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THE SOCIOLOGY OF FRIENDSHIP:

HISTORICAL, LITERARY & EMPIRICAL
PERSPECTIVES

David Skidmore

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ABSTRACT

Friendship has been extensively examined over recent years, particularly in the field of social psychology. I argue that, rather than friendship, other relationships implying friendship, which I term 'association', have been the focus of attention in these previous studies. This outcome is the result of 'outsider' approaches as a method of investigation which cannot approach an essentially 'internal' relationship like 'friendship'.

By examination of historical, literary and empirical texts, a model of 'real' friendship was identified. Subsequently, both 'insider' (participative) and outsider (non-participative) techniques were used to examine the feasibility of this model in everyday life. My own personal location is identified within this study, so that an understanding of the direction that the study takes can be identified.

Essentially, two types of relationships, that are labelled 'friendship' by 'actors', were identified:

- 1) Friendship: Which is argued to be a projection of 'self' that manifests as identification of certain idealistic/romantic attributes or qualities in others, and consequently only achieves 'reality' in a person's interpretation of events. In this respect it contains 'internality'.
- 2) Association: Which is a relationship frequently mistaken for friendship by observers, but is marked by its 'externality', in that such relationships are normally bonded by a shared activity where concern for the person is minimal.

Rather than taking a direct, positivistic approach to the subject, this approach 'unfolds' as it progresses, to identify, not only my own position, but also how people define friendship.

Combination of 'insider' and 'outsider' approaches provide data that illustrate the attributes and constructions of both 'friendship' and 'association'. Friendship is argued to be a device for anchoring the person's ideals in social reality, whereas association is argued to be a common relationship, sought to allow the outlet of an 'enjoyable' activity; in this respect the activity takes precedence over the person.

Finally, it is suggested within the text that a combination of 'insider' and 'outsider' methods is crucial when approaching the study of any type of relationship.

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CHAPTER ONE

A PERSONAL DISCOURSE ON FRIENDSHIP AND ITS MEANING

FRIENDSHIP AND ASSOCIATION

Preamble: A PERSONAL DISCOURSE

One could argue that friendship, as a concept, is something that everyone thinks they are involved in at some level. Generally it could be suggested to be one of the expectations of life; we expect, from early years, to have friends. Indeed, we are constantly reinforced by the media in holding such expectations by comics, books and television. Literature extols the virtues of friendship, movies glorify or romanticise it. If one is friendless the implication is that one is at fault. This type of notion leads some to highly profitable activities, i.e. Dale Carnegie's 'How to Win Friends and Influence People'.

The word, Friendship, holds a myriad of meanings: it can be used to negate sexual activity, as in the Hollywood utterance "We're just good friends"; to locate people within a personal network: "He's a friend of mine". Over time it has ceased to have one specific meaning and can now be used in various ways, some even contradictory. The literal definition is:

"One joined to another in mutual benevolence and intimacy. Not ordinarily applied to lovers or relatives." (A New English Dictionary)

Thus, it is not the relationship of kin or lovers but it is, by definition, a close relationship - it is intimate. In reality such a definition explains nothing. In general usage it is inadequate since we usually qualify the meaning: best friend, good friend or close friend. Other words exist that also imply friendliness: Mate, pal, chum or mucker. When people are prompted to discuss the relationship even more qualifications are revealed, these will be

discussed later.

Consequently, when approaching 'friendship' as a topic of study it would, it seems, be very easy to fall into the subjective trap of providing a definition and illustrating its 'truth' by a method of enquiry based on that premise. In a society where the word has many different meanings such an approach would invite misinterpretation and gross errors. One person's understanding of friendship may not correlate with another's, and similarly it would be wrong to take a positivistic stance without some knowledge of the major themes common to a 'majority' of people.

An Arbitrary Starting-point

Perhaps the best place to start in such a study is to declare what one does not know about this relationship. With any human activity the what, where, why, when and how are usual starting points. Marriage has a formal starting point, so too does parenthood and with both relationships there appears to be clear roles, definite codes of behaviour. If in doubt one can even consult books clarifying the position. With friendship, however, there is no rule book, no accepted code to declare what the relationship is. There is no special place that facilitates its bonding, unlike marriage, no where. One is uncertain as to the reasons why it happens or why it is necessary (if indeed it is). There are no laws to declare when it should occur; with marriage and parenthood both social custom and formal law offer guidance. Because of the variety of meanings there is no certain explanation concerning what it is; society, on the other hand, holds clear expectations about what a normal marriage is. Finally, there is little evidence to suggest how it happens; most adults are, however, quite clear about how babies arrive.

Conversely, the majority of people might argue that it (friendship) does exist, but as will be discussed later, few people really think about it.

Let us consider that we are born, primarily, into a vacuum devoid of social mores. Schutz (1962) argues that we are born individuals but from the moment we enter into the socialisation process we become persons. A person is not merely fed as the microbe on the culture plate, but is thrust into a structured sub-culture; a kind of cultural plate that is in turn influenced by the wider society. Consider the influence of society as a painting by numbers on a canvas. The basic picture is laid out and the contours numbered for colouring. The shade of colour selected is strongly influenced by the person's sub-culture. The contours represent the macro-expectations of society; the shade of colour those refinements made via the subculture. These expectations are those views concerning marital behaviour, gender-roles, parental behaviour and social laws. Within the backdrop of society there are standard themes, e.g. a man marries a woman and they are expected to have children. A person's culture may refine either partner's expectation of the relationship and the 'individual' inside the person will add the fine detail or the micro-expectations. Arguably, in Western society, it is the individual who defines what he finds attractive in a partner. The expectation that he will find a partner is reinforced by the social organisation of society in that people are provided with meeting places, both formal and informal. However, prior to his meeting he will already have developed expectations about such relationships, from parents and peers, and his taste in partners may have been heavily swayed by what the media dictate as being attractive. Similarly, the wider context of society

offers meaningful instruction on how to initiate and manage such encounters and the media adds to that pool of knowledge. There may well be biological aspects to the pantomime of mating, but one could argue that the concomitant behaviours are culturally determined and socially shaped. Human Beings are socially educated into meaningful relationships, prompted to accept the concept of love - the actualisation of the romantic spirit. The scenario of instinctive sex, anytime, anyplace, anywhere is viewed as repulsive, obscene and even unlawful. If one takes the Darwinian view then we must accept that we have evolved from the instinctive to the discerning by way of cultural evolution. Thus, despite the claims of free choice, one could suggest that the blueprint of societal living dictates how we procreate and to a great extent how we pair.

Similar arguments could be submitted for family, sex-role and indeed friendship. How we develop as persons must surely play a part in how we approach all relationships. Fundamentally, a person is the product of his personal history; in this respect his experiences are unique to him. The approach he takes to most encounters has been elaborately structured as masks because they are socially acceptable. Taking an inappropriate approach to a social encounter will be viewed as deviant or gross or ill-mannered. The person's knowledge of what is and what is not acceptable has developed through his experience of social life. Had the person survived in social isolation he would have no such knowledge. In this way the person constructs a public image; behind which lurks a private self: the inner wishes and desires of the person or the individual. One could suggest that it is this aspect of the person that leads to the myriad differences that exist within a group's view of the world. If all men found the same woman attractive there would be many lonely women and one overworked one.

That this does not occur is one illustration of personal preference.

Hypothetically, then, friendship is one of the background expectancies of life. From the moment that the individual becomes aware and evolves into the person he gathers information about his sub-culture. His parents have friends (often called uncles and aunties), he witnesses the portrayal of friendship on the TV, in his comics and books. Ultimately he is pushed out into the institutions that facilitate and expect him to develop such relationships: nurseries, schools, playgroups and youth clubs. His parents may also actively encourage such development; they may prompt him to be friendly with their friends' children. During his development, intellectually, he will, perhaps, perceive the romantic relationships of TV and literature and wonder why he does not have similar relationships; he may even yearn for such bondings or rationalise that he has one. In essence I am suggesting a dualistic meaning to life. A person develops two views of life in tandem:

- 1) The romantic or ideal view, that which he secretly desires.
- 2) The practical reality, that in which he participates because it is generally accepted.

His approach to life could be heavily influenced by the dualistic 'psyche', the extent to which he pushes his views or his ideals on reality and the extent to which he accepts society's views. Either will depend on his strength of 'personality'; he may protect his ideals totally from being tested by reality or he may try and force his ideals on reality. Nietzsche argues that the laws of society are merely the ideas of its great men. This statement suggests that others must give in to these ideas and publicly suppress their own.

It is then, with this 'loose' philosophy, that I find myself approaching a study of friendship. In the next section I hope to elaborate further on these themes in order to reveal my own location in 'sociological cosmology'.

An Intellectual History

I hope that it will become apparent in this text that I consider a person's definition of reality to be important when attempting to explain social action. I also feel that personal histories are crucial when offering explanations for social 'reality'. In fairness then, it may be helpful to explore my development within this area. The interest in a person's definition of reality has been with me for several years. Perhaps this was a natural evolution from a strictly functional approach. The approach outlined here, had its genesis in the tried and tested arena of medical encounters. In 1978 I invaded this arena with a firm positivistic stance, determined to illustrate that doctors did not offer information to patients. However, it quickly became apparent that there existed different sub-cultures within this arena: i.e. the lay-network, the medical periphery (GP) and the medical nucleus (hospitals). The location of a person within any or all of these locations held obvious effects to me. How did the present situation occur? Did people react differently towards each aspect of the arena? Previously, doctors had been treated as one breed, I had identified two distinctly different breeds in the GP and hospital doctor. The curiosity of occasion directed me along an historical path. The adage of Burke (1978): 'If you don't know where you've come from you don't know where you are', rang true. The historical development of an institution influenced its strategy and the expectations and effects it held for the actors entering it.

Similarly a person's development and reaction towards that institution held historical significance. The hospital, for example, developed as a symbol over time and the interactions that could be witnessed under its aegis were a product of that development. The GP did not grow from the same seed and consequently the 'public view' and expectations towards them could be markedly different.

Undaunted, but aware of this notion, as an apprentice researcher I arrived in these different arenas armed with a structured interview schedule. The approach produced the data required but subjects were quick to point out that this data was the mere produce of the researcher leading the witness. My interviews subsequently disintegrated into subject abreaction. Each person was allowed to hold court on their definition of reality within the medical context. There was no plan underpinning this departure, no logical progression based on intellectual argument, it was a case of 'let's hope sense can be made of all this later'. The noble hopes of producing the definitive thesis on predictive sociological analysis crumbled. From a rigid functionalist stance I had plunged to one of phenomenology in a mere six months.

The data generated in this earlier study identified several key points which have influenced my approach:

- 1) Nouns are symbolic: They convey more than mere meaning and provide an acceptable structure to reality. In a social context the hospital means far more than a building catering for the treatment of illness. It can imply severity, the unknown and certain confirmation of illness.

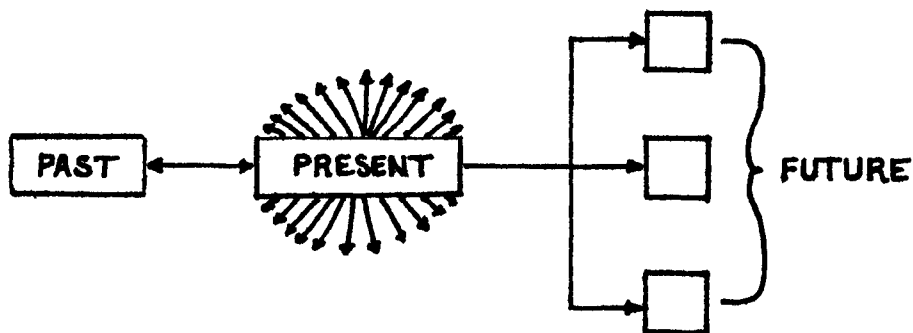
2) These symbols are heavily influenced by subculture: Certain hospitals are known by their specialities, the hospital's name would be meaningless to another subculture but can conjure whole stories within its own social context. This is particularly true of those hospitals developed from workhouses.

3) The outcome for each person depends upon what they take with them to an encounter. Standard responses to such encounters are unlikely since a person's own experience can be a crucial factor; for example, do they have previous experience.

4) Rich and diverse data can illustrate key themes that may well be missed by the positivistic approach.

The study alluded to above was concerned with the here and now, but identified the need to examine the past, both at a macro and micro level, in order to see the present in context. Indeed, it identified the usefulness of the 'conservative-impulse' (Marris, 1974):

FIG 1 "CONSERVATIVE IMPULSE"



This model illustrates how a person, when confronted by any situation, looks back into his own past, for relevant data; looks around him in the present, to see how others cope, and then constructs behavioural strategies for the immediate future. The application of this model to personal behaviour carries implications for the uniqueness of a person:

Past The computations of a person's past are probably infinite. To begin with, he or she has no control over the location that he or she will be born into. Parents may be married, unmarried, single or absent; highly intelligent, rich or poor; loving or unloving. The relevant genes will dictate his/her appearance - hence biology cannot be totally discounted. If he/she is deaf, blind, deformed, fat, short or tall these will have some influence throughout life. The social and geographic location will, to some extent, dictate the type of school, living conditions, life chances, peer group that one is exposed to. Indeed his past will contrive to locate him securely in the present: verbal skill, occupation, wealth, marriage partner and peers. Where he is now depends on where he has come from. On a simplistic level the history of a person can be viewed as the history of his society.

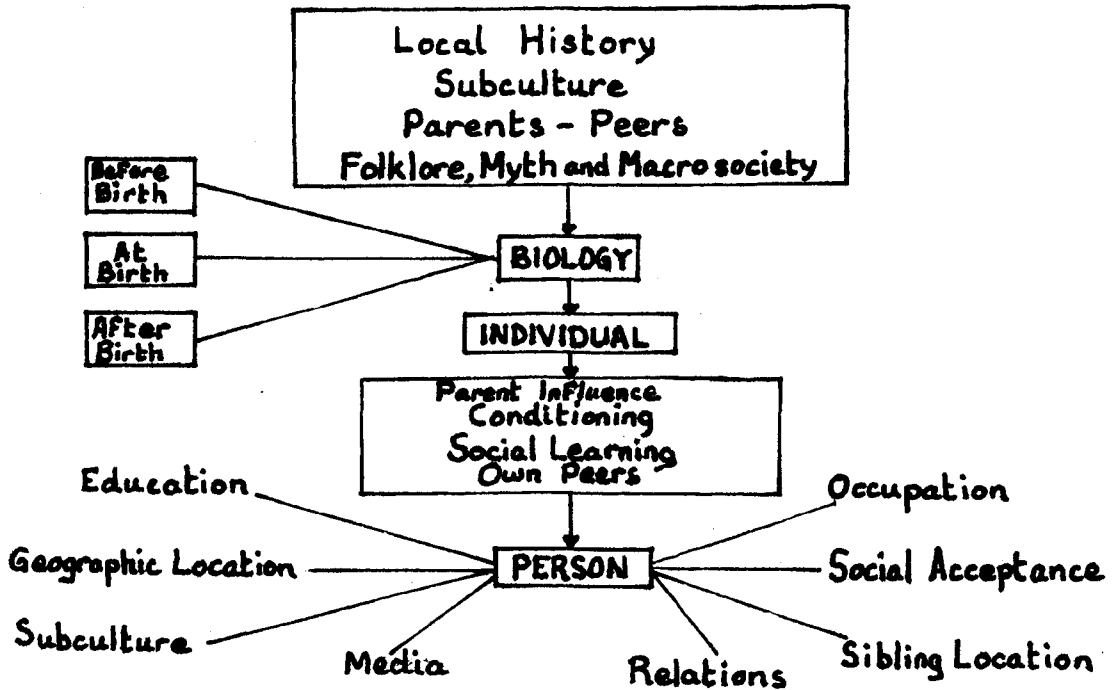
One can magnify the computations by arguing that the same situation was true of a person's parents and the parent's parents and so on back through history. The person's sibling location could also have an effect: whether he was first or third born, planned or accidental. Thus, it could be argued that a child is born into a pre-arranged back-drop. A large portion of his reality is blueprinted by the macro-society, the colours selected by his micro-society and left to

him is some influence on the shade of colour. Dependent upon his background, he will be seen as having high or low status; eccentricity or madness; breeding or vulgarity. The backdrop will shape his own expectancies, as it did that of his parents. To some extent it will determine the approach he takes to any relationship, be it marriage, medical encounter or friendship.

However, although society provides a person with the structure of approach, the vocabulary of interaction, it could be argued that only he can give meaning to the events; in this respect it could be said that one man's relationship is another man's isolation. He will be conditioned to certain needs (Maslow, 1968): The need for acceptance, relationships and recognition; but he can never pre-empt those needs or dictate their realisation. Consequently, it can be seen that various factors influence his past which in turn influence his ability to provide his reality with meaning. There is also the past before his past, or that which occurred before his existence; the events experienced by the wider society, that of the subculture and that of his immediate kith and kin.

His own past is all those events that occurred before the 'now' from his 'year dot'. Information seen and heard from his parents and peers, formal conditioning; that which he absorbs from the media, fact and fiction; how he has been seen, how he thinks he is seen and how he wishes to be seen. Indeed the suggestion here is that a person is the product of an holistic programme: biology, sociology, psychology and history. It might be graphically represented thus:

FIG 2 'HOLISTIC PROGRESSION'



Those influences un-boxed suggest fluidity in that the person can influence their change or other factors might bring about change; for example, his parents may have another child.

The above model is a model of a person's past. Since one does not develop in a vacuum all these things impinge on consciousness and subsequently influence the present. The here and now rapidly slips into the recent past, and, to some degree, enables the person to rationalise his actions even though such actions might have been initiated irrationally.

It has been suggested above that we are born into a 'structured' backdrop of society, this then implies that value has already been attributed to many social situations. Simply, there exists a basic script for interaction, a code of what is right and proper. Most

situations are charged with expectation - a notion of what the future outcome is likely to be. Expectation is born in the past and made use of in the present: The knowledge gathered in the past enables one to recognise the possible outcomes of a future action and organise actions accordingly. In many ways this mingling of past, present and future holds the key to the survival of interaction, although the implicit structure of this type of interaction does not allow immediate depth and quality it does provide the norm for social behaviour. Nietzsche (1977) argues that without history there is no society and that a society is the product of its myths, folklore, history and people. I argue that the same is equally true of the person: He can have no present without a past and without a present there can be no future.

Role

Out of this morass of 'social structure' a person develops 'role', which, arguably, is firmly locked within the social context from which it arises. In this respect a person cannot help but have many roles: Male, father, brother, employee, teacher, husband and friend. Most, if not all, of these roles will be shaped and structured by the criteria outlined above; each holding an historical component, built on from past knowledge, shaped by future expectations and drawn into the present. Consider the role of fatherhood: As children we are not normally offered formal instruction to prepare us for this role. There are, of course, classes in fatherhood for the expectant father, but the majority of males get by without them and, indeed, develop firm ideas about the role prior to the event. The role-script arises from the person's social location: The actions of his own father and those of his peers' fathers will help the person to develop a composite picture of fatherhood. Added to this will be the plethora of social-

learning material that constantly impinges on the senses: The 'ideals' of the media, observations of actions around the person, shared stories and the person's inner 'ideals'. All these actions that the person is exposed to are the product of their own histories. Within and around the person, then, expectations of the role develop as the person develops. Awareness of the consequences of future actions within the role develop - what would be acceptable and what would not. On a more complex level one must consider that most of this is not a conscious development; it is part of the general background expectancies that most people accept as a fact of life. The amount of social action that is negotiable, on the part of the person, is both intriguing and crucial to an understanding of the relationships that persons enter into. The amount of negotiation of role-conformity may be motivated by the 'self' or the individual that exists inside the person. However, before one can negotiate, one must first hold ideas about alternatives; a notion of what they want to be like or what they dislike about the present. I argue that it is only within an environment of dissatisfaction that the search for alternatives occurs and, conversely, that dissatisfaction can only occur if conflict arises within the 'inner' ideals. Reforms and changes in all societies have occurred, not by chance, but by the direct action of others (Lewis, 1971; Cicero, 1963, Nietzsche, 1977). Indeed, Nietzsche, as previously mentioned, states that the rules and ideals of a society are merely a reflection of its great men. For these great men to initiate change they had to have knowledge of alternatives. Similarly when these great men change their ideals and win support from others, the culture in which they are located will undergo change. This can be witnessed within the macro-society with regard to coups, revolution and social reform, in many ways they

are the results of direct action based on the views of few men. Lewis (1963) suggests that this is the very reason why there has been structured oppression against friendship, since it is groups of friends who occasion radical changes.

Other than the radical 'sudden' changes mentioned above, there are the more subtle, quiet and long-term changes that occur over time and these may also be the result of 'inner-self' influence. Much has been written about the move from community to association, urbanisation, secularisation, death of family and the privatization of self. These changes in societal living have taken years to develop and are, indeed, still developing. Some view these changes as the erosion of the very fabric of society; witness the myths alluding to the good old days:

"There was much more neighbourliness in the old days....."

"..... more community spirit....."

"Families aren't as close now....."

"There's much more violence about now."

Such adages have no doubt prompted the structured attempts, in some areas, to revive the community spirit: Neighbourhood schemes, crime-watch, residents associations. It could be suggested that this reflects a wish to restore the 'connectedness' of society or that there is an attempt to retain the predictability of society. On the other hand the general move away from the old ways could reflect the dissatisfaction of the 'controlled' way of life. People may desire privatisation of self. In short, the subtle changes may be the influence of the small men in society.

