feelings. And I—that was interesting for me. I held back a bit. I had never felt so strongly for somebody. And I realized at that moment, "I'm not very good at revealing my feelings for somebody." That was the first—I mean, even now, I'm thinking about it, I'm thinking back, I realize, "Gee, here's a guy professing his caring, his feelings, and I was playing a bit coy about that." I didn't think deeper than that then. I mean, I'm just thinking back now. That was really, that was weird of me to do that. But again, I think that's the upbringing—that you don't reveal too much, because then maybe they'll run away. You play a little hard to get. I wasn't thinking that consciously at all. I just think it was proper for me to be "a lady." So I didn't reveal... But I also think back now, I didn't really know how to express my feelings. I felt very embarrassed.

K: Sounds as though cultural norms got in the way.

M: Ah, yes. Yes, I think so. Because, I mean, when I think back in June, when we were together, I had a great time with him. Of course, I wasn't expressing my intimate feelings. I wasn't doing any intimate revealing to him, but we certainly had a great time. But soon as, you know, the more intimate feelings started coming, it was his role to say it, because I had been taught that way. When girlfriends yakked together in high school and university, you all say that. Probably they don't do now, but we did. So I just thought that was the thing to do.

K: You also mentioned that more intimate feelings came into play. Can you elaborate on those?

M: Yeah, there were strong sexual feelings. I mean, I think if there were sexual feelings in June, they were all wrapped up in love and caring and falling in love. Where, when he became stronger and more revealing of his feelings—like he would say to me, you know, that, you know, all those things that he cared about me, or that, you know, "You're beautiful" or "Your eyes are like this." I mean, he would do it in a very romantic way, in that he would be holding me in his arms, and he would be kissing me. And I never had that happen to me in that way. I mean, I did, but I mean, I didn't have such feelings. So I had such strong sexual feelings. Strongest feelings I've ever felt in my life. But with a person that I also felt such respect for, such love for and caring. They were all mixed up!
K: Sounds as though it’s a conflict for you.

M: No, I didn’t think of it then as a conflict. Now I would think back if I analyzed it, but right then, with my feelings, no, it all just seemed to be perfect. And if my feelings were awkward, I thought, it’s because I had never fallen in love before. I truly felt I was in love. I’d never been in love before, so this is obviously what love is. You are not just sexually attracted to somebody; you actually are in love. Now what’s "in love"? Some magical word. But I didn’t know what it was, but I knew that when I read romantic books or romantic movies, that it seemed like people just fell in love. So I had fallen into this, so I was helpless, I thought, to control it.

K: Would you say that it was in your head, and a lot of fantasizing and thinking, and now it was moving down into the body?

M: Oh, it was in my body. Oh yeah. My body was very active (laughter).

K: Active?

M: No, not active physically. Active...it was active physically, but active physically in that I was just thinking about him being in the other room. I wasn’t, we didn’t--I mean, we were then, you know, proper people in that, you know, we never slept with each other. We just what we used to call "made out" with each other.

K: Would you say you were preoccupied with these feelings?

M: Oh, yes. He was my whole world. He was everything. He was in my thoughts all the time. Of course, in the summer, what else do you have to do? He was just so wonderful. I mean, at times we would kind of...In the mornings, when we’d wake up, we’d go down to breakfast. I remember having this beautiful flowered robe that I really, really liked. And he sort of treated me like a princess a bit. I was still his friend and all that, but I was now his lover. But I was not his lover; all we did was kiss each other and make out! But somehow I had some sort of...felt special.

K: Special?

M: (pause) It felt like he and I were the only ones in the world. That all these other people were dancing around us, but we were the only ones that really were in each other’s eyes, or in each other’s heart.

K: So you had your own unique space.
M: Oh, yes. It was like a little cocoon. It was just wonderful. So that week really confirmed for me, and confirmed it for him, that we were feeling very strongly for each other. And, I mean, every night, everybody else would go to bed, and we’d sit down and watch t.v. and just make out until two in the morning (laughter)! With all these feelings, rumblings going on. Just marvelously passionate. Passionate.

K: Can you elaborate on the passion?

M: It just seemed to let go. It’s interesting...I mean, we just seemed to let go, but we never let go below the waist! (laughter) I don’t even know now why that occurred, but I guess, in those days, you didn’t allow it to occur. You just never would ever think of doing that. I supposed some people did.

K: I get a sense that you were on a roller coaster, but that it had to come to a halt.

M: Oh, you never went past that. I mean, there’s kind of an unsaid thing, that he would not have mistreated me. I mean, that was kind of the norm then. I think he felt he would be mistreating me. And I think he really did feel that he would want to save that for marriage. We never talked about it. But, I mean, his type, I would say, would think that. And I certainly thought that then.

K: Were plans for the future in your mind?

M: Yeah. And I think in his mind, too. I think that we didn’t discuss those plans, but it really felt we were discussing the future. We were discussing the fall, and I would come up in the fall, he’d go back to B., we’d see each other at Christmas, then he was going to pass the Foreign Service Exam, he was going into the Foreign Service, I was going to graduate the next year in June—we would be talking like this. And then I would go into the Foreign Service with him. Now what else does that mean, I suppose, than I would go as his wife. Because in those days, you wouldn’t go in any other way. You know, you just wouldn’t. So, there was like futures tentatively --he threw out these futures tentatively to me. Not tentatively, but assuredly. This was a sure thing. But never saying marriage. Then I went home. You know, the letters came, even more romantically passionate. Revealing of feelings, a lot of love and caring. Not sexual letters, definitely not, but just caring and love. I would have been very turned off if they had been sexual. Then in September, we came up again--I came up again--we went out for one week again before he went back to B. and I went off to R.. And then, I remember going out one night in the car. He just grabbed me and passionately kissed me and said that he loved me. He was
driving me back...It was the end of the week and he dropped me off at my sorority house. And the way he said it, it was this...I guess he'd been thinking about it a long time, and he just blurted it out. Now wait a minute. He said some sort of a poem. That was weird. When I think about it now it sounds weird. But I'm just remembering back now, he said some sort of a poem. I forget what it was.

K: And you didn't feel it was weird at that time.

M: No, he was very romantic. This is just all part of the romantic ideal that he was. That he would be the type to do this, you know. And then he said he loved me, you know, and he loves me, and "I love you very deeply. And, you know, I said "I love you" back. And in those days, it was really funny. I don't know what they do these days. But in those days, when somebody said they loved you, they meant--at least, in our group, they thought very carefully about it. Because "I love you" meant "This is it."

K: A commitment.

M: This is a commitment. So he wrote everyday, and we both decided we were not going to date anyone else. We'd discussed that. And we discussed that, you know, he would take his Foreign Service exam in February. I think he was taking it for second time. He got good grades in school, but this Foreign Service exam, American Foreign Service exam, was very difficult, and he missed it by one point the year before. So he had to take it again, because he was getting his Master's in psychology at G.--foreign service, psychology. That's my area, too. I was in psychology. And again, you see we even had the same major in school, when I think of it!

K: Well, you mentioned the fit.

M: Yeah, it was just very strange. So, you know, he said he would come back at Christmas, and then, you know, "Let's talk more then..." Okay, so I didn't date anyone. In fact, I got job working Friday and Saturday nights, and I just lived in my mind for him. I took a psychology course, that's right. Okay. I took a psychology course. I talked to my adviser, who said, "Oh, you know, I really want you to go to graduate school in psychology." That was the last thing on my mind, because I was in love, right? Who cares about school? Didn't want to tell him that. But he said, you know, "I really want to put you in this psychology class, because..." And I really respected this advisor; he was very good. And he said, "I want you to really think about your career." I thought, "Boy, he doesn't know I'm not even thinking about my career." I mean, everything went out the window. Because when I went back to B. then, all I did was think about him. I mean, I would go to the library
and I thought about him. I just thought about him all the
time. So this guy, my advisor, put me into a psychology
class which was very heavy, very philosophical stuff. And I
couldn’t think.

K: The thoughts of I. were so overwhelming that they stopped
your concentration.

M: Yeah, I had to drop out of that class. I kept my other
classes going, but I dropped out of that one. Because I--
that’s the last thing I wanted to do, was study
psychological theory. And I didn’t even tell my advisor.
I just never went back to him. Because I thought he just
wouldn’t understand if I told him I was in love. And that
just--I mean, why would I be in love when I was thinking of
a career? You know, I mean, I had all those things, like he
would think it was really dumb.

K: Sounds as though much of your time was spent in the
daydreams.

M: Oh, all the time. I daydreamed all the time. I remember
I had a tennis course I was taking. The balls would be shot
at me. I wouldn’t even see them coming. I’d be standing
there with a tennis racket. I’ll never forget that. The
teacher would constantly be yelling at me. And I just
wouldn’t be there.

K: Sounds as though you were having difficulty coping in
other areas of your life.

M: Oh, yeah. I might as well have been completely a zombie.
And everybody knew that I was in love. So they just sort of
expected it. That seemed to be what love was. So I
thought, "This is what falling in love is. Thinking about
the person all the time. But God, you know, I don’t want to
flunk out of this university."

K: Were those feelings good for you, thinking about love all
the time?

M: Yeah, but I was getting a little worried. I was getting
a little worried about two months into the term. I mean, I
was not studying at all.

K: You were having difficulty stopping the thoughts.

M: I couldn’t study. I couldn’t stop the thoughts. And
everyone I talked to said, "Oh, you’re just in love. That’s
just what you expect." And I thought, "Well, I mean, I love
thinking about this person. But gee whiz, I don’t want to
flunk out either." I didn’t flunk out; I did all right.
But I studied right before the exams. And luckily I dropped
that psychological theory course. So I didn’t have to have a
paper. A paper would have been impossible at that time. The exam, at least, I could put on the stuff at the end, you know, and procrastinate and then put on the stuff, and that was okay. You know, and I did it, because I knew it was survival. I had to. I couldn't flunk.

K: In retrospect, is there something that you could have done then that would have helped you cope better with the feelings, those in-love feelings?

M: Well, now I know. But then...I mean, now I would've done thought-stopping and all those things, because I'm more aware. You know, I would have known. Nobody told me those things. Everyone said, "This is the way it is. You have to go through this stage, and it's completely impossible to do anything about." Now I realize I would have had to want to stop them, and I don't think I wanted to stop them, except when I was under dire circumstances of taking my exams. Because I enjoyed them.

K: It felt good.

M: Yes. And I did not have any interest in school at that point. I just didn't want to flunk out, because I did want to graduate. But I felt I wasn't going on to graduate school anyway. I mean, I couldn't go on to graduate school, because I had him. He was going to pass the exam, and we were going to go overseas. I mean, this was in my mind, you know, that we had kind of talked about. Nothing was laid out, but it was just expected. So I figured, "Well, I'll just get a B.A. I mean, who needs to go to graduate school anyway?" In those days, very few people thought about going to graduate school. So you got your B.A., and then you got out and got a job. Or I planned to go to B. and work for a congressman or a senator or something like that in psychology. Or the U.N. --you know, I had dreams of doing that. So you don't need to go to graduate school, so what would the grades before anyway? You know, I was rationalizing that way. And I think then, in that era, that was okay, to rationalize or compromise. Because we weren't thinking of graduate school. And if I wasn't that interested in the topic at that moment in my life, fine, I'll let it go.

K: So you then just kept with the feelings that were happening towards I..

M: Yeah, I just kept them going. I didn't think about stopping them. I was getting a little bit worried about my courses though, yes. And then I just knew that, "Oh, I'll pull through, I always do, you know, and just study." Then when he came at Christmas time-- the feelings were just as intense as ever--he announced to his parents his feelings for me, okay. They became very worried that we were too young. I was twenty-one, and he was twenty-three. They
thought we were too young. So his mother—he was Protestant, and I was Protestant, too—and he wanted his mother, who had put us together in the first place, was worried...Actually, they were right. I mean, we were rushing into this too fast. And he might have told them that he wanted to marry me. How did I know? He didn’t tell me that moment, but he might have told them he was in love with me and wanted to marry me. I mean...He had another girlfriend before me—maybe a couple of years before, a year before—but, I guess, it had never been this intense for him. This was the first time. He did tell me that, actually.

K: And how were you feeling about this barrier that was being put up by his mother.

M: I started getting very worried. I was staying at their house right before Christmas holiday, and I noticed that she was getting very worried. It created a tension, a definite tension. It also, because he was so dutiful to his mother—he was a good boy...She had him talk to their doctor, family doctor, you know, their family doctor or whatever. A doctor. Actually, no, no, it was not a family doctor, it was a friend, because there was a seminary there or something. N.Q.! Well, I guess S.C.U., it must have been connected with that. A family friend. I. had gone to a Catholic boys’ school. So I think he was part of this whole thing. Anyway, he went and talked to him. And then he took me for a drive after he talked to him, and he said to me, "I really realized—perhaps we are going too fast." You know, he made me see that we have to really go much slower. So, it’s like I.’s, all his rational sides came into fore, because he was so, so attached to his family.

K: So it sounded as though he was pulling away.

M: His feeling didn’t--no. His feelings were not pulling away. His rational thinking was taking over. I don’t know what—I forget what the doctor said to him, whether he was telling me the whole story, but he said: "Maybe they’re right. Maybe we are too young. Maybe we should just see." And I said, "That’s fine. You know, if we’ve only known each other..." But I said that was fine, but I thought, "Well, God, if somebody really loves you, how can they suddenly be so rational?" I couldn’t do that, so why can he do that? And I thought, "Oh well, here it is. Here’s the pedestal that’s going to come flying down." And I went back home for Christmas, and I felt really, really funny.

K: Funny?

M: Funny. Yeah, strange.

K: In what way funny?
M: Bothered. I was very bothered and worried that his feelings were going to change, that he was going to obey his mother. Not his father. His father stayed out of it. And my mother said to me, "Well, it sounds like his mother maybe is worried that you're getting too close. You're going to take her son away from her. You know, even though she really wanted you to get together, there may be some sort of dynamics going on in the family, that you're taking her first-born, her son that she idealizes. You're taking over...you're the other woman in his life. And maybe her motivation isn't altogether pure."

K: Can you elaborate on your feelings?

M: Okay. I felt she was right, because I had sensed the mother being jealous of me. There were things going on at Christmas. After he announced to her his feelings for me, she started getting jealous of my youth. She started making comments about youth and being younger. She was really getting on that youth thing. And I think she was going through her menopause, I really do. You know, now that I think back, there was that sort of thing going on. But I went home for Christmas, and thinking, "Gee, this is a shock. How could somebody feel so much, and then now start being rational?" So that really confused me. I felt very confused. Because I couldn't stop my feelings that easily. "So why—is he stopping his feelings?" Or was...And then I talked to some male friends of mine, who said, "Well, that's men." Men have to think of their careers, their future, and all this—very sexist, right? You know, they have all these responsibilities on them. And men do think this way. And I thought, "Well, maybe they're right. He's getting scared and blah-blah..." And I thought, "Well, gee, I don't feel scared, I don't feel anything. I don't feel any of that."

K: Sounds as though your feelings were the same, and you felt a pulling away from I...

M: Yes. Yes, I did. And then when I went back, after Christmas, I felt they had—he had really somehow...He cared, and he still was in love with me—I did feel that—but I felt he was wanting to...He had more control than I did, I guess. He realized he'd gone wildly in love, and he thought, "Oh, wait a minute. I've got to really step back here, and I've got to pull back my feelings." So I felt some pulling back, some stiffness.

K: A sense of loss?

M: I felt a sense of loss, yes. I was confused, and didn't really confront him with it. Because again, I wasn't good with feelings anyway, to express them. So here he was, this person doing this to me. And I didn't know what in heck was
going on. And I couldn’t understand how somebody two weeks ago could feel so wildly in love, and then now, when parents talked to them...Of course, friends of mine came to that New Years’ Eve party—we had a New Years’ Eve party—and I told my roommate. And my roommate said to me, "Oh, get rid of him! He’s a mamma’s boy. If he’s kowtowing to his mother, forget it." And then her boyfriend was sitting right there. He says, "Yeah, forget it, M. Just get rid of him." "You really think so?" I said. "Yeah, yeah, he’s a mamma’s boy." So I started getting really confused, because maybe they were right, you know, since I’m so naive in these things. "You know, if he’s listening to other people around him, then, you know, he’s not right for you." And I consulted other friends. They said the same thing. I consulted one friend of mine there, though—another friend of mine’s boyfriend—and he says, "No, he’s scared. His feelings are so overwhelming for him he’s scared. So he’s pulling back, and he’s allowing his mother to do that, or the priest to do that. There’s a side of him that really wants—you know, is scared of his feelings."

K: Sounds as though you’re feeling confused at this point.

M: Right now?

K: Uh-hum.

M: No, no, I’m not confused right now. I mean, if you want me to analyze it right now, I know.

K: No, I’m sorry. I meant confused at the time.

M: Then? Oh, yes, yes, yes, yes! And, I think, you know, I didn’t know—I could analyze it rationally, but it was still an awful, awful situation. Awful.

K: So you were being churned up by all these feelings.

M: Oh, it was horrible. It was horrible. It was worse than...My feelings in the fall were nice and obsessive. They were lovely feelings. Now was just obsessive, but worried. Then he went back to school. He didn’t write! So, okay, it went from the fall, writing every day, to going back to B. and not writing at all.

K: What was happening for you at that time?

M: Oh, I didn’t know what was going on. So I decided—what was it about, all of January went by: no letter. Then I wrote, two weeks into February. And I said, "I really would love to know what’s going on. I haven’t heard from you"—something to this effect. "I still love you, and I want to know if you still love me." Something very direct. That took a lot of courage on my part to write that, because, as
I said, I didn’t--but I really wanted to know. Thinking back now, I shouldn’t have done that. I spoke to some of my male friends, who said, "No, don’t write the letter. Let him sit it out. Let him think about it. He’s just taking time to think things through. You’re going to push him, so he’s going to have to answer you." Well, they were right.

K: You sounded as though you were desperate, going from person to person to try and figure out some answers.

M: Exactly, exactly. I didn’t know what to do. First of all, I never had these feelings before, so I was just confused. You know, I didn’t know what to do. So, what I did was, I wrote him a letter. And I wrote him a letter--I’ll never forget this--ten pages and I xeroxed it, and it must have gotten lost in some of my stuff somewhere. I certainly don’t have it now. Telling him why I never loved him. I guess, my pride, you see. So I wrote him a letter saying, "Well, I never really loved you anyway." I wrote him ten pages. That was really dumb. And I told this friend about it, this male friend, he was this boy, he said, "You’re making the wrong move." Because, you see, one of the things I didn’t tell you is that he had flunked the F Exam again, for the second time, so he would now have to go to Viet Nam. And I wrote the letter about a week after he got the results for the exam. And so, because he flunked the F Exam, he would no longer be exempt from going to the war, and he would have to decide either...You know, guys were deciding then for going into the Army, going into the Navy. Basically, the two big decisions were Army/Navy. Navy was four years, Army was two years, but you could go over there and be, you know, front lines. So, the Army, you could go over there and be killed, the Navy takes four years out of your life. So I was going through this decision. Finally he did choose the Navy. And the next year after that, he did go to Officers’ Candidates School, in the East--I guess there was P.E.I.--and then went overseas. So I wrote my letter at a very opportune time, when he had just heard all these things. Not only was he going through problems with trying to re-think us, but he also had just flunked the exam, and had to think about Viet Nam. And I told this to a friend of mine...I knew that before I wrote this ten-page letter, because he told me in the letter he had to make that decision about Viet Nam. And I told this friend of mine, who was exempt from Viet Nam because of something. I forget. He was so relieved. Some health thing. And he said, "Well, you know, right now, all the fellows I know are going through terrible turmoil on whether to--you know, first of all, what branch of the service to go into, and also, just the fear of going to Viet Nam and the anger they’re feeling. And if they’re going with somebody, they’re certainly not--well, they don’t know what to do. And they don’t know whether to hold on to their girlfriends, or say, you know, ‘It’s going to be two years’ separation’--
or four years’ separation if it’s the Navy—’and therefore we’d better break up.’” So he was trying to give me a male point of view of the fear and the confusion the men were going through at the time.

