

# Interpersonal Attraction and Close Relationships

Today and Wednesday

## Why Do We Need Relationships?

- Relationships satisfy our inherent needs to belong and affiliate with others

## Health and Relationships

- Emotional benefits
  - Being around others makes us happy
  - Married people are happier
- Health Benefits
  - People who have many relationships live longer
    - Relationships have a stronger impact on mortality than cigarette smoking

## Health and Relationships

- Social Support
  - Spiegel et al. (1989)
    - breast cancer patients in social support groups lived 18 months longer than women in control groups

## Health and Relationships

- Ostracism
  - Williams et al. (2000)
    - Ps engaged in a virtual game of catch with two "others" on the internet
    - Ostracism from game lead to
      - Lack of sense of belonging and feeling bad

## Health and Relationships

- Ostracism
  - Gardner et al., 2000
    - Participants interacted with 4 other confederates via computer chat room
      - Social acceptance = "I hear you"... "cool!"
      - Social rejection = confeds ignored Ps in conversation

## Health and Relationships

- Ostracism
  - Gardner et al., 2000
    - Ps who were rejected remembered more social than individual events described in a fictitious diary

## Close Relationships

- History of studying close relationships
  - Relatively new -- last 30 years or so
  - Primary interest had been studying individuals
  - Many thought it was non-scholarly work
    - "Golden Fleece of the Year Award"

## Close Relationships

- History of studying close relationships
  - But...understanding close relationships is crucial to understanding human existence
    - We are social animals
    - We spend most of our time around others

## Close Relationships

- A. Characteristics of Relationships
  - 1. Emotional Attachment  
*(love and affection)*

## Close Relationships

- A. Characteristics of Relationships
  - 1. Emotional Attachment
  - 2. Need fulfillment  
*(connectedness, intimacy, nurturance, self-validation)*

## Close Relationships

- A. Characteristics of Relationships
  - 1. Emotional Attachment
  - 2. Need fulfillment
  - 3. Interdependence  
*(mutual impact of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors)*

## Close Relationships

- A. Characteristics of Relationships
- B. Two general types of relationships
  - 1. Nonvoluntary relationships
    - Familial relationships (kin)*
    - Work relationships*

## Close Relationships

- A. Characteristics of Relationships
- B. Two general types of relationships
  - 1. Nonvoluntary relationships
  - 2. Voluntary relationships
    - Friendships*
    - Intimate relationships*

## Close Relationships

- C. Social psychologists and relationships
  - Focus on situational variables*
  - (e.g, propinquity, attractiveness, social exchange)*

## Close Relationships

- C. Social psychologists and relationships
  - Focus on situational variables*
  - Some focus on early attachment*

## Attraction

- Desirable attributes
  - Warmth
  - Competence
  - Physical Attractiveness

## Attraction

- Desirable attributes
  - Walster et al. (1966)
    - Randomly matched 752 incoming students for blind dates
    - Rated partner's physical attractiveness and desire for another date
    - Only attractiveness predicted the desire to date again

## Attraction

- Rewards
  - We like those who bring us rewards or are associated with rewarding situations

## Getting Together

	You	Name of a close friend	Name of a non-close person
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

## Getting Together

- Calculate
  - The number of times you and your close friend match on a trait (both have checks)
  - The number of times you and the non-close person match on a trait (both have checks)

## Getting Together

- Similarity
  - Personality
  - Demographics
  - Attitudes
  - Physical Attractiveness

## Getting Together

- Newcomb, 1961
  - study of students in the dorms
  - IV: paired students based on attitude similarity
  - DV: Who were friends at the end of the year?
  - more likely to be friends with attitudinally similar others

## Getting Together

- Familiarity
  - We like those who are familiar to us, because they are judged to be safe and harmless

## Getting Together

- Proximity
  - Proximity effect
    - Simple physical proximity to others can increase familiarity, and thus attraction

## Getting Together

- Proximity
  - Festinger et al., 1950
    - Examined friendships of couples at MIT
    - 65% of friends lived in the same building
      - 44% next door, 22% two doors apart, 10% on opposite ends of the hall

## Getting Together

- Proximity
  - Proximity effect
    - Simple physical proximity to others can increase familiarity, and thus attraction
    - Unless...
      - Initial experience is negative

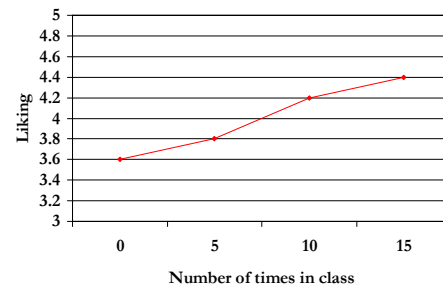
## Getting Together

- Exposure
  - Mere exposure effect (Zajonc, 1968)
    - Being exposed to a person increases familiarity, and thus attraction