The suggestion, then, is that the 'subtle' change in society is the product of the inner desires of persons; a long term revolution against the control and organised relationship of society. Collectively, persons wish to realise the desires of the individual and develop relationships of choice. Consequently the extended family is in a state of demise due to the inner desire of a relationship based on something more than duty. The rebellion against the predictable order of things, I argue, has been motivated by the 'Romantic Spirit'. There are inherent problems with such a development. It has no practical history, its existence lies only in the hearts and minds of men. Without a history, it has no present and without a present, no predictability. Whilst the practical relationships of family and marriage have certain 'pointers' for participation due to their historical anchorage, the 'romantic' relationship has none. Thus, the move from community holds foreboding for the 'romantic spirit', in which friendship is located.

From Community to Association

At this point it may be helpful to consolidate my thoughts: The nub of this discourse revolves around the predictability of relationships. In the past this predictability was highly structured and consequently relationships were relatively easy. This argument suggests that 'self' desired more than the structured relationship and this desire prompted change. The development of such change has eroded predictability, which in turn has created difficulty in forming relationships. In essence, I suggest that the romantic relationship, such as 'true' friendship only ever existed in the 'ideals' of a person; the person's search for that ideal caused changes in society that now prevent the realisation of that ideal. One of the major changes is identified as the demise of the 'community'.

It could be argued that relationships of all kinds were much 'closer' or 'richer' in quality during village life. Marriage for example tended to last longer (certainly less than 1 in 3 ending in divorce). However, this does not necessarily reflect a better quality of life; rather a more predictable one. Each partner knew their roles, had clear expectation and a sense of duty reinforced by the cultural backdrop. A community tended to be related to the workplace, the village was an organic unit and each member important for its homeostasis. In this respect the structural/functionalist view of society can be seen as important. To maintain its homeostasis it was important that the community maintained its social order. The village squire was just as important, or as little important, as the village idiot. Each member of the community was inter-related and since geographic mobility was minimal the chances are that many were blood relatives. The family could be viewed as a sub-unit of the total community, contributing to the total produce. This model seems to fit agricultural societies most closely.

Consequently, relationships held far more predictability: Everyone knew their place and indeed, social position was reinforced by the church:

"The rich man in his castle.....etc."

These small, close-knit communities encourage the survival of intimate relationships. Consider marriage, yet again, by knowing everyone in the village and being aware that this was likely to be the sum-total of the population you were ever likely to meet, it was much easier to select a life-partner with a reasonable assumption that a better one

would not turn up; it was, no doubt, easier to accept marriage vows to boot. Because of the connectedness, life was also, probably, much more open; within the small geographical boundaries of the village secrets were perhaps fairly difficult to keep. Each person's life directly influenced his neighbour and ultimately the whole community. Superstition also held great influence on life; indeed it can still be witnessed in the remnants of village life. Coal-miners in South Yorkshire will never return home for forgotten items once they have set out to the mine. To do so can prompt a disaster. In some cases this even prevents the working miner looking back towards home.

Consequently, these social rules and superstitions created a well ordered and structured village life that benefited the whole community. The whole span of life was affected, home and work, and this gave predictability to life. However, throughout history there have been stories of 'deeper' things; love, true friendship and great happiness. The fact that life was predictable did not mean that inner desire was satisfied. However the order did support religious influence, the importance of the family unit and the publicisation of self.

The rise of industry ultimately alienated the members of the community since the philosophy of work and labour took on a new emphasis. It was no longer necessary to labour for the total community since the product of labour was no longer directly related to food: People could now work for money without fearing crop failure. Should the local crops fail they could purchase from another source. Industrialisation also opened the road of geographic mobility and eroded the connectedness of community. Many historians and sociologists agree that it was during this era that family size started to fall. Other effects on

family were occasioned by social reforms: the discouragement of female labour and compulsory education meant that the family as a unit was no longer related in terms of material production; thus one of the bonds disappeared. Geographic mobility also encouraged the mixing of larger populations which in turn threatened the predictability of marriage. The gates were now open whereby a person might meet the ideal relationship. The chances of meeting a more attractive partner were greatly increased and with that increase, less chance of adhering to the vows. The mobility, alienation and re-negotiation of roles afforded the chance for persons to become more 'private' and within that perhaps the chance to realise their ideals. Relocation to a different area amongst strangers severed the connectedness between people. Your neighbour was no longer kith and kin, hence the need for openness died - secrets became a serious possibility. In tandem with this, it could be argued that a man no longer needed to wear the mask designed for him by his community, he could design his own mask based on his ideals since his own history was not common knowledge. It is within this backdrop that I suggest that relationships became more distant, unconnected and more complex, because the shared histories disappeared.

Consider the friendships of village life: the chances were that a friend knew a great deal about you without having to be told. In simple terms he was more like a relative because of proximity, prior knowledge and time-sharing. Friends probably shared all working time and leisure time together. If you required a special skill, no doubt you knew a friend who could provide it, free of charge, knowing that similar favours would be returned. However, the nature of friendship held many ascribed elements: only a limited pool of associates existed

to draw friends from and because of the nature of village life little choice existed in the selection of friends, it was necessary to be friendly to maintain community homeostasis. There was a necessity for friendship because all lives were inter-related.

The move to urban life (Tonnies, 1955) denied that pre-defined 'closeness'. These strangers do not possess prior knowledge of you and the necessity for negotiating friendships arose. With this necessity also came the possibility of excluding those who were unpalatable. It also allowed selectivity in what is revealed about self, indeed, if it is important to develop a relationship one could reveal a totally false identity that makes one appear much more attractive, this was not possible in village life. Urban life, then, allowed persons to be more selective about their relationships, but it also removed the very fabric upon which they were based. In the community people did not really need to negotiate relationships to the same degree because of the predictability, discussed above. The removal of that predictability caused relationships to become much more precarious which in turn reflects a closedness in society.

The quest for the realisation of his ideals is the very thing that prevented that realisation. It was Chesterton (cited in Cameron, 1980) that told of the man who left his home on the hill in search of the meaning of life. After a long time with no success he looked back to the hill and saw the very thing he was searching for - his own home. Similarly, men now look back to what they think relationships used to be. It has been suggested that the romantic spirit of relationships developed from the community spirit (not that it existed); the failure to realise that romanticism has prompted men to believe that it was

there all the time - in community. This notion is reinforced by the many novels and stories that abound today, the informal lay-media that extol the virtues of things long past. Man is still locked in his idealism, still searching but misguided in his belief that it existed in the past. The attempts to revive the community are merely attempts to realise his ideals. People talk of the search for love and closeness but we have no evidence that love exists except for what we read - the products of an author's ideals, and other than that which we desire. Those who claim to have discovered it may merely be protecting their ideals since this is now possible in a closed society. There is no universal view of love which permits measurement - that undying, sincere emotion may be a mere myth. Within this context one might place friendship, that greatest of loves praised by the philosophers.

In the above discourse I have attempted to outline my thinking and sociological stance as I believe it existed at the onset of this study. In summary I have suggested that relationships in general depend on internal and external components and that they cannot be viewed outside an holistic approach. The internal component has caused the person to lose the predictability of relationships and seek the romantic but that the absence of structure obstructs the realisation of the romantic. In conclusion to this section I will now outline my thinking on friendship in general and how I came to follow this route of research.

Some Specific Thoughts on Friendship

It has been suggested above that relationships have tended to disintegrate from a fairly highly-structured phenomena to a loose, complex and diverse activity. I wish to argue that now without the support of community every relationship is very different.

I, like many of my associates, had a firm idea of what friendship should be and, like so many others, gave it little thought prior to this study. It was something that existed, had always existed - will always exist. How I came along the path that led to this study is as circuitous as the relationship itself. It certainly was not due to any flash of inductive logic. Indeed, there was no one point of genesis but a series of unrelated explosions that arose in personal networks and professional duties. I should point out here that I had always believed that friendships could never be orchestrated or engineered and that they were a choice affinity of like minds. I will illustrate the significance of this point later.

The first minor explosion, alluded to above, occurred some eight years ago when I was researching matters medical. Many of my subjects related how their stance towards their friends had changed due to personal crises. Some had experienced pleasure at their friends' support during their crisis whilst others had felt betrayed at their desertion. One statement haunted me from a fifty-three year old man who had witnessed the death of his wife and experienced a heart-attack within a three month period:

"..... I used to think I had friends before all this.....I don't believe it exists now. They've not been near since Alice died..... apart from the funeral."

The comment was recorded and the source promptly forgotten, although the statement stayed with me. I discussed the situation with my own friends and was informed that the man in question did not have 'real' friends.

Two years later I had devised the ultimate theory in predictive sociology; this would make my fame and fortune certainly greater than Asimov's Hari Seldon. In order to unleash this theory on the unsuspecting world I entered into the relationship arena. By collecting data concerning marital-relationships I would be able to predict success and failure rates. This route exposed me to more minor explosions: One thirty-two year old lady was relating the events that surrounded her divorce, twelve months previously:

"It's not just a husband you lose.... it's your friends too.....they seem to see you as a threat to their husbands. That's the worst part..... you can replace a husband, but not friends."

Another lady of twenty-eight years again speaking about divorce:

"I'd never have got through it if it hadn't been for my friends..... they took over and helped me survive."

Over a six-month period while I tried to gather information about marriage people told me about friendship. This realisation linked back to the first explosion and led me to conclude that people invested a lot of importance in friendship. The betrayal of the spouse can be survived, but the betrayal of a friend goes deeper. Initially the notion was pushed into the back of my mind. I was determined to pursue my original thoughts on marriage.

A further explosion caused these notions to force their way to the forefront of my mind some months later. This time the explosion arose within my personal world:

A friend, whom I considered close, left his wife and did not reveal this until after the event. He had never betrayed his intentions nor his 'affair' of some six months. My feelings were very mixed: on the one hand I felt betrayed that he had not forewarned me of any problems, on the other I felt that I had let him down if he could not confide in me. We subsequently had many conversations on the nature of our friendship. He revealed that his inability to confide was the result of his need to protect me since I knew his wife. The first question she asked him was did I know? Had I known, he suggested, not only would it have been a double betrayal for her, but would have implicated me in the conspiracy. Indeed, he asked, how would your own wife have felt about this had you known? When we were out together were you covering for me and if so what were you up to? These were noble sentiments and all I expected of a friend. However, within weeks a colleague who I had not considered to be close descended on me one night with a bottle of whiskey and bared his soul. His most intimate wants, his inner fears, desires and problems were revealed in a matter of hours. This was the major explosion that caused the chain reaction. Why should this acquaintance reveal such secrets when a friend of some twenty years could not? Was that noble principle I had observed merely self-protection? I was not located in this acquaintance's personal network hence the revelations could not really hurt - I was the stranger on the train; not so with my friend - had he rationalised his actions? Thus, the little threads started to come together: Why do some friends offer support and others merely disappear? I began to suspect that there was no pattern to friendship. There was an implication by the discussion I had had, that many people judged their friendships on what they thought them to be rather than what they were. Was this not the reason for my own sense of

betrayal? My friend and I had made no contract to share secrets, I had just expected that this would happen. Was this also true of these others? Did they have a right to expect support? When support was given was it given out of duty rather than friendship? What was clear was that for many of these subjects there was no forgiveness, if a friend had let them down they 'divorced' themselves from their friend.

What then is friendship? Is it merely an ideal existing in a person's head that we ascribe to certain people until proved wrong? Such thoughts dominated my thinking, all thoughts of marital relationships were forgotten..... after all a great deal of work has been carried out by others in that area. My previous research inclinations were forgotten and I fell into an obsession with friendship. Why did it occur? What is it? Is it the same for everybody? Certainly, there are no rituals to bond it, we do not enter into the Teutonic spirit of blood-brotherhood and yet people seem to be saying that they felt them to be more supportive than marriage. It was this obsession that prompted me to try to offer some explanation of friendship.

Naturally such a journey involves re-assessment of one's own thoughts, boring others by the determination to discuss the relationship at every opportunity and creating such opportunities if they did not arise. In short, trying to get a feel for the subject. Although I personally believed that friendship existed I quickly realised that I did not know what it was. Of course, I knew why I disliked certain people, but I could not explain why I considered others to be friends. I expected them to be and knew that they could betray me in certain ways, but at the same time nothing had been negotiated, nothing agreed, so what right had I to feel betrayed? Friendship may be as intangible as

love or God. One can accept the existence without the experience. Such an acceptance merely offers support to one's inner desires: it offers a deeper meaning to life and I want it to exist so I accept that it does. I think therefore it is! I reflected on the classics of my schooldays: those wonderous friendships described by Homer, the discourses of Aristotle and Cicero. Here indeed were descriptions of true friendship, but how could one be sure of their authenticity? Homer, as fiction, may be the representation of one man's ideals; the philosophers tended to extol their relationship with a dead friend. It was highly unlikely that the dead friend would be resurrected to declare: "This was not true, we were never this close". Is there any true account of such a friendship that survives observation, interview and similar accounts from both parties? It could be argued that I termed certain people as friends merely because of the feelings they initiated in me, these relationships had never been tested. Constantly I was brought back to this point: Is a friend in reality the same as what I think he is ideally?

My discussions with friends and acquaintances helped very little. The usual response to "Why do you think we're friends?" was, after a long pause: "I've never really thought about it" or "Friendship's something you don't think about". I tried other avenues: "Why do you think we have friends?" and was informed: "Because....."

Many such attempts to converse on the topic left me feeling that nobody knows or at least they never give much thought to the matter. When pressured my friends could stammer meaning to the relationship:

"I can talk to my friends....."

"They never see you short (money)....."

"They'll protect you....."

But I could never pin anyone down into giving me a tangible reason about what the relationship involved. They gave me expectations, not realities; they had never needed to talk, but knew they could; knew they could borrow money but never would; saw protection as read, friends would not tell you that they had needed to defend you anyway.

My own feelings suggested that I, at least, held a great deal of affection for my friends; it was not sexual or even physical attraction. Indeed, in some instances I found my friends physically repulsive and found it difficult to understand their partner's attraction to them, although I would never declare this! I could not even explain my own affection that I felt for my friends. What did interest me was the difference in my friendships to those of my wife's. I now noticed, as I had not before that her friendships were very different to mine. They seemed to be part of her home and she part of theirs. They invariably met in each others homes, expressed more emotion, touched more often and frequently became locked in conversation (which I had previously assumed to be gossip). My own relationships were not home based. My friends and I always met away from the home, in pubs or sports halls; indeed, we seemed to have a need to structure meetings in each others homes: i.e. 'come for a meal' and such occasions were, or at least seemed to be, quite stilted. Otherwise, home visits were confined to calling for or dropping off, in fact we all seemed ill at ease in one another's homes. My friendships did not seem to exist unless something else was happening: drinking or sport or working;

my wife's existed on top of such activities. My wife and I were connected to our friends at a different level. Another difference existed in the fact that my wife's friends were in some way connected to me, they would talk to me, seek opinions; whereas my friends would only offer my wife a courteous nod or a civil 'hello'.

The culmination of these observations caused me to understand why my wife had friends, I could see the benefits, but not why I had friends. I knew that my own friendships were not bound by proximity, time or communality, but would they exist devoid of something else happening? Were they only bonded by the activity of sport or drinking? In honesty it became difficult to isolate what I got out of these relationships other than someone to do something with and support for my own ideals of friendship. I felt that I could trust them and they me, but this had never been tested. I felt comfortable with them, but only in that they were predictable, their actions held no surprises for me. In terms of structure we had devised codes of speech to exclude others; displayed territoriality in pubs and discussed our feelings about the world. On reflection I felt this to be very superficial, these relationships held no depth, not one of my friends had shared an inner secret with me, nor I with them. There were things that I knew I could never reveal to them, hence, did I trust them? Did we all deliberately prevent that connectedness from the home because of self-protection? In fact, were any of my ideals concerning friendship justified in reality? Did I reflect the general feeling of manhood?

Such thoughts led me back to the premiss that friendship may not exist in reality but only in romanticism. As long as one feels comfortable within a predictable relationship one can rationalise that it is more

than its reality. Friendship may be merely the feeling that others instil in us rather than an affection for another person.

It is, then with this background that I approached this study of friendship; the unbelieving in search of the unattainable? The next chapter will concern itself with how others have portrayed friendship. Such portrayals will be viewed on three levels: the philosophical, the fictional and the research approach.

CHAPTER TWO

A LITERATURE APPRAISAL

A LITERATURE APPRAISAL

This section will concentrate on how the approach for this study was shaped by previous works. The previous literature concerning friendship is quite diverse and in order to consolidate how friendship has been approached in the past, three areas will be examined: Philosophy, fiction and previous research/sociological theory.

Each area approaches the subject in a different way; philosophy for example exemplifies how certain men 'think' about friendship. Although these thoughts may be mere reflections of that person's ideals it does try to approach the subject in a direct manner. The philosophical discourses also illustrate that 'thinking' about friendship is not a new activity; it also suggests that the 'ideals' of friendship have remained quite stagnant for some two thousand years. One should, of course, remember that much of the philosophical material is inter-related: the early philosophers influence the later ones; and that, at best, these discourses represent one man's views on the relationship. Often these discourses are produced as epitaphs for recently dead friends and of course may as a result be 'glorified' - the dead friend cannot 'defend' his stance within the relationship.

Literature in the form of fiction takes a less direct stance. The author's thoughts about friendship, unless specifically addressing the subject, are made by implication. The author seeks to weave a tapestry of life within which his characters move and 'live'; to do this he must represent the everyday expectancies of life. In doing so the author will 'betray' his thoughts about love, marriage and friendship. Because of the subjective nature of this approach certain steps have been taken to minimise misinterpretation and this is discussed in the relevant section.

Research and sociological theory have resorted to the 'direct' approach and attempted to make sense of data gathered about the relationship or applied standard theory to make sense of it 'functionally'.

The examination of these three areas, I suggest, may highlight common expectations about the relationship. Once such expectations have been identified one can compare them with what goes on within actual relationships; the two may not necessarily be related. Again, one must consider that the true spirit of friendship may only exist in thought; a 'universal' acceptance of its existence does not give it reality. Before any explanation of its 'reality' can be attempted one must gather an awareness of what it is presumed to be. Consequently the first notion of this section is to accept the rationale that there is, and always has been (in structured society), an assumption that friendship exists in reality. Evidence of this can be provided by the ancient accounts as illustrated by the classics. It is from these early accounts that I take my starting point:

The Philosophical Approach

The philosopher is concerned with thought, this is the weapon he uses to offer meaning to the often intangible. His armour is logic but even so his starting point can be accused of being illogical. In the following accounts every 'thinker' makes the assumption that friendship is or was a reality. The premise appears to be 'it is, therefore I think'. Their accounts are often protected against judgement, as will be discussed below, and they actively insist that their thoughts have existence in reality with no proof other than their own assertions. It is the contention of this study that the following accounts are purely idealistic and reflect only what these thinkers thought the relationship should be, not what it was.

Perhaps the easiest, although not necessarily the best, starting point for the study of the 'philosophy of friendship' is Aristotle (384-322BC); I could have started with Plato's 'Lysis', but feel that his views are reflected in Aristotle, Aristotle is also the most quoted by other writers. Barnes (1976) informs us that Aristotle converted ethics from a theoretical to a practical science and that he based his thoughts on 'careful observation of life'; whose life exactly is not revealed. For the purpose of this study his discourse will be viewed as an idealistic 'argument' rather than a reality based study. The evidence he offers is well and truly personal; indeed he even limits his observations to his own definition of 'good' men. Bad men, apparently, can never have friends. However, Aristotle is useful in that he frequently alludes to the fiction and folk-sayings of the day, any of which are no longer on record elsewhere. Such action can offer some insight into the general view that the Greeks held about friendship. In 'Ethics' Aristotle betrays his conviction that friendship exists and that it is a necessity; however, his examination is more concerned with what is not a friend rather than what is. Basically he proposes two categories: Association and Perfect friendship.

Association: Is governed by various things: Common interest (clubmanship), utility and pleasure. In this respect, he argues, it is similar to kinship. He uses the term 'secondary friendship' to highlight the types of relationships in which the affection is not invested in the other person but manifests as affection for self based on personal gain. Such gain may take the form of security (as with a ship's crew) or exchange (as in business). He develops his major themes around this type of relationship in order, inversely,

to argue the spirit of true friendship. Thus, in order to understand his thoughts on true friendship, it is necessary to explore Aristotle's view on 'faked' friendship. His discourse identifies two types of false friendship:

- 1 Utility: in which people 'pretended' friendship in order to derive mutual benefit.
- 2 Pleasure: again friendship is faked because the actors gain personal pleasure from the relationship.

In both instances, Aristotle suggests that they are motivated purely out of personal gain and consequently can only ever be accidental in genesis. Due to this 'flimsy' bonding they are short lived since there can be no basis for maintenance once it ceases to be useful or pleasant. Such 'instrumental' friendships, he suggests, are specific to certain age groups. The elderly, for instance, frequently cultivate utility friendships (not wishing pleasure at their age!), along with those wishing to advance themselves (obsequious) and foreigner friendships (business relationships). On the other hand friendships motivated by pleasure are the domain of the young since they are 'regulated' by their feelings. Such friendships of youth, because of their motivation, are easily made and rapidly broken; he insists that friendships made in youth can never develop into true friendship.

One could have many secondary friends, but it is not really friendship - merely association₍₁₎; indeed, we only call them friends because they

(1) This term is here adopted in the sense that Aristotle means it: People who associate with each other.

reflect some of the qualities of 'true' friendship. Although they are equal relationships, i.e. each person gets just as much out of the relationship that they put into it, they are short-lived and hold no real affection; hence they can never be real friendships. Within such 'associations' one will witness many disagreements and arguments between the actors because they are formed on a contractual basis and concern is shown over any breach of contract.

Aristotle also identifies three other relationships which are often falsely mistaken for friendship:

Friendship between those of unequal status: these can never be true friends because those of higher status demand more affection (loyalty, love and respect) than they are prepared to give. These relationships are always based on utility or pleasure since the higher status welcomes the flattery and the lower status is happy to give it in his quest for advancement. This sort of relationship could never develop into a true friendship because people hold expectations about who they can and cannot be friendly with.