K: And how was that for you?

M: I realize now how immature I was, in that I could understand but I couldn’t empathize. Like I was too selfish at that moment. And that was confusing to me, too. Because I thought, was it really love I felt for him? If it was love I felt for him, I should be more caring about what he’s going through right now. I was, but only with respect to how it was going to affect me.

K: How was it affecting your feelings?

M: Yeah, yes. I thought—I mean, I was selfish.

K: By "selfish" you mean?

M: Well, I wasn’t thinking of him. I was only thinking of me. And I knew that at that moment, and I wrote a ten-page letter telling him I never loved him. And after I sent it—I never sent a letter like that ever again in my life, and never sent a letter to somebody before I really thought about it. You know, that taught me a lesson. And it was just really weird. I mean, it felt really good as far as getting it off my chest. But they were lies. I itemized all the times where I really never loved him. I was just kidding myself. How bizarre, when I think of it now! I guess I was twenty-one. Ah, what do you expect, a twenty-one year old? (laughter)

K: Sounds as though you were going through a lot of hurt.

M: Yeah, I was really hurt. Yeah, really hurt. And I could not empathize with him at all. I wanted to get back at him.

K: Hurt and angry.

M: Oh, boy! Oh, I was so—when I think of it, I was so angry. Then I...my friends said, "Ah, you know, he was no good anyway. If he did that to you, he wasn’t very caring of you." These are women friends. And then Easter holiday came, and I thought, "Well, so what, I wrote the ten-page letter." If he came home for Easter, you see—April. I phoned him. And he was very angry on the phone. I forget what he said, but I remember he was very angry at the phone call. And he said he didn’t want to talk to me. I didn’t say anything. I just said I wanted to get together and talk. And he said he didn’t want to see me. I thought, "Oh, all right. Well, fine." But again, how could love end that quickly? I still had feelings for him. So were his
feelings completely gone? According to my male friends, they really felt that it was the Viet Nam, and it was the, you know, the confusion he felt, it was overwhelming. But since I wrote that letter, they didn’t even know how to help me! They thought I was such a fool. "So naturally he’s angry at you, because you’ve written this one that you never cared! So what do you expect him to feel?" And I thought, "Oh, God. Well, at least I learned my lesson. But what I do now, I have these feelings—what do I do with these feelings?" I met another fellow. Again, fixed up with this new fellow, gosh, from T.--and he came from T.. Again, fixed up with the same friends who told me about I.. So they fixed me up with this guy. But this guy--I went out with him. This was really funny, because then this guy immediately fell for me, and I had no feelings for him. Because I was still wrapped up with I.. He was very much like I.. In fact, he was more mature than I.. In every way, he was much more--by "mature," I mean stable in his feelings, he was solid. He had that rational control over his feelings, yet at the same time could express them, and tell me that he was falling in love with me. And I said, "I’m not in love with you," I told him. And he said, "Well, I still care for you." I said, "Well, I still care for I., so I’ve got to work that out first." And he was just a wonderful, wonderful fellow. I think I was too young for him, too immature. Not age-wise, but just too immature for him. He just didn’t fit my--he fit my ideal as far as everything he was, but I just wasn’t attracted to him in that same way.

K: It sounds as though you went with him on the rebound.

M: No, it wasn’t even a rebound. I just went out with him, because he was a nice fellow. But he started really caring for me. He really cared for me. He came to my--I was graduating that year, that spring--he came to my graduation. My parents adored this fellow. They thought...They liked I., too. They did meet I.. Because I....Interestingly enough, my father was working in B., he had a project in B., at the time. And he met I., and went out with I. to movies and everything. So my father--I can’t believe that, I should ask my father now, actually. My father and I. did all sorts of things together. I should ask him that now, that’s interesting. I keep forgetting about that. Sorry.

K: How were you feeling about that?

M: Oh, I was okay. I thought that was great. He came to my father. But I...One thing my father told me after I. broke up with me, and that is--maybe we’re getting off the track here, but this did help me--my father said, "You know, "I" was really annoyed when you started working at the college restaurant, the college hang-out." I got a job as a hostess, and I really loved working there. It was great.
It was a little extra money. And I was doing modelling at the time, too. So I was pulling in some extra stuff then. And he told my father, "How can you allow M. to work in a restaurant?" My father was most annoyed at that, like somehow he had not done his duty as a father. And my father then said to me, "I.'s too conservative." You know, and I thought to myself, "Gee, my father's pretty sharp. What a sharpie. He was bothered by that comment. Like, what right did somebody I was going out with have to say that. It was my choice. So my father was saying, "Well, maybe I. was not all he was really cracked up to be. Maybe he was more conservative and more controlling of you." So that made me feel better. But I still didn't know what to do with my feelings. I mean, it made me feel better rationally, but it didn't make me feel...I still didn't find anyone I was attracted to. I'd go out on dates, and I...nothing. You know, so what do I do? I didn't know what to do.

K: Could you elaborate on these feelings that you were left with?

M: Ah, sadness. Just really sadness. I wasn't hurt anymore, because I knew I had a lot of part in that, writing that letter and everything. I just thought, "Boy, I really made a mistake writing that letter." And if I. is not the right person for me, at least I could have found out a different way. Not someone else telling me, you know? I blamed myself a lot. I blamed myself for everything. That was interesting to me. That was revelation to me, too--how much I blamed myself.

K: Blamed?

M: For the break-up. Not him, but me. I blamed me. And that seemed irrational to my friends. But I figured, "Well, it was me that did it." By writing the letter, or maybe not expressing my feelings enough, not being more direct. And then my friends were really funny. Here we all were twenty-one--I just turned twenty-two, actually, that spring--"Well, what do you expect, you're only twenty-two?" I says, "Yeah, but many of you are getting married right now. If we can't express our feelings, like, what are our marriages going to be like?" Like, we'd started talking a lot about that--communication. And so anyway, that summer I did, I called him up. Actually, this is interesting. I called him up in July. I could not get over my feelings. I decided, "Well, I'll call him up one more time." So I called him once in April, he didn't want to talk to me, so I called him in July. And I went down. I can't remember now, wait a minute. Oh, no, no, no, no. Okay, I called him, and I said I wanted to have a talk with him. And he accepted. He came up to R., drove all the way up, walked in the door, and there it was again. And I knew, soon as he walked in the door, that he still cared. That's all I wanted to see. So
I thought, "Now what?" Now I'm really confused. I knew right then. There was sadness in his face, but real longing and caring. And we walked all around campus, and I told him how sorry I was that I wrote that letter. And he was telling me about his feelings about going to Viet Nam. And how it would have been nice to get together, to know each longer, to really get to know each other, and all those feelings. We walked all around campus. We sat and we walked, and we sat and we walked. It was weird, but we started falling for each other again. Just being really close. Holding hands, walking all around the campus. And what I really like is, there was no malice on his part that I had written that letter. That was really mature of him, I thought. So...and I didn't have any malice on his part. I really felt I had grown a little. Not grown up, what "grown up" means, but I had grown little. I felt more mature than I did six months earlier.

K: In what way?

M: (pause) I guess...Okay, let me just explain this. I'm just expressing it now. I've never really thought this through. I never talked about it, I guess, in this way. That now it's--what?--twenty years later, and I realize that, at that moment of walking around campus with him, I was that day as old as I am now, I felt in my feelings, in that I really cared for him, felt attracted to him, and cared more for him than I did for myself. Not that I do that all the time now; I don't mean that. But I wasn't selfish at that moment. I didn't think of what I was going to get out of it. I felt I wanted to just put closure on it, to somehow say, "Okay, this is the way it is now, even though... Okay, if we still feel this way for each other..." We didn't say how we felt for each other, but the feelings were still there, the caring and the walking. And then we went out to dinner. Oh, yes! Okay, we went out to dinner, we had a glass of wine, and he said...We went to see Bonnie and Clyde! That's right. God, this is ages ago. And at dinner, he said to me afterwards, he said, you know, "You really remind me of Bonnie. You know, your blond hair and all that." And he started saying these things, and I thought, "Oh, dear. He still cares." I mean, verbalizing more. He didn't say he cared, but he's saying what I reminded him of.

K: And that made you feel?

M: That he still cared for me. I don't know what love is. At that point I was getting very confused on what love is. And I kind of didn't think it was this wild passion anymore. I just thought it was sad.

K: And the feelings you were experiencing...
M: Were sad. Because the feelings were that, "I’m going off to Viet Nam, and I can’t make..." He didn’t say "I can’t make a commitment to you," but "I have to figure out what I’m going to do." So it was couched in those terms. And then we came back to where I was living, and we walked up the stairs, and we didn’t say anything. And we still were holding hands. And at the door, he kissed me goodbye. I remember in his eyes... Oh, I think I said something to the effect of "I still love you" or something. I think I said something. God, I really forget. Something to that effect. I don’t think I said "I still love you," but something to that effect.

K: You allowed him to see your caring.

M: Yes, yes, I realize that now, that was very daring. I wouldn’t even do that now! I’ve gone down hill! Well, I’m married now, but, I mean, if I had to do it over again, I probably...I guess in certain positions you do things. But I guess I wanted him to know. I felt I wasn’t going to see him again. And he kissed me very quickly, and ran out the door. I mean, just tore out the door like panic. Like, "I can’t stay." It was like, "I can’t stay with this person or I may give in!" And he tore off. And I thought, "Holy smokes, now what do I do with my feelings?" They got all churned up again. And I asked my friends what to do, and a friend of mine said...Oh, yes! He called me back a couple of days later, in a very matter of fact voice, asking if he left a ring in my car. And I said, "No." "Oh, fine, thank-you," and he hung up. Well, now that’s odd. Again consulted my male friends, who said, "Oh, well, he obviously, you know, really felt he cared too much that night"—I mean, they were analyzing this, you know from what you’ve said—"and then is pulling back again." And I said, "Well, that could be. God only knows at this point, I’m so confused." Then I went down to see him again, with a friend. Just dropped by, to his house. That was brave. About two or three weeks later. Don’t you think that’s brave?

K: Sounds as though you were taking many risks.

M: I can’t believe it now, when I think of it. And it was really lovely. He was in his sort of grubby jeans and out in the back doing some gardening, and I came in with a friend. I didn’t go alone, I came with a friend. And is mother was there. And we really had a really nice afternoon. It was really, really nice. But it really seemed like he had made the decision, he was going to Viet Nam and this is it. Okay, that’s fine. You know, so I left it, went into the fall, and I felt okay with it. That’s the way it is, it’s going to have to be unfinished. S., the fellow I was dating from T., went back to N., because he was like on sabbatical or whatever from T.. So I was free of
S., but S. was still writing. So I didn’t have to contend with Steve, with his affections. So in September, suddenly I got a knock on my door—I was still living in the sorority house—I got a knock on the door—do you want to hear all this? --suddenly I got a knock on the door. "There’s somebody here that has put his guitar in your beetle." I said, "There’s nobody that’s put their guitar in my beetle." "No, M., you have a blue Volkswagen. There’s some guy down here wanting to talk to you." I thought...I was in the shower. I had to get out of the shower. My hair was soaking wet. So I came down, and there was this guy. Well, this fellow was from W.. I started talking with him. He told me his name; his name was A.. And he asked me to go out with him, after I started talking to him for a while. It wasn’t my beetle he put it in. It was the woman who lived across the street who also had a blue beetle. He came over, landed in N.A., was there for his M.B.A. from the University of H., and obviously he got the cars mixed up. I wasn’t the woman. So he says, "Why don’t we go out tonight?" And I says, "No, I work." Well, it was interesting. "But how about tomorrow night?" "No, I’m working then, too." Like, I didn’t want to go out with anybody. Well, he certainly persisted. So the fourth night—you know, he said, "How about the next night, the next night"—I said, "Fine, okay. Sure, sure, sure." So I went out with him. Went to a party, a French party in N.A., and came back. My immediate thought is, "Oh, my God, I’m going out with a foreigner." I’d never gone out with a foreigner before. I thought they were some foreign being, right? Well, this fellow and I started dating. And I plainly told him I was still in love with somebody else, but I would go out with him. And that was September, that was October, and I again, you know, plainly told him. That was fine. We went out, and we became romantically involved. But it was interesting. I could become attracted to him physically, mentally, but I wasn’t in love with him. So that was a new experience for me, too. So I went out with that guy in the fall, and we saw each other every day. And finally, I. came up for some other do. I think for some homecoming, homecoming game with R., and his sister. So he came up, because she was one year, two years behind me, so she was still...Anyway, I saw him again, and friends of mine grabbed me in the kitchen, and they said, "M., listen. If you really want our point of view, it’s A. over I. anytime. A. is just way more mature, more"—just, all the women adored A.. He was just, you know, like a walking...Everyone liked him. Somehow I was a little afraid of him, okay. A little afraid of him, because he was a foreigner. He would be going back to H.. I didn’t trust his morals, because he would always flaunt this French ways, how French men have all this free love, free sex. I. would never say that to me! But, you know, A. did. So he was different from my way of thinking things. But, yeah, he was very respectful of me.
K: Were your feelings influenced by your friends’ feelings towards I.?

M: No, no, they weren’t. I still felt strongly for I.. But then I started getting more physically involved with A.. And A. was then the first person I ever slept with—in January. So I was starting to get more physically involved with him. Hadn’t slept with him yet. And then I realized, "Well, wait a minute here." Now it was December. And A. was starting to express his feelings to me. About his caring. He found it hard to express his feelings. Well, no wonder, if I was telling him, "Look, I don’t care for you. I care for this other guy." Anyway, I said to him in December, I said, "Look, if you and I are going to have any chance, for me to really start caring about you, I’ve got to go down and end it with I.." "Why do you have to do that?" he thought. He couldn’t understand that. He was really, really...Now that I think back, he was scared that I would go down and see this guy and that would be the end of him. So I told him, "No, I really have to do this. This is the way I have to do this." So I called up I.’s family. I didn’t speak to I., but spoke to his mother, and I said, "Look, I really want to speak to I.. I have to end this once and for all in my head." Because this meeting in July confused me. So I went down to him, drove down to his house. He opened the door—oh, it was so embarrassing --but I had to do it. Walked into his house in the rain--drove down, S.A. is fifty miles from R.--walked in, and we went into the drawing room of his house. And that moment, when I saw him in that drawing room, in their very, very formal living-room-drawing-room, I thought, "Oh, my God. He’s so different than A.." A. was a fellow of the sixties. There was the Free Speech Movement going on in R.. A. was politically aware. Brilliant, brilliant economics student. Then an M.B.A. But not business wise. He just was very perceptive. And I suddenly realized, "My God, I.’s conservative. He’s really conservative. What am I doing going...First of all, what am I doing going out with a Republican?" Because I. was a Republican. And I was definitely a Democrat. And, at least Americans at those times had very strong feelings. You were very different people when you voted different parties. So, and A. used to laugh about my living in a sorority before. You know, "How could you possibly live with a bunch of--one hundred girls?" And I. was a fraternity fellow. Like, A. really made me confront my culture, very, very much. A. confronted my culture every inch of the way. "Why do you do this in the United States? Why do you do this? Why do you walk down the street and say, 'How are you?’, when you never even expect an answer back?" He constantly bombarded me with my cultural norms.
K: Uh-hum. You were seeing a difference then between A. and I.

M: Oh, an extreme difference. And suddenly I thought, "Wow, this is great that I’d gone down to see this guy!" Because I had been living in a fantasy world. And my friends were right. And so I told him, I said, "Look, I have another relationship now. And in order for me to really care for this person, I have to know once and for all from you what your feelings are for me." And he said, "Well..."—he didn’t say. He said, "I’m going off to Viet Nam and I have that to consider." I said, "Fine." I knew then, "Look, he’s not going to tell me anything." Fine. And I said, "Well, that’s all I want to know, and I have to--" And it was very, very formal. Oh, I felt really proud of myself. At that moment, I felt so proud of myself that I actually did this. I lowered my pride, went into his house, and confronted him.

K: Took some action.

M: Oh, it felt so freeing! I could not believe it. I drove down to S.A., having feelings for him still, walked into that house, talked to him, formally in his living room. I walked out. We walked to the car. And I’m standing outside my beetle, and he suddenly looks at me in a romantic way. And looking at the stars: "Isn’t it a beautiful night?" I said, "Goodbye, I.!!" I thought--isn’t that wonderful? Don’t pull any of those games on me. One moment you’re one way, the next moment you’re this.

K: A see-saw.

M: A see-saw. I said, "Forget it. I don’t want that." I got in the car, and to this day, I’ve never thought about him romantically again. Now that shocked me right there. That I could end it. That has been a wealth of information for me, even in counselling now. I mean, helping people in this. That I took action, I found out exactly, and then he started doing a little bit of a game—I ended it. I said, "No, thank-you very much." Now I also had the luxury of having somebody back that I was going to.

K: You were able to go to another person and transfer some feelings.

M: I went right back. I drove right back to A.’s apartment, and told him. "This calls for a drink!" (laughter) That’s what he said: "This calls for a drink!" So we had a drink. Then I had the most wonderful winter I’ve had in...Then I started going with somebody. See, I. and I were long-distance romance. And A. and I started really seeing each other. And then I found out what it was really like. And I fell in love. I fell in love with A.. Of course, that
ended later, too, in a different sort of note. But I had
that experience that year, of going out with somebody daily,
and falling in love with them. And he did not put me on a
pedestal. He really, really cared. And I realized, after
A., that I did not want somebody like I.. That my type was
really not my type. That was my type, my schoolgirl dreams.
And I had changed. I had grown up--or was growing up. But
ironically, I went with A. for three years, or whatever.
Came up to E.. Followed A. here. And then, right after I
got married--I met my husband up here. I, you know, broke
up with A.. I met my husband here. But that fall when I
met my husband--my husband I have now; I've only been
married once!--I went down to N.A. for my sister's wedding.
And I went over to a friend of mine's house, who knew I.'s
sister. And she called I.'s sister, and started talking to
his mother on the phone. She says, "M., here, talk to his
mother." "Oh, I.'s mother?" This is about four years
after. I mean, I had not seen or heard of I.. He was in
the Navy and Viet Nam. So I talked to the mother, and she
said, "Oh, hi, M.. It's so wonderful to hear from you. I.
is in Viet Nam. You know, I. doesn't have any girlfriend.
And he knew he really had to get his, you know, career
underway. This Viet Nam things had to be underway before
he'd cared for you." She was starting to make excuses for
what he did to me. I said, "Oh, really?" "Are you going
with anyone?" I lied, because I had just met O. two months
before. So I said, "No." You know, I thought, "Well, let's
leave this open. Who knows if anything's going to come of
O."--you know!

K: Are you saying that you still had some feelings for I.?

M: No, no, I didn't. It was more curiosity. And I thought,
"Well, maybe I.'s changed to. Because I've ended it with
A., I'm now a different person because of A. and what I had
gone through, and I've met O.. But, you know, I don't know
what love is anymore. And so maybe...We can always see."
So that was October. And then O. and I did start in dating,
seriously, in the winter. O.'s parents were coming in the
summer. And suddenly in April we were engaged. And, at
that point, I really honestly say, I didn't know what love
was anymore. So I felt I was...I couldn't say I was falling
in love with O., because I really was cautious on what I
meant by love.