## Getting Together

- Exposure
  - Moreland & Beach (1992)
    - 4 different female RAs
    - 3 came to class (5, 10, or 15 times)
    - Students shown photos and asked to rate RAs Intelligence, attractiveness, spend time, work together

## Getting Together



## Getting Together

### ■ Exposure

- Unless...
  - We have an initial negative experience with the person we are exposed to
  - We are exposed to the person too much

## Love

### ■ What is love?

## Love

### ■ What is love?

- Rubin (1973)
- Liking =
  - My partner is one of the most likable people I know
  - My partner is the sort of person that I would like to be
  - I have great confidence in my partner's good judgment
- Loving =
  - I feel I can confide in my partner about virtually everything
  - I would forgive my partner for practically anything
  - I would do almost anything for my partner

## Love

### ■ What is love?

- Physical symptoms
  - Arousal, beating heart, butterflies
- Behaviors
  - Saying "I love you"
  - Physical expressions
  - Positive emotional expression
  - Giving presents, doing things for others
  - Sacrificing

## Love

### ■ What is love?

- Dutton & Aron (1974)
  - Male tourists at a gorge who were either crossing
    - A bridge that suspended over the gorge and swayed side to side
    - A bridge that was close to the ground and rather stable
  - Ps asked a few questions and to write a story in response to a TAT picture

## Love

### ■ What is love?

- Dutton & Aron (1974)
  - Ps were more likely to report feelings of love and sexual attraction in TAT
  - More likely to call RAs at home!

## Love

### ■ Passionate Love

- Emotionally charged type of love that is often present at the beginning of a relationship
  - Intense longing for the person
  - Physiological arousal
  - Much more emotionally volatile

## Love

### ■ Companionate love

- An affectionate type of love that emphasizes trust and caring
  - Feelings of mutual respect and trust
  - Less emotionally volatile
  - Often found in good friendships

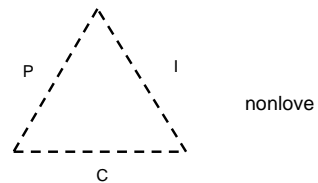
## Types of Love

### ■ Sternberg's Tripartite Theory of Love

- **passion**: motivational component
- **intimacy**: emotional component
- **commitment**: cognitive component

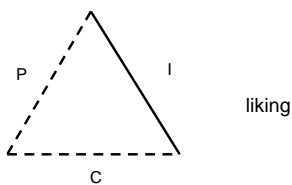
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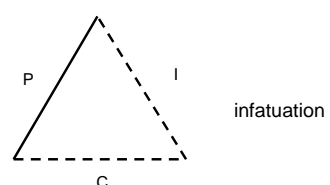
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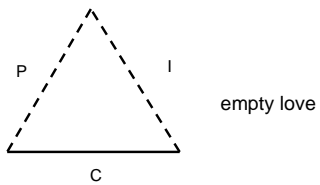
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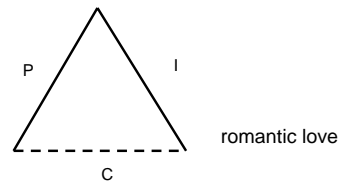
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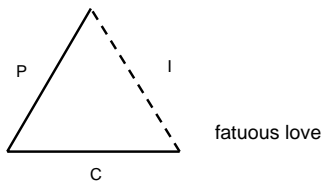
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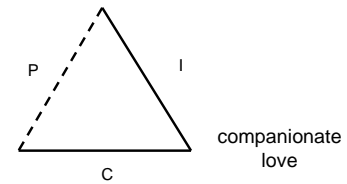
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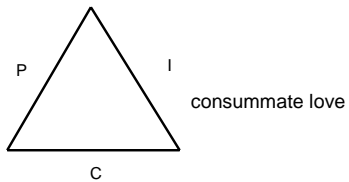
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## Types of Love

### ■ Sternberg's Tripartite Theory of Love



## Love

### ■ Berscheid

- Passionate love = companionate love + passion
  - Companionate love with sexual desire

## Long Term Relationships

- evolutionary perspective
  - we behave in ways that further the existence of our offspring
  - for women, reproduction is more demanding
  - for men, reproduction is much less constraining
    - leads to different types of mate preferences

## Long Term Relationships

- Evolution and Jealousy, Buss et al. (1999)
  - Which would be more distressing?
    - (a) your partner having passionate sexual intercourse with another person?
    - (b) your partner forming a deep emotional attachment to another person?

## Long Term Relationships

- Evolution and Jealousy, Buss et al. (1999)
  - Women tended to pick b more than a
  - Men tended to pick a more than b
- But...Berman et al. (2005)
  - No differences in terms of actual behavior