Concord: Is not friendship since it is based on common interest and practical ends such as trading or neighbourliness.

Goodwill: Is similar to concord and is often mistaken for friendship; however, it differs in that goodwill can be given to an unknown person and friendship never can. Friendship can, suggests Aristotle, grow from goodwill; thus goodwill is undeveloped friendship and the highest of these secondary relationships.

What then does Aristotle suggest that friendship is? Primarily, he argues, it is a virtue and consequently only possible between good men. It is also a necessity (for good men only?) in that, given all else - health and wealth - nobody would choose to live without it since friendship is crucial for happiness. Similarly one could argue that if badmen can never have friends they have no choice but to live without it, i.e. all bad men must also be unhappy men! He warns us that one should beware of pretenders because all that is amicable is not friendship. Here is the rub for any critics: Aristotle informs us that 'perfect' friendships are naturally rare because really good men are rare. If this is true, then would not happiness also be very rare? In many ways Aristotle appears to be challenging the reader with this point. It is tantamount to a statement that 'if you do not recognise the truth of my logic it is because you have no friends and hence you are a bad man'. A similar challenge, more direct, is offered by Montaigne (see below). However, Aristotle goes on to argue that 'perfect' friendship is based on 'love' for the other person, purely for their character and no other reason. He later confuses this issue somewhat by equating this relationship with self-love which in essence would negate the principle of the relationship. He further argues that this 'perfect' friendship can only develop over time since it is based on knowledge of each other. Furthermore, since it is bonded by love the relationship is permanent and cannot be eroded by distance (of time or proximity). He refutes the Greek adage:

"How oft hath silence cut the bond of friendship?"

Presumably, what Aristotle is saying here is that if a friendship is destroyed by distance then it was not a friendship in the first place!

This permanence is made possible because the relationship is more than a mere feeling, it develops into a state. Within this state true friends enjoy each others company, even in silence, and experience true equality. It is charged by trust and loyalty to the extent that your true friends will protect you from your mistakes and offer constant support in times of trouble. In essence, real friends treat each other as they wish to be treated, love each other as they would be loved. Because of these qualities arguments do not arise and this reinforces the permanent nature of the relationship. However, because this state can only develop over time and via mutual knowledge it is not possible to have many real friends; most good men, he informs us, normally have only one. This is perhaps as well since this relationship is more concerned with giving rather than receiving affection.

The sense of justice displayed within a relationship increases with the intensity of friendship, or so Aristotle suggests; hence it is far more serious to defraud a friend than a fellow citizen, much more serious to refuse help to a friend than a stranger. However, such acts of betrayal are very rare in true friendships and (again the let out clause) when they do arise it is normally because one party was insincere, i.e. pretending to love for material gain. Indeed, Aristotle argues that such acts of betrayal are not possible between men of high character; such actions are those of men of low character and consequently such men can never make real friends.

How such friendships arise, Aristotle dismisses as being irrelevant, although it is only a serious possibility between good men of high character. In summary, Aristotle views friendship as a naturally rare relationship, a virtue enjoyed by good men (he rarely makes

reference to women). It is a permanent, love based, equal relationship that is full of trust, loyalty and support that can only develop over time with shared mutual knowledge. A man can have many secondary friends but few real friends.

Cicero (1971) reflects his views on friendship through the character Laelius; in fact his whole discourse is presented as a kind of play. Falconer (1923) suggests that Cicero was influenced by Aristotle and Xenophon, for source material, and that he 'borrowed' sections from the latter's 'Memorabilia'. There is also evidence to suggest that he was also drawing from a lost treatise of friendship by Theophrastus. In his introduction he declares that 'Friendship is something that everyone ought to think about' and expounds his own views through the conversations of a group of friends. Laelius focusses upon his friendship with the recently dead Scipio to exemplify his ideas. Cicero is making use of what appears to be a philosophical tradition: the example of one relationship to mirror friendship in general. He treads a similar path to Aristotle, but his discourse is more concerned with what he terms 'real' friendship and he only alludes in passing to secondary friendship. Cicero is more structured in his approach and examination of the relationship: he strives to offer definitions and rules for friendship, but agrees, fundamentally, with his Greek counterpart that real friendship is only possible between good men. However, he does offer reasons for this and relates it to the nature of friendship formation. His basic argument is that friendship is created by nature hence only those in harmony with nature, i.e. those illustrating integrity, loyalty, honesty, fairness and generosity - in short good men, can experience the relationship. This principle is reflected in his definition:

".....a complete identity of feeling about all things in heaven and earth; an identity which is strengthened by mutual goodwill and affection....."

Such a relationship, he maintains, cannot exist without goodness.

Good men attract each other, but here again he agrees with Aristotle and states that there are few good men, thus real friendships are few in number. Cicero tends to labour the point with regard to 'goodness' and even suggests a moral code that should govern the behaviour of friends. Unlike other philosophers, he places the state and morals above friendship, insisting that the relationship should never support a friend's wrong doing. To this end he highlights three rules of friendship:

- 1 Do not ask your friend for anything that is wrong and if you are yourself asked, turn down the application.
- 2 Do anything that is right without waiting to be asked and always be ready to help.
- 3 Offer advice, willingly and without hesitation and always pay attention to friends' advice. In this respect one should admonish when necessary.

Following these rules, Cicero alludes to the notion of secondary friendship about which he concurs with Aristotle. His implications suggest that real friends, being good, are incapable of wrong doing. Such behaviour is, however, possible with those men who make friends for the purpose of utility. Wrong doing arises from the want of profit, but real friendship does not develop out of advantage,

although advantage can arise from friendship. This aspect in the true friendship is not important, because, above all else it is the affection that is enjoyed. No advantages are expected within the real friendship, indeed giving and receiving are merely one of the features of the relationship. In reality, he asserts, love is independant of profit and it is from love (amor) that the word friendship (amicitia) is derived. This is further reinforcement of the goodness principle.

Given that Cicero maintains that only the good men have the capacity for real friendship, what does the relationship offer the actors? The Roman is quite certain about this: Real friendship is the greatest of gifts from the Gods, the finest thing in the world; it is even more potent than kinship since the latter can exist without goodwill, but friendship never can. Consequently it should be placed above all other human concerns, since life is not worth living without friendship which a man needs all the time. (What about the bad men?) Cicero is as guilty as Aristotle in this area; the implication is that only certain men are capable of friendship hence the lives of the others are worthless. Nevertheless, he goes on to suggest that as a relationship it offers many benefits, all at the same time and too numerous to describe. The more important of these are trust and honesty; trust and friendship go together and in real friendship no element of falsity or pretence can enter - in fact it cannot help but be genuine and sincere all through. Loyalty and friendship also walk hand in hand since a friend will not believe wrong of his friend and a true friend will refuse to listen to criticism of his friends.

Another aspect that Cicero identified is that of sharing. Sharing in all things, he informs us, is indispensable, since concealment implies no love. Hence friends bare their souls to each other; total truth is imperative because without sharing on this level there can be no loyalty. It is, he suggests, most satisfying to have someone you can speak to as freely as your own self about everything. It is not merely secrets that real friends share since the relationship adds a 'brighter glow' to prosperity and relieves adversity by deviding and sharing the burden. A real friend then is a pillar of support:

"For any human being the best support of all
is friendship."

No barrier, states Cicero, can shut out real friendship (he seems to forget what he said about wrong doings), it is never untimely and never gets in the way. Like a wine it improves the older it gets; with the increase in mutual knowledge affection grows and this authentic friendship is permanent.

Cicero is also much clearer about what he thinks attracts friends, other than sheer goodness, he declares that the essence of friendship must always lie in similarity: The same interests, tasks, aims and views. He also echoes the notion of self-love in that he suggests that when a man thinks of a true friend he is looking at himself in the mirror. The feeling for friends should be identical with the feeling for self. The relationship, based thus, is then reinforced by reciprocal goodwill and equality. As a feeling it transcends absence and even death, since a man retains his presence because his friends cherish and remember him.

He is, however, careful to point out that none of this discourse refers to ordinary commonplace friends; only real friends reflect these qualities and these are so few that in the whole of history only three or four at the most have been lastingly remembered: Theseus and Pirithous; Achilles and Patroclus; Orestes and Pylades; Damon and Phintias.

In summary then, Cicero complements Aristotle's view that real friendship is only possible between good men and that it is very rare. It is a permanent relationship marked by Loyalty, honesty, support, trust and sharing. Interestingly, both 'ancients' suggest that betrayal is not possible between true friends, but equally they both rationalise such acts by suggesting that such relationships were not true friends anyway.

To move a little closer to more modern times, bearing in mind that the classical scholars still influence thinking, it may be beneficial to assess whether or not the 'moral' idealistic notion of friendship has survived the test of time. An examination of Montaigne (1533-1592) illustrates the strong classical influence of Aristotle and Cicero, although he does disagree with some of the issues raised by the 'ancients'. Once again the classical ploy of this type of philosophy is employed: using one 'experienced' friendship to make statements concerning all friendships. Montaigne does not disguise this fact and offers a very personalised discourse.

Montaigne marks out his boundaries from the very start and makes it clear that he is addressing the issues of 'real' friendship:

".....What we commonly call friends and friendships are no more than acquaintanceships and familiarities, contracted either by chance or for advantage....."

This has obvious echoes with Aristotle's secondary friendship and Cicero's 'Ordinary, commonplace friendship'. Montaigne entreats us not to rank his special friend in the same way as these everyday friendships, since:

"Such a friendship has no model but itself and can only be compared to itself."

He suggests that common friendships are divisible but that special friendship cannot possibly be divided in two. He also suggests that such a relationship is above all others:

"A unique.....friendship dissolves all other obligations...."

In this respect he follows the path laid by Aristotle and Cicero, that there are special, real or unique friendships which transcend all other relationships. However, Montaigne strives to place the relationship even higher and disagrees with Cicero's assertion that friendship comes after the state. In Cicero's discourse, Laelius relates the story of Caius Blossius, who concedes upon questioning that had Gracchus (his friend) ordered him to burn down the temples he would have done so; he is condemned for this admission. Cicero implies that this kind of commitment to a friend is offensive (and no doubt because it prompts wrong doing not real friendship), but Montaigne asserts:

"Blossius' answer was as it should have been."

He argues that friends are friends before they are citizens, before they are friends or enemies to their country. Thus, one could suggest that Montaigne places loyalty above that 'goodness' defined by Cicero and subsequently allows 'bad' men to have friends. Burning the temples down would be an anti-social act, it would be wrong and wrong doing suggests 'badness'. However, if Blossius' answer was correct this suggests that bad men can have friends.

One should remember that Montaigne is constructing a discourse to sing the praises of his dead friend Etienne de la Boetie and that his discourse must be viewed in this context. With this in mind one must stress that we have no way of knowing how intense the 'suggested' loyalty was in practice. Montaigne tends to wax lyrical on the subject of loyalty, he reinforces the classical view that you should never believe bad of a friend.

"It is beyond the power of all the arguments
in the world to upset my certainty of my friend's
intentions and judgements."

He supports the notion of a 'love' relationship favoured by the Greeks and Romans and he asserts that 'unique' friendships are spiritual in nature - a joining of souls. He also subscribes to the notion that such friendships are rare:

".....it is something if fate achieves it once
in three centuries."

Thus, we find a dichotomy between Montaigne's view of 'unique' friendship and his description of everyday friendships. Like Aristotle and Cicero, he too professes their rarity, uniqueness, their ultimate

spiritualness. It is a relationship equal in everything and full of trust, to the extent that sworn confidences can be betrayed:

"The secret that I have sworn to reveal to no other, I may without perjury communicate to him...."

This is because such a relationship is an extension of self, as Montaigne reveals:

".....who is no other - but is myself."

This is certainly in tune with 'mirror-gazing'.

He also supports the theory that real friendships do not rely on utility, since there should not be, could not be any profit made from the relationship. He suggests that in friendship the only business is with itself. The profit is the relationship and within its aegis one finds warmth, support and no 'roughness'. Again we find support for this idea that within true friendship disagreement rarely occurs; it is a relationship of mutual enjoyment placed above kinship and all other relationships. Indeed, according to Montaigne, it is deeper than love but not, he asserts, a reflection of self-love. His declarations of affection abound in this discourse and he even suggests that we should not judge him until we experience the same feeling. There is, however, little chance of that since he assures us that such relationships are exceedingly rare:

"But knowing how far from common, indeed how rare, such a friendship is, I have no expectation of finding a competent judge."

Finally, he is quite vague concerning the genesis of true friendship and resorts to using destiny as an explanation suggesting that some inexplicable power brought about '....our union'. Nor can he explain the maintenance of the relationship or the reason why affection should occur:

"....I feel that my only reply could be:
Because it was he, because it was I."

Montaigne, then, whilst following the classical path to some extent suggests some radical departures from the previous 'ideals' of this relationship. He agrees that it is an extremely rare, equal, sharing, loyal and trustful relationship, but takes the 'spirit' of friendship much further placing the obligations of true friendship higher than everything and deeper than love. He does not exclude any strata of men, indeed he makes the idea of friendships between bad men a serious possibility, although he does suggest that women do not have similar relationships:

"There has never yet been an example of a woman's (friendship) attaining to this, and the ancient schools are at one in their belief that it is denied to the female sex."

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) also alludes to friendship particularly in 'The Advancement of Learning'. Although not a specific examination of the subject, he does betray some of his views. He too accepts the notion of friendship on two levels: Friends and Familiar Friends and suggests that a man's virtues and abilities are known from his friends, but that his conceits and opinions only from familiar friends '.....with whom he holds the most discourse.....'. One could suggest that Bacon is implying that one opens up more to the familiar friend in

order to expose one's conceits and opinions. Indeed, he further suggests that such friends help us to think more clearly:

".....friendship maketh daylight in the understanding,
out of darkness and confusion of thoughts....."

However, Bacon holds a more matter-of-fact approach to the relationship and suggests an active process of making friends. He suggests that friends should be made according to the composition of our own natures but that such selection should be made with caution so that one can avoid those likely to involve one in quarrels. This certainly departs from the previous views of 'heaven-made' friendships since it suggests an active and conscious participation in the 'bonding' process.

Although he argues that one receives 'faithful' counsel from friends there is a strong implication of utility in Bacon's stance. Naturally, he is more concerned with the learning process but to suggest using friends to develop one's own intellect is probably tantamount to heresy as far as our previous thinkers are concerned. However, he does suggest that this is possible with friends because one can share thoughts and ideas easily. Thus, Bacon ascribes to the two level friendship theory; sharing/closeness and receiving counsel in faith. Perhaps Bacon offers a more pragmatic view of friendship since he dispenses with the 'love' aspect.

Carlyle (1795-1881) on the other hand adheres to the romantic spirit. He speaks of men being united in love having the capabilities of achieving what a thousand singly could not. Friendship, he suggests, is impossible without mutual devotion to the '.....good and true....', anything else is merely 'armed neutrality or hollow commercial league'.

Carlyle also recognises the dualism of friendship, then; without love, goodness and truth we are left with utility.

If one appraises the themes of these thinkers it transpires that at least one common theme has survived for over two thousand years: the concept that there are two types of friendship, the common, everyday type that is motivated by utility and the special, close type that is based on the romantic spirit. It will be further illustrated that such themes have continued into modern times.

Black (1898) uses the mantle of friendship to extol the virtues of God. Hence, one could argue that he follows the classical mould of associating it with all that is good. He does however deviate from the classical themes and suggests that there was something 'suspect' about the friendships of the ancients'. He even associates their themes with paganism and states that in modern times only the more pagan-spirited writers, such as Montaigne, give it importance. This is the foundation for his stance that friendship, in its true sense, is becoming obsolete; indeed, marriage is now supplying the need of friendship. His basic reasons for this are that friendship requires nurturing and delicate handling to survive.

".....we can kill it by neglect....."

There are two points here that ring discord with the previous views. Firstly, it was placed above all other relationships since it was deeper than any other relationship; hence can it be replaced by marriage? Secondly, it has been argued that there is a spiritual joining in friendship that cannot be eroded, no barrier can keep it out; hence can it be killed by neglect? When one delves deeper

into Black's discourse one can follow the logic of his theory: he is initially speaking of 'secondary' rather than 'true' friendship and tends to mix the two. The decline in friendship is the result of man's basic selfishness although, being a gift from God, it (friendship) is extremely important for life. The text in places seems contradictory and this is created by Black's insistence on encompassing the whole arena of friendship in his discourse. He does make frequent references to 'true' friendship, but offers little to distinguish this from the common-place. In order to illustrate the complications within his discourse (which may well have arisen because he is not addressing a specific friend) let us examine his views on 'bonding':

"Friendship in its essence is spiritual....."

"Friends are born and not made....."

".....this golden friendship is not a common thing to be picked up in the street."

Such thoughts are very much in line with the views already discussed. However, Black goes on to expound the theory that since most men prefer to be loved than to give love we are abusing friendship. This view would appear to be contradictory with the spiritual notion. Later in his argument he offers more clarity and suggests that we apply the term (friendship) to low and unworthy uses to the extent that it runs the risk of losing its true meaning. One makes connections and acquaintances and calls them friendships; in essence we have few friendships because we do not and are not prepared to work on them. Most men, he argues, makes friends easily enough but few keep them. There is further contradiction here: which type of friends do we make easily? If it is the utility kind then there is no reason to maintain them once they have outlived their use. If the true friend:

he has already stated that these are born and cannot be picked up in the street. This then is the conundrum: He agrees with the notion that friends are rare and spiritual in nature; he agrees that there are sundry uses for the term; he even concedes that you cannot force the relationship; but then strikes discord by suggesting that man is at fault. In an attempt to guide us towards the real 'joys' of friendship he develops a set of rules based on the Book of Proverbs (which he suggests is a manual of friendship):

- 1 Economics - there should be sharing and giving between friends in all things.
- 2 Counselling: friends should give and receive advice willingly.
- 3 Help: '....the very word (friendship) suggests kindly help and aid in distress....', friends must give help and support.
- 4 Moral Control: It is a duty of friendship to moderate behaviour as a form of protection. We should prevent our friends from slipping into 'immoral' behaviour.
- 5 Pleasure: Friends should give each other pleasure by providing a sense of belonging.

I argue that Black is merely reiterating the themes of classical writers, but his departure is marked by the stance he takes on these qualities. The classical authors felt that these arose naturally as friendship developed; Black is suggesting that one should make a conscious effort to provide these within a relationship. I argue that direct effort contravenes the rules of romanticism, indeed, Black appears to be making a case for developing the romantic spirit from practical effort. No doubt the classical writers would argue that this cannot be done unless affection

is present and at this stage Black has not considered this aspect. He further complicates the issue by stating that friends '.....come unsought.....', how does this marry with a manual for making friends? I suggest that his two themes, the miracle and the culture of friendship, do not rest easily together. The major problem is that Black identifies two kinds of friendship, but does not treat them separately. He states that true friendship is a miracle, a gift from God; lapses into secondary friendship and then suggests that the former can be achieved by culturing the latter. Whilst I would agree that the former (if it does exist) is spiritual in nature. I would suggest that it cannot be cultured. On the other hand it is relatively easy to cultivate mutual utility friendships. However, the style of argument so far suggests that the two are not and can never be the same; nor are they motivated by similar stimulus.

Black also disagrees with the major themes on two further points. He suggests that the closest friendships are formed in early life whereas it has previously been argued that such relationships are fickle and short-lived. He also suggests that friends fall out of the relationship and that effort should be made to rekindle the bond; this notion too is discordant with previous thinking.

At the end of his discourse, Black suggests that one should use the friendship model to develop one's relationship with God. Thus, despite his earlier argument he too is placing the relationship higher than all others. He does not recommend a relationship akin to the 'sanctity' of marriage or even the master-slave relationship (albeit charged with love) but friendship! Either he is suggesting a utility relationship here or he does indeed recognise the virtues described by earlier writers.

In summary and by way of circuitous routes, Black adheres to the major themes of this relationship. He recognises two kinds, places it higher than any other relationship, agrees that it is rare (albeit for different reasons) and that it carries certain functions/obligations.

The last writer to be examined in this vein and who offers specific thought to friendship is C S Lewis (1963). Lewis declares from the outset that friendship is indeed one of the four loves (the others being affection, charity and eros). Furthermore, it is the highest form of love since it is free from obligations and demand, particularly instinct, duty, jealousy and the need to be needed. He agrees that in essence it is spiritual, but this is true only of real friendship. In modern times, he suggests, the term has been abused and in common usage has little to do with the *Philia* or *Amicitia* of Aristotle and Cicero. When men talk about their friendships they tend to mean companionship or clubableness. These, he suggests, are only the matrix of friendship and not real friendship. Thus, Lewis also identifies a dualistic use and having marked out his boundary: that friendship in the true sense is a spiritual bond, proceeds to dissect its reality.

Lewis confesses that his discourse is a rehabilitation, to encourage him to evaluate his thoughts on friendship, although he too suggests that this is the perfect model for one's relationship with God. The old estimates of the relationship, he declares, were correct; this was true friendship. But, he wonders, where are the overt displays of affections, that friends gave each other then, now? Where are the embraces and kisses? Lewis does not accept Black's view that man is at fault, although he does agree it is in demise; his theory is that

society has constructed a form of structured oppression towards friendship. It is accused of being unnatural - latently homosexual and consequently disliked and distrusted by those in power. His reasoning here revolves around the very nature of true friendship. Taking Carlyle's stance, he argues that it is groups of friends who have changed the world, in this respect they possess power. Every friendship (that is true) is a form of rebellion since it excludes others and because all friendships are thus tainted they are actively discouraged. He also introduces the notion of exclusive friendship between bad men, so he contradicts the ancient mentors that he previously stated were correct in their estimation.

