

MEASUREMENT OF ROMANTIC LOVE¹

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This study reports the initial results of an attempt to introduce and validate a social-psychological construct of romantic love. Starting with the assumption that love is an interpersonal attitude, an internally consistent paper-and-pencil love scale was developed. The conception of romantic love included three components: affiliative and dependent need, a predisposition to help, and an orientation of exclusiveness and absorption. Love-scale scores were only moderately correlated with scores on a parallel scale of "liking," which reflected a more traditional conception of interpersonal attraction. The validity of the love scale was assessed in a questionnaire study and a laboratory experiment. On the basis of the emerging conception of love, it was predicted that college dating couples who loved each other a great deal (as categorized by their love-scale scores) would spend more time gazing into one another's eyes than would couples who loved each other to a lesser degree. The prediction was confirmed.

Love is generally regarded to be the deepest and most meaningful of sentiments. It has occupied a preeminent position in the art and literature of every age, and it is presumably experienced, at least occasionally, by the vast majority of people. In Western culture, moreover, the association between love and marriage gives it a unique status as a link between the individual and the structure of society.

In view of these considerations, it is surprising to discover that social psychologists have devoted virtually no attention to love. Although interpersonal attraction has been a major focus of social-psychological theory and research, workers in this area have not attempted to conceptualize love as an independent entity. For Heider (1958), for example, "loving" is merely intense liking—there is no discussion of possible qualitative

differences between the two. Newcomb (1960) does not include love on his list of the "varieties of interpersonal attraction." Even in experiments directed specifically at "romantic" attraction (e.g., Walster, 1965), the dependent measure is simply a verbal report of "liking."

The present research was predicated on the assumption that love may be independently conceptualized and measured. In keeping with a strategy of construct validation (cf. Cronbach & Meehl, 1955), the attempts to define love, to measure it, and to assess its relationships to other variables are all seen as parts of a single endeavor. An initial assumption in this enterprise is that love is an *attitude* held by a person toward a particular other person, involving predispositions to think, feel, and behave in certain ways toward that other person. This assumption places love in the mainstream of social-psychological approaches to interpersonal attraction, alongside such other varieties of attraction as liking, admiration, and respect (cf. Newcomb, 1960).

The view of love as a multifaceted attitude implies a broader perspective than that held by those theorists who view love as an "emotion," a "need," or a set of behaviors. On the other hand, its linkage to a particular target implies a more restricted view than that held by those who regard love as an aspect of the individual's personality or experience which transcends particular persons and situations (e.g., Fromm, 1956). As Orlinsky (1970) has

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suggested, there may well be important common elements among different varieties of "love" (e.g., filial love, marital love, love of God). The focus of the present research, however, was restricted to *romantic love*, which may be defined simply as love between unmarried opposite-sex peers, of the sort which could possibly lead to marriage.

The research had three major phases. First, a paper-and-pencil love scale was developed. Second, the love scale was employed in a questionnaire study of student dating couples. Third, the predictive validity of the love scale was assessed in a laboratory experiment.

DEVELOPING A LOVE SCALE

The development of a love scale was guided by several considerations:

1. Inasmuch as the content of the scale would constitute the initial conceptual definition of romantic love, its items must be grounded in existing theoretical and popular conceptions of love.

2. Responses to these items, if they are tapping a single underlying attitude, must be highly intercorrelated.

3. In order to establish the discriminant validity (cf. Campbell, 1960) of the love scale, it was constructed in conjunction with a parallel scale of liking. The goal was to develop internally consistent scales of love and of liking which would be conceptually distinct from one another and which would, in practice, be only moderately intercorrelated.