K: Do you feel that the relationship you had with I.
influenced your future relationships?

M: Yeah, it made me way more cautious. It made me really
think about what love was. But, you see, I got married in
July--July 15. And would you believe that one month later,
out of the blue, I got a letter from I., after five years.
Four and a half, five years. So his mother must have told
him in the fall. And I still have that letter somewhere.
And it was basically: "I’m out of the Navy now. I’m going to law school. I’m—" He sent me a picture of him in his uniform. "I still care about you, and I want us to get together." Well. Well, well, well. I wish that letter never came. Well, I don’t know how to explain it. It was very harmful to me.

K: Harmful?

M: Very harmful to me that I got that letter. (pause) I suddenly realized I was married. And suddenly after I was married—it was wonderful going with O. all year --but right after I got married in July, I realized, "I’m not free anymore." When I got that letter, I realized, "My God, I’m not free anymore. I can’t just fly down to N.A. and go out with somebody else."

K: By somebody else do you mean I.?

M: I., yeah. Not anybody else. I wasn’t desiring of going out with anyone else, but I didn’t have the freedom to go and see whether there was still something in this relationship.

K: Even though you felt that the feelings were no longer there.

M: Yeah, I would just—I was curious, because the feelings had once been so strong. But I knew, though, intuitively, that I’d gone with A.. I was now married someone else who was like A.. He was a blend of A. and I.. He was perfect. I was somebody who had that blend, which was very perfect for me, of both European and American, you know—or Canadian, you know, but North American. And I thought I.--I don’t know if he had grown, or changed, but I wanted to see whether I still liked that type. But I had a hunch I probably wouldn’t be attracted to that type anymore. But I guess it brought back old memories, and all that. But it suddenly, I think, what it really brought up to me was that I didn’t have freedom anymore. And it put me into a mood that was quite depressed that first year of my marriage.

K: Freedom means to you?

M: I was now committed to someone else. I never committed myself to anything before. Friends, maybe. I had good friends. I was loyal, always loyal to friends, and I was...Loyalty is very important to me. Commitments. Now, but I mean--commitments to friends--but I had never been committed, made a conscious decision to be committed, and now there was a piece of paper that I was committed. It just sort of...I had feeling for somebody, so I automatically was committed to them. But I would have to make a rational...I mean, I was committed, I was married,
the papers were signed, so to speak. "My God, this is a commitment to this other person, to be loyal to this other person. Not to run out on them. That I could hurt someone else." The irony is—and O. and I talk about this now and then—what if the letter had come a month sooner? I don’t know. And I don’t want to get off the track here. But I guess I would have gone down. To see. And so O. keeps thinking, well, I never would have married him then. I don’t think so. You know, I think that probably—but who knows? It was really odd that it came a month later, I will say.

K: And looking back, I get a sense that you had a lot of learnings from that relationship.

M: Oh, oh, yes. But, when I think back now that I’m re-telling it, it’s actually putting some things in perspective right now for me. I am getting a lot out of this, re-telling it, in that I thought, over the last few years, and with A. I felt that way—I blame myself a lot—that I could not really express my feelings. And I said that when I was starting to fall in love with I., I didn’t express my feelings very well. But after the relationship started going sour, I think I really expressed—maybe not wholeheartedly—but I did take a lot of risks. They were rejected...

K: I’m wondering if there’s a tie-in between the risks that you took with I. and this commitment that you talk about with your present husband. That there may be a factor in that feeling of being swept away, that you may be missing, that you had with I..

M: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. I never felt swept away by my husband that whole year. Never did. I really held back deliberately. I met him in September, and after both A. and I., thank-you very much, I wasn’t going to go through this again. So when I met him, I immediately liked him, and we communicated—bam!--just so well that first meeting. It just hit me over the head. And I thought, "Boy, this is a guy who’s combining both I. and A.. Perfect for me." And I thought, "But I’m not going to fantasize about him. I’m not going to do any of those things." See, I knew nothing about thought-stopping or anything then, but I thought, "Listen, it seems like the key to this is, Don’t fantasize. Don’t think about the person, so when you’re away from them, you’re under your own control." So I figured that out the hard way. So I never fantasized about O. too much. I think I--I can’t say never. I mean, that’s not being honest; when I think back. I certainly did a bit. But I really controlled myself. And then when O., after a couple of months of going out with me, after a month and a half, started acting strange, I confronted him right away.
M: Started acting aloof. I met him—he came up to my door, we were going out on a date, and at that moment he started acting aloof. Where he had been so romantic, right, for a whole month and a half. And I thought, "Oh, here we are again. Here's the little change that comes into relationships." And I said to O., I said, "Look, I went through A., I went through I., not really communicating how I feel. So I'm going to be very direct with you." I said, "You're acting--this is how you're acting towards me right now. You're acting quite aloof and everything. I'm wondering, you know, if anything's going on for you. Have your feelings changed for me?" And I felt so mature, you know, being that way. And he said, "Well, I don't know if my feelings..." I thought his feelings were lessening. "No," he said. He said, "I feel that this is going too fast, so I have to slow down my feelings, and I have to pull back a bit. I have to think. I need time to think." And, of course, I talked to O. later, and he said he was falling very hard to me, and by pulling back and thinking... And I thought, "Wow, this is fascinating! He's very similar to I." A. was similar to me. A. just let his feelings go. He was very direct, and, you know, "Let's go." Where, "Gee, this guy's"--I mean, I thought he was very similar. He's European, like A. was, but he seemed to have I.'s... a little bit more conservative, I guess. That made me feel safer. Not conservative politically, but conservative lifestyle-wise. So, at that moment, when O. said that, I had a little bit of... I didn't think about I., but I thought, "Oh, gosh, that's where I went wrong with I.. I. was pulling back, and I should have allowed him to pull back. That's what those male friends said. And here is this guy doing it to me now." But I wasn't worried. I said, "Fine, take all the time you want. That's fine with me. You know, I can go out with other people." Because I really did feel that way, because I wasn't fantasizing. I had my own life, I had my own control, so I didn't get locked in that this person is everything to me.

K: So you could keep yourself.

M: Oh, yes. I kept myself. Where, with A., I let myself fall. With I., I let myself fall. And I didn't want to have that happen again. (pause) I should add one more thing, though, to this. And that is, I think, finally—you know, O. did this to me three more that year, pulling back, and I was so rational—I think that I didn't allow myself to really fall for O. So, when I think back now, I could've let go and it would have been perfectly safe! So I held back too much, and I never allowed that infatuation to take hold. And so when I. wrote me that letter, it reminded me that, "Gosh, I don't have this with O.. Maybe there's something wrong, that I don't have this with O.. Well, I know I held
it back. But maybe it just never would come." So then the next year I started really re-thinking my marriage. Not telling 0. about it. Getting very panicked. Panicked in that, "Have I married someone I didn’t love? Oh my God!" So I went through that whole year. O. got sick. I got pregnant. What a horrible year. It was one of the most horrible years of my life. Well, certainly, I got pregnant, I wasn’t going to go anywhere. Besides, I never thought of it. I made a commitment, and I had to see this through. But until so many years later...Actually, A. came back, too. I wrote a letter to A. three years later after that, when I was in Europe. And he came—he didn’t end the relationship—he came back. He thought my marriage was on the rocks, and he came back. Crazy. But anyways, so, these people still hold on, I guess, and I’m similar. But anyway, I realized I was too rational with my marriage. And then when I actually...I remember seeing somebody from afar who reminded me of my--of I. Not I., but just generally an attractive man. And suddenly this attractive man in class--I was in school, you know, out at U.B.C--asked me out for coffee. I was a T.A. in the class. I was a T.A. for this department, for P.. And this guy asked me out for coffee. And then we went out for coffee every week on Thursday, and I realized—I’m really glad that happened to me—because I realized that I still had feelings of attraction for somebody. Because I was married, and I was into babies, and I thought of myself as a wife-mother-student-friend. I didn’t think of myself in a romantic way. And just having coffee with that fellow for three months brought back that I was a woman. That I have romantic feelings.

K: I have a sense from what you say that you’re still vulnerable to those emotional highs.

M: No. Sorry to disappoint you. I say "No" with such confidence! (laughter) I could be. I could be. I certainly don’t feel that way right this moment as I’m talking to you. I am so involved with my work at U.S.C. that romance is not on my mind anymore. Even telling this--telling this, I just love telling it, it’s really interesting to talk about it. But I can see it from a distance. I feel I’m not that vulnerable anymore. But I thought that before I saw this guy for coffee--what, seven years ago or something! I thought that then. I obviously was wrong. So, I mean, certainly it could happen again. I mean, all I did was have coffee with him for three months. And then I did tell 0. about it. I mean, I felt that was betraying him, so I told him about it. (pause) No, right now I feel quite distanced from it. I feel very okay with it. Yet, I will say, it certainly is lovely, that feeling is lovely. And to think that, from now until the day I die, I’ll never experience it again, is kind of sad.

K: Tell me more about that sadness.
M: Well, I...(long pause) Well, I guess, I've certainly never felt that high again. I mean, I can't say if I really desire it right now. Right now, I don't desire it. And I probably never will desire it again. But, I guess, when I think of never experiencing it again, it's kind of a feeling of loss. I think, yeah, yeah--I think I have a capability of having that feeling again. (pause) Well, okay, it's sad, but also, I don't think I want to be out of control anymore. So I will say that. It feels...I think I would choose not to be out of control.

K: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

M: No. No, thank-you.

K: Thank-you very much.
Transcript #1 (Case U)

K: Could you talk about a time when you were romantically in love with someone, and what happened to you before, during, and after the experience, as if you were telling a story? First I would like you to talk about how you were feeling and what you were thinking before you met that person—what was going on in your life for you at that time.

U: Okay, I think I'll start with the one that made the biggest impact and lasted the longest. Probably that'll be appropriate, and then I can talk about any other experiences afterward. Am I talking loud enough?

K: Uh-hum.

U: Okay. And what I was doing before I met this person...I guess I had reached a very negative state, a very depressed sort of state in my marriage and was feeling quite hopeless about that in a way. I actually was—interestingly enough, I was having an affair with someone who I was kind of infatuated with, and very physically attracted to, who was in a course that I was taking at school. And this person was kind of playing games—you know, mind games—with me, and he was having another affair, and he was also married. And so we were kind of struggling, and this other person, the person who I’m going to be talking about that I fell in love with, somehow kind of involved himself and offered support, emotional support, and asked me if I was—you know, started asking me, "Are you okay?" and, "Are things okay with you?" and, you know, "I see that you seem kind of troubled," and so forth. And this was a person who I had sort of met several years earlier, and I can remember the first time I saw him was at some kind of a big gathering of people, and he walked in, and I remember thinking that there was something incredibly attractive about him, even though he wasn’t the kind of person I was usually physically attracted to. And he didn’t have the same kinds of—I had some sort of an idealized notion of what appealed to me, and I remember, another time, seeing someone that just fit that, and just seeing him across the room, and going "Who is that?", you know, and I ended up having an affair with that person. And it was like, I would seem to meet these people in kind of high-energy academic situations. Like this person that I had met that I referred to before—I’m kind of going off track—was at some kind of an academic meeting, and it was in a situation where there was a lot of energy and, you know, kind of involvement with work or school. It was always that kind of a thing.

K: So something intellectual is a stimulus for you.
U: Yes, yes. So anyway, I had seen this person that I fell in love with, I had seen him several years before, and remember being very surprised at the way I felt when I saw him. You know, it was like, I didn't believe it. It was like I saw him, and I just thought, "There's a really interesting-looking person." And then I heard his voice, and I heard him speak, and that was a real seduction in itself, because he had this wonderful voice and this wonderful way of talking and just a wonderful quality to his voice. And so I didn't really think about it—I mean, I just saw him very, very briefly, you know, at this thing a few years before. And then I ran into him again, shortly before I started going back to school to get my Master's, I ran into him at the reception desk in this department that I was going into. And I remember just the way he looked at me, kind of—he really sort of devoured me with his eyes. And again, it was like, here was this person whose physical appearance was very much unlike anyone that I'd ever been attracted to, and I remember just feeling this—what's the feeling?—it's like a real high, like a real surge of, kind of, joy somehow, you know, and acceptance somehow, and just feeling really emotionally connected somehow, and saying, "Oh, you know, you're going to be doing this and this here," and, you know, "Looking forward to working with you," and all that. And again, I didn't think anything of it. I mean, it was just a very nice feeling, and I sort of linked it more with my feelings about what I was going to be doing, and, you know, it made me feel more enthusiastic about the college that I was going into. So that was fine, and then I ended up working with this person in the college, and so I was in fairly frequent contact. Like I would see him maybe three or four times a week, just as part of what I was doing. And this is when this came up, where I was having an affair with this other person, and I started to...My marriage was falling apart. Things were really difficult at home. I'd gone through a situation where my husband had found a cheque that I had--this was maybe two years before this, a year or two before—he had found a cheque that I was sending to someone I was having an affair with. And I was sending him a letter about my plans, and he tried to get me to renege on this deal and I wouldn't, and so I ended up going to A. anyway, and meeting this person. And, I mean, if things were bad before that, they were really bad after that. And the kids were kind of restless, and they knew things were going on, and here I was in this new college, and just very detached from what was going on at home. And very disconnected. We weren't even good friends. So anyhow, then I was having this affair with this other person, and I was feeling very detached from him, and I wasn't getting...He was, you know, as I said, really playing mind games with me, and we finally, finally got together for one whole day together, for the first time. And I just had a fantastic time—I thought it was great—and he came back a few days later and said that it just wasn't going to work
for him, he had this other affair, and he felt he was going to get really involved in me, and so he didn't want to go any further with it. And I really experienced that as rejection. Like, I didn't really believe him. Part of me believed him, and part of me thought, "He's just saying that to make me feel better. You know, if he's really that smitten with me, then he's not going to be able to cut it off." So, like, I really doubted myself, and it really kind of ate away at my confidence about myself. And --this is interesting actually, thinking about all this stuff. And so at this particular point in time this other person kind of jumped into the breach and started offering emotional support. And I just--people would say to me, "You know, he really focuses on you a lot, and he talks about your issues a lot with clients," and all that, and I got a bit of hassle about that. It was partly just feedback that I got from this group. And so finally another month went by maybe, and I remember one night--how was I feeling around that time?--I started to have this glow, I guess, just sort of a feeling of excitement, a kind of sexual excitement for one thing. This sort of, as we talked about, sort of an inflated sense of myself, very hypersensitive, kind of, to my environment and what was going on around me, and very tuned in, very aware of my surroundings, and, sort of, how I was coming across with people. And I became very--I mean, that was already going on a little bit when I was having this affair, and I was very into my own sexuality. It was kind of a period of sexual exploration. And I was aware of myself in a way that I had never been aware of myself before. I mean, and here I was, I was already in my forties.

K: Can you describe that more?

U: Yeah, sure (pause). Well, I mean, it was kind of like the way I dressed: I would dress as provocatively as I could without sort of going out of the bounds of what was acceptable in this college that I was in. Just sort of like this really keen interest in everything I was wearing, and my hair, and--it's hard to get back into it, it's amazing, you know--just this incredible feeling about myself; it's hard to describe, it really is (long pause). Physically, what's the feeling? It's sort of like excitement, physically, in the pit of my stomach (pause). Just a--I don't know--just a feeling of being sexually turned on, you know, at various times, just being really sexually aware of myself and the impact--feeling sensual as well...

K: Sounds like you were saying a sense of well-being.

U: Uh-hum, uh-hum. And just a feeling of--I had long hair, and just the feeling and the flow of my hair, and just sort of aware of the connecting with other people, with men particularly, and it was like that was with me wherever I went, kind of. And I can remember this particular evening
when this thing started. And I went to class, and I was wearing my jean outfit--I had this blue jean outfit which I thought was really sexy--and, in fact, I probably didn’t even wear runners with it, like I had to wear some kind of jazzy boots or shoes or something like that. And I just remember being very hyped up, and just kind of generally excited. And I wasn’t quite sure what it was all about. Nothing was really happening. I was kind of in between things. I had sort of been rejected by this person that I was having an affair with. And there was feeling of lot of energy, energy for my work, and just kind of a euphoric feeling—that was it, a euphoric feeling, whatever that is. And I remember an expectancy, kind of like something was going to happen, and I had absolutely no idea what, I really didn’t, not in a conscious way. And I remember being in this class and being charged up. And afterwards, I kind of--and again, this was very undirected, I was just sort of hanging around to ask a question. You know, I was really kind of involved with the work that I was doing, and I had a lot of questions about it. And this person was kind of leading the class, and he was sitting in the chair at the front of the class afterwards, and kind of slumped in his chair and looking very--ah, what’s the word...He would get this look on his face. He would just kind of, not withdraw, but become very quiet, and sort of physically, just kind of sit back in his chair, like he was spaced out somehow, like he was kind of spacing out and distancing himself in some way. And he started to—he had this way of talking which was exciting for me, the way he used his voice, you know, and he was very expressive, the way he talked, and he said, "You know, there’s this such-and-such kind of a thing coming up down in D., and it’s all about the stuff that we’ve been doing, and we should really go down." And I remember getting again this feeling of—it was kind of feeling good about myself again. It was, like, about my work, you know, that I was being singled out somehow as special with what I was doing, and to be included somehow. And so again it was like, "Oh, all right, sure. You know, that sounds interesting." And I just felt somehow—it was an ego trip, like it was an ego high, it was like, "Well, I must be really, you know, special in some way." And again, it was nonspecific in terms of seeing myself in relation to this person in a sexual way. The feelings that I was describing were more about myself, my sexuality. And it was nonspecific at that point; it was not directed toward anybody in particular. So that was fine. I went home, and I was quite titillated by this. And then I remember when we were walking down the street, you know, in this area where I was doing all this work—a few days later, maybe the next day, I don’t remember for sure—and the topic came up again. And he was asking me, you know, he said something about, "Well, gee, maybe there are sexual overtones to this," and I just sort of went, "What?"—you know, that was the farthest thing from my mind at that point, with this person, anyway.
And so then that got me thinking, though. I mean, I sort of came away from there, and I thought, "This is really interesting. I mean, why did he say that, and why is he saying it like that?" So we went on this trip. And it was very exciting, I must say. It was a combination somehow of this excitement and energy about my work, and that got sort of translated into this excitement and energy for him somehow. And then I started to become aware of this attraction for him, which had been very much like...The person that I was having the affair with when we were all in the same group was very physically attractive, and this person didn’t sort of fit that description for me. And so it was mysterious. It was like, "I don’t understand this." And yet the feelings that I had for this person were stronger in a different kind of way. And there was just a lot of passion. And we went on this trip, and—and also I started to feel incredibly vulnerable at the same time, so it was like this feeling of vulnerability, which...(pause). Where the vulnerability comes in is, you know, sort of like a fear of, if you have some kind of disagreement, or if you don’t see eye to eye on something, that feeling of losing the relationship. Like, it’s so fragile--like the whole thing is just so heightened, and there’s such a sense of arousal and, sort of, a merging together and meeting, that if there’s a moment where...For instance, at one point during this weekend that we spent together—and that was when we began to have a sexual relationship—at one point, he made some comment about us not being well-matched sexually. It was implied, okay, it wasn’t specific. It was more like, "This is a problem in this relationship, sexually." And I was just devastated! I mean, it was like I was up so high, and feeling so vulnerable, that everything rested on that somehow—that if that wasn’t okay for him, that that meant he was just going to end it, or he didn’t want to continue, or he wasn’t happy with it. It was kind of like, instead of thinking about how I felt about it, and my dissatisfaction with it—which I had, some dissatisfaction. You know, there’s always issues, and there’s kind of like that period of adjustment to each other sexually, so we were just in that real initial phase, and I was just crushed when I heard this. You know, it was like, "What does this mean? Am I being rejected?" But this would go on, from time to time as the relationship went on, and he would throw those things out, and it was kind of like he would say it—he was one of these people that sort of had to say whatever was on his mind—so he would just say that. And he’d say, "Gee, this is really kind of strange that we’re so involved with each other, and that I’m still in this relationship, because this is usually an issue for me, and I’m surprised that, you know, it’s okay for me," and all that. So it was a bit of torment, in a way. Anyway, how did I get off on that?
K: I'm wondering if you had sense that he was pulling away, or using that to distance himself.