Regarding its frequency, he also asserts that it is rare:

"....few value it because few experience it."

He identifies a definite progression from companionship to friendship, but suggests that ultimately such relationships are engineered by God - they are not choice relationships. However, he does support the Homans' (1951) theory within this premise: friends are developed via common interests; society provides the medium, i.e. schools, workplace, leisure pursuits, and through these we are drawn to those who have similar interests. From these acquaintances we develop special relationships, those who share the same inner experience with us become closer. The bond is developed by an internal quest and not located in the realms of the physical, in this respect it is spiritual. From this initial 'bonding', Lewis believes, the relationship develops over time, we share our inner-selves and love develops. Personal history, status, income and age are unimportant (again he disagrees with the classical writers) since a friend is what he is and one is not interested

in his personal details, only in his inner views. It is this sharing of inner views that bonds friends, because friendship must be about something, even if only an enthusiasm for stamps, and it is this sharing that separates friendship from mere affection.

He carefully distinguishes between male and female friendship, stating that he can only trace the history of friendship in the male line and that he feels male friendships are closer than female. Indeed, he goes on to argue that women actively try to destroy male friendship because of envy. He also argues that opposite sex friends are impossible because of the social expectations involved; consequently such relationships quickly convert to eros.

What, then, does this special friendship offer to its actors? Lewis feels that this relationship, which develops over time, is bonded by sharing. The lovers, he explains, demand privacy and naked bodies, whereas friendship has solitude enforced upon it and requires naked personalities. The true friend bares his soul and, unlike lovers, wishes to share his relationship with other friends. Thus, Lewis implies that it is possible to have more than one close friend. On the functions of friendship, he is in tune with the classical authors since he maintains that these are carried out unconsciously. A friend will prove an ally when required, lend or give when you are in need, nurse in sickness, stand up for you against your enemies and support your widow and orphans. The major theme of Lewis's theory is not that help is given, but that once it is given the relationship does not alter in the slightest. Other benefits include the fact that one can rely on support for one's own opinions, even though friends are far away and that we can trust them since only they know one's true mind. Such qualities will never be found in 'commonplace' friendships even

though such relationships can mirror true friendship. Commonplace friendships mirror true friendships in that they often utilize a secret language or code of behaviour in order to exclude others; however, this is based purely on utility since it is a deliberate ploy. In true friendship such actions are unconscious and not premeditated.

Lewis, then, also sets real friendship apart from other relationships and terms it a purer love than all the others. It is marked by the overt lack of properties that make up the composition of other relationships. Friends, he suggests, hardly ever talk about their friendship, whereas those bound by eros, charity and affection need to and need to be needed.

Conclusion

From this philosophical excursion it appears that several common themes of friendship have been handed down over time:

- 1 A concept of real, true or perfect friendship that stands apart from other relationships and a secondary use for the term based on utility.
- 2 That real friendship is rare, spiritual in nature and natural in origin.
- 3 That certain functions arise, naturally, from the relationship, i.e. Trust, Loyalty, Support, Sharing and Love.
- 4 It is marked by 'feeling' rather than utility; i.e. there is no profit to be made from it.
- 5 That it takes time to develop.
- 6 That friends bare their souls to each other and hence develop a greater knowledge of each other than is possible in other relationships.

I suggest that the above accounts have formed the 'romantic spirit' of friendship, the view of what friendship should be rather than what it is. In essence they inform us what certain men think ideal or perfect friendship should be whilst at the same time suggesting that the majority of us will never experience it because of its rarity. There is no real evidence to suggest that such relationships exist other than the proclamations that some of these men experienced this rarity. It is of course quite possible that the allusions to secondary friendship represent the norm: that this in essence is all that friendship is and that higher order of relationship is pure fantasy. However, I am prompted to accept that there is a dualistic nature to the relationship that exists in theory. Again, in theory there is no reason why it should not exist but so far we have no real evidence of such existence. The object of this section has been to illustrate that the view of 'friendships' has developed along a certain path. To some extent this has been achieved and I will now seek to illustrate the survival of such thinking in the next section.

The next section concerns itself with literature in terms of fiction. The rationale is that the author must either display his own ideals of friendship or base them on his own personal experience. In many ways such offerings adhere to the philosophical approach. One should, in theory, be able to identify the themes outlined by the philosophers if they are truly representative of man's⁽²⁾ idealistic stance. Thus, it is proposed that the framework of friendship suggested by philosophy is used to examine how frequently these themes occur in fiction.

(2) The term 'man', is used, in this context, to represent humanity rather than gender-type.

A GUIDED TOUR OF LITERATURE

Hargreaves (1972) argues that the study of literature would be a valuable exercise that would contribute to the knowledge of friendship; he further states:

"....the wisdom of writers, including poets and novelists, on the nature of friendship.....that has accumulated over the ages, has neither been examined or tested."

Other workers, particularly Brain (1976) and Miller (1983), have made passing reference to the early literary texts, but have in no way examined or tested the themes to any depth. I argue that the study of this area indicates a society's 'background expectancy' of the relationship. Unlike the intricacies of 'lover' relationships, which can take several forms in fiction, friendship is rarely explained as a relationship; there appears to be an assumption of its functions, qualities and existence. Such assumptions are not unique to the classics, where other workers focus their attentions, but are also apparent in more modern 'sagas'. Indeed, one can follow similar 'expectancies' concerning friendship through the development of fiction.

In the classical tomes the virtue of friendship is extolled; the concept of a pure and loving relationship is poetically expounded in true philosophical style. A convenient starting point is the 'David and Jonathan Model', which to some degree continues to echo its 'virtue' in the present. The mythologies of many societies describe similar relationships and it would be impractical to examine them all in this text, consequently I will simply explore the recurring themes.

The David and Jonathan Model

This model is identified as the epitome of friendship, the ultimate peak of the relationship. Modern writers rarely allow similar passion when describing its modern equivalent, perhaps because, as Lewis (1963) suggests, it would be viewed in a perverse way. However, the Bible portrays the relationship between these two warriors as being charged with a passion that even surpasses the love of women (one assumes the love a man might have for a woman). So similar is this relationship to the philosophical model that it could have been scripted by Aristotle. We are told that Jonathan's love for David placed the latter above the former's regard for the state (above his own father in fact); and that, as their souls knitted together, Jonathan loved David '.....as his own soul.'. This relationship was marked by 'inner feeling', love, trust and loyalty. In fact, the relationship was based on mutual understanding and admiration with no selfish or sexual motive, continuing until death did them part. These attributes certainly mirror the philosophical model of love and permanence. Similarly, there were no secrets within this bonding and each held the understanding that David would care for Jonathan's orphans on his death.

This 'romantic' view of friendship survived, certainly until medieval times and one could argue that the David and Jonathan model formed a framework for the later writers. The 'learned' men of later times were to a large extent educated via the scriptures and classics and could have been heavily influenced by the style of prose.

The classical equivalent of David and Jonathan can be found in Homer's representation of Achilles and Patroclus. This relationship was also brimming with love and mutual admiration; indeed the cynic may suggest

it is in reality the same story. The theme is the same: Achilles cast in the Jonathan role of lord to Patroclus's squire David. The outcome is different in that in the Greek version it is the squire who expires, although the dialogue has a familiar ring. Achilles declares:

".....my dearest friend is dead, who was
more to me than any other of my men, whom
I loved as much as my own life."

The two characters shared everything and indulged in overt displays of emotion, just as their biblical counterparts did. When Patroclus dies Achilles casts himself on the floor, tears his hair out, rubs dirt into his face and even arranged for a mutual grave so that:

".....their bones lie together....."

Both David and Achilles conform to the model in patterns of grief and, from the 'stories' we are led to believe that this is normal action on the part of friends.

The 'love-based' friendship, or David and Jonathan Model, between men, has survived literary interpretation through time. The medieval equivalents can be witnessed in the sagas of Roland and Oliver, Hrothgar and Beowulf and Amis and Amiloun. The authors of these relationships identified clear obligations within the relationships. The friend was placed above all others, would defend his friend's image/persona until death and would be the chief mourner at his funeral; similarly the relationships are all arising from 'warriorhood'. Many of these obligations are viewed, in modern times, as the responsibilities of kin. In the classics we are called on to share

the grief of close friends, it is much more than a family affair.

The medieval sagas, as mentioned above, continue this notion of love, bravery and ultimate idealism. For example, Amis and Amiloun share a mutual love, which, like David and Jonathan, surpasses the love of women. So strong is this love that Amis kills his two small sons in order to heal Amiloun; indeed, the song informs us that they were bonded in all things:

"In word, in work, in will, in deed."

Brain (1977) describes such portrayals as the peaks of the cultural history of friendship. One could also suggest that they represent the peaks of idealism, glorified by poetic licence. These accounts are so intertwined with virtue that it is often difficult to disseminate when friendship begins and 'moral character' ends. In many ways they read akin to the 'this is the key to the kingdom of heaven' scripts. Just as one is expected to have an 'unrealistic' purity for total salvation, so too must one invest totally in another before it can be called 'true' friendship. Arguably, one is examining the Abelard and Heloise or the Romeo and Juliet of same-sex friendship. Just as love reaches its ultimate, idealistic pinnacle in romantic fiction, so too does friendship. Both are as equally passionate and yet equally as tragic; in short they are so perfect they cannot survive in the real world: Abelard is castrated by Heloise's uncle; Romeo contrives to die by 'misguided' suicide; Patroclus is killed safeguarding Achilles' reputation; Amiloun chooses leprosy and poverty rather than desert Amis.

A Variation on a theme.....

Other authors have sought to combine the notions of love and friendship by taking a variation on the theme: two men locked in friendship because of the mutual love of a woman. Perhaps this is an attempt to give the bonding a more macho image, considering Lewis's (1963) point that such close relationships amongst men have been eroticised. The major attributes of loyalty and trust continue, as does the warrior theme, but the reason for bonding is far more structured. The friends do not merely 'arrive' due to mutual attraction but share anchorage through a third person. Rostand's (1953) *Cyrano* is a case in point: both Cyrano and Christian are bonded by their love of Roxane. The bond allows Christian to take liberties with Cyrano (jibes about his nose) and causes Cyrano to protect his friend. Sensing Roxane's preference, Cyrano aids Christian in his wooing of Roxane which leads to their marriage. Christian discovers the truth, that Cyrano loves Roxane, and insists that this truth is revealed, so that Roxane can make an 'informed' choice. He subsequently goes to his death in battle, but whilst dying from the wounds the distraught Cyrano lies, saying that he has revealed all but Roxane loved Christian. For years after Cyrano maintains a friendly contact with Roxane and she only discovers the truth minutes before Cyrano's death, where it is revealed that she would have reciprocated. Here, then, we have the marrying of both ideals: unrequited and tragic love for a woman and the fatality of close friendship!

Dickens' (1980) steers a similar course in '*A Tale of Two Cities*' where a triad is portrayed, the Darnays and Sydney Carton. In this instance Carton takes Darnay's place at the guillotine for no other motive than love, insisting that:

"It is a far, far better thing I do....."

Greater love hath no man, one might echo, with liberal sprinklings of...

"How are the mighty fallen....."

One interpretation of such 'stories' might be that one does not die for love of a friend or lover, or indeed for the lack of it, but for the ideal of either. The actualisation of ideals, it seems, is romantic and romance is about 'suffering'. Thus, we arrive at a point where both literature and philosophy attempt to explain what the relationship should be and that suffering makes it all the more virtuous.

More Variation

In the accounts so far we have been informed that friendship is about love; that it is noble and pure and so deep in its feeling that even death cannot diminish it. The accounts above have taken a direct approach to narrate the relationship. Another variation used to imply the power of friendship concentrates on the inherent dangers of contravening the 'rules'. The act of betrayal between friends does not merely bode ill for the 'actors' but can lay waste whole societies. This theme is utilized by many authors from ancient to modern times. A gross breach of the friendship clause invokes the hand of fate and gods. The portrayal of the consequences of betrayal is witnessed in the Arthurian legends: Lancelot and Arthur are close friends, in the traditional sense; Lancelot, with a little aid from witchcraft, falls for Guinevere; their subsequent affair ultimately destroys the very foundation of civilization and restores war to the land: Arthur dies, Guinevere enters a nunnery and Lancelot

is distraught. The triad is the same but here falls short of ideal nobility and honesty with fatal consequences. This variation introduces the notion of 'extended incest' into the friendship relationship. It appears to be an unwritten law that one does not find a friend's partner sexually attractive, much less do anything about it. Generally, this 'law' can be encompassed under the 'Do your friend no harm' rule, of which Shakespeare makes great use.

Brutus's part in the slaying of his friend, Julius Caesar is rewarded by hauntings and the division of Rome by war. Shakespeare is using poetic licence here, since we know from Plutarch that they were never really friends; but it is a theme preferred by the bard. The wrath engendered by this treacherous act explains everything. Macbeth survives the murdering of Duncan and Macduff's family with no more than a twinge of guilt, but his deed towards friend Banquo are similarly rewarded by hauntings which initiate the 'worthythane's' downfall.

In these accounts the true spirit of friendship is portrayed via contravention of the rules rather than by direct praise. Interestingly, the outcomes are equally tragic: being true and loyal to one's friend is as drastic as betraying that friend. In both cases, one might suggest that true friendship should be avoided because of its dangerous nature; ideal love and friendship should, indeed, carry health warnings if these fictional accounts are anything to go by.

The Story So Far.....

There has, then, been a commingling of Love and Friendship in literature. Both relationships appear to epitomise the romantic notion of love and its ultimate tragedy. In fact, one could suggest

that, in a romantic sense, they reinforce the philosophers claims of rarity: such closeness is rare because one or both parties die, leaving witnesses with the expressed 'Tennyson Syndrome', the praise of dead friends.

Considering Lewis's rationale that in modern times we decry male friendship because of its homosexual context, how does the modern author deal with friendship as an expectancy? In essence the themes of friendship are very similar, as are the variations. Lawrence has been accused of exploring the homosexual theme because of his regard for deep and emotional ties between his male characters. One could argue that Lawrence was bitten by the classical spirit and to this extent his male friends always tend to have special relationships. At times he could switch the characters from male/female to male/male and retain the essence of the story. Lawrence's friends share everything, are distraught at a friend's downfall, and, in the absence of the warrior-bond, even discuss formalising their relationship via 'Blutbruderschaft':

"Make a little wound in their arms, and rub each other's blood into the cut?" Said Gerald.

"Yes - and swear to be true to each other, of one blood, all their lives. This is what we ought to do. No wounds, that is obsolete. But we ought to swear to love each other, you and I, implicitly, and perfectly, finally, without any possibility of going back on it."

(Women in Love, 1960)

The exploration of the true spirit of friendship is a common theme in much of Lawrence's work and one could suggest that he has suffered for his 'classical' interpretation of the relationship. However other authors betray the same notions with less intensity.

One finds the 'greater hath no man' aspect in Steinbeck's 'Of Mice and Men' (1970). The friendship of George and Lenny, albeit a kind of parent-child relationship, is very much charged with love. Indeed, George depends the whole narrative of the story protecting his half-wit friend and then commits the ultimate act of friendship: He shoots Lenny to save him from the torment of the lynch-mob. This, one could argue, is an act of love on George's part since he can no longer protect Lenny, he can no longer save him, better to kill Lenny as a friend than allow the indignity of death by the enraged mob.

Others exemplify the spirit in the Shakespearean style: Gerald Green (1978) in his novel 'Holocaust' implies the hand of God in rewarding betrayal. Hans Helms, recently recruited to the SS betrays Rudy, a friend since boyhood and Jewish. He shortly after realises the principle of 'Arbeit Macht Frei' - he is blown to pieces in a booby trap. The Arthurian example can be explained as an act of social wrath, Shakespeare as psychological 'hang-up', but surely Helm's fate is the result of divine intervention. Similarly, Le Carre in 'Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy....' (1980) uses this inverse code. The Mole, Haydon, having been exposed and shown to be directly responsible for Prideaux's crippled state, is despatched to the after life by Prideaux. This is a just and rational act, in true Weberian sense, since they had been long standing friends.

Indeed, both examples appear to be examples of the traitor getting his just desserts, not necessarily because they are 'bad' men but because they betrayed a friend; it does help and add to the sense of justice that they are bad, however, and it also reinforces the philosophical notion that 'bad' men are incapable of true friendship.

Less severe, but of equal regularity, is the diminished Arthurian theme, where characters stress their friendship by lack of direct action. This variation is frequently used in the modern novel. Raphael adopts it in 'Richard's Things' (1973), when Peter confesses that he would never have made amorous overtures to Kate, Richard's widow, had Richard still been alive because Richard was his friend. Indeed, he is still inhibited in his actions because he was Richard's friend. The same theme, with a subtle difference, is used by James Mitchell in 'Goodbye Darling!' (1980): Malcolm, a homosexual, is a close friend of Janet, Jacko's wife; Malcolm confesses, albeit to himself, that although he finds Jacko attractive he would never make an approach because of the implicit act of betrayal.

The dual concepts of protection and greater love are being used here; one places one's friends above all others and similarly does them no harm. The two concepts are intertwined and should either attribute be contravened certain devastation will occur. This concept of fidelity within friendship far exceeds that expected within the 'lover' relationship; the fidelity expected in friendship extends beyond the person and is attributed to relationships with significant others. In this respect, I argue that the possibility of betrayal within friendship far exceeds that of the lover's relationship.

The Leitmotif

Despite the variations on the theme of friendship, there appears to be a recurring melody lingering behind the prose that adheres to that originally scored by the philosophers. One should remember that the novelist is treating friendship, in most instances, as a background expectancy which complies to certain rules. A more in depth view is

offered when novels set out to explore the relationship specifically, akin to the Lawrencian stance. Julian Mitchell, in 'The Undiscovered Country', whilst adhering to the principles of Romantic Friendship makes the point:

"I worshipped him.....devotion.....made up of awe, liking, puzzlement and perfectly innocent love. I don't think Charles ever reciprocated this feeling, but our closeness was recognised..."

It could be suggested that, had this disclaimer not been added, over time this one-sided portrayal would have been viewed in true David and Jonathan tradition. Indeed, the book could be viewed as a sepulchre to a dead friend. In it Mitchell explores all the attributes of true friendship; he even explores the Baconian principle of friends making sense of one's thoughts:

"My apprehension of reality was a jumble of unrelated, often non-sensical impressions, Charles related them organised them, explained them to me."

He explains how they shared happiness and grief together; in true spirit, Charles' and Julian's conversations are never superficial but always plumb the depths of meaning; also, time and distance do not devalue the relationship, they pick up their interaction after months or years as though it had never been interrupted. Mitchell states that this is:

"...the friend who meant more to me than anyone else had ever done."

He also places the relationship above any other, but cannot explain why:

"I don't understand our relationship any better because it is over....."

Like all true romanticised accounts 'The Undiscovered Country' is a tragedy, Charles dies young and denies the promise of the permanent bond of real friendship.

In essence, Mitchell has produced an account of friendship which equals the funeral orations of David or Achilles. It is an attempt to exorcise and make known, what he felt about the relationship, what he calls an attempt at a serious novel. It is the modern equivalent of Aristotle and Cicero to the extent that those readers who have ignored the ancients may suggest that there is something more than pure love here. Such suspicions would, indeed, be worthy of Lewis's (1963) contempt. There is, perhaps, a homosexual element in Mitchell's prose, as there is in Lawrence's, but it is not governed by 'eros'. What Mitchell appears to be saying is that in such a love the penetration of body boundaries should not matter - providing no harm arises from it. This relationship is not physical and any physical connotations arise purely out of 'soul-bonding'. Mitchell has, intentionally or not, resorted to the Leitmotif first hummed by the ancients in describing a relationship based on pure love rather than utility.

The Symphony

If one imagines that all authors are musicians contributing to the overall symphony that plays the friendship tune, one can see that they follow a similar score. The recurring theme is present but in most novels it is dealt with as an expectancy, the tunesmith expects the listener to recognise the tune. In much the same way as the

listener holds expectations of what, for instance, Beethoven's Ninth will sound like, so too do novelists expect the reader to recognise the finer elements of friendship. In this respect the bifurcation of friendship into close and other, is never overt. Friends tend to be treated 'en masse' and one must 'dig' for the differences. In general the novelist's portrayal of friendship tends to confirm to the expectancy clause. Friends are close both physically and mentally and often indulge in certain rituals that place them apart from other characters. Certain themes of expectancy can be identified, however, and these will be dealt with in a systematic way.

The first theme is that of 'innocent' touching since one could suggest that this is an overt display of intimacy. Le Carre suggests that English friends have no real way of greeting each other (The Honourable Schoolboy), but in the novel other actions display that people are, at least, friendly. Again, one might assume that it is the accepted 'norm', according to various authors' views of reality, within the relationship. In some cases the friendly act of touching is qualified in a way that the reader is expected to understand; the use of non-threatening touch is a strong aspect in the portrayal of friendship in fiction:

"Connelly gripped Wilson by the shoulder....."
(Shaw R, The Hiding Place)

"We occasionally rested arms on each other's
shoulders....." (Mitchell;The Undiscovered Country)

"He threw his arms around my neck....." (ditto)

Such displays of affection are normally reserved for lovers only and other such intimate relationships. It is the touch of support,

reassurance and caring. When it does not occur 'naturally', the novelist evolves elaborate rituals to allow its fruition. Between males such actions are normally reflections of the 'macho' spirit, acts of choreographed aggression or the pretend fight. The ultimate physical encounter between two male friends is again offered by Lawrence in 'Women in Love', when Rupert and Gerald wrestle naked. One might feel that Lawrence is flirting with the homosexual arena, but overall he is only intensifying that which other authors have portrayed. The friendly fight is often used to imply affection between friends. Raphael uses this ploy regularly. Mike and Dan (Glittering Prizes) and Stephen and Gideon (Heaven and Earth) often resort to the friendly fight in order to make physical contact. Julian Mitchell also endorses this concept:

".....punched each other on the arm....."
(Undiscovered Country)

It appears to be a way of portraying a difference within one relationship that is absent between the characters and others. It sets the relationship apart and the reader is expected to accept it, just as one would with lovers. It is a normal and natural activity that close friends enter into.