The first step in this procedure was the assembling of a large pool of questionnaire items referring to a respondent's attitude toward a particular other person (the "target person"). Half of these items were suggested by a wide range of speculations about the nature of love (e.g., de Rougemont, 1940; Freud, 1955; Fromm, 1956; Goode, 1959; Slater, 1963). These items referred to physical attraction, idealization, a predisposition to help, the desire to share emotions and experiences, feelings of exclusiveness and absorption, felt affiliative and dependent needs, the holding of ambivalent feelings, and the relative unimportance of universalistic norms in the relationship. The other half of the

items were suggested by the existing theoretical and empirical literature on interpersonal attraction (or liking; cf. Lindzey & Byrne, 1968). They included references to the desire to affiliate with the target in various settings, evaluation of the target on several dimensions, the salience of norms of responsibility and equity, feelings of respect and trust, and the perception that the target is similar to oneself.

To provide some degree of consensual validation for this initial categorization of items, two successive panels of student and faculty judges sorted the items into love and liking categories, relying simply on their personal understanding of the connotations of the two labels. Following this screening procedure, a revised set of 70 items was administered to 198 introductory psychology students during their regular class sessions. Each respondent completed the items with reference to his girlfriend or boyfriend (if he had one), and also with reference to a nonromantically viewed "platonic friend" of the opposite sex. The scales of love and of liking which were employed in the subsequent phases of the research were arrived at through factor analyses of these responses. Two separate factor analyses were performed—one for responses with reference to boyfriends and girlfriends (or "lovers") and one for responses with reference to platonic friends. In each case, there was a general factor accounting for a large proportion of the total variance. The items loading highest on this general factor, particularly for lovers, were almost exclusively those which had previously been categorized as love items. These high-loading items defined the more circumscribed conception of love adopted. The items forming the liking scale were based on those which loaded highly on the second factor with respect to platonic friends. Details of the scale development procedure are reported in Rubin (1969, Ch. 2).

The items forming the love and liking scales are listed in Table 1. Although it was constructed in such a way as to be factorially unitary, the content of the love scale points to three major components of romantic love:

TABLE 1
MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND CORRELATIONS WITH TOTAL SCALE SCORES OF
LOVE-SCALE AND LIKING-SCALE ITEMS

Love-scale items	Women				Men			
	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>	r^a Love	r Like	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>	r^a Love	r Like
1. If _____ were feeling badly, my first duty would be to cheer him (her) up.	7.56	1.79	.393	.335	7.28	1.67	.432	.304
2. I feel that I can confide in _____ about virtually everything.	7.77	1.73	.524	.274	7.80	1.65	.425	.408
3. I find it easy to ignore _____'s faults.	5.83	1.90	.184	.436	5.61	2.13	.248	.428
4. I would do almost anything for _____.	7.15	2.03	.630	.341	7.35	1.83	.724	.530
5. I feel very possessive toward _____.	6.26	2.36	.438	-.005	6.24	2.33	.481	.342
6. If I could never be with _____, I would feel miserable.	6.52	2.43	.633	.276	6.58	2.26	.699	.422
7. If I were lonely, my first thought would be to seek _____ out.	7.90	1.72	.555	.204	7.75	1.54	.546	.328
8. One of my primary concerns is _____'s welfare.	7.47	1.62	.606	.218	7.59	1.56	.683	.290
9. I would forgive _____ for practically anything.	6.77	2.03	.551	.185	6.54	2.05	.394	.237
10. I feel responsible for _____'s well-being.	6.35	2.25	.582	.178	6.67	1.88	.548	.307
11. When I am with _____, I spend a good deal of time just looking at him (her).	5.42	2.36	.271	.137	5.94	2.18	.491	.318
12. I would greatly enjoy being confided in by _____.	8.35	1.14	.498	.292	7.88	1.47	.513	.383
13. It would be hard for me to get along without _____.	6.27	2.54	.676	.254	6.19	2.16	.663	.464