U: (pause) Uh-hum, uh-hum. I guess that was a concern. I mean, the point was that he was married, and I was married. But my sense was that he didn't have as much dissatisfaction with his relationship as I had with mine—that for him this was just his way of operating in the world, was to be married and have affairs, whereas for me this was just like really consuming, and I could never have been that interested or involved if I had had any real feelings for my husband. Yeah, I felt like maybe I was going to be rejected. It tied in with the way my self-esteem was at that time, which was...(pause). I guess I had a lot of hang-ups about my sexuality, and that I wasn't a good performer in some way, that I hadn't had enough experience, and so if somebody said something about that, then I took it very personally and felt rejected by that. And so, like, I had so much invested in that at that time. Yeah, I did (pause). So, I don't know.

K: What happened during the relationship for you?

U: Well, I can remember, like, there was a lot of sexual excitement that weekend, just every place and everywhere we were, and just driving in the car, and a lot of stuff going on, and touching, and coming back to town and feeling really quite wrenched by having to go home. Although by that time I'd had that experience before, so I was getting pretty good at, you know, hiding it, and sort of having this dual personality. And then not being sure, you know, what was going to happen with it, and it went on. And I guess it was very exciting, but also very frustrating, because I couldn't see this person as much as I wanted to. I pined for him. He just wasn't that available. He was very obsessed with his own importance, and his own work schedule, and of course he had his commitments in his marriage. He was much better about those than I was with mine. And I remember (pause)—yeah, I mean, I always wanted to spend more time with him than he wanted to spend with me, and I think that became part of it. It was like it was part of the obsession, sort of, and I don't know what would have happened if it had been the other way around, or if it had been equal. Sort of a feeling of being cheated somehow, and a sense of loss, and pining. And I remember once, when he was away—of us was away, I guess he was away—and we got together after being apart for a couple of weeks, and I remember we went to have coffee at this place, and there was just this incredible electricity between us, and I remember his eyes were...I can remember sitting and staring at him and just being enthralled. And his eyes were just this incredible shade of blue—which, you know, they varied, kind of. And I remember he looked at me, and he said—and he seemed to find it very distracting, and very annoying or upsetting, kind
of—like he was into this, too, but he also said, you know, "I've never experienced this before, and I'm finding it very distracting," because he was always concerned about his distractions and wanting to get on with his work. And I can actually remember—I think we were talking about the idea of, you know, when you're in love with someone and, kind of, that sense of loss or feeling like you want to be with him and you can't. And I remember finding excuses to leave what I was doing and drive out to where he was, and sort of driving around the building, seeing if he was around, looking for his car, you know, and then, if his car was there, finding some excuse to go in, and feeling very left out when he wasn't available. Or he might kind of come trotting by and sort of treat me just like I was, like one of the other people there, and as if we weren't having relationship. And that was very distressing. I subsequently...I can remember sitting in the bedroom—he used to come over to my house during the day, which was pretty risky, scary, and I used to go to his place—and I can remember sitting in the bedroom, in my bedroom, and feeling really strange, because there I was sitting there with this other guy. And we were sort of half dressed, and eating lunch in the bedroom, and sitting on the carpet, and I was in the throes of thinking about leaving my marriage, and in some way this was an impetus for me to do it really. And yet I knew that he was never going to leave his wife. I knew that, I mean, I really knew that, but I had this weird hope that maybe something would happen and I'd have this impact on him and he would. I did sort of, I eventually got the message after about a year that this was never going to happen, for sure, even though I kind of knew it all along. And I can remember feeling very sad about what was going on, and about my marriage and all that. And I started to cry, and he put his arms around me and rocked me. And, you know, that was the first time anybody had ever done that. And so we were very close, and there was a lot of sort of emotional intimacy and a lot of sexual excitement. But it was very measured from his side, you know, it was just—it was almost like a tap that could be turned on and off, and that was just excruciating for me, because I couldn't seem to do that, I didn't have that control. And I feel like I don't—somehow I don't feel vulnerable like that anymore. It's really interesting. I don't know whether I could ever even subject myself to that, or lose that control that I lost or whatever, I don't know, it's really weird.

K: So are you saying you think that relationship had an effect on future relationships?

U: Well, that in combination with a couple of others. Eventually, I got to the point where I don't think that could really happen again. I don't know. Maybe it could, and maybe it—I don't feel as open to it. You know, I don't feel like I could...Right now, it would take an awful lot
more for that to happen, and I can’t think of anyone that
could make that kind of an impact on me. Because it had
something to do with how I felt about myself, and my
deficits. Okay? So now that I’ve got some of those things
that I didn’t have at that time, it would have to be
Superman for me to feel—to idealize the person in that way.
It’s always been someone who I can really idealize, and feel
has really something to offer me—that I really want
something that that person has. So I subsequently moved out
and moved into my own apartment. I remember one time I had
made an arrangement to go out with this woman on a Friday
evening, and she and I had—and like, here I was single, for
the first time, you know, in twenty-five years or whatever,
and maybe ever, because before that I lived with my parents,
before we got married—and there I was in my own apartment,
all by myself, and it was very exciting, I really enjoyed it
in some respects. That was also incredibly lonely, and he
and I would come home from, you know, we’d go on a weekend
or something like that, and he’d come home and maybe bring
me up into my apartment, and I’d walk in, and then there’d
be this incredibly empty feeling when he walked out. Like
here I was confronted with these four walls. So anyway,
this woman and I had this date one night, and I remember she
and I had had lots of discussions about her feeling rejected
when her friends would decide at the last minute to go out
with some guy that suddenly phoned them or something, so I
knew I had to be very respectful. And he suddenly phoned
me, which was very out of character for him to phone me in
an evening. And he said that his wife had just suddenly
decided to go out—which reminds me of a movie I saw on t.v.
last night—and, “Did I want to get together?” And I was
just crushed—and go to a movie! --and it was just like this
incredible temptation! You know, it was like, here was this
person, we always would just catch these odd moments
together, or it would be during the day, and the feeling of
wanting to have, you know—it was an incomplete feeling. It
was like I wanted to be with this person as my partner in a
more traditional way, and see him in the evenings and go
places together and share all these things, and I could
never do that, and it was very, very frustrating. And so
the thought of doing that was so tantalizing, for one
evening, you know—and, of course, there was also this whole
sexual thing. And so I remember just agonizing over that
decision. And I couldn’t do it. I mean, I just, I had to
go out with her. And it was also something about myself,
too. It was kind of like I couldn’t just do that. But it
was a ‘damned if you do, damned if you don’t’ situation,
because I hated myself for the choice I made, and yet if I
had gone with him I would have hated myself for that. I
would have been annoyed with myself either way. So that was
the kind of, you know, sense of loss and pining-away
feeling, just missing him and wanting to be with him. And
the whole evening—and then I remember she and I went out,
and she sat there, and it was sort of this time for her to
dump all her shit out to me in this—we were down at the Vancouver Hotel having drinks—and she started to cry, and get into all her stuff. And I was just—I can remember—I just felt so restless and frustrated. And I just thought--I was just ready to just go through the ceiling. And in some way it was so wrong for me to be there, and yet it was so wrong for me to be available to him all the time and for him not to be available to me. So it was like a Catch-22 situation (pause). Anyway, it went on over a period of two or three years—from two to three years, somewhere around there—where, you know, we would continue to meet on a very erratic basis. And I guess the feelings were still pretty strong, you know, at that point, even after two or three years, but it became increasingly more frustrating, and I became increasingly more dissatisfied with just having it like that. And I guess what finally happened was--I don’t know if I’ve told you about this, just privately, or not—but he had a party, and I was invited, and his wife was there and gave him this fancy cake. And everybody we knew—like, we had all these mutual friends, and everybody was there—and it was like people knew what was going on, but they didn’t know what was going on, and some people thought they knew what was going on, other people... Most people didn’t really know, but they sort of speculated—and I’m probably attaching more weight to it, I’m sure they didn’t stand around and think about it all evening. And I couldn’t believe that his wife didn’t know what was going on. That was hard to believe. But apparently she’s pretty good at that—not knowing!—and I remember watching while he opened these presents and cut this cake, and everybody was standing around, and just feeling out of place, you know, like, "What the hell am I doing here?" I mean, I really felt a sense of belonging with this particular group that I was in, and I knew a lot of people there, and it was fine. But I was also—it just made me very sad, I guess, and very dissatisfied and uncomfortable. And yet, sort of hanging on—you know, like I was hanging on and hanging on, and then everybody left and there were about six of us in the kitchen, and his wife was standing in the kitchen, and I was there, and he was kind of throwing me a few crumbs. And when he was cutting the cake and opening the stuff or whatever he was doing, and everybody was watching, he gave his wife a kiss—but it was like a very perfunctory little peck, sort of—and he told me afterwards when we talked about it, he said, "I was very aware of you being there, and I was concerned, you know, I tried not to get into too big a kiss, and, you know, she doesn’t like kissing in public anyway, so it really wasn’t a problem," and so forth and so on. And so I stood there that night, and it was about one o’clock in the morning, and we were all standing around in the kitchen, and there was all this B.S. flying back and forth, and I was watching him—sort of just really still enamoured with him, but I was getting more and more pissed off, I guess, so there was a lot of anger there, and a lot
of disappointment and frustration. And so I just said to myself—I drove home by myself, and I just talked to myself in my head, and I just said—"This is it." Look, you know, I never wanted to be the other woman. It just doesn’t fit for me. It was very demeaning. It was a very, very kind of down kind of feeling, and realizing that I was caught somehow. And so I resolved, at that point, to end it. I think we got together a few more times after that, but it was like, I knew that I was going to end it. I was very sad, I would cry. And I ended it. I mean, I did, within a period of three months. And I felt really good about that. You know, I felt—and it was interesting, because I still have a real strong feeling of friendship for this person, but I don’t pine for him anymore. And I used to think I would always love him, and I don’t feel like I love him. I mean, I love him as a friend, but I don’t love him in the same way that I did then. And I don’t think I could. And I don’t want to go back to it; I don’t have those feelings. I remember once we got together when he came—he moved away—and he came back, and we were having a meeting, like a work meeting, and he—I mean, he practically raped me. But he managed to sort of somehow insinuate himself on me. I didn’t—you know, I don’t consider it rape, I guess, but I was pretty annoyed, and he sort of forced himself on me. And yet, I mean, I guess I could have stopped it, okay, but by that time I was really withdrawn and really distanced, and it just didn’t...I was kind of doing it for him, in a sense, and I was very...And that was it. I mean, that absolutely—I didn’t even get turned on. And that was a really good feeling. I’m getting away from the topic of love, I guess, but it was a very nice feeling, yeah.

K: Well, it sounds as though you got it together at the end within yourself—your emotions were resolved.

U: Yeah, I guess that’s true in a way, because, I must say, since that relationship...Like, I mean, superimposed on that relationship was this other four-month affair that I had, which actually took place simultaneously to this, or toward the end actually—it kind of piggybacked on this—and I did get really infatuated with this person, and I felt that I loved him, too. But since that time, I have never had that experience. I’m not saying I wouldn’t like to have it, but I don’t think I ever want to feel that limited again. Vulnerable is okay, I don’t mind feeling vulnerable, but I do feel much more complete within myself, it’s interesting, and I feel like...You know there’s that feeling when you’re with someone that you really care about, and when you’re together, you feel like you’re kind of stuck together and there’s that sense of completeness. And in some way I have that with myself a lot more than I ever did. And I really got something out of that relationship. Like, I got something...I really did feel loved in some way. Now what he said to me was that he had had a lot of affairs and he
was known as a womanizer, an inveterate kind of, you know, philanderer and all that, and he still says that--like, to this day, we talk about it--and he says that if his wife, number one, ever acted like she knew what was going on and confronted him, which she doesn't, number two, really kind of responded to him the way he wants to be responded to, that he doesn't think he would carry on like this. Anyway, I don't know about that. But the point is that he did say to me afterwards that he had got something from me--or, he said, during the relationship--that he felt was always there for him, and we've talked about it since, that he felt really loved for the first time, and that he felt--he had always felt, physically, kind of rejected by women, even though he had had all these affairs, but he had still felt physically rejected in some way, somehow--and that he never felt that way with me. And it changed the way that--that he felt like he had really got something from me. So it was really good for both of us, I think. It was a real--I don't want to use the word "growth," because it's such a cliche--but it was a real fulfilling kind of experience for both of us. So I don't know whether you want to hear about the other situation...

K: Is there anything else you'd like to add, that you haven't talked about, with this situation?

U: (long pause) Well, I guess--I don't know--I guess I kind of described the angst, the anxiety that I felt. And at the same time, I felt involved and--it was very compelling--in a way that I don't feel involved now, and in some way that kind of heightens the sensations in other areas as well. So there's a general feeling of being more alive somehow, and more turned-on. And in some way I feel like, to some extent, I tend to withdraw. I mean, I don't know how...I would like to have that feeling more, but I don't know whether it's something that just kind of goes on and on. If you end up living with a person, it could be rather draining at the same time, I don't know. Or--not draining; it might be something that doesn't necessarily exist in the same way if you become involved in a long-term relationship, I don't know.

K: Are you saying that living with someone changes it?

U: Yeah, I'm saying that I suspect that it does. Now, I'm not saying you wouldn't love the person, or that you couldn't remain in love, but I don't think it would be that anxiety and sense of expectation and all of that, you know, I don't know. I've never had that experience, so I don't know--of living with someone that I felt that way about.

K: Of being in love and living with them at the same time?
U: Yeah, I mean for any length of time. Now, I had a four-month relationship with someone who I felt that I was in love with at the time, and that was very exciting and very dominating as well, compelling. But again, it's like that was a very sort of extraordinary situation; it wasn't really the kind of thing that lasted. So it's always been very, for me, it's always been very ephemeral—what's the other word I'm looking for? There's another word, which kind of means like a light going out, I can't think of the word... But anyway, it's--not 'incandescent,' but it's a similar word, okay?—and it's always been a very transitory kind of thing, transitory kind of state. And I always wonder whether I just didn't kind of, you know, hang in there, I don't know, and wait for this to happen, or whether it was something that would just happen again or--you know, I mean, it's only happened a few times. So, I mean, I can remember once looking at somebody across the room and thinking--the one that I mentioned earlier--and just saying to the person I was with, "Who is that?" You know, and just feeling this incredible attraction for the person, and we ended up having an affair, but I wasn't always ready for that kind of thing. Again, it happened when I was feeling very--ah, okay, okay, I just thought of something. The first time that I ever had an affair was shortly after I had finished my Master's degree, got this very high profile job—I had been out working for a year, but I suddenly got this really good job a year later. And again, it was this heightened sense of my self which played into my feelings and my sexuality. And it was almost like I had had this massive injection of confidence, and that when I got this massive injection of confidence, then I started turning my attention to these unresolved issues of my sexuality. And also, because I felt so good about myself, it came out, it came through, it just really came out in all of me. And I remember I was working at the hospital, and I got on a plane to go up to the interior to do this presentation, and I sat next to this really crazy guy, and we started talking very much later in the flight. And I just had this incredible—this was not love, exactly, I don't what I would call it. That was just a real just pure and sexual infatuation, kind of. But that was the beginning of all this, when I started to have this sense of myself. And that was what followed, kind of. And so it was almost like Alice Miller's "grandiose self," you know. And it was like, after feeling in a state of mild depression all my life—and sort of accentuated at certain times by even worse depression—and then suddenly, sort of, getting into this grandiose self. And I see it very much—when she talks about that, I can really relate to it. Like I could just attract anybody, you know, and it was true! And it was like people felt that, and picked up on it. And I had this crazy affair with him, but it was very fragile at the same time. Like what happened was, he started to—first we had this incredible affair, it was very brief—and then he started to play
games with me and tell me he was going to call me back, and he didn’t. I can remember running out of a conference, in the middle of work, because I thought he was calling. You know, and I heard the phone ring and the secretary had gone for lunch. And—I mean, things that I would never do in my right mind. I was totally out of my mind. I really was. And now I look back on it—if I ever had a feeling of shame, because shame to me is not a big part of my lexicon—but when I think back on that time, it’s one my life’s shameful moments that I actually left this conference with these parents about their kid to run and answer the phone because I thought it was him. And it wasn’t. So that was just this—so it was very fragile at the same time. There was this grandiosity, but the problem was that it was about half an inch thick, and it didn’t take much. Anything, you know—all you had to do was put a little bit of a wedge into it, and it just fell flat. It was very tenuous. ‘Tenuous’—that’s the word I was looking for. Anyway, so yeah, yeah—so I don’t know whether you want me to talk about anything else or not. There was the other experience that I had. The other time that I felt that I was in love was with that four-month stint with somebody.

K: I think that’s fine, thank-you.

U: You’re welcome.
Transcript #1 (Case N)

K: Can you describe in as much detail as possible what was happening to you before, during, and after your romantic love relationship, as if you were telling a story?

N: I was in a marriage that basically was without passion. I was not happy with my former husband. There was no connection between us. I had just moved to S., and felt a certain freedom after leaving T. and all my roots behind me, and I could almost do anything that I wanted. When I left T., I was really depressed. I didn’t want to be with my former husband, and I resented coming out to S. with him, and him making me move and leave my entire family and support system in T.. About two months after I arrived in S.--it was by that time I had made some friends and I’d made a big party at my house, and the doorbell rang, and this husband of one of the women that I had invited was at the door. I took one look at him, he took one look at me, and I said to myself, "My God, I’m hot all over. This man is undressing me." I looked at his face. I thought I was going to die, this was the most gorgeous man I have ever seen. We just stood there looking at each other without realizing that there were other people there, and I told them to come in, and from that point on, the whole evening, we just kept--it was like an electricity. I couldn’t take my eyes off him, he couldn’t take his eyes off me, and when we’d get near one another, we’d both feel the heat. And we talked. And the end of that evening, I knew that I would see this man again. Every party that we went to, after--because I was friendly with his wife--every party that I went to after, we would see one another, and we would always end up talking to one another. And he’d always be bringing up about affairs, and both of us knew that eventually we would have to have an affair. And I don’t know what it was, but it was certainly some spark; we could not keep away from one another. And what happened was then that I would phone his house when I knew his wife wasn’t there, and we would talk all evening, and he would always bring up affairs. And then he started calling me when he knew my husband wasn’t there, on the pretext of something, and we, for six months, saw one another very often, or engineered to see one another very often, and to go out as couples so that he and I could be together, and we never could take our eyes off one another.

K: Sounds as though you were titillating one another.

N: Yeah, we were. And finally one day after seeing one another--and I would dress provocatively for him, and I knew that he just drank this all up, and whenever we were at parties I would feel his eyes on me, and I’m sure he could feel my eyes on him, when we weren’t talking.
K: How did you feel about him when you weren't seeing him? What was happening?

N: Oh, I was obsessed. Absolutely obsessed. I ate, drank and slept thinking of this man, and throughout the day I would just think about him, constantly.

K: Was it difficult for you to carry on with other things in your life?