Acts of exclusion, or intimacy, are further reinforced by 'secret' language codes: Characters take part in verbal rituals the meaning of which is known only to the 'members'; the nickname and 'short-hand' speech are examples. Lewis (1963) argued that such codes are devised consciously to exclude others, although it could be equally true that they are merely devised to include 'members' in a relationship without consideration to others. They suggest the intimacy of the

relationship. Mike and Dan (Glittering Prizes) adopt 'wild-west' accents during their fight routines; Steven (Heaven and Earth) refers to Gideon as 'Gidman'; Le Carre similarly causes Smiley and Westerby (Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy) to go through a Red Indian Pantomime:

"How" as a greeting, and "Too much wampum
bad for braves."

Julian and Charles (The Undiscovered Country) also display this form of 'inclusion':

"Comewel." To which the other should answer,
"Bad to glee here."

These verbal rituals can take on many forms and one of the favourites for the novelist is the mutual insult. James Mitchell's 'Callan' frequently criticises 'Lonely's' personal hygiene in an affectionate way. This act of 'inclusion' is summed up quite succinctly by Sparks in 'Accident':

"They were old friends, and this kind of deprecatory
banter was a standard opening to any conversation."

In many ways, one could suggest that it is a more intimate form of the banter devised by RAF squadrons; the ritual does not only suggest 'togetherness' but also a negotiated history between the characters. The liberal use of puns between Stephen and Gideon (Heaven and Earth) can only have evolved over time. Within a group, such as the RAF, new comers are required to learn the banter from others, i.e. it already exists; between two friends they must both actively develop the code from 'scratch'.

Within the symphony of friendship, then, novelists tend to follow a similar theme which indicates that friends share a unique relationship. A popular 'key' that they use to do this is the 'inclusion-key' where characters betray their togetherness through touching rituals and special language codes. The style of orchestration appears to be adopted in the assumption that this will be recognised by the reader as the natural key and tone of everyday life.

Operatic Interpretation

In order to emphasise the friendship of characters even more, many authors attempt to explore the meaning of friendship. When attempting this, it seems, the background expectancy approach of the 'symphony' is not enough and they resort to the operatic model. This approach offers the reader a structured plot where he need not necessarily recognise the tune being played. Readers are led along a certain route so that they too can explore 'new' ground. This approach to friendship is more direct, words are given to the music so that the reader can recognise the depth of the relationship that might not be apparent by implication. Raphael uses this approach quite often in his works. Indeed, in some stories he causes the characters to perform an autopsy on the term. In both 'The Best of Friends' and 'Heaven and Earth' the characters not only explore the meaning, but the functions. Such 'post mortems' usually commence with:

"I'm not sure I'm all that good at friendship.....
I'm not sure that I even know what it's supposed
to be." (Best of Friends)

"I'm not sure what you mean by friendship....."
(Heaven and Earth)

These are the type of opening lines to the opera that allow the author to develop a meaning to the plot. Ultimately the Romantic Spirit is used as the Leitmotif, as discussed above:

"I loved him without wanting him in any physical way....."

".....We came together by sheer accident...."
(Heaven and Earth)

But with the operatic approach the author is allowed to explain his interpretation of this theme. Julian Mitchell, whilst adhering to the principles, offers a fuller explanation of Charles and Julian's relationship. He can now explain to the reader that this relationship was one of love, not erotic, which was developed by chance and that deep friendship is not chosen.

This libretto added to the theme allows the author to take the implicit intimacy and enrich it with intensity. Friends can be treated like lovers, placed apart from the everyday characters, given a unique history and a private world. The reader can now witness the depths to which the relationship takes its characters. The model allows characters to share secrets, to bare their souls and confess inner fears. The conversations of these friends are never trivial but always sincere, deep and often dangerous. In 'Heaven and Earth', Stephen and Gideon often bare their souls to each other; Stephen tells Gideon that his wife takes lovers, Gideon reveals that his wife loves Stephen. Charles and Julian (Undiscovered Country) share similar intimacies: Charles revealing that he may be homosexual.

The sharing of self is part and parcel of the interpretation of friendship in the novel. It is further development of the relationship from implicit closeness (through rituals) to actual closeness (through self-revelation). In short it underlines the fact that these characters are closer than any others. Indeed, Raphael suggests, in 'Heaven and Earth', that one should always keep at least one secret from a lover, but never ever one from a close friend. This elaboration of the 'symphony' can be witnessed in many novels, particularly Lawrence, Raphael, Le Carre, Julian Mitchell and James Mitchell.

The author, then, uses this particular style to illustrate that real friends do not wade, gingerly, through the shallows of conversation, but plunge head first into the deep end. Friendship is given deeper meaning, intensity, trust and love. It also allows further elaboration of the obligations of friendship and a great deal of concentration is given to honesty in this respect:

"A friend is someone who can be honest with you;
nothing more, nothing less." (Heaven and Earth, 1985)

The presence of honesty, or its declaration is a major theme of the operatic style:

"You don't mind me being honest do you?
Only we've been friends for so long." (Richard's Things)

The actual delivery of the dialogue can take many forms and is often linked to the 'banter' rituals in that when the banter stops it is honesty; or if a friend gets upset by the honesty the banter is used as if to declare 'I'm speaking as a close friend'. As with

the conversations, honesty between friends is rarely superficial and can be viewed as quite cruel on occasions. Julian Mitchell favours this blunt approach:

"You'll never be a poet, I'm afraid. I've seen the odd things of yours here and there and you just haven't the gift."
(The Undiscovered Country)

This type of exchange further reinforces their togetherness. Friends rarely take offence at the words and it also illustrates the differences between relationships. A character may be tactful to the point of outright dishonesty but not with a friend. In Raphael's words:

"Only that's part of friendship too, isn't it; knowing when to be tactless?"
(Richard's Things)

or, as Bradbury explains:

".....it's called friendship and it means you can despise him" (The History of Man)

The honesty between fictional friends is a declaration of togetherness; it utilizes the philosophical model in that honesty and secret-sharing can only be developed by mutual trust and knowledge of each other.

Thus the author uses this aspect of the theme to illustrate intensity, closeness, honesty, protection and love. He can elaborate on any of these aspects, show how one friend shares another's grief or happiness and the lengths a friend will go to in protection. In short, it is used to segregate special friends from the rest of the cast by

refining the qualities normally expected in friendship.

This theme is also used to identify those characters who are not close friends. Since friends tend to be treated 'en masse' in that they all share the superficiality of the relationship, it is also important to indicate when there is a lack of intensity. The novelist, to some extent, appears to recognise the principles of utility and pleasure; and whilst such relationships may indulge in the expected rituals it is made clear that it is at a different level. When Adam (Glittering Prizes) wants a favourable review for his latest book he contacts Anna, the BBC's literary genius, and remarks to his wife:

"Funny how you remember old friends like that...."

Julian Mitchell graphically portrays the pleasure friendship in 'A Circle of Friends' and makes it clear that this is not the type of friendship that holds no rules, stating that one of the circle's rules was never to stay away from each other for more than a few hours. Thus, the scripting allows the author directly to declare intensity and to use the term, friendship, in other ways. The close friends of fiction, however, closely resemble those outlined by the philosophers in that they do not depend on regular contact; they share happiness, sorrow and secrets; offer protection; are loyal; give support; are trustworthy and share love; in short they reflect the 'ideal' of perfect friendship said to exist.

The Composers

Where then do the authors develop their ideas of the expectancies from? Is it pure inspiration like their musical counterparts? Or based firmly

on experience? In an attempt to 'discover' the foundation for friendship, in the novel, several 'living' authors (twenty) were approached; only five replied (Appendix A). All were asked whether they based their portrayal of friendship on experience or what they thought friendship ought to be.

Le Carre was most succinct:

"Your question is unanswerable"

Iris Murdoch stated that it was 'invented' but that friendship is a huge concept covering many different relationships, although speaking personally she feels that it includes loyalty, love and duty. James Mitchell tries to include the whole range of relationships in his novels and feels that most of his fiction is based on personal experience and observation. He recognises the notions of friendship and acquaintanceship and states that friendship, in its best form, can be as important as the kind of emotion felt towards a woman.

Frederick Raphael's friends are frequently aggressive to each other, if not outright hostile. Indeed there is an implication in his work that friendship is not so firmly bonded. In *Glittering Prizes*, Adam can never resist an opportunity to show his friends that he does not need them; in *'Lindmann'* one character only ever shouts at his friends; in his latest book (*Heaven and Earth*) the two close friends divorce each other on a train. Perhaps this reflects his own experience, as indicated in his letter and yet there is still the air of romanticism in his work. He misses friendship more than love, but has not really believed in it since his schooldays. He admits that he has:

".....never been too clear about what friendship is about."

and this is reflected in his character's dialogue (see above). Indeed, in some cases his characters conspire to prevent real friendship and if this is an indication of his experience, his acceptance of the romantic notion of friendship might reflect his ideals. Montaigne could accuse him of never having a real friend, but, like the rest of us, he might hope that they do exist.

Julian Mitchell has betrayed similar uncertainty in his works, but feels that he bases his themes on experience. He also makes the point that it is a vast subject and a fuller account of his views is offered below (see Appendix B).

Final Chorus

In essence, I have returned to my prelude since the fictional contributions to the friendship 'overture' are based on a mixture of invention and experience. There is an implication that friendship does carry expectations whichever foundation is used. The notion of categorisation is also apparent, as it is in the philosophical model. Indeed, the marrying of philosophy and fiction at this stage would not result in disharmony; both explore similar themes, both extol similar virtues. Overall, they form a composite picture of what real friendship is expected to be. In the absence of 'data' one cannot accept that this is what friendship is. Hence the next section will examine how the academic world has explored the intricacies of this relationship.

THE ACADEMIC MODEL

Authors from the academic world of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Psychology have made tentative steps in the examination of the nature of friendship. Often this takes the anti-Baconian stance of armchair speculation or outright theorising developed from associated observations. Previous studies in the area of friendship tend to be vague as to the type of relationship actually in focus and could be accused of treating all 'friendly' relations as friendship. Indeed, there is much argument that the world of academia has not effectively examined the subject at all (Paine, 1969; Hargreaves, 1972; Seiden and Bart, 1975; Smith, 1977; McCall and Simmonds, 1978; Hess, 1979; Nicholson, 1980; Acker et al, 1981; Miller, 1983). Such arguments suggest that friendship has been neglected by the social sciences due to the concentration on kinship and that no attempts have been made to define the meaning of the term.

"What crystallizes or breaks a developing friendship?
.....How does a person's conception of friendship
change with increasing age? Do males have different
conceptions of friendship than females?.....
Questions such as these have hardly been examined
at all, even though they are among the most fundamental
issues in the field." (Hargreaves, 1972)

Klein (1965) suggests that the word 'friend' is frequently confused with relative and neighbour and Gibbs (1962) argues that the interest in kinship overshadows that of friendship. Nicholson (1980) laments the lack of definition of friendship in most works. Paine (1969) is the most succinct on this subject, claiming that the subject has received meagre attention and suggests that:

".....there are no short cuts in the comparative sociology of friendship - we have to think hard about what we mean by the word 'friendship'."

Although more attention has been given over to the study of friendship during the last five years, few appear to have heeded Paine's advice. The American emphasis on friendship, particularly in the field of Social Psychology, tends to take a definite positivist stance and this approach has crossed the Atlantic in force. Unfortunately this approach appears to present problems when attempting to explain the relationship. To paraphrase Paine (1969) many workers do attempt to take shortcuts in their efforts to gather information; at best their data is subjective and relies on 'outside' methods which often leads to an examination of the outsider's meaning rather than that of their subjects. Strauss (1969) argues that value attributed to an object is not put in it, it is in fact a subjective judgement and consequently the value does not exist. Hence, since it does not contain value per se it must be experienced by the persons for the value to be recognised. One would argue that this is particularly pertinent when studying friendship and its 'meaning' and that it cannot be recognised by pure 'outside' techniques.

Over the years these 'skirmishes' in the friendship arena have developed various theories concerning the initiation and maintenance of the relationship. It has been approached by way of network theory, behaviourism, structuralism and various other schools of thought, but whichever approach is used conclusions derived tend to embrace one of the three major theories: Attraction, Propinquity or Common Interest. Whilst these theories add to the general pool of knowledge they offer very little information about what friendship means to a

person or its social value; indeed previous work seems content merely to explain what goes on in the encounter. One conclusion that could be drawn from these studies is that there appears to be an assumption that there is a universally accepted structure and meaning to friendship. Even though it has been pointed out that different social classes have different concepts of friendship (Ford 1969) the approach and interpretation of data varies very little. Duck (1977), who suggests that friendship develops from acquaintanceship, argues that:

"Acquaintance is taken for granted as an everyday part of life....."

One would extend this to friendship and argue that not only is it taken for granted by the actors but also their observers. The assumptions concerning friendship tend to disguise its convoluted nature; whilst there may well be a standard 'idealistic' view, one should consider that each person may offer different interpretations of its meaning. I argue that a person's concept of friendship is shaped by their ideals developed from their personal history. Strauss (1969) suggests that:

".....past and future impinge upon and influence action in the present."

In this respect friendship could be seen as a continually developing concept influenced by the social context in which it occurs. For this reason the collection of cross-cultural data may provide little of use since the actions of one culture cannot be generalised to another. Indeed, it may even suggest that the findings from one group cannot

be generalised to another even though they co-exist in the same culture; or it may even cast doubt on the feasibility of comparing values within the group. I argue that before any explanation of friendship can be offered, the values expressed by the actors must be examined and common themes identified. The starting point for previous studies appears to rely upon decisions being made about friendship's nature by outsiders prior to the commencement of the investigation. Again, Strauss (1969) maintains that the act of identifying objects, human or physical, allows a person to organise his actions with reference to those objects and that the subsequent act of naming a thing is to place it in terms of something else: one ascribes meaning without description. Hence, it is quite possible to ascribe meaning to an interaction and assume that a general description exists and is acceptable. This appears to be the trap that previous studies have fallen into since they make the assumption that friendship does not require explanation; nor do they attempt to define or describe the type of friendship that they are investigating although there is awareness of its varied meanings. Reviewing this literature then, may only offer information concerning the expectancies of friendship as held by researchers.

A suitable starting point may be to offer brief descriptions of the three major theories:

Attraction Theory has drawn the most interest in recent years and suggests that we make friends with people who are like us in terms of physical appearance, attitudes, behaviour, beliefs, lifestyles or intellect (Precker, 1952; Byrne, 1971; Newcomb 1961; Ford, 1969, Nash, 1973; Berscheid and Walster, 1974; Bensman and Lilienfeld, 1979; Duck, 1983; Hays, 1984). In some respects, this theory is a development of

Freud's self-love concept, since it suggests that we only choose friends who are like us. Conversely one would never make friends with an opposite.

Propinquity Theory is a variation of the above and owes much to Homans (1951). This theory suggests that the closer two people are located in space the more they interact and consequently like each other (Homans, 1951; Festinger et al, 1950; Form, 1974). Once distance, spatially, enters the relationship it tends to deteriorate. Conversely, Hargreaves (1972) argues that we are just as likely to dislike such persons and highlights anomalies where this kind of interaction is regular but lacks friendship.

Common Interest Theory suggests that people are bound in friendship when they share common goals (Sherif, 1966). These relationships disintegrate when the goals are removed.

The studies that have occasioned the evolution of these theories concern themselves with identifying the motives and functions of a relationship assumed to exist. Since there is no universal meaning of friendship and, arguably, people do not normally construct their realities from dictionary definitions, the actions under scrutiny may have many different motives. Assuming that one is investigating friendship does not necessarily reveal information regarding friendship. Previous studies tend to adopt the rationale that friendship is stable in quality and meaning, that it is an absolute. Strauss (1969) suggests:

"Different groups of men have characteristic perspectives and so neither name objects identically nor possess exactly equivalent systems of classification."

Consequently the assumption of similarity can impose suspect findings. I argue that differences in perspective and classification are the products of personal histories, and, as Nietzsche argues, society does not and cannot exist without history. Sherif (1966) claims:

".....whether we like it or not, history enters into the very definition of the problem of intergroup attitudes and the images we have of our own and other groups."

This suggests that a persons' definitions of certain objects will be different and that an observer's history will influence how he defines the images he witnesses. Thus, the subjective or outsider approach to friendship could adopt the principle of what Lippman (1922) terms defining first and then seeing. If one pre-defines friendship they will subsequently witness those actions they expect to see. Since each actor's definition of friendship may differ an approach based on a generally assumed meaning must be invalid.

In essence, the above theories of friendship need not necessarily be right or wrong. They may, indeed, describe certain types of relationships that are referred to as friendships or the types of activities that can be observed in friendly relations; one should, however, be cautious of accepting them as a 'rule of thumb'.

".....our survey and analysis does warn against facile interpretation of data on the friendship choices of children at school." (Hargreaves, 1972)

This comment can also be applied to the data collected about any type of friendship; as Strauss argues:

".....any social scientist attempting to get at the real root of an act must go through essentially the same procedures as the lay man, but with more care, caution and sophistication."

This suggests that any examination of meaning must involve participative methods as well as other methods in order to develop a balanced view. Previous studies tend to be totally outside (Duck, 1983; Hayes, 1984; Argyle and Henderson, 1984) or totally inside (Miller, 1983); to date no attempts have been made to develop a dual approach: examining friendship from the inside and the outside.

How, then have academics dealt with the subject of friendship? Despite the major theories discussed above, various themes have developed from the study of friendship.

Foundations

Much of the previous literature has sought to categorise friendship in terms of intimacy as a foundation for general discussion. Simmel (1950) argues that friendship is built on a person in 'totality' and that it was developed in the romantic spirit which causes its maintenance to be difficult in our present society. Simmel appears to be referring to the philosophical model of friendship and certainly gains support in the notion that intimacy is 'dying':

"We have forgotten how close human beings once were to each other." (Miller, 1983)

Consequently, one school of thought focuses on the rarity of friendship and suggests the demise of community (after Tonnies (1955)) as a likely cause.

"....friendship was largely noticeable by its absence. As a tentative generalisation we would say that close friendship with a man or woman is rarely experienced....."
(Levinson, 1978)

Morris (1980) suggests that it is: '.....a rare blessing....' and Miller (1983) endorses this view stating that it is quite rare in our society. This particular line of thought relies upon arguments drawn from the changing nature of society, particularly the privatisation of self. However, one must also consider that they might be referring to their 'ideal' view of friendship which may not have existed in the first place. Other than the changes that have occurred in society one must consider other aspects that contribute to this line of thought. In ancient times friendship was considered the ultimate relationship whereas today it can hold sinister connotations:

".....many people find it difficult to imagine an intimate relationship not made up of a husband and a wife."
(Peplau, 1981)

Such difficulties embody the Lewisian principle discussed above. One argument even suggests that the heterosexual relationship provides for all the needs once met by friendship, consequently friendships might now be viewed as perversions of the heterosexual relationship. An awareness of this point of view could lead people to deny friendships that they have to protect their image, thus

leading to the belief that it is rare. On the other hand Stein (1976) suggests that people experience difficulty not only in defining friendship but also in describing its functions. Such difficulties may also lead observers to believe that it is rare; if it cannot be articulated it does not exist. Naturally, such arguments enter the realms of inverse logic: if something cannot exist it cannot be seen, if not seen cannot be explained; therefore what cannot be explained cannot exist.

A third consideration is that it might only have ever existed in man's thoughts. Duck (1983) argues that since the time of Aristotle the feeling has been abroad that it is rarer than previous eras. This introduces the concept of constantly looking to the past for a model of friendship; which may be the product of idealising as I have previously argued. Today we yearn for the old community spirit, and yet some historians argue that friendships were highly unlikely to develop under the structure of societies three hundred years ago in this country (Mitchell, 1985). This argument has been proffered previously and further discussion will not be of any real use.

Hence, one school of thought reinforces one of the themes suggested by the philosophical model - that close friendship is rare.

The other school of thought accepts its continued existence, or at least has not been deterred from examination of friendship by claims of rarity. There is, consequently, a wealth of literature that seeks to explain the forms, genesis, maintenance and functions of friendship.

Paine (1969) suggests that friendship is a private relationship devoid of institutionalisation whilst Clark (1981) suggests that it is a communal relation. Duck (1983) argues that it is something that can be developed, like a skill, whilst Morris (1980) and Miller (1983) claim that it cannot be learned or forced. There are theories, as mentioned, that the relationship is bound by attraction, proximity, common interest; but also theories of predictability (Strauss, 1969; Hargreaves, 1972) and exchange (Ekeh, 1974; Weiss, 1974). Newcomb (1961) even suggests that its development can be predicted by observation. In short, despite a similarity of approach there is a varied foundation on which theories of friendship are based. There is no consensus in the academic world concerning the existence, or the foundation, of friendship.

Building Bricks

When building upon the foundation, many workers identify differences in the basic material. The diverse nature of the 'building bricks' of friendship have indeed been identified. Often this has been carried out subjectively and involves the researchers' own definitions as a translation of the data rather than that of their subjects. The categorisation of friendship is usually carried out once the data has been collected and is not a central theme of the methodological tool; in other words, most studies do not strive to discover any differences in the meanings that may be given to friendship.