Liking-scale items	Women				Men			
	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>	r Love	r^b Like	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>	r Love	r^b Like
1. When I am with _____, we are almost always in the same mood.	5.51	1.72	.163	.270	5.30	1.77	.235	.294
2. I think that _____ is unusually well-adjusted.	6.36	2.07	.093	.452	6.04	1.98	.339	.610
3. I would highly recommend _____ for a responsible job.	7.87	1.77	.199	.370	7.90	1.55	.281	.422
4. In my opinion, _____ is an exceptionally mature person.	6.72	1.93	.190	.559	6.40	2.00	.372	.609
5. I have great confidence in _____'s good judgment.	7.37	1.59	.310	.538	6.68	1.80	.381	.562
6. Most people would react very favorably to _____ after a brief acquaintance.	7.08	2.00	.167	.366	7.32	1.73	.202	.287
7. I think that _____ and I are quite similar to each other.	6.12	2.24	.292	.410	5.94	2.14	.407	.417
8. I would vote for _____ in a class or group election.	7.29	2.00	.057	.381	6.28	2.36	.299	.297
9. I think that _____ is one of those people who quickly wins respect.	7.11	1.67	.182	.588	6.71	1.69	.370	.669
10. I feel that _____ is an extremely intelligent person.	8.04	1.42	.193	.155	7.48	1.50	.377	.415
11. _____ is one of the most likable people I know.	6.99	1.98	.346	.402	7.33	1.63	.438	.514
12. _____ is the sort of person whom I myself would like to be.	5.50	2.00	.253	.340	4.71	2.26	.417	.552
13. It seems to me that it is very easy for _____ to gain admiration.	6.71	1.87	.176	.528	6.53	1.64	.345	.519

Note.—Based on responses of 158 couples. Scores on individual items can range from 1 to 9, with 9 always indicating the positive end of the continuum.

* Correlation between item and love scale total *minus that item*.

^b Correlation between item and liking scale total *minus that item*.

1. *Affiliative and dependent need*—for example, “If I could never be with _____, I would feel miserable”; “It would be hard for me to get along without _____.”

2. *Predisposition to help*—for example, “If _____ were feeling badly, my first duty would be to cheer him (her) up”; “I would do almost anything for _____.”

3. *Exclusiveness and absorption*—for example, “I feel very possessive toward _____”; “I feel that I can confide in _____ about virtually everything.”

The emerging conception of romantic love, as defined by the content of the scale, has an eclectic flavor. The affiliative and dependent need component evokes both Freud's (1955) view of love as sublimated sexuality and Harlow's (1958) equation of love with attachment behavior. The predisposition to help is congruent with Fromm's (1956) analysis of the components of love, which he identifies as care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge. Absorption in a single other person is the aspect of love which is pointed to most directly by Slater's (1963) analysis of the social-structural implications of dyadic intimacy. The conception of liking, as defined by the liking-scale items, includes components of favorable evaluation and respect for the target person, as well as the perception that the target is similar to oneself. It is in reasonably close accord with measures of “attraction” employed in previous research (cf. Lindzey & Byrne, 1968).

QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY

The 13-item love and liking scales, with their component items interspersed, were included in a questionnaire administered in October 1968 to 158 dating (but non-engaged) couples at the University of Michigan, recruited by means of posters and newspaper ads. In addition to the love and liking scales, completed first with respect to one's dating partner and later with respect to a close, same-sex friend, the questionnaire contained several personality scales and requests for background information about the dating relationship. Each partner completed the ques-

tionnaire individually and was paid \$1 for taking part. The modal couple consisted of a junior man and a sophomore or junior woman who had been dating for about 1 year.

Each item on the love and liking scales was responded to on a continuum ranging from “Not at all true; disagree completely” (scored as 1) to “Definitely true; agree completely” (scored as 9), and total scale scores were computed by summing scores on individual items. Table 1 presents the mean scores and standard deviations for the items, together with the correlations between individual items and total scale scores. In several cases an inappropriate pattern of correlations was obtained, such as a love item correlating more highly with the total liking score than with the total love score (minus that item). These inappropriate patterns suggest specific revisions for future versions of the scales. On the whole, however, the pattern of correlations was appropriate. The love scale had high internal consistency (coefficient alpha was .84 for women and .86 for men)³ and, as desired, was only moderately correlated with the liking scale ($r = .39$ for women and .60 for men). The finding that love and liking were more highly correlated among men than among women ($z = 2.48$, $p < .02$) was unexpected. It provides at least suggestive support for the notion that women discriminate more sharply between the two sentiments than men do (cf. Banta & Hetherington, 1963).