N: (pause) Yes, it was really very difficult. The only time I had a car accident was when I drove past his house, and I looked at his house, and I went into a parked car. It was a total obsession...until, one day, I was babysitting his son, and he came to pick up his son at my house, and I asked him if he'd give me a lift, and when I was sitting beside him in the car I could not stand it anymore, and I said to him, "You better hold my hand. I just can't stand being so close to you." And the minute he touched me, I was on fire. And he said, "Will you meet me later?" And I did. And after that, we knew it was just a matter of time before we would have an affair, and be in bed. It took me about eight months to decide that, to hell with it, I was going to do it. And then we had a connection for eight years (pause).

K: By connection you mean...?

N: After six months of having an affair, I decided, No, this is not going on anymore, because I was not prepared to leave my marriage for him, and I had young kids. But we would talk very often--two, three times a week. Occasionally we'd meet and touch one another, but for eight years, when I say we had a connection, we thought about one another, we talked often, he would constantly try and convince me to continue with the affair, and I wouldn't. I just needed to talk to him. That was enough.

K: What was it that gave you the strength to break it off?

N: Oh, I knew that if I went on with it, it would destroy my marriage, and I did not want to leave at that point. My kids were very young, and I just could not see myself doing that.

K: Are you saying that your feelings were becoming out of control?

N: Oh, they were out of control at one time--when I left to T. and stayed there for two months with the children one summer, because I was completely out of control. I just wanted to be with him all the time, to touch him constantly. We would sit and talk for hours. And, during the eight years, very often he'd want to continue the affair, and when
I separated from my former husband, he was the first one on my doorstep. And, by that time, I did not want anymore of that. He was still in his marriage.

K: And do you know why you didn’t want anymore of it?

N: I think, deep down, I knew that we wouldn’t—it wouldn’t be a good marriage, and I was still—he wasn’t Jewish—and I was still very much hooked into that Jewish thing, being with somebody Jewish, and I still think I am. I need the strong cultural tie. But, thinking back, oh, I don’t think we were ever in a room where we could talk to other people without looking at one another.

K: A very strong connection.

N: Very strong. It was extremely strong.

K: Do you feel that has influenced other relationships?

N: (long pause) I don’t know. I can’t say whether it has or whether it hasn’t. I don’t know. But I knew that when he came out to N.—after I was already living with O.—I was completely cleansed of him. And I know if he came out here, I mean, it would have no effect on me whatsoever. He had come out here. I think when you asked me what made me think that it wouldn’t work—he was extremely tight. And I don’t think I could live with a man—and I guess I want to have more control in a relationship—I don’t think I can live with a man that would tell me how to spend my money, or limit me in the amount of money he would give me.

K: So, while you were caught up in the emotions, there was still a part of you that was rational.

N: Yeah. There always is, K. Well, that’s, I guess, what I was trying to say. There always is a rational part with me. With M., when I chose M., ah, I had to know what his finances—I had to get a full disclosure statement of his finances. That’s the rational. As much as I wanted to be with him, I knew that I was never going into anything again where I didn’t know the financial situation, and where I didn’t know that—where—I had to know that a man was fully independent.

K: Would you say that the relationship with G. was a relationship in which you experienced feelings of a kind you had never experienced before?

N: Oh, I’d never experienced those kind of feelings before. I never was so drawn to any person as I was to him. Because he was so very bright, I could not believe that this man wanted me. This was such a gorgeous man, I could not believe that he thought I was so gorgeous. When I looked at
him, I thought, "My, this guy is gorgeous—and he's undressing me!" His first thoughts, when he looked at me, was, "Oh, she's got such beautiful legs! And her lips, and her eyes!" That was his connection to me.

K: Were there other emotions connected with it for you?

N: There was the intellect. There was the looks. He was a professional. I think there was just everything. And if I was single and he was single, we probably would have had a long-term relationship. We might have even lived together.

K: And when it ended?

N: (long pause) When it ended sexually? Because I'm just sitting here and thinking, I don't know that, with G., that it ever ended. I think that if we met tomorrow, we'd be as good friends--I had the mortgage on his house, I had the mortgage on his boat. I don't know--we could sit and talk about anything, absolutely anything, and for a very long period of time--I don't know that there was ever an end.

K: Not a closure.

N: Ah, no. I don't know that there was ever a closure. I just knew that I didn't want to be with him sexually anymore. And I was the one that pulled away.

K: And you pulled away because...?

N: Because I knew that I did not--I wasn't going to break up my marriage for him. And when I was single and he wanted to continue, I knew that it was no longer right. It was no longer the thing for me. And I think religion played a large part in that.

K: Is there anything else, on looking back, that you can think of, that was important for you emotionally?

N: (pause) No, I--I still have to smile when I think of it. When I think of him, I see this most gorgeous man in front of me.

K: When you smile, there's a warmth in your smile.

N: Yeah, it was just the most wonderful, wonderful, passionate, emotional thing. It was so good for me, because I guess I never thought I was that gorgeous, that this man could chase after me, could pursue me.

K: Sounds as though you felt as though you were a princess.
N: I was with him. He thought I was the brightest. He thought I was the prettiest. I always thought I had--my legs were okay, but from the way he looked at them, my God!

K: So through his eyes you saw a different N..

N: Yeah, I saw a very exciting N., because he saw me that way.

K: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

N: No. No.

K: Okay. Thank-you.

N: And maybe it was more romantic because we never had a chance to live together to spoil it. We never had the quarrels. We never had any bad times. When I look back, all it was was the most pleasant, beautiful times.

K: Idealistic.

N: Yes. But then, there isn't the everyday-to-day living and, you know, the hard reality of what can happen in relationships. We never had to quarrel about money, because we didn't share our money.

K: Anything else?

N: No, I don't think so.

K: Okay, thanks.
Transcript #1 (Case R)

K: I'd like you to think back to a time when you were experiencing an in-love feeling that had an impact on your life. And I'd like you to start with what was happening to you before you met this person, what you were feeling and thinking.

R: Uh-huh. Well, I was eighteen. I'd just come back from travelling to Japan. And I knew I was going to be going to university, but I was of the mind to spend a summer, I guess, of hedonism. I went to a Gulf Island, and just was running my affairs exactly as I wanted to, without any external schedule or sense of goal beyond the distant one of attending university. Basically all I was doing was fishing and reading and photographing and stuff. And so that was the context in which this woman walked into my life. I'd borrowed a cabin from my aunt, and I was living in it. And she—my aunt, that is—double-booked it, so that this other woman thought that it was hers for a period of time, whereas in fact I was in it. And I later found out from the woman in my relationship that she was put out to find this man living in her cabin when she arrived! But we immediately recognized that we had some talking potential. Just, you know, at first it was being set back, "Oh, were you supposed to be in this cabin?" "Yeah, I was supposed to be in this cabin." But we just started talking. And within ten minutes we were starting to argue. And not argue about the situation in the cabin, just argue about an outlook on life. And further than that, just the nature of me, more than her. Because, being—a combination of being, I think, an exceptionally insightful person and gifted person, she was also fifteen years older than me. She was thirty-three, and I was eighteen. So I guess—I can't remember exactly what questions she started asking, but they were very provocative, and they caused me to defend myself, to question. She knew things about me that I didn't know about me. Or she could see things about me that I couldn't see that I felt about myself. She could clarify that.

K: Are you saying that she had perception--insight into you?

R: Yeah, remarkable insight into me. Where she could articulate an emotion that I was feeling but couldn't articulate, and do it fairly intuitively, I suppose, without enough information about my past or present or ideals at that time. So I found her just so compelling by that insight. And, I don't know, it took me about three hours from the time she arrived to make a physical move for her. I just was drawn to her that strongly. And she responded. Although she was married and had children, they weren't there. They were back East.
K: By "physical" move, I’m assuming you mean "sexual."

R: Sexual, yeah. And she was very responsive. I didn’t find her overwhelmingly attractive, in the sense of somebody that's outrageously beautiful, or a commercial type of attraction, I guess—you know, the ideal woman—or even one of the young nubile girl that’s extremely attractive. And she wasn’t, in that sense. You know, she wasn’t like a target of sexual desire like somebody else might have been. But I did find her very attractive, so it worked out. And we just became very passionate lovers for the next three months.

K: What was it that stood out for you about her?

R: (pause) Her insight. Her intuition. And her ability to speak my mind, like I didn’t know my mind. And, you know, it was just too fascinating for words. I mean, she could probably tell me what passages in a book I had read that had appealed to me, that stood out. Just an incredible range of knowledge of literature, too. So if I mentioned anything that I had found very interesting, she could remember what it was, too, in that given book, or something, and relate it to my character as to why I found that so fascinating.

K: So you both had a common interest as well.

R: Yeah, although I guess it wouldn’t be...It was more, I guess, a common interest in spiritual psychology. That was it. But she was fun. I mean, we laughed so spontaneously, as well as fought spontaneously. Because I guess I was enough of a mental challenge to her to be stimulating company. Or, I guess, just interesting enough that she would be wanting to be with me twenty-four hours a day as well.

K: How did you feel about yourself when you were with her?

R: Very high. At times very despondent, though. Because, I think, as you struggle through your own limitations, you become aware of your own limitations—or what you think are your own limitations—you start seeing, you know, parts of yourself that you’re scared of, or the things that are holding you back, or fearful parts of yourself, negative parts of yourself. And although those things start coming out, you can become depressed or whatever for a period of time, and frustrated and angry. And I would become like that. But she seemed to know how to manage that, so that I wasn’t threatened to the point of departure.

K: How did you relate those feelings to a relationship?

R: Those feelings in the relationship?
K: Yes, when you talk about the anger and the depression, and that this was happening within yourself. Do you relate this also to what was happening between the two of you?

R: (pause) Not that much, no. There was a side that... Our relationship between each other was joyful one, in that we both gave each other joy to be in each other’s company. The part that would have been difficult, and would have depressed me for a period of time, would be something purely in me, not to do with the break-up of the relationship or an inability to communicate within the relationship, a lack of satisfaction with the other person, or anything like that. It was just coming to terms with myself, purely.

K: So your own growth.

R: My own growth, yeah. Whereas in the relationship with her, it was a sense of constant joy really. Like I never, I think, had felt before, and very rarely since, except maybe in terms of outdoor recreation. I mean, looking back on it now...I don’t think about it that much, because it used to tear me up, thinking about it then, and then seeing how things have changed and how it’s behind me and that. But, yeah, it was great a deal of joy. I mean we swam together and walked together and shopped together and cooked together and everything, as much as possible. Although within the context...I mean, she had friends, mutual friends of my parents and everything, and everybody knew she was married. It was difficult to carry on an affair in light of that. You know, her friends and my mother, and my mother knew...So we kind of had to sneak around a bit, although I think it became pretty obvious, because it just was.

K: Because this feeling spilled over?

R: Yeah. (pause) I felt very special in that, in being her friend and her lover. I felt very lucky to be in that position with her. Because she had a lot of attention being thrown her way from other men, and from people in general who wanted to just talk with her to find out about themselves. Because she had that ability to see things in people that they didn’t know about themselves, and ask questions that would stump them for three days, and when they found the answer, it would open up a door in their psyche that was so life-giving that they loved it. And whenever I became lazy about that, though, she used to get mad, which was funny. It happened a couple of times, where I sort of, I guess, just got tired of dealing with aspects of myself that I didn’t...I just wanted to have fun, or whatever. And sometimes there was a demand there to take this seriously, and if I didn’t...Well, once she said, "You know, you’re not going to be in this relationship forever. You might as well take advantage of it while it’s here." And indeed it only lasted from April—April, half of April,
May, June, July, August. So four and a half months, I guess, of being together almost all the time.

K: Uh-hum.

R: And then after that she moved back East, and went back to her husband, and that part of our relationship ended there. But we continued to be friends, when she came back out west, for another five years.

K: By "friends" do you mean a sexual relationship as well?

R: No. The sexual relationship ended. She ended up getting married again, and then there wasn't room for that anymore. The thing that remains constant, though, to this day--and I'll talk to her twice a year or something--is that quest in myself that she helps to clarify.

K: In retrospect, when you think about the relationship, do you feel you had any control, or were you swept away by the feelings?

R: (pause) Well, I didn't want to...I didn't want things to proceed any differently than they were, so I guess I never thought of control or not control. I just thought that we were doing wonderful things in the here and now, and I didn't want to change anything. When it came time to break up, I was broken up, and I wish I'd maybe had more control of that. I wish I would have had the control, I guess, to perpetuate the relationship.

K: By "perpetuate" you mean...?

R: Keep it going. Just stay in it. You know, keep things going as they were. Because we were more in love everyday. We were more in love the day that we left--or parted--than we'd been the day before that, or the month before that. So we left at an absolute high of love for each other.

K: Can you describe, then, what your feelings were like when it ended?

R: (pause) They were, I guess, the deepest pain and sorrow that I've ever felt. I mean, I didn't have another relationship after that for two years. My heart was just in agony at leaving, and I must have cried, you know, gallons of tears. I just felt lonely, I felt confused, I felt totally lost. And no matter how much psychology I'd gone through, none of it helped in terms of allaying the kind of pain that I was going through. You know, that was such a painful experience. I didn't have time for anybody, closest friends, my parents, anything. I was just like a wreck.

K: Sounds as though you withdrew.
R: I didn’t withdraw from the social obligations. I mean, I still went to dinner here, still did my studies, you know, that fall, and continued to read and everything. But I think I just...I wasn’t able to handle another relationship, that’s for sure. That was one thing I didn’t...I couldn’t manifest it. I mean, even if I’d wanted to, which I’d thought would be great, if I could move in to a relationship with somebody else. But I think that I was such an intense individual at that point that any woman would have ran on feeling that kind of energy. Because it was probably very needful energy; it was take, take energy, rather than a sense of contentment in myself, and something of a strength that would draw somebody else to you.

K: So you didn’t feel you had anything to give to someone else.

R: No, no, I didn’t. I guess I’d been taking, and being the recipient of so much, that that was my mode of operating. Although, you know, I had a lot of wealth in character. You know, as much as anybody else in having travelled and, you know, having an interesting background and stuff. You know, I don’t think I was like a person of no value or anything, but I guess, you know, within the relationship I maybe was too self-centered at that point to be in one. I was lustful as ever, but I wanted the spiritual dimension to the relationship at the same time. And that’s why, I suppose, I had problems with forming other relationships for years. I was using the one I’d had as an example of what a relationship could or should be. And, in fact, it’s never materialized in that same way again.

K: Can you elaborate more on how that relationship affected others?

R: Well, for the first few years, I think my demands, although silent, for a relationship that I was in were probably too high. I mean, wanting the woman to be more than she was in the way of a mental stimulus. Sexually, they were fine and getting better. At that level, they were being held together very well. But I guess as they became more...I sort of realized I couldn’t have that same kind of stimulation mentally again very easily. I mean, it’s hard to find somebody again like that. So, acknowledging that, I just, I guess, accepted the relationships to be different. Not so intense, maybe?

K: By "intense" you mean...?

R: I mean psychologically, spiritually intense. They could be physically intense, they could be fun. Did I say sexually intense?
K: Uh-hum.

R: Yeah, sexually intense. They could be fun. They could be mentally stimulating, which I’ve always insisted on, I guess. I mean, I’ve tried every now and again to go for a woman purely on sexual attraction, and it doesn’t work out. You know, it’s nice, but it just never works out. I’ve tried to go to bars at various times over the last ten years, you know, to pick up some really lovely woman, and it doesn’t work.

K: By not working—the sexual is just not enough?

R: Yeah, and I think what I’ve got to do is, I’ve got to find somebody in the context that I enjoy. Like, most of the people I’ve met have either been through outdoor recreation or, perhaps, movies. Something that I’m interested in. And in that context somebody comes out compatible with me. But, you know, on a purely sexual attraction level, I mean, you can look around the streets or something, but the chances of being compatible with somebody that you’re attracted to purely physically are fairly remote. It would be nice if it happened at the same time. Somebody—the ideal physical person for you, and the ideal mental person, as ideal as ideal gets, would be great. So that relationship affected my expectations of others. But I’ve become much more forgiving, I guess, of myself and everybody else in the world in general in the last five years. I’m not nearly so demanding on myself or other people.

K: Are you saying that you don’t expect...?

R: I don’t expect as much, no.

K: So that in-love feeling that you experienced with this person hasn’t happened again for you then?

R: Not to the same extent.

K: I wonder, R., then, if you could describe again what this in-love feeling means to you.

R: (long pause) There are different parts of it. I mean, different things. On the one level, it’s a joy at being with somebody that you really enjoy and are attracted to, and that makes you feel wonderful. So, it means feeling very good in yourself, just emotionally feeling good. I guess, I...That’s what it feels like. That’s the thing, in terms of an emotion, that’s what it feels like. I have different ideas about what it means.

K: Well, are you saying it’s been missing in the other relationships for you, then?
R: No, not the feeling of being happy and contented and joyful. No. I mean, my heart is capable and willing to feel those things again, given the right relationship. And I did feel it again. The only problem has been, and what’s become kind of a qualification to that, is that relationships in my experience have only lasted between six months and two years and a half or something. And I got too heartbroken too many times to, I guess, go to the point of the first one again. It never happened again. I don’t know why. It’s maybe just not meeting the right person, more than an inability or unwillingness on my part to give and give. I just, you know, met this person. We were attracted to each other; we found each other stimulating. Slept together and started spending more and more time together. Fell in love to a point, and then, for some reason, the relationship ends. And that’s been the pattern. You know, for some reason, being, well...one of them...I lived with a woman for a year and a half. I became just not attracted to her physically anymore. And that was very difficult, sleeping together. I wasn’t stimulated enough to stay with her. And that’s why that relationship ended. Another woman I lived with for a year and a half, her career ambitions and personal ambitions got in the way, where she didn’t want to be in a relationship, because she found that it was an obligation that she couldn’t handle on top of an eighteen-hour day. So that one ended. Another one ended, you know, a person moves back East. Or you meet somebody camping, and you have a fling. It might be a great relationship, but she might want to have had kids right away, and she knew that I wasn’t ready. So that one ended. You know, picking the wrong people or something (laughter).

K: It sounds as though—what happened in the first one, the conditions have never been quite the same for you.

R: No. The quality has never been quite the same. (pause) But I think it’s a hard one to compare things to. Because she’s--and still is--such a magnetic and powerful person, that to be in a relationship with her was, you know, doubly powerful as just being in a friendship with her, as a lot of people are. And they tend to...You know, people who are just in friendships with her have moved across the country to stay nearby, so they can still see her. And, you know, so it’s a hard person to compare things with, and use as an example of a relationship, because it’s more her maybe than the effect of a relationship.

K: Although the connection between you seemed very strong.

R: Uh-huh. Yeah, it was. Yeah, it was. So I was very disappointed that it ended for that reason. Because we were so compatible, mentally compatible. And I wasn’t...I’m not
the magnetic person she is, objectively—at least objectively—but between us, we're very compatible, yeah.

K: Is there anything else that we haven't talked about, in terms of your feelings, that you can say something about?

R: Yeah, I...(long pause) I guess it's just that... Slowly I'm beginning to believe that relationships are not just being in love, a feeling of being in love. They're a mechanism for unveiling your self, and unveiling the other person. I guess, bringing light on to each other, each other's better nature, each other's potential. So I don't have the expectation of constantly being high, or being passionate. I guess, there are more dimensions to it, and those have to do with coming to understand yourself.

K: So through the connection with the other person...

R: Through the connection with the other person, yeah. You can either do it alone, or you can do it with somebody else. And it's a lot easier to do it with somebody else. In a relationship, I think you go through so many things that are potentials for identifying yourself, and for identifying what you really are. Identifying what you can do best in the world, socially; what is the best of your artistic creativity; what is the best part of your nature. They can bring that out in both people. Given a commitment to the relationship and experiencing life together, there's going to be endless conflicts, as there is if you're single or in a relationship or whatever. But being able to work them out in a relationship teaches you a lot. And I guess I trust that as true.