Cohen (1961) offers four types of friendship, based on his cross-cultural studies:

Inalienable: A relationship bonded by ritual or ceremony; this would be akin to the 'bloodbrother' relationship and because of the ritualisation would tend to be permanent.

Close: Although embodying some of the intensity of the above, this relationship is not ritualised and is made by personal choice; such friends, argues Cohen, are rarely privy to each others secrets.

Casual: In this relationship one discovers very little sharing and the absence of duties; in fact actors locked in this form of interaction are merely aware of each others presence. It could be suggested that the concept of 'nodding-acquaintances' is prompted by this term.

Expedient: This relationship is developed between unequals for mutual gain; this would suggest the classical concept of utility-friendship but would negate the concept of real friendship which is always between equals.

Wolf (1966) describes two types of friendship: expressive or emotional and instrumental. The former is marked by concern for the person, the latter by motives of personal gain. Conversely, Paine (1969) argues that all friendships are instrumental, an aspect which I shall discuss later. Hays (1984) differentiates between close and best friends, suggesting that best friends are more intense in their relationship. I feel that these terms are his and not those of his subjects, since he states that:

"Much of the existing literature on friendship belies friendship complexity by focusing on... attraction and structural characteristics."

Even after stating this Hays attempts to impose structural characteristics to the relationship.

Argyle and Henderson (1984) offer 'high and low intimacy' friends; their high intimacy would equate with Hays' 'best friend', in that this type of relationship is marked by support, trust, protection and enjoyment.

This is a similar format to that offered by Paine (1969) where friendship is differentiated from acquaintanceship: Paine argues that acquaintanceship lacks the intimacy or confidence found in true friendship. He also identifies 'group fellowship', which, he argues, is bonded by dedication to an external object.

Duck (1983) and Hays (1984) see a natural progression from acquaintanceship to close friendship. If certain 'rules' are not followed then persons 'stick' at certain locations on the acquaintance - friendship continuum.

This form of categorising is seen in many studies of friendship and suggests that the academic model reinforces that first mooted by the philosophers.

Architecture

Once establishing the foundation and selecting the bricks, the academic model enters into lengthy examination of function. In other words, they design the building from the data collected. In many cases the

final design resembles a supermarket in that much of the literature concentrates upon 'exchange theory' as a prime function and maintenance indicator of friendship, (Goffman, 1963; Paine, 1969; Ekeh, 1974; Clarke, 1981; Duck, 1983). The rationale underpinning this theme is that a person enters friendship only for utility reasons, be it material gain or validation of self-worth. However, Paine (1969), whilst subscribing to the exchange theory, also argues that:

".....one should not try to impose upon the analysis of friendship ideas....about reciprocity."

Unlike marriage, he adds, friendship lacks an institutional basis and is consequently beyond social control. Thus, he suggests that although the relationship is based on exchange, it can be totally one-sided and no sanctions are imposed when reciprocity is absent. Similarly, Allen (1978) stresses that exploitation does not occur in friendship (which the demand for reciprocity would imply) and O'Connell (1984) argues that the absence of reciprocity does not strain ties between friends. Argyle and Henderson (1984) suggest that the rules of exchange are far less important than the rules of intimacy. However, the crucial point here is what is defined as an exchangeable commodity? Certainly the sharing of secrets in intimacy can be seen as one form of exchange; some studies suggest that this is the case (Bensman and Lilienfeld, 1979; Form, 1974; Duck 1983).

This notion of entering a relationship purely for exchange contradicts the tenets laid down by the philosophers. Indeed, there is disagreement in the academic world: Kurth (1970) argues that friendship is based on concern for the person as an individual, whilst Morris (1980) and

Miller (1983) suggest that it is primarily a 'love' relationship. Hence, one school of thought within the academic world maintains that exchange is a foundation and ultimate design of friendship, whilst another argues that this is of little importance. The major difficulty underlying these themes, apart from the definition of exchange, is the identification of its motive. The romantic spirit would argue that exchange is a natural development of friendship and not the initiating factor. The identification of exchange within the relationship might arise from the actual approach of study. If one approaches friendship en masse, without identifying the different levels of friendship, a lot of utility will be witnessed in certain relationships and generalised to all others. Because utility occurs in some friendships it cannot be concluded that it occurs in all, nor that this is the major function of friendship. The philosophical model argues that exchange/utility is evident in true friendship, but that it is a natural consequence of the relationship and not a mitigating factor. On the other hand, some sections of the academic model assert that it is the mitigating factor and that friendship cannot occur without this exchange. Duck (1983) and Hays (1984) suggest that it is the degree of intimate exchange that stimulates an acquaintanceship to develop into friendship. The degree of self-disclosure is proportionate to the level of intensity that the relationship achieves. This aspect suggests a very structured and conscious approach to the relationship on a personal level, an act of intention, of deliberate sharing to win friends. It does not consider the alternative that natural evolution and knowledge of each other breeds trust which in turn stimulates self-disclosure. The fact that exchange occurs is not in dispute, it is the reason for exchange that is contested. Most of the previous studies have

highlighted the exchange of secrets, views and opinions (Form, 1974; Crawford, 1977; Bensman and Lilienfeld, 1979; Nicholson, 1980; Clark, 1981; Duck, 1983; Argyle and Henderson, 1984) but tend to dispute its importance in the relationship career. The identification of its existence alone tells us nothing other than it occurs, it is the point of impact within the relationship career that can provide indicators. Whilst I would accept that interaction is, to some extent, socially structured, meaning and depth of a relationship are personal values (Strauss, 1969); they are not socially structured in terms of when, how and where they should occur. Consequently, the 'bench-marks' of self-disclosure are crucial to the understanding of friendship; if, indeed it occurs at the beginning of the relationship it may well stimulate the 'bonding' process, if, however, it occurs sometime after initiation other factors may be involved in the bonding. It is a question of which comes first, exchange or friendship? Little attention has been given to this matter and most workers appear content merely to identify that exchange occurs without considering the motive of exchange. The evidence offered by these studies may lend weight to Tonnies (1955) view of friendship: 'Do, ut des' (I give so that you will give), they may also highlight the type of activity that occurs in friendship, but they fall short in offering explanation for the meaning. Again, one encounters the familiar difficulty that these studies create: They are attempting to give meaning to actions from outside the relationship. Paine (1969) and Strauss (1969) argue that content and meaning cannot be at all accurately determined from a position outside the relationship, nor can it be segregated from its social context. However, despite this sound advice, many workers continue to explain the meaning of friendship functions. Clark (1981) for example, suggests that closeness can be indicated by the level of exchange and interaction.

One aspect of the overall design that the majority of workers appear to agree upon is the basis of equality to the relationship (Wolf, 1966; Suttler, 1970; Brain, 1976; Crawford, 1977; Allan, 1978; Bensman and Lilienfeld, 1979; Miller, 1984; Argyle and Henderson, 1984). Wolf (1966) and Brain (1976) go as far as to suggest that affection, reciprocity and equality are only possible in friendship since relationships of spouses and kin are marred by formalities. In this respect, the academic model is in tune with the philosophical model in that it not only identifies the equality of the relationship, but also suggests that it is a 'higher' relationship than any other.

The qualities present in true friendship, as identified by Paine (1969) are autonomy, unpredictability and terminality; this marks its lack of institution and segregates it from other relationships. Paine (1969) uses the qualities of friendship to define what is not friendship and identifies acquaintance and group fellowship, discussed above. Hence, he suggests that true friendship is a relationship constructed from personal choice, beyond social control and is charged with intimacy and confidence through which it develops its own structure and rules. If, then, one is to accept Paine's view of friendship the argument for variation between friendships is strengthened. If each friendship develops its own structure and rules then they do not necessarily follow a set pattern, since they are beyond social control: Hence differences are bound to occur.

Form (1974) suggests that friendship reduces the necessity for outside contacts and provides intimacy. I argue that the same is true of the 'lover' relationship and the conclusion offers no information concerning friendship as a relationship. Form's stance is very

much located in the propinquity model and he develops his findings on friendship to support convergence theory: he concludes that the relationships are organised around the workplace, and suggests that that is evidence of involvement beyond the family and neighbourhood. However, Form does not look beyond the workplace for friendship data.

Bensman and Lilienfeld (1979) appear to view all friendly relations en masse and argue that peer-group should be re-titled 'friendship-group'. This study tends to add to the general confusion regarding the way in which friendship is defined. Other workers and particularly the 'attractionists' argue that friendship develops from the peer-group (Duck, 1983; Hays, 1984); hence peer and friend do not share the same meaning. Bensman and Lilienfeld agree that friendship is an equal relationship based on negotiated intimacy, but appear to generalise these qualities to a wider social group. Certainly the concept of emotion is 'clinicalised': they use the term 'psychological affinity' rather than affection. In essence, this study seems to be a description of 'clubmanship' rather than friendship.

Hays (1984) endorses the main themes of friendship suggested by other studies, suggesting that it is a relationship highlighted by the breadth and depth of interaction in which affection and communication are crucial components. This type of interaction, he argues, can only develop over time. However, having identified 'values' he maintains that 'behavioural similarity' is more important in its maintenance than shared values. This then adds another facet to the attraction model in that one chooses friends who behave in a like manner to each other and to one's self.

Argyle and Henderson (1984) dichotomise male and female friendships, one of the few studies that does, but places friendship below kinship, suggesting that friends do not provide major help like kin. They go on to propose six rules of friendship:

- 1 Defending friend in his/her absence.
- 2 Sharing news of success.
- 3 Offering emotional support.
- 4 Giving trust and sharing confidences.
- 5 Giving help in time of need (minor help one assumes).
- 6 Striving to give each other enjoyment.

There is no evidence to suggest whether or not these rules were produced spontaneously, by subjects, or were prompted by the researchers.

Certainly, in principle the rules adhere to the ideals of friendship and knowledge of their genesis would be useful. However, their study is focused more on the concept of high and low intensity than actual meaning and definition. If the rules were delivered to subjects then they are being prompted to agree or disagree with the principles of a pre-defined structure; they (the subjects) might have offered different terms with a more informal approach.

Several workers support the theory of concern for the person as the prime motivator of friendship; notably Kurth (1970); Allan (1978) and Miller (1983). Again, mere affection tends to be unacceptable as a reason and attempts have been made to link affection into theories of exchange. The argument here is that mutual affection is a source of reward - one likes and is liked in return - hence such relationships provide a source of emotional support and give its members a feeling of belonging (Berscheid and Walster, 1974).

Nicholson (1980) suggests that friendship is shaped and bonded by the sharing of confidences and the giving of practical help. Again, this study follows the principles of exchange but offers little information concerning when such exchange occurs in the career.

Strauss (1969) suggests that predictability is the key to friendship; when we can make predictions about a person, i.e. know how they will react in most situations, we find stability in that relationship. This notion is supported by Corbin (1978). I argue that although predictability may be present in friendship it is unlikely to be the basis of the relationship. Predictability is based on knowledge, and knowledge can only be accrued through time (Marris, 1974). Consequently, whilst I accept that predicatbility might create a deeper friendship-bond, the career as a whole must have earlier origins. Seen in this context, this theme reinforces the philosophical concept of time strengthening friendship. It also adds weight to the 'attraction-model' proposed by Duck (1983) and endorsed by Hays (1984). Duck (1983) suggests seven 'functions' of friendship that develops over time:

- 1 A sense of belonging.
- 2 Emotional integration and stability.
- 3 Opportunities to communicate about self.
- 4 Assistance and physical support.
- 5 Reassurance of our worth and value.
- 6 Opportunity to help others.
- 7 Personality support.

Duck suggests that these 'qualities' develop at certain stages within the acquaintance - friendship career. He identifies three prominent benchmarks within the career, each adding intensity to the relationship:

- 1 Information disclosure concerning beliefs and attitudes;
this draws members of the acquaintance pool together and
in time leads to:
- 2 Increased intimacy, access to closeness both physically
and mentally. Following this stage the dyad indulge in:
- 3 Advertising, or letting others know of the shared closeness.

Should any of these benchmarks be resisted or not realised Duck argues that friendship will not occur. In essence, Duck is reinforcing the themes highlighted by other studies: trust, sharing, loyalty and support. Similarly, other earlier studies have mooted these components, these 'qualities', at one level or another. Hess (1972) stressed the supportive notion in that she sees friendship as offering a system of creating and maintaining social reality for its members. Boissevain (1974) suggests that it offers affection and protection. Crawford (1977), in another study which differentiates between the sexes, agrees that the relationship provides a source of support, trust and discretion, as well as offering the notion of Goffman's 'backstage' quality - someone you can totally relax with. Wish, et al (1976) attempts to explain the relationship in terms of semantic differentials. They argue that friendship is akin to 'spousehood' in that it is a relationship of intensity and co-operation; acquaintanceship, on the other hand, is one of superficial co-operation.

In the above discussion I have concentrated on studies felt to be more pertinent to this study, there are others (see additional Bibliography) which either replicates the views outlined above or concentrates on 'clubmanship' or peergroups rather than friendship. I feel that I have succeeded in highlighting the central themes identified by academic study. In essence the majority of studies offer a similarity of qualities that illustrate 'what takes place' within friendship: Trust, support, sharing, loyalty, affection and equality. Many studies also emphasise that this is a relationship which takes time to develop and involves personal choice. In many ways, I had to resort to a shopping-list approach in order to illustrate how the academic model tended to follow the 'canons of friendship' outlined in the previous models. At this stage it may be useful to take note of Boissevain's warning: That there is a danger of trying to columnise data, that is forcing it into a structural model represented by a table or figure in a text. I think that in fact, in many of the studies on friendship, this warning was not heeded. Consequently conclusions are offered about a relationship that may or may not be friendship; information that could be interpreted in different ways since little consideration has been given to the variety of relationships termed friendly, other than to explain a career-model. I wish to argue that the term is used to 'locate' different relationships in a person's social reality and that a positivistic stance does not disclose this type of meaning. The major emphasis of the academic model centres on reciprocation, arguing that in the absence of 'sharing' friendship cannot occur. In this respect the above studies distinguish between acquaintance and friend, and furthermore adopt the concept of best/close friend. There are two themes that should be considered here:

- 1 Since people tend to see themselves at the centre of their own particular network of friends (Frankenberg, 1966) only they can assess the closeness or distance within that network.
- 2 If one adopts the philosophical model, which extols affection, the notion of exchange could introduce further variation in friendships.

So far, we have been offered various concepts of friendly relations:

- 1 Acquaintanceship
- 2 Clubmanship
- 3 Friends (low intensity)
- 4 Friends (high intensity/close/best)

It has been argued that the degree of reciprocity defines the level of friendship, but I argue that other types of friendship may exist within this theme. Consider:

- 5 Token-friendship: This need not necessarily be reciprocated since one performs the friendship pantomime for other motives, i.e. one 'pretends' friendship to a friend of a friend in the interests of maintaining the 'true' friendship.
- 6 Social-mobility friendship: the adoption of 'friends' to advance one's social status, e.g. the local plumber claiming friendship with doctor. This type of relationship can be totally one-sided in that the 'low-status' friend does all the 'courting'. This equates with the 'unequal-status' friendships of the philosophers and might lead into:

- 7 Utility-friendship, after the philosophical model, where the doctor befriends the mechanic in the hope of cheap repairs.
- 8 Spiralist-friendship: Persons cultivated from acquaintances because they may prove useful, e.g. the old-boy network. This situation is evident very much in the academic world where acquaintances can be revived, in the name of friendship, and asked to contribute to books, to courses or to help one's students.
- 9 Location friendship: The term is reserved to locate someone to other people, e.g. he's a friend of mine.
- 10 Finally, there are the concepts of mate, chum, pal and other terms that appear to have been ignored in the literature.
How are these terms used and what do they mean to the user?

All these terms fit into the descriptions offered in previous work where exchange is the central theme. In fact, I have arrived at a point where I feel it necessary to state that previous work has offered very little in explanation of the meaning of friendship. Friendship is treated largely as a background expectancy. Whilst these studies do reinforce the philosophical model they fail to indicate whether or not that model is a practical reality.

Another factor in the academic architecture of friendship is the rationale that it has a common starting point: Personal attraction, common interest or goal. Society is in fact structured to bring us together in acquaintanceship (schools, place of work), and through such exchange we develop close/best friendship. One point to consider here is that the membership of that pool tends to draw people from similar areas, hence similarity is not unusual. This aspect of the

academic model negates the romantic spirit since it discounts the principle of 'love'. Academics seem to opt for a material rather than spiritual bonding.

The reason for construction

When a house is built each contributor has a motive for his role in that construction: The architect claims aesthetic joy and money, the builder provides a need and gets money, the purchaser wants somewhere to live and gives money. This structural view can be readily applied to the above analogy, each role is interdependent and bound by exchange. Most studies have attempted to apply a similar theory to the construction of friendship. I have discussed how previous studies have suggested that friendship has specific functions based on exchange; other studies suggest that those without friends suffer in health (Lynch, 1977; Bloom et al, 1978; Perlman and Peplau, 1981). I wish to argue that the search for the meaning of friendship has been clouded by the conviction that there must be a reason for it. If definite functions can be identified then structure can be given to it, in much the same way as it can be learned and acquired through effort, in much the same way that a house is constructed. However, if the relationship is of a more spiritual nature, as the philosophers suggest, then the reasons for its construction are more elusive; it becomes more artistic than mechanical. This aspect of friendship has received limited attention although it is suggested to be of crucial importance for understanding (Hargreaves, 1972; Paine, 1969; Nicholson, 1980; Miller, 1983). Interestingly, many studies acknowledge that the relationship is a consequence of personal negotiation (Paine, 1969; Suttles, 1970; Hargreaves, 1972; Crawford, 1977; Bensman and Lilienfeld, 1979; Nicholson, 1980; Miller, 1983; O'Connell, 1984), but few explore the

the consequences and meanings of this negotiation. Crawford (1977) and Nicholson (1980) suggests that self-definition of friendship create different meanings of the term. These studies also moot the concept that more women than men have close friendships, a notion which is endorsed by Argyle and Henderson (1984). Again, this depends largely on what one uses for indicators; the fact that women may confide more than men does not indicate necessarily that men feel that they lack close friendship. The reasons and definitions of friendship held by men could be totally different from those held by women. This strengthens the quest for definitions of the term. Miller (1983) argues that friendship can only be seen in its own context, thus endorsing Montaigne's view, but then proceeds to argue that because of his observations of women's friendships, deep friendship between men is rare! In this respect he is not seeing friendship in its own context since the only valid conclusion he could make from his observations is that his own friendships are different from those he has witnessed amongst women. He further argues that the behavioural approach to friendship (Duck, 1983; Hays, 1984) is incorrect and that friendship cannot be forced;

"The art of friendship books are vulgar
and oversimple....."

From this starting point he proceeds in various attempts to 'force' close friendships! Miller follows the philosophical model, arguing that true friendship is 'love-based' and endorses all the classical virtues. He concludes that he met with some success and that, yes, it is rare. In fact, I suggest that he met with more failure than success because he ignored his own argument that friendship cannot be forced. At best, Miller's study is a valuable account of one man's

view of friendship since he is totally 'inside' the study and attempting to actualise his own ideals of friendship. However not all his conclusions can be accepted as valid, for example, the fact that he failed to create several close friends does not really support his claims of rarity; there could be other variables involved, for instance he may not be likeable to others or they may have suspected his motives.

Consequently I suggest that the motive and definition of friendship has not been effectively examined. The academic model offers similar information to the other two models in that it offers information concerning the structure of friendship, but little on the meaning. There is a convergence of the models around the central themes: friendship develops over time (Miller in fact tries to short-cut this aspect), that it offers support, trust, loyalty and affection. If one accepts the academic model then one would expect to find friends bonded by factors other than 'love': work, proximity, attitudes, values and exchange. One would not expect to find friends who did not have similarity since it could be viewed as an expression of self-love, we seek out those who are similar to us because they manifest those qualities that we admire in ourselves. Indeed, this also suggests that friendship between male and female is unlikely due to reasons other than the eros factor. Such assumptions arise from the positivistic stance of inquiry; pre-definition of terms excludes objectivity and one falls into the lap of the armchair-speculator. In order to understand the meaning of friendship it is necessary to take an 'inside' and 'outside' stance at the same time. The implications carried by the three models discussed above suggest that there are individual meanings to the

term and that it cannot be explained in isolation from its social context.

The next section will discuss how I seek to develop such an approach by discussing a statement of intent, and my methodological approach.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

Technically, this study does not profess to contain hypotheses and contents itself with a statement of intent. My concern is not merely with discovering information about how 'friendship' is defined by persons, but also an exercise in what might be termed 'holistic social enquiry'. The development of this stance has evolved as the study unfolded and has imposed its own direction rather than being confined by structure. The term holistic is adopted since I do not seek to diminish the philosophical stance of any particular school of thought. I argue that all have valuable contributions to make, as have the more subtle approaches of fiction and philosophy. In this respect the reader should view the intentions of this study and its methods in light of what has been discussed before. Essentially my study has developed both backwards and forwards at the same time and at various levels. Backwards, in that data was collected before any concrete plans were made, and forwards, in that background reading suggested further areas of data collection. The rationale behind the study has developed on various levels, which will be reflected in the methodology:

- 1 On a personal level, my own thinking and experience; the inside aspect.
- 2 On a professional level, the art of enquiry passed on to me by my mentors and through 'apprenticeship'.
- 3 At a social level, changes in direction occasioned by informal conversation.

