

Close Relationships and Unrequited Love
Friday 04/08/05

I. Relationships

A. Characteristics of Relationships

1. Emotional Attachment (love and affection)
2. Need Fulfillment (connectedness, intimacy, nurturance, self-validation)
3. Interdependence (mutual impact of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors)

B. Two General Types of Relationships

1. Nonvoluntary Relationships (familial, work relationships)
2. Voluntary Relationships (friendships, intimate relationships)

C. Social Psychologists and Voluntary Relationships

1. Attachment Styles and Relationships
2. Physical Environment and Proximity
3. Mere Exposure Effect

4. Physical Attractiveness

5. Similarity

6. Social Exchange Principles

II. The Importance of Love

A. Receiving Love: Unconditional Love (Carl Rogers)

B. Giving Love: The “Art of Love” (Erich Fromm)

C. Reciprocated or Requited Love

III. How common is unrequited love?

A. 60% of college-age respondents had loved someone in vain during last two years (Bringle & Winnick, 1992)

B. More common in men than in women (Hill, Blakemore, & Drumm, 1997)

C. More common for *insecurely* attached people (Aron, Aron, & Allen, 1998)

IV. Problematic Interdependence

A. Would-Be Lover's Options

1. Suffer in silence.
2. Court object of affection.
3. Give up.

B. Target's (Rejecter's) Options

1. Invest time, attention, and effort in unwanted other.
2. Spurn the unwanted other.

C. Possible Affective Consequences

1. Humiliation for Would-Be Lover
2. Guilt for Rejecter

D. Is there a script?

For Would-Be Lover

For Rejecter

E. The “Conspiracy of Silence”

Rejecter and the “mum effect”

Would-Be Lover and complicity

V. The Narrative Truth of Would-Be Lovers and Those Who Reject Them
(Baumeister et al., 1993)

A. Participants wrote true stories.

Rejecter Instructions:

“Please write a true story from your own life in which someone was romantically attracted to you and the attraction was not mutual (you were not romantically attracted to the other person). Nearly everyone has experienced such things at least once; please choose an especially powerful and memorable experience.”

Would-Be Lover Instructions:

“Please write a true story from your own life in which you were romantically attracted to another person and the attraction was not mutual (the other person was not romantically attracted to you). Nearly everyone has experienced such things at least once; please choose an especially powerful and memorable experience.”

B. Reported Emotions

C. Self-Esteem

D. Guilt, Morality, and Humiliation

1. Rejecters

2. Would-Be Lovers

E. Definitions of the Situation

1. Would-be lovers

2. Rejecters

E. Perceptions of Self and Other

1. Would-Be Lovers
2. Rejecters

VI. Science versus Folk Wisdom

A. Would-Be Lovers

1. not helpless and vulnerable
2. don't perceive rejection
3. don't suffer terribly
4. experience more positive than negative emotions

B. Rejecters

1. burdened with guilt
2. feel confused and "scriptless"
3. feel frustrated

4. experience more negative than positive emotions

C. The *mutuality* of love makes the world go 'round.