K: So through this other person, it opens up unexplored doors for yourself.

R: Uh-huh. Yeah, yeah. (long pause) And having kids would be another mechanism for that to happen. Like, it's more than just, you know, creating progeny, its... Again, going through that experience, opening up parts of yourself. I mean, it's not selfish; I mean, you are bringing other people into the world, you are giving joy to another person, but...I suppose I trust that it moves you closer to self-realization. That has to be the objective of a relationship. Mutual self-realization. That's what I think that the function of a relationship is now.

K: Anything else you'd like to add?

R: (pause) I guess the sexual nature of myself...I'm not sure, in that context, where sexual energy fits, because you want to have a fling at the same time!

K: By "fling" you mean...
R: Oh, I guess, being with somebody that's super attractive physically to you, who just raises your passions. Yeah. Rather than somebody that you're super compatible with for a long-term thing.

K: So that's different than being in love with them?

R: Yeah, yeah. I think so. Maybe not. Maybe you're in love with a certain part of them, and you're in love with them in a certain way. But it's not the best target if you're going to have a long-term relationship or marriage relationship. You know, I think you got to look at more than how they look for that. You have to. It just won't work out. But you were asking about how I "imagine"--is that right?--the perfect love affair relationship.

K: Uh-hum.

R: I guess it would be a combination, or a relationship that would include both physical attraction and spiritual growth. Like, if I were to picture the perfect person for me, I think I would use words like "graceful," "poised," "soft," "self-contained," "self-confident," "light"--in terms of outlook, and also physically, I suppose--"slight"--the way that they carried themselves. Somebody that smelled very nice. Somebody who could look at me in the eyes and see my--how to put it, without being cliché?--see me, like, see me beyond any fear or any ambition. See me in the best part of myself always. Being able to look at me and always see that self, that higher self that sits there always but isn't always acknowledged and acted on.

K: That isn't always known.

R: Not always known, yeah. That gets lost. I guess somebody who sees it, as opposed to anything else. Sees it as opposed to anger or frustration or whatever modification on fear that I might be experiencing. And I guess reinforces that positive self, higher self. But also somebody who is not a saint! Somebody who's themselves vulnerable, themselves subject to, you know, the rigours of evil, for lack of better word. And who needs my presence for their growth and well-being as well. Rather than somebody who doesn't need me to enjoy life more, or somebody, I guess, who is so self-possessed that all I am is somebody to help. You know, there's something attractive in weakness.

K: By "weakness" you mean...

R: Vulnerability. In searching, in not knowing. In asking, in questing, as opposed to, I guess, self-possession, containment. I guess, the dimension of humanness that isn't
perfect, that is searching for more, who's baffled by the complexity of life. Those things, you know, they're human and they're beautiful. And I guess they're inevitable, because we live in such a huge, complex, miraculous thing. And our minds and ourselves are so small and so young, that we constantly have to be exploring and entering new fields. And as we do, we're bound to be baffled and confused at times.

K: So are you saying that you'd like to explore with someone those untouched depths?

R: Yes. Yes. And they're not only of the world, but how the individual responds to them. Like, the maturity is how you respond to the challenges of the world; how you respond in difficult situations, as somebody said. So, you know, as you go through life, if you're developing the tools to deal with that kind of exploration, then you actually enjoy the exploration rather than being overwhelmed by it. And, I suppose, ideally I'd like to be with a woman who ran with that kind of confidence. But, you know, at the same time, there's not a perfect person. There's no such thing, I guess. You have the tools to deal with the world, but you're not in control of the world. But I guess I'm very visual in terms of my idealization of this thing. I do see a certain person, and certain clothing, and cooking--I see her cooking. Which is something that really drew me to the woman that I fell in love with first, the older woman. She had a way of stirring food which said so much about her control of herself, and her love, I guess, for food, which is part of life. So, like, I cook well myself, but I love seeing a woman cooking and loving that process. Tossing salad or adding oil or, you know, those kind of things. I guess I see somebody dressed in a gown, poised, cooking. And enjoying it, and reveling in company, more than one person in the room. And laughter and music and appreciating all those enrichments that art brings, I guess--art and science and knowledge brings.

K: Sounds like you like all the senses to be involved.

R: Mm. You mean like smell and sight and sound--music, yeah--and painting. All those things, I guess, somebody who appreciates those things and sees them all as part of a network of the richness, a fabric.

K: So these would enhance the in-love experience for you?

R: Uh-hum. Yeah.

K: Anything else, R.?
R: I guess with somebody like that the need for a fling on a carnal level would be totally unnecessary, and not even considered...(pause).

K: Okay, thank-you very much.
Transcript #1 (Case B)

K: Take a few minutes to think back to a time when you were feeling in love. And I'd like you to describe what it was like for you before the experience, during and after.

B: Uh-hum. Okay. Pretty much what I have done is, since I knew just a very little bit about what you were doing, I was already thinking over the last week or two, "If I can select just one person, who would that be?" So I have thought of that person already. And let's see...I met her in 1980, in January, and her name's E.. And I met her at a training session for the crisis center here in O., but I'll back up a little bit and explain, you know, what happened before that. In June, I'd say--yeah, in June of 1979 was when...At that time I was married, but I also became separated during that month from my wife, and sort of went through about three or four months of...not so much misery as sort of really just sort of asking myself what was going on, and very actively trying to pursue my wife, from whom I was separated. Because I felt that I had been wronged, and there was no clear explanation as to why she had left. And I was really working, trying to work very hard, at some sort of situation where we could talk, to talk about some sort of reconciliation. And during that process, I would spend time with some of my male friends. And, on one occasion, we ended up downtown at one--I forget the name of the hotel--in one of the lounges. And, at that time, I met...I was with a friend who ran into one of his friends, a woman, who had a friend of hers along--two women. And so I met both those women, and subsequently went out with one of those women for about two months, a little bit more than two months. That takes me up to just the first week or so of January, 1980. And that relationship was very disturbing to me. I didn't really like that much.

K: Disturbing?

B: Disturbing, yeah. It seemed too much of a reaction to being separated.

K: A rebound.

B: Yeah, yeah, like a rebound, I guess. And, you know, there were several elements of that relationship that I didn't like. So I wasn't really too sure about it from the beginning. And when that ended...Again, when this woman that I had been going out with for a couple of months, when she said that she didn't want to continue seeing me, in a way I was relieved.

K: Uh-hum.
B: So that was actually okay. It was sort of like, "I'm glad that's over." You know, I certainly learned what I don't want in any sort of relationship. So this is the long roundabout to getting me up to E., whom I met in the first week of January. And, as I mentioned, I first noticed her during training sessions for the crisis center. We were both in a group of people being trained to be volunteers. And my initial reaction to her was, "I don't like this woman." She was too loud, too opinionated, too sure of herself, too confident. Everything was just too much. And I do remember sort of singling her out from—oh, there must of been at least twelve or fourteen of us in this group. And she was one that I remember singling out right away as, "Boy, I don't want to have anything to do with this woman." So she got my attention in a negative way. As it turned out--initially, it was sort of...Well, as it turned out, she lived in the same direction that I lived. At that time I was living in D., S.D., and she was living at U.N.C. And she had no car. And I was the only one of this whole training group that lived in that direction, anywhere near U.N.C.. So, when she asked--I mean, this was part of her too-much behavior--I think at the end of the first session, I think she said, "Is anybody driving out toward U.N.C., because I need a ride?" And, I mean, this was like...I thought this was just a little too much. I mean, this just sort of confirms everything I had already thought about this woman. And thankfully, somebody else said, "Yes, I'm going that direction." But, you know, they said where they were going, and it wasn't nearly as along their route as it would have been for me, to go right along...It really would have been very little out of my way, an extra ten minutes driving, that's all. And so I was glad that this other guy gave her a ride. But then, maybe part of being a romantic, part of being a nice guy, I thought, "It's not really fair that this guy has to go way out of his way, you know, compared to me, to drive her home." So the next meeting--it was the next meeting or the third meeting, I forget--but again, she needed a ride home. She always needed a ride. So I offered to give her a ride home. And it was a very interesting ride home. It took about--I don't know--maybe half an hour, twenty-five minutes, half-hour drive. And I don't know whether it was during that first drive that I gave her home--I gave her a ride home--or maybe the second time, but pretty quickly I realized that, although there's a lot I don't like about her, there's a lot that I do like about her.

K: So when you say "interesting," on the ride home, something caught your attention?

B: Yeah, yeah. Now what, I guess, what caught my attention...Hmm, okay...I can't remember in, sort of, what order they were most important or not. But one thing is that she's Jewish, and a number of people in my life have
been--a number of people who have been very influential in my life--have been Jewish. And this was sort of something that, from a distance, I could say, "Well, this is something going for her." But she sort of exhibited a lot of what people might consider typical Jewish characteristics, which would be: quite outspoken, quite confident, loud—which, of course, are not true, but in this case she had a lot of those characteristics. And other Jewish friends and people who've been important to me also had these characteristics, and other characteristics, but this wasn't unusual to me. So I wasn't... I was pleased, I guess, when... Because I think we started talking about religion, somehow. Because that's important to me, spirituality. And that's how it came out, that she would have said that she was Jewish. So that was quite fascinating for me. Also that she, you see, sort of reclaimed her Jewishness, because she wasn't raised Jewish. Because her parents, who had managed to get out of Y. alive, during the second war, they were so frightened of being Jewish that they didn't raise any of their kids Jewish. And at... I guess she would have been in her late teens, eighteen or nineteen, when she decided that she was going to become Jewish again. And her parents couldn't help her very much, because they had just sort of blocked so much out, they were just so frightened of being recognized as Jewish.

K: The fact that she was Jewish was an attraction for you?

B: Uh-huh. Yeah.

K: And were there other things about her that...?

B: Oh, yes. Yeah. Physically she was very present. You knew when she was in a room. Part of her confidence, part of her... Her physical presence was a very solid physical presence. I mean, she was here. You knew it, if she was in the room. Now, to complicate matters... Very quickly, we were attracted to each other physically, starting out on the intellectual stuff--you know, talking about Judaism, Christianity, spirituality in general--and along with that a physical attraction, too. Which was fine by me, because I had very quickly sort of forgotten about this previous two-month or so relationship, which was very unsatisfactory. It was complicated a little bit, though, because she happened to be married. And--I forget--it would have been about the third or fourth time that I had driven her home, I guess. And, you know, by this time I knew she was married. I also knew she was very unhappy with her husband. And she also had a daughter, an eighteen-month-old daughter. When I first met her daughter, she was eighteen months. It would have been the third or fourth time that we had given her a ride back. And, instead of me just dropping her off--and she went into residence at U.N.C., where she and her husband and daughter were living--we went for a walk instead. And
on that walk was where we first kissed. And down on the
track up at U.N.C. Which was, I think, more, in a way
maybe more exciting—not terrifying, but just exciting for
her—because this was like a stone’s throw from where she
lived. And even though it was at nighttime, anyone walking
around that area most likely lived in one of the residences
there, and there was a very good chance that she would be
recognized. So she was a little edgy about this, but it
didn’t really seem to bother her at all. It didn’t
really...Part of her confidence in just sort of moving
ahead: she just said, "Well, this is happening, and if
someone recognizes me, well, that’s, you know, that’s too
bad. I’ll deal with that."

K: How did you feel about it?

B: Oh, I would have...If I were her, I would have been far
more cautious. I mean, I would not have had that attitude.

K: But what about your feelings?

B: Yeah. My feelings were that this was really moving very,
very quickly. Especially when she stated that, "Well, now
that we have sort of expressed our true feelings to each
other, this is it. There’s no turning back." And that kind
of confidence that sort of, once there had been a certain
understanding between her and me, that was it. Essentially,
basically saying that that was it; she was leaving her
husband. And, I mean, I was like, "Ay-yi-yi! This is a
little bit too fast for me!" Because I was still...Although
I wasn’t trying to pursue my ex-wife with the same fervor,
that was still there. I was still sort of thinking, "Well,
what’s going to happen there?" At the same time, I was
aware that what was going on between E. and me was obviously
far more solid in some way.

K: Are you saying that you were also caught up in the
feelings, but a bit cautious?

B: Oh, yeah. I was very much caught up in the feelings, but
I had the brakes on full at the same time I was moving
ahead. It was more like I was—certainly, at that time, and
it’s taken me many years to sort of understand this—but
very much saying, Yes-Yes, No-No, both equally strongly.

K: Feeling caught.

B: (pause) No, not really caught. Because I enjoyed it. I
enjoyed it immensely. I don’t think I was fully aware of
the consequences, at that time, of saying Yes. No, no, no.
Not saying Yes. Behaving Yes, and saying No. So I was very
good at that. That, you know, "No, I don’t want to continue
this relationship," you know, as I won’t let her leave.
There was just a stream of me giving all the reasons why
this was impossible, wouldn't make sense. My sense of honour toward her husband was...I mean, I just didn't know what to do with that. I felt terrible. And, in the long run, she ended up doing a lot to convince me that she was leaving anyway. I mean, that was something that had been in the process for quite a while before she even met me. And meeting me was really just sort of a final reason for her to leave her husband. But I felt terrible about that.

K: So you felt badly about the fact that she had a husband.

B: Oh, yeah. I thought I was a home-wrecker.

K: Can you describe more about your feelings towards her?

B: Very, very passionate. (pause) Yeah, just...By about the end of January, the third or fourth week of January, I mean, that was, I was...very, very, very passionate. I think she was startled by the strength of my statements of love for her, and also my physical expression of it. She had to drag me into bed, very, very reluctantly. Looking back on it, it's hilarious, what happened. But she really, like literally, dragged me into bed. And even there, I wasn't about to do anything that I didn't want to do. And she really just had to basically say, "Look, this is what you're going to do, because this is what's going to happen." And, I mean...Because I was, physically I was saying Yes, but it was absurd. I mean, I don't know if you want...No, you're not going to get the details of...I mean, but it was incredibly...It was bizarrely picky. I said No at absolutely every step of the way.

K: Do you know why you were saying No?

B: Because she was married. That was what I said to myself. "This is a married woman. The fact is that I'm very passionately involved with this woman, but she is married. And how can I, as an honourable man, do what I'm doing to break that up?"

K: So even though she was convincing in that she said you weren't breaking it up, you still were dealing with your own feelings about how you would feel if it happened to you?

B: Sure, yeah. That was...(pause). I mean, it was compounded a little bit, because, during that month of January, some few times I would come up to visit her on a weekend or something, and her husband sometimes would stick around to chat with me. And he was so incredibly naive. He was painfully naive. The poor guy, all he had known all of his life was school. I guess he would have been twenty-seven or so. Twenty-seven, twenty-eight years old then. And he had literally been in school all of his life. He was busy doing some doctoral work in linguistics. He had
literally never had a job. He asked my advice on whether he should take this or that job that had been offered to him at the university, at horribly low wages! And, I mean, I just couldn’t believe that this guy...I just couldn’t believe his naivete.

K: So he wasn’t aware of any feelings between the two of you?

B: No, not that he ever let on at all. No.

K: Were you able to carry on with your own work at that time? Or were thoughts of E. intrusive?

B: It was easy to continue work, because my job was not demanding at all. You know, really, half of my energy was going into...Let’s see, what...Okay. I’m just trying to think now. Yeah, at that time, you know, I was doing the training for the crisis center. And really a lot of my energy was going into that. Because I was wanting to learn how to do that. That was sort of...You know, because my marriage had broken up, I was wanting to learn how to do that. That was sort of a good reason; it gave me the time. And I had been sort of wanting to learn how to help people for a little while, for a few years, at that time. And so, really, half my energy went into the crisis center work, and I was able to concentrate on that pretty well, even though E. was there in the training sessions. I have no recollection of that being a problem. And my other job just had no demands on me at all, really.

K: So the feelings that you were experiencing for E. didn’t affect other parts of your life?

B: They didn’t affect my work life. I mean, I was able to do my work functions. I mean, I can’t recall exactly, but I would be pretty sure that I would be constantly going over my concern about breaking up this home. And most likely spent a fair amount of time wondering how my parents might react to what I was doing. (pause) Yeah, but that...But I don’t recall being disabled in the way that I have been disabled from other situations.

K: From other in-love situations.

B: Yeah, yeah.

K: And what was it about this situation that was different, that you would describe as being "in love"?

B: (pause) I think because E. was so much sort of on the edge of leaving her husband, that that was so... That really preoccupied me, in the way that I thought, "Well, if she leaves, then it seems like she’s leaving because of me,
largely. And if she does, then, in a way, I feel bound to be with her. And I don’t know if I want to be with her right now, because I’m still trying to sort out the other stuff." So this was all what I was thinking and saying, but it was the old, "I’m saying No, but the rest of me says Yes, I want to be with you."

K: Could you describe how the rest of you felt at the time?

B: What, the Yes part?

K: Uh-hum.

B: (pause) I’m doing it right now. I sort of would...I guess I would pause, and I would stop, and I would just focus entirely on her. And really just revel and... just be totally involved with her. I mean, there would be times when everything else would be totally forgotten, and it would just be E... It was just like a total involvement.

K: It sounds as though it was a euphoric feeling.

B: At times. At times it would be euphoric. At times it would just be a--what?--a...Well, you know, we run into trite cliches here, don’t we? Like all-consuming, but sometimes in a fairly steady way. It would be like she would be a constant, a constant thought, a constant...(long pause). I don’t know. It’s--what is it? I keep coming back to her Jewishness also. Because that was very important. Important to the extent that, you know, because of her, and other Jewish people who have been very important in my life, that I was actively going through a whole process of thinking, "Okay, here is this Jewish woman with her Jewish daughter, and how far am I willing to change to accommodate this Jewish family?" And so there was a large amount of the religious/spiritual aspect there.

K: So the spiritual part of it entered into your relationship with her?

B: Yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah, very much.

K: How would you describe this spirituality?

B: (long pause) Well, we would talk about it a lot. I’m getting...I’m having difficulty thinking of just this one situation. Because spirituality is like a basic foundation to my life, it’s hard for me to separate just what it was with E. compared to the whole of my life. I think that a lot of it had to do with the fact that this wouldn’t just be talking about some spiritual stuff. It would be living within a family; it would be a family situation.

K: A connectedness.
B: Yeah. Because, you see, I mean, I'm just realizing here that I haven't talked much about her daughter, about H. And she was also extremely important to me. I mean, there was very much a romantic falling in love with H., too. And you know, in its own way, that relationship was very, very romantic.

K: During this relationship with E. and H., how did you feel about yourself?

B: How did I feel about myself? Vacillating back and forth between feeling like a real heel, someone who was doing—you know, I was doing my part to actively destroy the family. And me doing this right on the heels of my own marriage breaking up. I thought, "This is crazy. This doesn't make any sense. How can I look at myself in the mirror?" But at the same time, there was just a sense that I had to be with her. So part of me just had to be with her. The other part said that, "No, there are lots of reasons why you cannot be—lots of reasons why you should not be."

K: When you say you "had to be with her," can you elaborate on what you mean by that?

B: Uh-hum. I think a lot of the spirituality would have been hooked up with the sexuality also. There's a very clear connection there, because sexually we were very compatible. What a bland way to say that! Sexually, things were wonderful, and, you know, totally unlike my marriage. Totally, utterly different.

K: By "wonderful," do you mean a sense of fusion?

B: Yeah, yeah. I mean, that's where a lot of the passion expressed itself also. Quite an abandonment to that fusion, to that connection. Now that was quite important. That was extremely powerful. And also for E. also, this was quite unusual in its intensity, this sexual relationship. So the combination of the spirituality and the sexuality, the intensity of it... (pause) I'm thinking that, like, I know that the way my life goes, or the way I run it or whatever, it really does go in big cycles, where I will be a hundred per cent consumed, passionately consumed, either with an idea, person, project or you name it, and then it just sort of dissipates after a while, and I do nothing.