As we have seen, the concept of friendship can be examined by way of several theoretical standpoints. I could have adopted the principles of network theory - or a phenomenological approach, or a more positivistic

one. I attempt to draw from the philosophies of all these approaches. We have seen earlier suggestions that friendship developed from the romantic spirit and is difficult to maintain in our society (Simmel, 1950). Bearing this point in mind I focus on friendship which occurs in the society with which I am familiar: Northern England. It has also been argued that various 'romantic notions' of friendship are accepted (Brain, 1974; Miller, 1983) and that these 'ideals' form the background expectancies concerning friendship. From the previous literature little can be discovered concerning a person's definition of friendship, hence, if the relationship is categorised, and it is generally accepted that it is (Hays, 1984; Argyle and Henderson, 1984), information is required concerning the style of categorisation. By categorisation I mean how a person defines a category and not my interpretation of that category. Consequently in this study I concern myself with how people use the term 'friendship' and what they mean by that term.

I also, as I have already said, question whether or not the topic can be approached in a totally positivistic way. To this end, I carried out three pilot studies based on approaches suggested by the academic model (see Appendix C). These studies, or rather their results, indicated that approaching the topic in this manner causes subjects to react in a way that disguises rather than reveals their meaning of the term. For this reason I did not feel it useful to adopt the formal stance of developing an hypothesis. To approach this topic armed, for example, with the statement: 'Friendship can only exist in groups sharing similar interests' not only develops expectations concerning friendship, but indicates a certain area of data collection. In short I would have been defining and then attempting

to see (Lippman, 1922). Consequently I developed intentions rather than hypotheses, namely:

- 1 To examine whether or not the 'romantic' notion of friendship has validity in reality.
- 2 To discover the genesis of friendship, be it common interest, love, attraction, similarity, predictability or common goal.
- 3 To gather information concerning the 'personal negotiation' in terms of maintenance and intensity. This embodies the concept of a friendship career.
- 4 To gather information regarding how persons define their friendships. Consequently I am concerned with the various terms such as close/best/superficial.
- 5 To examine the criteria that persons use for concepts of intensity. To identify processes of inclusion/exclusion.
- 6 To examine similar themes within the relationship between the sexes.
- 7 To examine whether or not friendship can be 'forced'.

In short, my intention in this study is to find something out about the meaning of friendship.

It can be seen at the outset that my study lacks scientific rigor in the strict sense. The intention of the study concerns itself with persons, at least in some aspects, rather than groups. In this respect I was limited by who would actually discuss the matter; indeed I had many refusals during the search for interview subjects. However, in view of what has been discussed previously this study attempts to approach the subject by way of 'inside' and 'outside' approaches (Strauss, 1969) whilst, at the same time, following

McCall's and Simmonds (1978) direction of who comes together to engage in what social acts when and where. The intent of the study also creates data of a qualitative rather than quantitative style and it is with this in mind that I reveal my own personal experiences as an aid to readers' evaluation of any interpretations offered.

The methodology then, includes two approaches: inside and outside.

The inside methods can be subdivided into:

- 1 Direct personal
- 2 Indirect personal

The object of this approach is to attempt to get inside the relationship so that the actual experience of the relationship can be compared to that which is observed.

It should be remembered that subjectivity is highly likely by this method as can be witnessed in Whyte (1955) and Miller (1983). However I felt that this was a useful stance to take since it can provide recognition of meaning. The data collected through the inside approach includes:

- 1 Personal 'Revelation' of Friendship Network. During the course of this study my marriage 'broke-down', I found myself relocated in a different part of the country and without friends. This has, no doubt influenced my thinking on friendship and is offered as background data. In many respects it is similar to the informal interviews of the outside method in terms of 'quality'. This

aspect of the data is also important because, as I revealed in the introduction, it stimulated the development of the other aspects of my style of work.

- 2 Participant Observation: This method was adopted to test the theory that friendship grew from common-interest. I joined two 'sporting' groups, an archery club and a fencing club. Participation in both clubs continued for two years (in fact I still attend both) for the purpose of evaluating the 'bond' of common interest and the nature and depth of relationships; it also gave opportunity for:
- 3 Friendship negotiation. I attempted to 'cultivate' friends from the 'pool' of these clubs. I used this to test the notions of personal negotiation and whether or not the relationship can be 'forced'. In an attempt to balance these inside methods, and hopefully to restore objectivity, outside methods were incorporated and ran in tandem with inside methods:
- 4 Non-participant observation: This was used to evaluate further the argument that friendship develops from 'groupness' (Duck, 1983). Again this was an opportunist sample and concerned a miners' 'drinking-group'. I observed this systematically over a period of twelve months, after which the group 'disappeared' without informing the observer of its relocation! This observation enabled me to evaluate what social actions occurred when a group of people come together.

5 I carried out informal interviews to evaluate the personal meaning of friendship. Again this was to a large extent 'opportunistic' since many people refused to disclose their feelings about it. However, sometimes I was able to interview a person's 'nominated' close friend and compare accounts.

I suggest that these methods complement one another in that they offer both the experienced and the observed/related views of friendship. I developed them, as previously mentioned, over time and by various routes but nonetheless think that they make good bed-fellows. The data prompted by these methods were collected over a three year period and can be viewed as a continuous development, rather than separate sections of information. Each method has influenced the other to some degree and consequently, should not be viewed in isolation. In essence I see myself as having adopted one single approach seeking to get to the root of the meaning of friendship.

Samples: Whether one sees my informants as one sample or several, their assembly was opportunistic. Certain limitations arise naturally in a study of this nature, for example, I was unable to observe or participate in female friendship, although I was able to interview some females. This dictates a mainly masculine sample. I also thought it undesirable to use captive samples to which I had access since the quality of the data would have been suspect, nor could I 'force' subjects to discuss their feelings. Consequently I was compelled to draw subjects from my own 'arena' and even then only those who agreed to participate. No doubt I could be accused of 'entrapment' considering the context of informal interview, but I have tried to opt for the 'willing volunteer. Neither the male bias

nor the restriction on age, social class or civil status were intentional. They were unavoidable. I did however attempt to 'randomise' certain aspects, for example, interview topics, and to strike a balance by including other variables (sex of subject), but despite that no claims are made for the data being representative of any particular group or population. Information has been sought and gained about friendship by such means as were possible to me.

A total sample size of fifty was achieved (fifteen female and thirty-five male); ages and occupations varied, as did the level of interaction with subjects. These aspects will be further discussed, and samples further described when data is discussed in the relevant sections.

As I have argued above, I tried to ensure that this study took its direction from the shortcomings of other studies and concentrated on the 'richness' of data rather than quantity.

My methodology, then, has developed from a dual concern:

- 1 To discover the deeper implications of friendship in our society.
- 2 To develop a method of enquiry that provides such information.

The intentions of this study and its methodology must be viewed in light of the arguments above and with regard to the detail of those studies described in Appendix C.

In the next section I present the data obtained through these methods prior to entering into a discussion of the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

A TOUR THROUGH THE DATA

A TOUR THROUGH THE DATA

Preamble

I have argued that the data presented here should be seen in totality; each section is related to the next and certainly linked by my 'influence'. As I have already said, my methodology unfolded as my experience of, and thinking about, friendship broadened. The initial stance outlined in section one has not been radically altered although my 'firm' views about relationships have. Indeed, the very foundation of this argument, as outlined in section one, revolves around the influence of a person's 'inner' self on his outer world. The approaches that one takes to any encounter is shaped by the past of the participants and the history of their previous encounters, shared and unshared. Since embarking on this quest my own history has radically changed and this may account for the cynical flavour of some aspects of this discussion.

I felt that because of my approach it was crucial to include some autobiography in order to illustrate how my own experience has had direct influence on this study. This is not an attempt to exercise bitterness, neither is it an exercise in self-indulgent analysis. I argue that the approach a person takes to an encounter helps to shape social action; similarly the approach and attitude a researcher takes to a study has to be revealed in order that readers can identify sources of bias. The original approach I intended for this study was pure 'outsider'. I had identified two sources of possible friendship formation: closed and open. I intended to make a direct comparison between formally structured and closed 'clubs': Monastery and freemasons, and informal open 'clubs': Sports-group and drinking group. I had then no intention of participation but later came to feel that data thus acquired would only mirror previous studies in terms of

identifying action and not meaning. This change towards a more 'holistic' approach can be regarded as the influence of my past on my present causing a reconstruction of future actions. In this way the methodology has developed and is aimed to dig deeper in the search for the roots of meaning.

Personal Experience

At the outset of this study my life was, I consider, fairly stable. I had what I considered to be a good marriage, home, family and two close male friends. These aspects of my life I took for granted, and assumed everybody else enjoyed the same. I did not anticipate any major changes, things had been happily coasting along for some fifteen years. In short I felt the comfort of security around me. I feel that my approach to the initial study of friendship was influenced by this. I assumed that it existed in reality and mirrored the 'ideals' of the ancients. I had, as previously discussed witnessed differences in my friendships with men to those of my wife and her friends and no doubt this had some bearing on my previously structured approach. In order to explain the changes it is my intention to describe a case-history of, what I considered to be my closest friendships.

John is the same age as I am; we were thrown together at the age of twelve in grammar school. It is of course difficult to remember with accuracy one's initial feeling, but as I remember my attraction was not the same as that proposed by the attractionists. He was extrovert, mischievous, rebellious and 'worldly'; for my part I was introvert, fearful, controlled and insular. Indeed, it would seem that the relationship had nothing to commend it except that as a boy

I had always been drawn to this type of person, usually without success. The analyst would no doubt claim that I wished to be like them, I would counter by saying that I found people like me 'boring'. After the first year our actions betrayed closeness: If he was kept back after school I would wait for him and vice versa; if he was away from school 'sick' I would truant after the first break to visit. We planned escapes from school and carried them out; defended each other and helped with the other's weaker lessons. Our little rituals tended to follow the schoolboy patterns of mock fights and seeing how often we could get each other into trouble with the masters. At that time, during schooldays, I believed I gained more out of the relationship than he: My self-assertion was modelled on his, he taught me, informally, that you did not need to be a good fighter merely a better 'bluffer'; he explained the mysteries of sex and convinced me that Lady Chatterley was not a 'dirty' book like the other boys and adults seemed to believe. In return I taught him to play the guitar. At fourteen we formed a pop-group (didn't everyone in the sixties), and a year later had gained some acclaim; naturally we both embroidered our merit and success. From thirteen to sixteen we were inseparable, our parents frequently complained that they never knew where we were living; we spent evenings, weekends and holidays together and discovered together that we were 'star' gymnasts within the school.

On leaving school we took employment at the same firm; he in salaries and myself as a trainee draughtsman. To some extent our lives followed different paths, I left the pop-group following an ill-fated tour that did not bring us fame in the wake of the Beatles, he continued. This change did not diminish our friendship we continued to share our gains

and disappointments, intimate secrets about the girls in our lives. Indeed, not only was he the best-man at my wedding, but he was the only person considered for the task.

After my marriage at twenty and resettlement some fifteen miles away, we lost contact, apart from the occasional letter, for some four years. On a sudden whim I sent him a birthday-card and he responded by telephoning me. It was as if there had been no break and within weeks we were meeting regularly, at least twice a week and often with our wives for extra social occasions. Our wives did not get on too well, but this did not really matter to us, wives were rarely discussed, children always. We quickly developed a routine: On Mondays he came to my local YMCA where we played five-a-side soccer, on Saturdays I went to help him in the garage which he was now running. This routine continued for some eight years.

In terms of content we shared most things, secrets, fears and ambitions. Our conversations were never superficial. When he left his wife I did not judge him, I offered advice only when asked; when he returned to his wife I shared his happiness; when he went bankrupt I gave money and often invited his family for meals. Certainly by the time we were thirty he was closer to me than anyone. I revealed to him things I would never to my wife. Our politics were different, our attitude to life and now our social spheres, but none of these differences mattered.

At thirty-two I separated from my wife, I told John this was about to happen some days before the event. He was, I think, stunned and said as much. How was it possible.....the last people in the world.....

of course you must come and stay with us. It was no less than I expected, but due to my profession and lack of finance I had to seek lodgings nearer to my employment some thirty miles away. Over the next six months we maintained regular contact, I visited him after my observations on Saturdays, he came over to Manchester regularly. However, gradually I noticed a change in his 'receptiveness', I was by now having many difficulties: Depression, not eating and sleeping most of the week in my car. I wanted to share these experiences but he always changed the subject, at first to the possibility of reconciliation, then to more mundane topics. Our relationship for the first time became superficial. Once the divorce was finalised he stopped his visits to Manchester ('....pressure of work....'); shortly after he offered reasons why I could not visit him on Saturday. Eventually I stopped trying. Some months later his wife sent a message to my mother that I should ring him, I did and felt the encounter frosty and stilted. He concluded with:

"Well....don't lose touch and if you're ever over this end.....you know."

He had never asked where I was, how I was and I concluded that I had been relegated to acquaintance status. I rang him again some weeks later stating that I would be going to the old-boys dinner, we had been regular attenders for some years. He affirmed that he would see me there but never arrived.

During the course of this study I became a couple again and received an invitation to dinner for myself and my 'new lady'. It was a terrible evening of perfect strangers and I am still at a loss to explain the motive behind the invitation.

The relevance behind this experience is that it caused me to doubt the romantic spirit of friendship. John had been the most important person in my life for some twenty years and I held 'certainties' about our relationship rather than expectations. I knew that I could rely on him for support and that, just as my view of him had never changed, his view of me never would. My experience of the reality left me with more disappointment, more loneliness and more sorrow than the breakdown of my marriage. When I started thinking logically about the relationship I realised that I had no right to hold any certainty, let alone expectation. Our relationship had never been negotiated, we had not bargained affection or support and in truth I supported him because I was certain he would have done the same. It is possible that he never held such expectations and that my view of the relationship was totally one sided. Indeed, it now seems more clear that I used the relationship as an anchorage for my own stability. Some years ago I would have offered definite explanations about what close friendship was, in reality my view had never been tested.

Hence, my thinking underwent change as a result of experience. The consequences of the changes afforded me opportunity to become an 'insider' within the friendship pantomime since I suddenly found that I had no friends. My other friendships disintegrated in similar style, but this was the crucial bench-mark of my experience and bears direct influence on how the inside-data came to be collected.

Participative-Observations

One school of thought suggests that friendship arises from common-interest. In an attempt to test this theory I joined two clubs as a participant. There is an element of cheating involved here since I was reasonably adept at both sports and had been so for some twenty years.

The Archery-Fellowship

This group was located at Manchester Polytechnic and was administered by the Students' Union. As a member of staff I had access to all Union facilities for a minimal fee. I joined this club during the September of 1981 and continued observations for two years; I am still a member of the club and still attend, although I no longer make formal observations.

During winter the club's activities are confined to the main gym, but in summer it often holds 'shoots' outside. Over the years the club has never attracted exceptional attendance and claims more members during the autumn and winter terms. The membership during the autumn of 1981 was fourteen, including myself: eleven men and three women; four of the men, again including myself, were staff members: Geoff, a science technician; Bill, a Faculty Dean; Mike a catering lecturer and myself a sociology lecturer. Liz, Jane, Sharon, Gerry, Pete, Simon, Dave, Martin, Ian and Ian (Taffy) were all students from various faculties within the Polytechnic. All were on different courses and from mixed levels: first years, second, third; full-time and part-time. Their age range was between eighteen and twenty-three; the staff groups age range was between thirty-two and forty.

The gymnasium is 'netted' for this activity, a large portion of the floor space is enclosed with a strong, fine-meshed net to halt stray arrows. Three targets are used, each with different faces and at increasing distance. We 'beginners' were all marshalled into one corner where our names were taken on that first evening and Pete instructed us regarding the club rules. Pete was the secretary of the club and 'self-appointed' head coach. He informed us that the

club met twice a week, Monday and Wednesday evening; that when he blew the whistle once you stopped shooting and put the bow down, when he blew twice you collected arrows from the target or floor and you never crossed the 'line' when a 'shoot' was taking place. From this starting point he demonstrated the club's equipment: one a very basic, fibreglass bow (which we would be using) and the other a sophisticated wooden bow that members can use if they are very proficient. We beginners numbered seven: Simon, Dave, Ian, Taffy, Martin, Sharon and myself. Each of us was given the mark-one bow and herded to the nearest target with the largest face, approximately ten metres. Following measurement for arrow-length (which is taken from the inside outstretched arm) we were each given three arrows (the limit per shoot) and instructed to shoot in twos. Nobody in our little group spoke to each other, we watched in silence and occasionally nodded and smiled. This activity continued for one and one half hours and Pete occasionally gave advice to individual members concerning stance, grip and sighting.

Similar activity occurred over the next three weeks, Monday and Wednesday, so far we all proved good attenders, but communicated very little. The silences were very useful because they offered me opportunity to observe the 'informal' structure of the club. The targets marked the boundaries of three distinct groups: the near target with the large face for beginners; the middle target with a medium face for the reasonable and the distant with small face for the skilled. Within this grouping existed an elite: these archers owned all their own equipment: bows, arrows, quivers, finger pads, guards and repair equipment. The elite were not limited by the boundaries and would use any target throughout the meet and would

'choose' to instruct others. The elite consisted of Geoff, Pete, Bill, Gerry and Liz, a mixture of staff and students. Mike and Jane were middle-targeteers who used the best equipment and after the second week 'Taffy' was moved into their group. Hence, three clear groups emerged: elite, middle-targeteers and beginners. The social actions within the groups also differed: we beginners hardly spoke; the middle-targeteers interacted socially; the elite spoke archer, i.e. makes of bows, field-shoots, stabilisers and going for gold. At the end of the meetings the elite would retire to a bar making it known that it was 'committee-business' and thus excluding the rest of us. We all dispersed our separate ways. I found out some weeks later that Geoff and Bill were not committee members, and could not be, because they were staff; hence the committee business for the ritual could only be an exclusion device.

By week five, Pete had noticed that Simon and I could hit the target with constant success and moved us into the middle-targeteers. Oddly, Simon now started to speak to me and I to him. It was as though the movement had granted permission. We exchanged details, vague addresses and views on films. Taffy joined our little clique, but Mike and Jane whilst being civil did not seem to care for our company. On occasions I attempted to talk to my old 'colleagues' in the beginners, thinking their silence and lack of involvement somewhat silly, but I never met with success. They would answer questions, normally in monosyllables but offered nothing. It seemed that now we were using the good bows they could not relate to us.

I had not gained access at this stage to a group that would spawn friendship. Beginners did not communicate and middle-targeteers

kept things superficial and dispersed quickly at the end of the 'shoot'. However, on the Monday of week seven Geoff approached me and asked if I had ever done archery before, he had been watching me. I informed him that I had 'done' it for about fifteen years. Nothing else was said but I saw him cross to Pete and speak to him; they both appeared to be watching me but I tried to ignore it. Half an hour later Pete approached me and suggested that I could improve my skill if I had my own bow. I asked about prices and makes and after some discussion he mentioned that he had a 'take-down' for sale and that he would bring it in on Wednesday for me to examine. No further communication ensued with the elite members, but Simon, who had been listening said that he thought that he would buy his own bow too.

On the Wednesday Pete honoured his promise and arrived with the bow; after putting it together he invited me to try it, which I did. Twenty minutes later he asked what I thought and I asked how much he was selling for. He evaded and asked if I wanted it - depends on price - okay we'll talk about it in the bar after. I had been invited into the inner sanctum! It may have been a consequence of this action or pure coincidence that Simon immediately approached Pete and asked about buying a bow. Pete replied that he would bring him some catalogues next week. I was allowed to use the bow for the rest of the evening. At the end of the shoot I was asked by Liz to help put equipment away, normally the duty of the elite and she asked questions about my location in the Polytechnic. We exchanged superficial details as we toiled. Subsequently I was escorted to the bar by Geoff and Liz to meet Pete, Bill and Gerry. Pete introduced me formally to everyone and invited me to be seated. The matter of the bow was not approached and much of the conversation was above my head; they spoke

of past competitions and field shoots that they had entered. After about half an hour I informed Pete that I would have to go soon and what did I owe him for the bow? Well, he was going to ask thirty-five, but I could have it for twenty-five including carrying-case. We struck the deal and I left the group demonstrating classical archer stances to each other.

My feeling at this stage was that the elite enjoyed certain privilege within the club, but that they were not necessarily friends. They appeared to be bonded by a common interest and had developed rules of membership. Notably one did not join the elite, one was elected. Their total influence on the club did not become clear until later.

On the Monday of week eight I was greeted, for the first time, by members of the elite. Indeed, Pete had found a bow-sight that he gave me and Geoff gave me six arrows that he said he never used. I was further invited to shoot on the 'top' target. It appeared that I had been absorbed by the elite rather than joined. Simon for his efforts had actually bought his own bow over the weekend and invited Pete to inspect it, which he did, but he was still limited to the middle-target. Since I was now a member of the elite other members of this group took an interest in me; they asked lots of questions about me: what did I do? Where was I from? Was I married? But on reflection other than this they reacted as though I had always been a member. At the end of the shoot Geoff declared that he'd get me a pint in, without asking if I was going to the bar. Hence after helping to clear away the equipment I retired to the bar with my new colleagues. It was during this session that I discovered the history of the elite and their range of influence.

A small alcove had been commandeered in the corner of the bar and we were huddled around a table. It transpired that we were having a meeting to select a committee and this had been prearranged after I had left last week.

"Any ideas Dave?" asked Pete.

I am certain he recognised my look of bewilderment.

"For the committee.....we need a treasurer, assistant secretary and armourer..... It's Union rules."

"Are you asking me to take a position?" I asked with caution.

"Christ....no!" declared Liz. "We don't do that.... none of us want to."

"You know the others better than we do," explained Geoff. "Who can we con into doing it?"

In treacherous spirit I nominated Simon, Taffy and Sharon, but rationalised that it would balance the club to select from mixed ability.

"Mmmm," thought Pete, "That Simon is keen, he's a bit of a pain though.....do you think you can get him to do it?"

I said that I would ask him but was then informed that it might be better if I got the three of them to come to the bar on Wednesday. I had my first duty as an elite.