Table 2 reveals that the love scores of men (for their girlfriends) and women (for their boyfriends) were almost identical. Women *liked* their boyfriends somewhat more than they were liked in return, however ($t = 2.95$, $df = 157$, $p < .01$). Inspection of the item means in Table 1 indicates that this sex difference may be attributed to the higher ratings given by women to their boyfriends on such “task-related” dimensions as intelligence, good judgment, and leadership potential. To the extent that these items accurately represent the construct of liking, men may indeed tend to be more “likable” (but not more “lovable”) than women. Table 2 also reveals, however, that there was no such sex

³ Coefficient alpha of the liking scale was .81 for women and .83 for men.

TABLE 2

LOVE AND LIKING FOR DATING PARTNERS AND SAME-SEX FRIENDS

Index	Women		Men	
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD
Love for partner	89.46	15.54	89.37	15.16
Liking for partner	88.48	13.40	84.65	13.81
Love for friend	65.27	17.84	55.07	16.08
Liking for friend	80.47	16.47	79.10	18.07

Note.—Based on responses of 158 couples.

difference with respect to the respondents' liking for their same-sex friends. The mean liking-for-friend scores for the two sexes were virtually identical. Thus, the data do not support the conclusion that men are generally more likable than women, but only that they are liked more in the context of the dating relationship.

Table 2 also indicates that women tended to *love* their same-sex friends more than men did ($t = 5.33$, $df = 314$, $p < .01$). This result is in accord with cultural stereotypes concerning male and female friendships. It is more socially acceptable for female than for male friends to speak of themselves as "loving" one another, and it has been reported that women tend to confide in same-sex friends more than men do (Jourard & Lasakow, 1958). Finally, the means presented in Table 2 show that whereas both women and men *liked* their dating partners only slightly more than they liked their same-sex friends, they *loved* their dating partners much more than their friends.

Further insight into the conceptual distinction between love and liking may be derived from the correlational results presented in Table 3. As expected, love scores were highly correlated both with respondents' reports of whether or not they were "in love" and with their estimates of the likelihood that they would marry their current dating partners. Liking scores were only moderately correlated with these indexes.

Although love scores were highly related to perceived marriage probability, these variables may be distinguished from one another on empirical as well as conceptual grounds. As Table 3 indicates, the length of time that the couple had been dating was unrelated to love scores among men, and only slightly related among women. In contrast, the respondents' perceptions of their closeness to marriage were significantly correlated with length of dating among both men and women. These results are in keeping with the common observations that although love may develop rather quickly, progress toward marriage typically occurs only over a longer period of time.

The construct validity of the love scale was further attested to by the findings that

TABLE 3
INTERCORRELATIONS AMONG INDEXES OF ATTRACTION

Index	1	2	3	4
Women				
1. Love for partner				
2. Liking for partner	.39			
3. "In love" ^a	.59	.28		
4. Marriage probability ^b	.59	.32	.65	
5. Dating length ^c	.16	.01	.27	.46
Men				
1. Love for partner				
2. Liking for partner	.60			
3. "In love" ^a	.52	.35		
4. Marriage probability ^b	.59	.35	.62	
5. Dating length ^c	.04	-.03	.22	.38

Note.—Based on responses of 158 couples. With an N of 158, a correlation of .16 is significant at the .05 level and a correlation of .21 is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed values).

^a Responses to question, "Would you say that you and _____ are in love?", scored on a 3-point scale ("No" = 0, "Uncertain" = 1, "Yes" = 2).