K: Did that happen with this relationship, too?

B: (pause) No. No. It was...You see, things continued on as they...This passionate intensity was...I mean, because she left...No, when did she leave her husband? Okay, she was still with her husband in April, May. She was still with her husband in May. And by that time, we had finished
our training, and, you know, I was still... By this time, I was picking her up at U.N.C., and driving her to the training, and then driving her home. Only, by this time, we were making all sorts of one- and two-hour stopovers at my house on the way back to her house. This was really getting really bizarre. I mean, it was hard on her, it was hard on me. You know, it was... wonderful. Because it was illicit. That's good word. And that, in its own way, added a real, real thrill. A real, like, "What if we get caught?" sense to it.

K: An enticement.

B: (pause) Ah, no. Not in the sense of enticing being to sort of draw on or to attract. That was already there. This was more like a... This was just like, "okay, throw another shovel full of coal into the fire, here." It was just a sense of "Put some more fuel on the fire." I think I had a sense that this kind of situation could not continue forever. Something had to give. And I think I was dreading her leaving her husband. More so for me: what was I going to do then? My miserable sense, my misguided sense, of honour came back here pretty strongly, saying that, "Because I was the agent"—and in my megalomania, too—"because I was the agent for her leaving her husband, I then had a responsibility to be with her." Which, of course, didn't make any sense. It doesn't make any sense. But I told myself that my sense of honour said, "I must do this." Yet, at the same time, I wanted to. It was very confusing. So what happened in May was, the company I was working for here—I mean, I had a very... low-pressure job is to overstate the job. I was working for a plastic pipe company, and my job was to take orders over the phone, prepare orders of plastic pipe and fittings, and send them out. This was a job I was doing sort of while I was sort of recuperating from my marriage falling apart. And it was also very good to have this very low pressure job while this incredible affair was going on. But, at that time, the company said, Do I want to move to Q.?—because their salesman in Q. was leaving, and they needed someone to do the sales job for Alberta. Which would be a promotion for me. I think I hated that job, just hated it. Hated the company, hated the idea of selling plastic pipe. But I didn't have to work for it really. It was like I did nothing, and I got paid for it. And I decided that, Yes, I would take this job in Q.. Which meant, of course, I would move to Q.. And E. didn't like that, but it was a way for me to get some distance somehow. Like I wanted some distance, but I wanted the intensity?

K: I'm wondering if you felt there wasn't a future for you and E. right from the beginning?
B: I might have thought that, but if I had been listening to my body, I would have known that, of course there's a future. I really, particularly at that time, had such a powerful struggle between that Yes and No. Now I've learned to listen to my body more, because I no longer think that it's just some wild thing roaming around on its own. It is connected to me; it is part of me. But, at that time, I would have thought that, yeah, the future would be very difficult. And I was also telling myself that I would wait for the three years to elapse to get a no-fault divorce, and then I would feel free to then be with E.. And I think I used that as a way to buy time, because I was frightened. I was frightened also of the intensity, because I had never experienced anything this intense before in my life. The combination between the intellectual--she's also extremely bright, one of the brightest people I know--so the combination of the intellectual intensity and the physical intensity was amazing.

K: How did it finally end?

B: Very long, drawn out. I moved to Q., and within a week--week? yeah, within a week of me moving to Q.--I got a phone call from E., saying that she had left her husband. And she and H. were--I forget where they were--but they were on their own, anyway. Really, really difficult for her, and for H., and for her husband. And I was safely in Q.. I was distanced away from things. And that began pretty much two years of us having a distanced relationship, a good long-distance relationship. This is something I've done since that time also. I seem to have...Okay, I'll try and stick to this one situation. Where, I was in Q., and she eventually ended up in I., where her family is, and we'd have big telephone bills. Every couple of months, either she would fly to Q., or I'd fly to I.. So we'd see each other about once every two, or every three months. Which was enough to keep this...I mean, it was like, you know, the fire would die down, but then fan it a bit and ka-phoomph!, here we go again, which E. was getting increasingly tired of. She basically was starting to say, "Either you're with me or you're not." And I kept on saying, "Well, when the three years are up, then I will get my divorce. And then I would feel clear to live with you." It's just absurd, that reasoning, when I think back on it. So after about a year and a half--I stayed in Q. about a year and three months or so--I then moved back to P.I., which, I told myself, "This is part of the process of moving toward E.." But in a way it wasn't. ' Because actually, I could get from Q. to I. faster than I could get from P.I. to I., as it turns out. So there I was on P.I. for six months in 1981. So this is about a year and a half after we've been together, one way or the other. The letters that we wrote back and forth are amazing, too. I mean, they're...I take great joy in writing, and love letters are a wonderful thing. I just
love to write love letters. And again, maybe that’s the way I kept things at a distance somehow.

K: But still keeping the passion alive.

B: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Very much. And if a letter would come back that was sort of not so hot, I would make sure I wrote something back really hot, to compensate for the not-so-hot. And yeah. To keep this person at a distance, to keep E. far enough away, but to keep...And maybe there I was doing the enticing, saying, "When I am feeling clear to be with you, you know, then all this will happen." And I would’ve described raptures, all these promises in the future. But, you know, she became a little tired of the postponement.

K: And your feelings?

B: I didn’t want to lose that passion, that intensity. That was extremely important to me. It still is extremely important to me to have a lot of passion in my life. And I didn’t want to lose her. So, if she was sounding that, if she getting tired of waiting, then I would do something to move closer. Or somehow to revive the passion.

K: How did you finally let go of your feelings?

B: Oh, have you got lots of tape? (laughter) Because what happened next was...While I was living on P.I., and I was still...It was easier in the sense that, at that time, I didn’t have a job that I had to report to. I was just writing on my own time. And I could go over and spend three or four days with her. She could come over to P.I. and spend three or four days. So we did get to see more of each other. And it was getting closer and closer to me...You know, we were becoming a family. H. was starting to call me "Dad." And I had to patiently explain to her that, "You know that I’m not your dad." And she said, "Yeah, I know. But I wish you were." So things were really becoming very much closer. And it was to the point where E. was having to do custody things in court regarding H., and her husband was being a bit of a jerk. And it was starting to hinge on that, if I was part of this family, that would look good in court. Reasonably good. Some stability there, in E.’s life. But I still wasn’t willing to commit myself to that extent. I also knew that if I was with E. that I would not be able to travel. This was the next one I pulled out of the bag. Like, "I want to go travelling." I have never gone travelling before, really, outside of Western Canada and the States. I want to go to P.. I also want to make it very clear to E. that I know who I am, and part of me is, from time to time...I want to just go places, and I may want to
go somewhere for a month or two or half a year. And that's just me. That's altered also now.

K: So you were pulling away?

B: I was--what was I doing?--I was bargaining. I was bargaining. Again, I just wanted that passion.

K: By "bargaining" you mean?

B: I wanted to maintain that passionate closeness, but, at the same time, I didn't want to say, "Yes, here I am, completely, one hundred per cent." Maybe I was playing hard to get in a way. Like, I certainly was hard to get, as it turned out. But, you see, because of the custody things, I told myself--and it was really pretty obvious--that, the way things were looking, H.'s father would not allow H. to leave M. And I thought, well, it would be at least ten years, I imagined then, before we might be able to do any travelling. And I said I wanted to do some travelling, "before I came back to be with you." So things are looking good now, right? Okay, the guy wants to go travelling before he comes back to be with E. and H.. Okay. "How long are you going to go travelling for?" "I don't know." So anyway, I went ahead, I bought--isn't this sickening?--I went ahead and bought my ticket to fly to L., and managed to get a one-year open return. And basically said--you know, this took place over a few months, preparing for this--and basically said to E., "Well, here I go. I'm going to go travelling, and when I know that it's time for me to come back, I will come back." And it wasn't an easy parting at that point. So I went. Went to P.. And was there a total of four months--just a couple of days under four months, because I was out of the country exactly four months. By the time three months had gone by, I knew pretty clearly--you know, I was in P.--I knew pretty clearly, "I don't like what I'm doing here. Where I want to be is in I. with E.." And during the whole time I'd been there, I had written maybe only about a letter every two or three weeks. Sometimes only a short one, but sometimes, you know, twenty pages. Mainly full of me, what I was doing, how wonderful it was for me to be in P., etc., etc. And here's E., who's having to...I mean, she was on welfare, having to deal with social workers. I mean, now I know just how hard that is. And here I was willing to say, in essence, I mean, it must have been like, "Good luck with the welfare system, the guy you've got to go to court with for custody and so forth. Good luck with all that, I'm going to P., and I'm going to have a good time." Hindsight is wonderful. So after about four months, just under four months there, I was in Z.. And I hadn't received a letter from E. for a long time. Matter of fact, I'd only received one letter from her during whole four months, because it seems like I was always moving ahead a little faster than the letters were catching up to me.
K: And your feelings for E. at this time were?

B: At this time, they were, "I'm on my way back home." And home was I. I had written her letters saying, you know, "I've done what I wanted to do here, and I want to be with you and H." And, you know, I had asked her, for example, to get information about counselling programs at U of I. And a lot of the things I asked her, just, you know, "Could you start to check these things out for me, so that when I come back to I. I can settle down? I now want to settle down. I'm on my way back home." And I'd sent off a couple of letters like this, and I thought, "I want to phone her to say I'm on my way back." Right around Christmas time. And, like, I had done things. For example, I had bought a couple of small rugs, you know, like this, in Z. And I chose the design...The design that I really liked was such that it was like, there were like, sort of like, arrows going in a certain direction. And I bought them specifically because, as I said to myself, "These symbolize that I now know what direction I'm going in. I'm going to I., and I'm going to be with E. and H." And I was so happy to be able to get these rugs, which I would take back with me, rather than mail them--actually, I did mail them. But I would be able to explain to them that, you know, "The reason I got this pattern is because, at that time, I knew that I was with you."

K: As a symbol for going back.

B: Yes, yes. And, you know, that along with letters saying, "Please check U of I.," and blah-blah-blah, and how I had finally resolved any issues to do with the differences between Judaism and Christianity in terms of our religious and spiritual life together as a family, and that I was looking forward to celebrating, you know, all of these festivals and holidays and what-not. And these were all in the mail. And I thought, "I want to phone her and tell her this." So I phoned her. And it was interesting. It was my first ever "Dear, John" telephone call--halfway around the world, in a public telephone exchange in Z. Very, very primitive, it seemed. And you know, like, I placed the call, and then they said, "Come back in two hours, and we should have the call ready for you then." And so I came back, and they called me. And you go to phone booth number 9, down this little row, you know, pick it up, and, you know, so-so connection, and, "Hello, hello!" And, you know, "It's good to hear your voice." And, you know, "I want to tell you I'm on the way back." And silence from the other end. And basically what she said was, "Well, did you get my letter?" And "Well, I got the letter that said blah-blah-blah-blah-blah..." "Well, did you get any letters after that?" "No, no, not yet." "Hm." So then, she then explained to me that, actually two months previously, she
had moved in with some other guy. Someone that she had mentioned very briefly, because she worked at that time for this single parent resource center in I... And I was stunned. You know, here it was in...This would have been about January 1 that I was calling, I think. And here she was telling me that at the end of October, that she had moved in with this other guy. And she was adamant that it was over between us, that there was nothing that could be done. That she had decided she was moving in with this guy. I thought this was absurd, that within less than two months of me leaving that she had decided that she would be moving in with this guy. I mean, now I know that she was just so frustrated with my distance-making that she just said, you know, "Even though I want to be with him, I can't take this kind of behavior anymore." Anyway, it was a terrible time. My feelings then were terrible. I cried a lot, and was...couldn't eat. I was very afraid for myself. I knew I had to get back home immediately. Very afraid.

K: By "afraid"...?

B: By "afraid," I'm thinking...Like, I wasn't afraid that I would kill myself, out of this despair, but I was very afraid that I would...I mean, my sense of direction went. I mean, my sense of direction is normally very good, but I sort of stumbled out of this telephone exchange building, and I wasn't sure where I was. I mean, I knew I was on Z., and I knew the town I was in, but where was I staying? You know, so I found where I was staying, but I was just utterly, utterly disoriented. I mean, I didn't believe that she meant that this was it. And I said that I was on my way back, and she tried to talk me into--saying, "No, no, no. Stay in P.. You know, you're there; enjoy you're trip." Right. I mean, this is when I had decided I was on my way back anyway. I mean, I was back in this town en route to go back. I was going to take two to three weeks to get back to L., and then fly home. So, you know, no way I'm going to stay. So I said I would be getting back as soon as I could. So over the next day, you know, I managed to get a plane ticket from Z. to X.. I mean, that was a horror show in itself. Just trying to get a bloody plane ticket just from Z. to X. was...It seemed impossible, utterly impossible. Hmm. I couldn't eat all that time. I tried. I would go to a restaurant, telling myself that I had to eat. I'd order something really simple, and it would arrive, and I'd look at it and I'd almost throw up. And then I thought, "Well, okay, maybe I can drink something." So I would order a beer. And I could, I think--you know, I was able to drink a beer very, very slowly. You know, the first day. That was it. And my stomach was just, just...ah!

K: In knots.
B: Hm, horrible. So I got very, very edgy. Very, very irritable. I was...On the short little hop from Z. to X., I was in a non-smoking section of the plane, and this miserable Italian beside me lit up immediately, as soon as we were airborne. And I just said, "Put it out." And he sort of looked at me like, like, "What?" And I said, "Put it out." And he said, "Ah, man, don't worry." But I convinced him that I was very, very serious, and he put it out. And a lot of other Italians sitting around sort of like, "Whoa, what's with the crazy guy from S.A.?"--you know? And in X., I went from terminal to terminal, trying to get a ticket to L.. Finally got one, a ticket to L., on stand-by, but I had to wait and wait and wait. And I had this sense of trying to protect other people. I so desperately wanted to protect and help other people at this point. You know, a little girl was playing with some weight sensors that would open a door. And it's dangerous with little kids, because they don't know that, and they can get squashed. And it's like I have a sense that I, you know--a little girl almost got squashed with some doors like that--and I had a sense that I almost rescued her from that. And I thought, isn't this, doesn't this take the cake? You know, the person who needs rescuing, in a way, is doing the rescuing. Got a flight from X. to L.. Spent part of the time crying, just weeping, on that flight. Part of the time sleeping. Again, I was giving things to people. You know, a young couple from R. who were flying to L.--I mean, they look at me like, "Oh, this guy is in a rough way." You know, they looked like, "We feel sorry for you. We don't know what's going on, but we feel very, very sorry for you." In L., I telephoned to E., told her I was in L., on my way back. And she said again, "You can't stay with me when you get here." And I said, "Well, let's talk about it when I get there." And she said, "No. There's no discussion. You cannot stay with me." While I was in L., I stayed at this hotel, and I tried to tip the waitress. She didn't understand what I was doing. Big confusion. The manager came over and said, "What's the problem, sir?" And I said, "I'm just trying to be nice. You know, I'm trying to be nice to people." And, you know, the waitress got chewed out by the manager and...Oh, it was just miserable. And then I arrived back here. No, then I flew to W.K.. In W.K., I helped people. This was really big. I just was helping people. People who were lost, going from terminal to terminal. Because I had to wait there for eight hours or something, I'd learned a little bit about the terminals, and I could direct people. I got a flight to V.. And in V., got a car; drove up here. Arrived here at my parents. And my parents being the kind of people who don't like to...I mean, they don't have feelings, thank-you very much. They said, "Well, how are you?" I had phoned, saying I was on my way back. And I said, "Terrible." And they just didn't acknowledge it. So I slept about six hours that night, and
then went immediately over to I. the next day and talked with E.. We met in a coffee shop in a shopping center.

K: Impersonal.

B: Oh! And, ah, we just stared at each other. We were both so sad. It was terrible, for both of us. It was very, very hard for both of us. But she was adamant. She was not going to budge. She didn’t want to talk. You know, I had gifts that I had bought for her and H., which I gave to her. What was I going to do with them? Told her that there were other gifts in the mail that I had mailed, you know, two weeks before; they should arrive in due course. And that letters were in the mail. And this was absurd, you know. To me, this was absurd. As it turned out, she also had been unable to eat for three days. We both managed to drink a little bit of tea. So that was good, I guess. And then when we left, you know, I asked her if she needed a ride. And she said, "No," because—you know, I forget his name—but he was there. Which was a shock to me. But, you know, just when we said that, she sort of went walking off toward this truck, where this guy was waiting. I was furious, I was just furious that... It’s almost like this guy didn’t trust what was going to happen, in a way, and maybe E. didn’t know what was going to happen, but that...And, you know, this guy also has four of his own kids. And here he was, this guy with his four kids, and they’d been waiting in the parking lot! Who knows for how long? And I just...I was just...I was...ooh. I mean, it’s a good thing that I was exhausted. I mean, I was just...Ah!

K: Angry.

B: Furious. Just furious. It was almost like I wasn’t trustworthy, in a way.

K: How did you cope with your feelings after that?

B: (long pause) Hm, well. Things then go into a nice, long, dark depression for about six months. Yeah...No, I just came back to O.. And my father very generously told me that, literally, he said, "There are other fish in the sea." Thanks a lot, Dad. And I lived at my parents for about the next six months or so. I was just...Really, one of the better depressions I’ve ever had. I couldn’t come up the flight of stairs without pausing halfway to get my breath. I wrote a letter to E.’s parents, telling them that I hoped that E. and I would be together. That was my wish, and I was sure that would happen. That was pretty nasty of me to do that.

K: It’s hard for you to accept the ending.

B: Oh, yes. Yes.
K: You mentioned that you and E. wrote letters back and forth.

B: Yeah, but about once every...I bet you, since that time, only about maybe three letters each way. Three letters each, something like that.

K: Did you remain friends after a while?

B: No. I mean, that's seven years ago now, and it's really just now that I'm feeling strong enough or capable enough to talk with her about what happened. It's...I mean, I really don't have much of an idea what her life is like now. I knew what her life was like up until '86. Maybe that was the last letters that we would have exchanged.

K: Would you say that relationship influenced your future relationships?

B: (pause) Yes. But how, how? (long pause) You know, I really don't know how. Now, like seven years later, I can look back on it, and see how...some things I have learned from that. You know, one very clear thing is simply to have more courage, to be more direct, and also to get rid of, or try to get rid of, that same No-but-behaving-Yes.

K: And that's what you mean by being direct--being able to say yes and go with your feelings.

B: Yeah. Being able to...For me, to be direct with myself. To say, "I have certain feelings." And there's no longer any right or wrong to those feelings. I have certain feelings, whether I like it or not. And now I am much more capable of saying, "Here are these feelings. And, you know, let's you and I talk about what I feel. And let's you and I talk about what you feel." It's no longer terrifying. Well, I mean, it's terrifying to be that open, but I prefer that terror, that--I'm smiling as I say it, you know, "that terror" --because I find it incredibly, very, very exciting, and very passionate, which is what I like. And so it's...One thing that that has taught me, that whole relationship and the outcome, is to be more honest with myself, which then allows me to then have the chance to be more honest with the other person.

K: And by "being honest with yourself," you mean...?

B: By knowing what my feelings are. By accepting my feelings. Yeah. Because, you see, a lot of those feelings, a lot of those strong passionate feelings, back in 1980-81-82, I would have put into the whole category of wrong feelings. These are not appropriate feelings for this situation. It is illicit. Somehow illegal. And I no
longer think that way. Yeah, so I ...This relationship has contributed to my understanding of that.