^b Responses to question, "What is your best estimate of the likelihood that you and _____ will marry one another?" Scale ranges from 0 (0%-10% probability) to 9 (91%-100% probability).

^c The correlation across couples between the two partners' reports of the length of time they had been dating (in months) was .967. In this table, "dating length" was arbitrarily equated with the woman's estimates.

love for one's dating partner was only slightly correlated with love for one's same-sex friend ($r = .18$ for women, and $r = .15$ for men) and was uncorrelated with scores on the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale ($r = .01$ for both women and men). These findings are consistent with the assumption that the love scale was tapping an attitude toward a specific other person, rather than more general interpersonal orientations or response tendencies. Finally, the love scores of the two partners tended to be moderately symmetrical. The correlation across couples between the woman's and the man's love was .42. The corresponding intracouple correlation with respect to liking was somewhat lower ($r = .28$). With respect to the partners' estimates of the probability of marriage, on the other hand, the intracouple correlation was considerably higher ($r = .68$).

LABORATORY EXPERIMENT: LOVE AND GAZING

Although the questionnaire results provided evidence for the construct validity of the emerging conception of romantic love, it remained to be determined whether love-scale

scores could be used to predict behavior outside the realm of questionnaire responses. The notion that romantic love includes a component of exclusiveness and absorption led to the prediction that in an unstructured laboratory situation, dating partners who loved each other a great deal would gaze into one another's eyes more than would partners who loved each other to a lesser degree.

The test of the prediction involved a comparison between "strong-love" and "weak-love" couples, as categorized by their scores on the love scale. To control for the possibility that "strong" and "weak" lovers differ from one another in their more general interpersonal orientations, additional groups were included in which subjects were paired with opposite-sex strangers. The love scores of subjects in these "apart" groups were equated with those of the subjects who were paired with their own dating partners (the "together" groups). In contrast to the prediction for the together groups, no difference in the amount of eye contact engaged in by the strong-apart and weak-apart groups was expected.

METHOD

Subjects

Two pools of subjects were established from among the couples who completed the questionnaire. Those couples in which both partners scored above the median on the love scale (92 or higher) were designated strong-love couples, and those in which both partners scored below the median were designated weak-love couples. Couples in which one partner scored above and the other below the median were not included in the experiment. Within each of the two pools, the couples were divided into two subgroups with approximately equal love scores. One subgroup in each pool was randomly designated as a together group, the other as an apart group. Subjects in the together group were invited to take part in the experiment together with their boyfriends or girlfriends. Subjects in the apart groups were requested to appear at the experimental session individually, where they would be paired with other people's boyfriends or girlfriends. Pairings in the apart conditions were made on the basis of scheduling convenience, with the additional guideline that women should not be paired with men who were younger than themselves. In this way, four experimental groups were created: strong together (19 pairs), weak together (19 pairs), strong apart (21 pairs), and weak apart (20 pairs). Only 5 of the couples contacted (not included in the

above cell sizes) refused to participate—2 who had been preassigned to the strong together group, 2 to the weak together group, and 1 to the strong apart group. No changes in the preassignment of subjects to groups were requested or permitted. As desired, none of the pairs of subjects created in the apart groups were previously acquainted. Each subject was paid \$1.25 for his participation.

Sessions

When both members of a scheduled pair had arrived at the laboratory, they were seated across a 52-inch table from one another in an observation room. The experimenter, a male graduate student, explained that the experiment was part of a study of communication among dating and unacquainted couples. The subjects were then asked to read a paragraph about "a couple contemplating marriage" (one of the "choice situations" developed by Wallach & Kogan, 1959). They were told that they would subsequently discuss the case, and that their discussion would be tape recorded. The experimenter told the pair that it would take a few minutes for him to set up the tape recorder, and that meanwhile they could talk about anything except the case to be discussed. He then left the room. After 1 minute had elapsed (to allow the subjects to adapt themselves to the situation), their visual behavior was observed for a 3-minute period.⁴

Measurement

The subjects' visual behavior was recorded by two observers stationed behind a one-way mirror, one facing each subject. Each observer pressed a button, which was connected to a cumulative clock, whenever the subject he was watching was looking across the table at his partner's face. The readings on these clocks provided measures of *individual gazing*. In addition, a third clock was activated whenever the two observers were pressing their buttons simultaneously. The reading on this clock provided a measure of *mutual gazing*. The mean percentage of agreement between pairs of observers in 12 reliability trials, interspersed among the experimental sessions, was 92.8. The observers never knew whether a pair of subjects was in a strong-love or weak-love group. They were sometimes able to infer whether the pair was in the together or the apart condition, however. Each observer's assignment alternated between watching the woman and watching the man in successive sessions.

RESULTS

Table 4 reveals that as predicted, there was a tendency for strong-together couples to engage in more mutual gazing (or "eye con-

⁴ Visual behavior was also observed during a subsequent 3-minute discussion period. The results for this period, which differed from those for the prediscussion waiting period, are reported in Rubin (1969, Ch. 5).

TABLE 4
MUTUAL GAZING (IN SECONDS)

Group	<i>n</i>	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>
Strong together	19	56.2	17.1
Weak together	18 ^a	44.7	25.0
Strong apart	21	46.7	29.6
Weak apart	20	40.0	17.5

^a Because of an equipment failure, the mutual-gazing measure was not obtained for one couple in the weak-together group.

tact") than weak-together couples ($t = 1.52$, $p < .07$, one-tailed). Although there was also a tendency for strong-apart couples to make more eye contact than weak-apart couples, it was not a reliable one ($t = .92$).

Another approach toward assessing the couples' visual behavior is to consider the percentage of "total gazing" time (i.e., the amount of time during which at least one of the partners was looking at the other) which was occupied by mutual gazing. This measure, to be referred to as *mutual focus*, differs from mutual gazing in that it specifically takes into account the individual gazing tendencies of the two partners. It is possible, for example, that neither member of a particular pair gazed very much at his partner, but that when they did gaze, they did so simultaneously. Such a pair would have a low mutual gazing score, but a high mutual focus score. Within certain limits, the converse of this situation is also possible. Using this measure (see Table 5), the difference between the strong-together and the weak-together groups was more striking than it was in the case of mutual gazing ($t = 2.31$, $p < .02$, one-tailed). The difference between the strong-apart and weak-apart groups was clearly not significant ($t = .72$).

Finally, the individual gazing scores of subjects in the four experimental groups are presented in Table 6. The only significant finding was that in all groups, the women spent much more time looking at the men than the men spent looking at the women ($F = 15.38$, $df = 1/150$, $p < .01$). Although there was a tendency for strong-together subjects of both sexes to look at their partners more than weak-together subjects, these comparisons did not approach significance.

TABLE 5
MUTUAL FOCUS

Group	<i>n</i>	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>
Strong together	19	44.0	9.8
Weak together	18	34.7	14.0
Strong apart	21	35.3	14.6
Weak apart	20	32.5	9.4

Note.—Mutual focus = $100 \times \frac{\text{mutual gazing}}{\text{woman's nonmutual gazing} + \text{man's nonmutual gazing} + \text{mutual gazing}}$

DISCUSSION

The main prediction of the experiment was confirmed. Couples who were strongly in love, as categorized by their scores on the love scale, spent more time gazing into one another's eyes than did couples who were only weakly in love. With respect to the measure of individual gazing, however, the tendency for strong-together subjects to devote more time than the weak-together subjects to looking at their partners was not substantial for either women or men. This finding suggests that the obtained difference in mutual gazing between these two groups must be attributed to differences in the *simultaneousness*, rather than in the sheer quantity, of gazing. This conclusion is bolstered by the fact that the clearest difference between the strong-together and weak-together groups emerged on the percentage measure of mutual focus.