K: Uh-hum. What I hear you saying is that you want to be true to yourself.

B: Well, yeah. To not have this dichotomy within myself. That I want to be able to accept myself. And that’s what it boils down to for me. And by realizing that what happened during this relationship with E. is that I was not true to myself, and the consequences were not pleasant for a lot of people. You know, for me, for E., for H., for her parents, for my parents. I mean, it’s...And a lot of it is because I just did not accept me.

K: Would you also say that fear got in the way of these overwhelming feelings that you were experiencing for E.?

B: Well, the fear would be largely me admitting to myself that I had these feelings. I have been very good at these wonderful, romantic enthusiasms, but it’s only been in the last few years that I’ve connected that very clearly to what I feel. A lot of it was what I thought, what I think. Now there’s a combination. So the fear used to be that these feelings of mine, that these passions of mine would just take over.

K: Sweep you away.

B: Oh, yeah. I mean, that’s a phrase that I still use. When I don’t want to face what I’m feeling, I still revert back to saying, "Oh, but I was swept away." I mean, literally, I use that expression. And I have friends now who won’t let me get away with that. I now know that I am not swept away by another person, I am swept away by me.

K: So you’ve become more aware of your own feelings, more in touch with them.

B: Oh, yeah. Yeah. But the relationship with E. was one step among many, many, many steps. Yeah, that was...There was no great revelation at the end of that, in terms of some new understanding. You know, some understanding about how bitter I can be. Because, in the first month or two after I came back from P., I was incredibly bitter, and I wrote some of the most horrible letters to her that you can imagine. I put all of my skill into writing letters that were exquisitely designed to torture her. It’s something I’m not very proud of, but...(pause). Yeah.

K: Is there anything else that you’d like to add about your feelings towards E.?
B: (pause) As you said that, I felt a lightness. I felt a real lightness in my heart. I'm imagining her having listened to all of this now, and her...Hm, it's too bad you don't have a video; you could get it all from my face, I think. You know, like, what are my feelings like over all, the whole story, sort of? Like a sense of lightness right now. Because I have learned--through many different things--I have learned now that that situation, you know, that whole time of a few years, two and a half years really, occurred because of a number of reasons. And things have changed now. And, I mean, there's no bitterness. There's...I'm ashamed. But only enough to say, "I'm ashamed that I was that bitter and that nasty." And that's the end of it. I mean, I'm not about to dwell on...I'm not going to dig a hole for myself. I'm done with that, thank-you very much. Yeah, there's a real sense of--I guess a sense, you know, like, I think that E. taught me a lot, whether she knew it or not. Despite being who she was, she helped me learn more about myself in the long run. And, as I said, now, I think, I am...And for the last few months, from time to time, I've toyed with the idea of getting in touch with her again. Her and H.. Maybe not H.. I'd leave that up to E.. You know, because H. was only three. Three? About four. Almost four when I last saw her and talked to her. So I don't know what H. thinks of me. Or, you know, what her memory is.

K: But still, every once in a while, they cross your mind, and you think what they're doing.

B: Oh, yes. Oh, yeah. Yeah. Because it's very much...That was a relationship very much that, you know, if things had gone a different way, I would be with E. and H. now. I wouldn't be where I am now. Which, you know, gives me pause to puzzle. I mean, why am I where I am now? Hm. I've also gotten rid of this notion of this one amazingly flammable relationship that is going to be passionately there and somehow perfect. I really am realizing, I'm learning--I had been learning--that that's not the way life works, for me anyway. So it's like I think, "Well, you know, if things were different, I would be with E. more than I would be with anyone else, had things worked out in 1982."

K: But they didn't.

B: But they didn't. Yeah.

K: Thank-you very much.

B: Okay.
Transcript #1 (Case A)

K: Think of a time when you felt those in-love feelings for a partner. Describe, in as much detail as you can, what was happening for you before, during and after the relationship, as though you were telling a story. First start with what was going on in your life before you were experiencing those romantic feelings.

A: As I was growing up, the person that I was really most in love with was a man that I went out with over several years, but who I never really termed as a boyfriend. And we never considered ourselves girlfriend and boyfriend. But I really, really cared about him a lot. And I went out with different guys all in between, but I really had the biggest crush on him. And, I don’t know, it seemed very physical, but it was also...I’ve never really thought about for so long that it’s even hard to even remember. And I’m not sure that I ever really let myself go into it, because I didn’t feel that he did, so it felt more one-sided. So I just held myself back in it.

K: Try and describe the feelings.

A: (long pause) I’m not good at this (laughter). (long pause) I guess, just thinking about him a lot, dreaming about him a lot. These aren’t really feelings, but maybe...It was just kind of an aching for him, in that I wanted him, I wanted to be his girlfriend, but that it just wasn’t going to happen the way I wanted it to. And so I don’t even know if our relationship qualifies for what we’re talking about. Because I think as far as...I think I was in—wow, I don’t know, just jumping all over to different relationships that I’ve had. But say that it did qualify, Say that it did qualify, because that’s the best example that I’ve had, the only one, and even that just doesn’t seem to be very romantic. Because it wasn’t this romantic relationship that one would usually think of. So I don’t think I really experienced a real romantic relationship growing up.

K: And then you got married.

A: Uh-hum. And...(pause)

K: That felt...

A: Very physical and intellectual. And then it kind of got romantic. And I think the romantic part was kind of an interdependence and not a real wham, hit-over-the-head, romantic love—my idea of romantic love—but it was kind of the...He kind of had the qualifications, and there was also a very strong physical relationship.
K: Between you and your husband.

A: Yeah...so that's what it was about. I think--yeah, yeah, it kind of didn't go anywhere. It kind of stayed at that level of being interdependent, and very--you know, we just our very strong areas of dependency--and very physical...you know, in not always a positive way.

K: Was there something missing for you then in that relationship?

A: Uh-hum. Yep, yep, there certainly was. And I think I must have know that it was missing all the time, because I was questioning it all along, whether this was really what I wanted. And we had, oh, a lot of fighting on the honeymoon. I mean, I think those things are normal and happier worked out. It seemed to wane quite quickly, if it ever was really strong—but not to compare to what I had later.

K: And what did you have later?

A: (pause) Well, into my--let's see, I guess it was the eighteenth year of my marriage--I met someone that I fell in love with--I think is what happened, I'm not sure. I seemed to just fall off the deep end, anyway.

K: Can you elaborate on that? How you met him and what happened for you.

A: Okay. (pause) I met him at a workshop, and there was nothing that happened during that workshop between us. As a matter of fact, I disliked--I had a distinct dislike for his personality. He was doing a racist imitation and joke, and I didn't like it. But we had a mutual friend at the workshop, and I was visiting this mutual friend, and he was there, and I spent four hours in this friend's shop with this man, and something clicked. It felt like I was hypnotized by this man.

K: Do you know what it was that clicked?

A: Hmm. It seemed like it was something deep and unconscious. It was as if I didn't have control. That's why, I think, it felt like I was being hypnotized. It was like I was out of control. (long pause) What clicked? It was strange. I think it was the things that he was saying; it was his mind. But it was enormously sensuous as well, at the same time. It wasn't just his mind. It was his mind and--I'd never experienced sensuality and sexuality through conversation like this.

K: So there was communication and then intellect for you?
A: Uh-hum, uh-hum, that's right. And emotional, in another strange way. I mean, it's psychological--"psychological" is the best word, I think. I think it just reached something...psychologically deep. And I can't remember what we were talking about. It may not even be what it was exactly, it was how, it was the way this was being communicated.

K: It was what was transpiring between you.

A: Uh-hum. That's right, that's right. It was the connection, that's right. It was how we were looking at each other. It was how we were feeling. It was like we were understanding each other. I don't know, it's like really hard to describe. It wasn't normal communication, I don't think, because I don't...Often, I think, I've had the experience maybe in sharing myself with a--I'm just trying to think--in hypnosis, that kind of...It wasn't a connection in hypnosis. So it was a feeling of...I was able to deeply share, I think, is what was happening.

K: So something was happening in your own self?

A: Uh-hum, uh-hum, that's right.

K: And how did it progress?

A: Hmm. Very quickly.

K: By "quickly" you mean?

A: By the hour (laughter). And, yeah, he was an artist, and I went home to see his etchings, and I missed the appointment that I had (laughter). And that was that. It was just--I just got carried into a very physical thing. And it was so scary, it was so powerful, and so scary, that I'd never experienced anything like it. And I have to say that we smoked pot, which has that effect, but I'd smoked it before. I had had a relationship, my first relationship, outside of the one with my husband, three years before, and I had met someone, and got together, and had smoked pot, and, you know, it was all very sensuous and very nice and powerful. But not, but just not--there was no comparison. It was sexually powerful and sensuous, but this was spiritually, emotionally, psychologically and physically powerful, and it scared me to death, and I told him that I never wanted to see him again. And I spoke to him on the phone a couple of times, and it was really...I was absolutely freaked out by this man.

K: Can you describe the scary feelings?

A: Well, I remember having a dream at the time of running up a stairway. It was like, you know, these towers that keep
going up and up and round and round, you know. And a man was chasing me. I think it was him; I never really saw him. But it must have—I was quite sure it must have been him. And I just kept running up at the top, but I knew that I was going to get to the top, and I didn’t know what I was going to be able to do. And the dream ended. I just never knew, but it was just like I woke up in this panic.

K: Do you know what you were scared of?

A: (pause) Well, I think I was scared of the changes that—I mean, my whole life was at stake. This whole life that I’d set up for myself, my family, you know, twenty years of marriage and family, and never having had this experience. I thought at the time it was about that this was...my nice little life was at stake. But I think when I look back at it, it was much more than that. Because I had never let myself go like that, and I had never felt anything like this. And it was like I could no longer be this independent person that had, you know, these barriers around them. It was as if all my barriers were going to totally fall down, and I would just be totally exposed raw. Or something like that, you know?

K: Vulnerable.

A: Yeah, yeah. Total vulnerability. Total devastating vulnerability that I’d never experienced before. So that was just totally scary. But I think in my mind at the time, I was just scared, as I said, just kind of at the superficial level. I didn’t want to have any disruptions in my life.

K: And so you cut it off with this man?

A: I tried to, at some level. I don’t really know. Yeah, I did try. I didn’t want to see him. It was scary. But I kind of used—just very kind and very gentle, you know. There was just no threat, and no pushing. And I ended up talking to him often on the phone, and gradually I saw him again, and just met him for a walk or—I can’t remember just what—meeting for lunch on the beach and this kind of thing, and just slowly got to trust him. I mean, I didn’t know him at all, and so I got to know him. But the physical was so strong that it didn’t take long to...But the physical was what was scary about it, too.

K: Because?

A: (pause) It was so powerful. It was in the physical -- when I’m talking about this, it was all connected with the sexual, physical connection that I was experiencing.

K: Was there more to it than just the physical for you?
A: Uh-hum, uh-hum, uh-hum.

K: Can you elaborate on that?

A: But I don’t think I’d ever experienced...I’d say, a couple of times I experienced something spiritual with J. Only a couple of times in the marriage, in the whole marriage. And it was more actually towards the ending of the relationship than the beginning. And it was when we were working on the relationship, when I felt I started sharing myself in a different way with him. And I felt his care and his desire to make some changes, and his understanding of me, and, you know, the fight that we were having. When we did connect sexually, there were a couple of times when it was very strong. But in talking about it later, it wasn’t strong for him; he was having a lot of problems with it.

K: So there was energy moving for you.

A: There was energy moving for me, but that energy was not satisfying for him. It was threatening to him.

K: And what was happening with your feelings for your lover at this time?

A: (long pause) I’m just trying--the sequence is not exactly...That was before T., that I’m talking about with J. But why I thought of that was because this was a new kind of connection thing, and it happened in a minor way with J., but it was happening in a much stronger way. It was if...I think what made it so strong--it was if, it was finding someone who knew, when I’d say something, it was if I almost didn’t have to say it. He knew. He knew what I was going to say. And when he’d say something, it was as if it was a knowing that I--something that I had always known, and he was just verbalizing it for me. It was...this understanding of each other somehow. And I felt so understood, I felt so...I don’t know, I’m not good at verbalizing these things.

K: That’s wonderful. Yeah, it’s that comfortable kind of feeling that you don’t need to put words to because that person’s so much a part of you.

A: Uh-hum, uh-hum, uh-hum.

K: And that was a new experience for you.

A: Yeah, that’s right, that’s right. It was, it was there. And I remember the first time I said something that he didn’t understand, I was blown away! (laughter) You know, like, it was such a shock. Because, it was as if, you know,
he was just like reading my mind or something all the time, because it was this incredible understanding between us. So this time, I had to come down to earth that he didn’t understand absolutely everything about me.

K: How were you feeling about yourself at this time? How did you view yourself?

A: That whole period of my life, I started viewing myself in a whole different way. I think it happened because I had gone through changes of how I saw myself. I had started to dance, I had started to do things for myself. I started to see myself differently, in a way that I’d always dreamed about seeing myself.

K: Such as?

A: Oh, dancing and...(pause) doing my own thing, being independent. Not doing things to please a husband, but doing things that I needed to do for myself, and taking dance classes, and starting to work on teaching dance therapy.

K: Finding your own talents.

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And finding the supports out there, because J. was so against it—and my whole family. To find the people out there who were supportive just created just a whole different way of seeing myself. So when I actually went into E.’s shop, where I connected with T. again, to put up a poster for my dance class out at U.B.C., I was already in a whole different space than I’ve ever been in my whole life. So he just supported that for me. He was another support for me in that.

K: How did you feel about yourself when you were feeling the in-love feelings for him? Did you have a different sense about yourself?

A: (pause) I always connected it with what was going on for me in that whole time. And I never connected it with him, the feelings that I had about myself.

K: Can you elaborate on those feelings?

A: (long pause) Well, it was just that I was doing things to please myself.

K: And how did you feel about yourself? What kind of feelings happened for you?

A: Well, I was just really excited about who I was and what I was doing. And, I mean, I just would work hours intently in the concentration of planning classes, and working out,
and taking classes. And, you know, I just felt healthy, and, you know, my body and spirit just felt really good.

K: Do you feel that being in love, and having that kind of support, gave you energy, too?

A: Yeah, that was different, it was a different energy.

K: Different?

A: Than the rest of what I'm talking about. You know, like, when you talk about...Being in love was an extra feeling, that's right, that augmented this other feeling that I had about myself. This was...I guess I kind of can relate it to other times when I was younger, and even with J. there was a time when I really did, you know, think about him a lot, and look forward to being with him. And so this was, you know, a time when I just was kind of euphoric, walking on clouds, kind of up in the air. You know, you could be spaced out just about in half a second, just walking around in that kind of space. You know, I think it seemed to affect me physically and emotionally.

K: How did it affect you physically?

A: Well, I'd never been as sensuous in my whole life as that. Like I said, you know, like in half a second, you could be spaced out. And I guess when I say that, part of being spaced out, you know, would be to relax enough to just feel that sensuous. So that was a new experience for me (pause). I'm just trying to think, appetite and this stuff. But then, I think that it--

K: By appetite...

A: Well, that...You know, not thinking. I can't remember. I can't really remember.

K: I'm wondering whether you weren't as hungry, or whether food wasn't important, or...

A: Yeah, yeah, I was going to say that, but the other foods, some foods, special foods, were really great. And it was almost symbolic of the special relationship --was manifested in these special foods only. I was only going to have special foods. The good foods were so good, right, but you kind of limited yourself to only the good foods (laughter).

K: We were talking earlier about the effect of the relationship on the break-up of your marriage.

A: Okay, in the marriage, I felt out of control in my relationship, my affair. After the break-up of the
marriage, I felt in control of the affair, but out of control with what was going on in the marriage.

K: So something changed for you?

A: Uh-huh, uh-huh. Yep, very much so (pause).

K: And this had an effect on the ending of your love relationship with your lover?

A: For a while, for a while. For about six months. Part of that was that I didn't want to have any messy kind of situation, and I spoke--I didn't see T. for six months--but I spoke to him actually almost every night on the phone. So I can't call it the end. It wasn't really. It was only--I didn't see him, but he was still a very strong support. And I didn't know how it was really going to turn out, but I guess I was still hoping, in a kind of a way, that the marriage wasn't going to break up. So I wasn't sure what I wanted. I did know that I did want to work on the marriage, at least to give it a try. But, because my ex-husband wasn't willing to do that, it never happened. And T. supported me in what I wanted to do, which was--what I was saying I wanted to do--was see if I could salvage the marriage.

K: And what were your feelings for T. at that time?

A: Total gratitude for his understanding and, you know, support and loving care, tender loving care and all of this, all of my trauma. And total bewilderment at anybody who wasn't--who was so almost self-sacrificing, you know. And, in a way, I knew he cared about me, and that he would have liked me to say, "Okay, it's you and I now, and good riddance to J." But he knew that's not exactly where I was at, and he just, in my estimation, just came through in flying colours, and was willing to support me as a friend to do whatever I wanted. So I had this growing respect for him as an individual, and as a model of letting someone--love as letting someone go, you know.

K: You experienced a lot together.


K: Is there anything else you'd like to add about your feelings, anything that stands out for you that we haven't talked about?

A: Well, it has been an ongoing relationship, and I think that the next few years after that was mixed up, you know, with my--trying to sort out what my values were, and trying to sort out my own feelings of independence and not needing a relationship. How I always saw it as, was that it was
just developing more and more into a friendship that I wouldn't know what I would do without, really, but still maintaining always that I was being very independent! (laughter) Because, you know, I wasn't about to live together, or say that we were a couple. But meanwhile, I just couldn't imagine not having him in my life. So I think in the last while--since I haven't been feeling well, I think, is when it really started--that I started just seeing that more clearly. You know, how much he does mean to me, and that I have looked at, you know, the other men that I have gone out with and been with, and they just don't compare. So--there's a side to him that I really don't like, that I really dislike strongly, but he's being such a help and wonderful friend to me in my growth, and allowed me to be wherever I'm at without wanting more, even though he sometimes does want more, but without it being a--never feeling like I have to put out more.

K: So it sounds as though he's there for you.

A: Uh-huh.

K: How would you say your relationship with him affected your marriage?

A: (pause) It brought on the end of my marriage. It may have ended anyway. It was certainly ripe for someone to come along and end it, or for me to--I don't know--I was going to say, to find a path that would have totally excluded my marriage maybe without another man in it. Either--that would have been a possibility, too, because basically that's, I think, why J. really did stand in his decision to leave the marriage. It was not only the affair, which I told him about, but also, and predominantly, that I was taking a different path that he didn't approve of.

K: Would you say that it was the intensity of the feelings that you were experiencing for T.?

A: That was the catalyst. That was the catalyst. I could not handle those feeling, and I couldn't handle the guilt. I couldn't handle the schizo, crazy-making feelings that I was having in where I was at.

K: It sounds as though your feelings for T. were overwhelming.

A: Uh-hum, uh-hum, uh-hum, that's right. So I think it was at an unconscious level that I had to do something to break that, to try to find a resolution. And because I couldn't find it myself, I just ended up telling J. and letting him decide how to handle it, because I couldn't. But that was fairly typical for me, I guess, in those days, to not take
control, and to let J. have that control. I like to think it would be different... It certainly would be different in my relationship with T., because we have a more equal relationship. But I know that when I am with people who use control, who use power, who need to be in control, I can very easily revert to letting them have it, because it’s very difficult for me to be assertive with people like that. It’s easy for me to be assertive with most people, but not real authority, power, controlling people. I have to think very hard and be very aware of how I’m reacting. So I don’t know how I... I’m learning.

K: Anything else you’d like to say about the relationship?

A: No, I think that’s it.

K: Okay. Thank-you.