This pattern of results is in accord with the assumption that gazing is a manifestation of the exclusive and absorptive component of romantic love. Freud (1955) maintained that "The more [two people] are in love, the more completely they suffice for each other [p. 140]." More recently, Slater (1963) has

TABLE 6
INDIVIDUAL GAZING (IN SECONDS)

Group	Women			Men		
	<i>n</i>	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>
Strong together	19	98.7	23.2	19	83.7	20.2
Weak together	19	87.4	30.4	19	77.7	33.1
Strong apart	21	94.5	39.7	21	75.0	39.3
Weak apart	20	96.8	27.8	20	64.0	25.2

linked Freud's theory of love to the popular concept of "the oblivious lovers, who are 'all wrapped up in each other,' and somewhat careless of their social obligations [p. 349]." One way in which this oblivious absorption may be manifested is through eye contact. As the popular song has it, "Millions of people go by, but they all disappear from view—'cause I only have eyes for you."

Another possible explanation for the findings is that people who are in love (or who complete attitude scales in such a way as to indicate that they are in love) are also the sort of people who are most predisposed to make eye contact with others, regardless of whether or not those others are the people they are in love with. The inclusion of the apart groups helped to rule out this possibility, however. Although there was a slight tendency for strong-apart couples to engage in more eye contact than weak-apart couples (see Table 5), it fell far short of significance. Moreover, when the percentage measure of mutual focus was employed (see Table 6), this difference virtually disappeared. It should be noted that no predictions were made concerning the comparisons between strong-together and strong-apart couples or between weak-together and weak-apart couples. It seemed plausible that unacquainted couples might make use of a relatively large amount of eye contact as a means of getting acquainted. The results indicate, in fact, that subjects in the apart groups typically engaged in as much eye contact as those in the weak-together group, with the strong-together subjects outgazing the other three groups. Future studies which systematically vary the extent to which partners are acquainted would be useful in specifying the acquaintance-seeking functions of eye contact.

The finding that in all experimental groups, women spent more time looking at men than vice versa may reflect the frequently reported tendency of women to specialize in the "social-emotional" aspects of interaction (e.g., Strodbeck & Mann, 1956). Gazing may serve as a vehicle of emotional expression for women and, in addition, may allow women to obtain cues from their male partners concerning the appropriateness of their behavior. The present result is in accord with earlier

findings that women tend to make more eye contact than men in same-sex groups (Exline, 1963) and in an interview situation, regardless of the sex of the interviewer (Exline, Gray, & Schuette, 1965).

CONCLUSION

"So far as love or affection is concerned," Harlow wrote in 1958, "psychologists have failed in their mission. The little we know about love does not transcend simple observation, and the little we write about it has been written better by poets and novelists [p. 673]." The research reported in this paper represents an attempt to improve this situation by introducing and validating a preliminary social-psychological conception of romantic love. A distinction was drawn between love and liking, and its reasonableness was attested to by the results of the questionnaire study. It was found, for example, that respondents' estimates of the likelihood that they would marry their partners were more highly related to their love than to their liking for their partners. In light of the culturally prescribed association between love and marriage (but not necessarily between liking and marriage), this pattern of correlations seems appropriate. Other findings of the questionnaire study, to be reported elsewhere, point to the value of a measurable construct of romantic love as a link between the individual and social-structural levels of analysis of social behavior.

Although the present investigation was aimed at developing a unitary conception of romantic love, a promising direction for future research is the attempt to distinguish among patterns of romantic love relationships. One theoretical basis for such distinctions is the nature of the interpersonal rewards exchanged between partners (cf. Wright, 1969). The attitudes and behaviors of romantic love may differ, for example, depending on whether the most salient rewards exchanged are those of security or those of stimulation (cf. Maslow's discussion of "Deficiency Love" and "Being Love," 1955). Some of the behavioral variables which might be focused on in the attempt to distinguish among such patterns are in the areas of sexual behavior, helping, and self-disclosure.

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