During this encounter I also discovered that the elite did not have a common history. Pete and Geoff had started the club three years

previously and Bill was an original member. Gerry and Liz had been invited to join (the club) when Pete discovered that they were members of a rival club. Pete had always been secretary, but following the first year had farmed out the duties to an assistant. Since its initiation the elite had, apparently, always selected the committee. This was a very interesting point, because the committee's officers were technically voted in by the membership. However, the elite now numbered six, three of whom could not be committee members and hence held no vote and any meeting had to be quorate. The elite manipulated this by declaring their membership to be twelve plus four (we staff being the additions with associate member status). Since the elite had three votes they only required three to carry policy through. By offering the three outsiders 'official' positions and the 'associateship' of the elite they managed to control the club.

That Wednesday I played my part in a plot worthy of C P Snow and managed to encourage Simon, Taffy and Sharon to go to the bar with me, with a promise of 'something that will interest you'. Sharon was at first reluctant, I suspect she thought I had wicked designs on her, but once she discovered Simon and Taffy were also attending gave way to her curiosity. The interaction that followed seemed well rehearsed, although to my knowledge it had not been. Pete engaged the three in 'archery' conversation, showed them catalogues and asked for their opinion of the club. The three 'lambs' felt that more coaching should go on since some members were thinking of dropping out. Liz felt that this was a good point and we all nodded agreement. Then Pete suggested that we had better get on with the meeting, our three 'lambs' looked a little confused. Some minutes were produced from someone's pocket, I did not notice whose, previous minutes were hurried through

and then came the election of officers. Liz nominated Pete as Secretary, Gerry seconded and vote carried. Pete nominated Taffy as Assistant, Liz seconded, vote carried; Gerry nominated Simon as Treasurer, Pete seconded, vote carried; Liz nominated Sharon as Armourer, Gerry seconded, vote carried. The business was finished in minutes and Pete, Gerry, Geoff and Liz left for home. Bill finished his drink and left me with the 'lambs'. They looked bewildered and confused. Taffy turned to me and said:

"You didn't say we was having a meeting."

"I didn't know," which was the truth.

I reassured them that Pete would fill them in regarding their duties and they should not worry. I felt some guilt concerning their fate. We then fell into a superficial conversation about membership recruitment and difficulties of essays before going our separate ways.

The following weeks continued in very much the same way as earlier weeks. Simon was given charge of the club keys and I was encouraged to involve myself in coaching, but otherwise the level of communication was consistent. I accompanied the elite to the bar after each 'shoot', the others went their separate ways. On two occasions Simon and Taffy had followed us to the bar but were on the whole excluded from interaction. I was bemused on these occasions that Pete had included me in the elite's history: apparently I had been on field-shoots with them, I did not challenge this.

At the end of this first term I re-assessed my observations. It appeared that the 'core' of the club was the elite. I still felt

that one was elected to the club although I had originally felt that one had to have one's own equipment. To own one's own equipment was not a right of entry, nor was the desire to be a member; Simon had displayed what I felt to be the right manoeuvres, but was still excluded. Even gaining election to an official position was not a rite de passage. Why I had been elected is a mystery, from my point of view we gained little from the position other than 'informal' privilege: the right to shoot at any target or interfere with other people's shooting. As a group we shared nothing; we never suggested meeting socially, if we met outside the confines of the club we merely nodded acknowledgement.

During the winter term membership dropped. None of the beginners, other than Sharon, ever came again; my fellow elites, except Geoff and Pete came only spasmodically. It was as though they had safeguarded the club's organisation and need no longer attend on a regular basis. When they did arrive they still claimed elite status. We were now left with two groups: the elite and a sub-elite. Myself, Geoff and Pete were regular attenders; Simon, Taffy, Mike, Jane and Sharon were also regulars but not elite. We now tended to invade the bar en masse but I was drawn into a 'conspiracy' of eliteness by Pete and Geoff. In many ways I was a willing partner to this and never contradicted when I was included in histories of which I had no knowledge.

During the winter term Pete selected a team for the 'Manchester-competition', which included Simon, Taffy, Sharon and myself. During the term we out-shot all competition and took 'pole-position' in the Manchester Varsity League. All arrangements for the competition were made on club nights, and we never met other than that. Indeed, after

competition we made our own way home. The superficiality of our meetings deteriorated into silence: we came, we shot, we went. In essence, we did not even enjoy acquaintanceship but familiar 'strangerhood'. There was no content to our meetings, only brief recognition outside them.

During the summer term only Geoff, Simon, Taffy and Sharon met with me to shoot. Our meetings deteriorated into 'foolery', we often tied balloons or beermats to the targets instead of serious shooting. On the odd chance occasion I had met Geoff in college and we had exchanged pleasantries. I rarely met the others outside the club. Half-way through that summer term I had accidentally met Geoff at lunch-time and we had a drink together. We subsequently made a firm arrangement to meet again and over the weeks met regularly. During our meetings, outside the club, we shared information and experiences and were soon acting like old friends. Indeed, Geoff would often refer to our 'external' meeting in the presence of other club members. I feel that I got to know him quite well during these meetings, whether he could say the same I know not. By the end of summer I was introduced to another friend of Geoff's - Laurie, and we formed a regular lunch-time threesome. It is difficult to describe the benchmarks of this triad, since they were quite undramatic. I already knew Laurie by sight, we could be termed 'nodding strangers', but did not know his name. He was also a technician at the college and his friendship with Geoff arose from the work situation. As a triad we had met quite a few times over lunch but the relationship did not extend beyond that. Laurie was not interested in archery, favouring the more aggressive sports of football and running. Laurie's relationship with Geoff was akin to the 'Callen-Lonely' structure, since Laurie frequently made

disparaging remarks about Geoff's appearance, physique and sporting abilities; Geoff took these comments in good part. In outward display, they were totally different: Geoff was placid, calm and quiet; Laurie aggressive, ebullient and loud.

The archery club ceased to function half-way through the summer term. The student members were wrapped up with exam preparation and the club was refused access to the gym until September when the numbers supposedly increased. I suspected that contact with Geoff would now be limited to our once-a-week lunchtime contacts. However, on the first lunchtime contact following the demise of the club, Laurie suggested that I join them the next day at the 'Royal Oak'; their regular Friday lunchtime 'watering-hole'. I consented to this arrangement.

I feel that this was the first real benchmark to the 'triad' relationship since it marked the time of 'inclusion'. I arrived at the pub at about one o'clock (pm) and was beckoned over to the bar by Geoff and Laurie. Laurie bought me a drink and started to explain their ritual: Seating was limited in this popular lunchtime venue and Geoff and Laurie made a game of 'psyching' people out. They would stand close to a table, place their drinks on the table and argue loudly until the table was vacated. I was surprised at the success of this venture on several occasions. Another game they had devised was 'Dooley-spotting': This involved surveying the pub and recognising the most 'dooleys' or 'wallies'. The game had rigid rules: A male-dooley would be dressed either in a white suit or sport open-necked shirt to show off a medallion; they would also be aged thirty-five plus and make attempts to hide receding hair-lines. Female-dooleys would wear calf-length trousers, heavy make-up, drink pints and laugh frequently.

I was invited to join in both these games but did not prove very skilled at either.

Once we had managed to clear a table and sit down the information exchange commenced between the three of us; it was apparent that Geoff had already filled Laurie in concerning some of my details and we entered a 'do you know so-and-so' routine. In fact, we did not know any of the same people.

These lunchtime triads continued, sometimes three times per week, until the end of the summer term. Normally they consisted of the games and information exchange, i.e. getting to know each others histories. I do not remember a confidence being exchanged during these sessions.

During the summer-break I frequently stayed in college, I was participating as a tutor in a French summer-school. It was because of this participation that I was able to develop my relationship with Geoff and Laurie further. Part of the summer-school involved guiding the French students around some of our historic cities (Chester, York) and we required willing guides for this purpose. Geoff and Laurie proved willing guides and the days out staggered on into the nights. The three of us often functioned as a group explaining dialect to the French, giving directions and advice. Once the school was over we appeared to be so routinised with our nights out that they continued throughout the summer. Even so the relationships were purely social, there was no closeness and no sharing of secrets. We enjoyed regular contact, lunchtime and eveinings, for social reasons.

When the archery-club met again in September, we only attracted the same number of members that we had left off with: Geoff, Taffy, Simon, Sharon and myself. Because of the low numbers we were only allowed access to the gym on Monday evenings. My obvious shooting-partner was Geoff and we had ceased to take the shoots seriously in that we frequently tried to 'put each other off'. Occasionally we would shoot competitively, but usually it was a light-hearted affair. Other members of the elite occasionally visited, but did not often shoot. There were no competitions throughout the year and indeed by the end of the first term Sharon's attendances became at best erratic. On some occasions only Geoff and I turned up. We continued our lunch and evening meetings to the extent that archery took second place to these. The archery club had developed into a small group of 'participants' drawn by common interest. My conversations with the other members were always about archery and confined to club nights. Geoff and I now hardly ever mentioned the subject and conversed about other 'superficial topics'.

This is a potted history of two years observations and an overall conclusion will be offered later, following a similar history of participation in the Fencing-club.

The Fencing-Fellowship

Since common-interest could have been stimulated by other means than the sport in the above 'study', i.e. similar work place, career similarity, I decided to participate in a similar group in isolation from the working environment. I was now living in Warrington, and it seemed ideal to utilise the facilities offered by a local club. Again, the only other sport that I was reasonably adept at was fencing

and I therefore joined the local fencing-club. This set of experiences ran in tandem with the archery since both were joined during the same week. Fencing only happened once per week hence I did not have the same content in terms of time that had occurred in archery. However, I approached this club with the same stance that I had adopted for archery. Initially I intended to be 'non-intrusive' and allow others to approach me; this stance was to alter slightly in view of my 'archery-observations'. I rapidly became aware, from those observations made in the archery-club, that membership is a fluid term, it fluctuates in terms of numbers and consistency as it progresses. Consequently, I have focussed only on the regularly attending central characters in this study. References will be made to others who did not stay the course, but only to exemplify certain points. Again this account is essentially a 'potted-history', examples of total observations from both clubs will be found in Appendix D.

The Warrington and District Fencing Club was originally sited in an old church hall about one mile from the centre of the town. It was situated on a back-street and required some searching out. I arrived at the hall about half-an-hour after the meeting had commenced, not intentionally late but because I had got lost on the way. There were about twelve people, mostly men, of mixed ages (seventeen to forty-five) involved in fencing. Their activities lacked discipline and ranged from the classical to the 'musketeer' style. There was no formal coaching taking place. I entered the hall, complete with my own equipment, and sat in one corner awaiting attention. Along one side of the hall stood a large box containing a jumble of masks and jackets, and to either side of the box, two large weapon bags. An ante-room was positioned to the left of the hall, which afforded access to a small

kitchen; the anteroom was also used by two fencers. I sat for about twenty minutes before being approached by Alf. Alf was the head-coach and chairman of the club.

"Are you new?" he asked.

I responded in the affirmative and he explained that I could come this once free of charge and then would have to join. He explained the fees and the 'ladder-system': every so often the club members enter a 'pool' and fence each other, from these results a league table is devised. He also suggested that coaching for the AFA bronze award took place, but despite my eagerness I received only two lessons in two years. After these explanations he invited me to fight '.....to see what I could do.....'. He had not asked about previous experience and seemed a little annoyed when I demonstrated some skill. I had in fact been fencing for some twenty-years on and off and while I was by no means expert, I had gained a sound grasp of the rudimentaries. The bout lasted some three minutes before Alf asked where I had fenced before, I explained and was informed that '.....you still have to go on the bottom of the ladder.....'. This has proved an interesting decision since over the two years of observation I have noticed, with some irritation, that similar candidates have been placed immediately in the middle of the ladder. After this comment Alf suggested I go and find someone to fence with.

I returned to my seat and was approached by Peter, who informed me that he was new also but had previous experience. We chatted a while and he revealed that he had joined the club to meet new people because he had just divorced; I exchanged a similar story, which was almost true! Identifying a common 'bond' he proceeded to examine the 'ins and

outs' of divorce before challenging me to a 'fight'. One normally uses a first to five hits system in fencing although this tends to be negotiated in friendly fights. Peter suggested ten, I suggested five because I was 'getting old' and he agreed. In the event I beat him five-one, for which he thanked me. Fencing, all weapons, is quite interesting on this point, it is perhaps the only aggressive sport where one has to appear pleased at being beaten and thank one's opponent for being beaten. Peter was not unduly perturbed at the defeat and we returned to our discussion. This was a typical superficial exchange: Where do you live? Where are you from originally? Where do you work? Peter was thirty, an engineer and lived alone. At present he did not have a girl-friend but was looking. He explained that the 'looking' was difficult because of his age and that singles' clubs held no attraction for him. Did I find the same problem? Not really, I had to admit, and he suggested that my employment was a boon in this department. I explained the notion of moral turpitude but he remained unconvinced.

The next three sessions were monopolised by Peter and followed a similar pattern; indeed the conversation became repetitive of the previous weeks. I invited Peter for a drink after the session on week three, but he declined saying he was meeting a friend. However, during these three weeks I developed a notion of the informal structure of the club and the principal characters. In some respects it was very like the archery club, but consisted of two main groups:

The coaching-elite: Who owned all their own equipment, usually for all three weapons, administered the structure of the club, were the committee and claimed the right to coach whoever they pleased. It

was interesting to discover that the elite often dominated the top of the ladder even though they rarely fought everybody.

This group was also involved in other clubs outside the district and consisted of: Alf (40); Graham (24); Gordon (50); Roger (44); Jean (36); Jo (26). Helen (25) could be termed a periphery elite, she is Graham's fiancée involved in most elite activities but lacking the skill to be a true elite.

The rest: This included any other members of mixed ability; the principal characters were: Tim ('Gringo') (27); Paul (23); Gary (17); Nick (19); Arthur (32); Tim (17); Barry (18); Maggie (34); Naomi (17); and myself (33). This group tended to be sub-divided into 'who I know' groups: Gringo, Paul, Arthur and me; Gary, Barry and Tim; Maggie, Naomi and Nick. Peter is not included since he terminated his membership after eight weeks.

It should also be noted that these meetings were a mixture of fencing and information exchange between the members of each sub-group.

One final point is that Arthur and Paul were by far the 'best' fencers in the club but never attained 'pole-position' (Top of the League) in the two years of these observations.

The power behind this club was undoubtedly Alf, together with Jean; I discovered some months after initial observations that they also had a 'lover' relationship. This pair dictated the rules and the objectives of the sessions and were always supported by their fellow elites. One aspect that was introduced when the club moved to new premises (the church hall was burnt down one week before the insurance expired) were regular structured coaching sessions. These sessions often claimed

up to three-quarters of the meeting time and at best were repetitive. Many of 'the rest' complained about them but with little success. Similarly, the elite would also organise 'out of club' events, i.e. walks, parties; the routes and venues seemed to suit members of the elite rather than members of the club. As in the case of the archery club, members would be co-opted onto the committee via the elite seduction process; co-opted members were always kept to a minimum and consequently held no real power. Another interesting point is that new members were not taken seriously until they had proved their interest through continuous attendance over three months; after this period other members would interact with you (regular members that is) and coaching would be offered.

I will now concentrate on the relationships that developed over the two years. The relationships of the elite were beyond my observation; they made it clear that they interacted outside the club and had done so prior to my arrival. They visited one another's houses and attended other fencing-clubs together as well as attending coaching-courses en masse. Over the two years I never witnessed anyone's initiation into the elite, even when Jo left the area; in this respect it remained static, and continued to do so for a year after these observations terminated. Consequently, I was unable to develop any real insight into the workings of this group. I would describe them as 'stand-offish'; they guarded their elite status and adopted the tones of school-teachers when addressing the rest. Other members confided to me that they found them very 'patronising'. They also devised sanction techniques for the outspoken:

- 1 Placing an offender in the 'unskilled' group during pools:

In this way they could only achieve the top of the bottom six regardless of ability. This technique had been used on Arthur, Paul and myself several times.

- 2 'Ladder-dropping': A very flexible rule that was used whenever the elite wished. In essence the rule stated that if anyone was challenged for a bout and was absent then they automatically lost the bout. Members who were creeping up the ladder would often find themselves dropped up to two positions, after a short absence, without explanation. It would be stated that they had been challenged, but not by whom.

- 3 The right to challenge: The process of climbing the ladder was governed by challenging those above you. The elite had 'ordered' that you could only challenge those up to two places above you; this placed the elite out of range of the more able fencers after the application of rules one and two.

- 4 The rules for removing committee members were equally flexible: If a member of the committee did not attend for more than four consecutive sessions they were excluded from the committee. This rule was invoked for the rest but, oddly, absent elite members were provided with excuses and it would often be said:

"Well, I saw him/her at the weekend, so it's not really absence."

These sanctions preserved the monopoly of the elite in terms of 'published-skill' and 'committee-rights'; it also ensured that they entered all competitions since the team comprised of the top six fencers on the ladder. On the occasions when Arthur, Paul or myself attained sixth position the team size contracted to five and rule one was exercised the following week, or rule two if one was absent.

It should be pointed out that the majority of 'the rest' were not interested in the politics, they came to fence and nothing more. Those who were seduced onto the committee held positions such as 'entertainments secretary' or 'internal competition organiser'; no one other than an elite member held the position of 'Secretary', 'Chairperson' or 'Treasurer'.

Members of the 'rest' occasionally conspired to embarrass the elite in subtle ways. Because none of the elite were proficient at sabre or epee (or not enough elite members to make a team) there would be an annual sabre and epee contest within the club; the top six were invited to make up the team. The best fencers from the 'rest' would conspire to win and then decline the invitation to be a team member because of 'lack of experience'.

This then is a picture of the informal political relationships that unfolded over the two years. I shall now discuss the informal relationships that developed between myself and other members.

Although, by week six, I was a member of a clique, the first approach of sociability came from Nick: he suggested that we went to a pub after the meeting, stating that other members would be going too. In the event only Nick and I turned up and we indulged in a superficial information exchange routine. This situation continued for a few weeks and a case-history of this relationship is presented in the next section. Nick proved very adept at the utility principle in his relationships and our sociability tended to disintegrate after a few months. He allowed himself to be elected 'entertainments secretary' after his third week of membership, indeed he canvassed for the position, only to have his position revoked for non-attendance some five months later.

Arthur, a paraplegic and member of the disabled olympic fencing team, also made the initial approach to me in week eight, in terms of sociability. Arthur joined the club in my fourth week and invited me to fence; from this initial introduction we fought every week for two years, all weapons, and he taught me much about 'chair-fencing'. In week eight he suggested that I join him and his wife for a drink after the session and this became a regular feature of our relationship throughout the two years. This relationship is also discussed in the next section.

Paul tended to 'sneak-up' on me, without really being aware of the development I suddenly discovered that we had a relationship after the first year; this too is outlined in the next section.

Tim, 'gringo', became a peripheral 'social-contact' mainly due to our membership of the same clique. His attendance became erratic after the first year and consequently precluded development. If one is to give a label to our relationship then it would be one of 'conversing acquaintances' and this is the case to date.

I also interacted with Gary and Barry at a superficial level and this could be described as the informed-father-figure. Both these youths intended to go to university and frequently asked for advice on courses and places. There was no depth to either of these relationships and even after two years I know them no better. At best we remain conversing-strangers.

The type of member the fencing-fellowship attracted was predominantly 'professional' or aspiring-professional. The younger element intending to go to higher education, the older from distinct 'professions:

Tim (Gringo), dentist; Gordon, Lecturer; Alf, teacher; Paul, head groundsman (highly qualified); Roger, chemical engineer; Maggie, physiotherapist; Helen, Health-educationalist; Graham, engineer, Jean, ex-teacher. Arthur had been a plumber prior to his accident. The 'rest' used nicknames for several people, usually the elite, but these were not often bandied about outside small conclaves, the only nickname publically used was Tim's - Gringo; this had been coined by Paul because of Tim's likeness to the villains in the Eastwood spaghetti westerns. 'Backstage', Alf was Pilsbury (after the doughman), Roger was Raj, (after the Ripping Yarn); Graham was 'Blue Peter', due to his presentation of the coaching sessions; Jean was 'Headmistress', due to her attitude displayed to the rest; Gordon was 'Morris-man', due to his interest in folkdancing and Nick was 'D'Artagnian' because of his unruly fencing style. Our particular clique also used nicknames openly: Gringo has been explained; Arthur was Daveros, after the Dalak's creator; Paul was Morrissey, after the singer from the Smiths pop-group and because it annoyed him; I was 'Prof' initially, and then 'Grandad' because of my frequent pleas of getting old.

This then was the overall pattern of the club over the two years of observation; apart from the out-of-club meetings of the elite, very little social-exchange occurred between members. As will be explained, social interaction occurred between Arthur, Paul, Nick and myself, but only after a more intrusive approach from myself in an attempt to foster relationships beyond club-nights.

In terms of structure, both the archer and the fencing fellowships were similar. Both displayed a ruling elite which ultimately controlled the running of the club; both did not spawn social arrangements

outside the clubs, indeed on occasions when efforts were made to organise pure social occasions outside club-nights they were very poorly attended. On reflection, the fencing-elite were far more organised in their control of power and in the assertion of such power. In the light of these observations I became doubtful that the common-interest theory held water. However, my observations at the archery fellowship led me to believe that there is a system of 'keys' offered to a person whom another found attractive; it was then the responsibility of that person to use that key and in return offer a similar key. Such a key may be a meeting place or 'gift exchange'. Consequently I decided to maintain the non-intrusive technique within the archery fellowship, but to play my part in the pantomime of exchange with the fencers. It is this more intrusive approach that yielded the data for the next section in an attempt to test 'key-exchange'.

Case-Studies

This section concerns the three relationships I actively tried to cultivate from the initial approaches made to me by other fencers. They are, due to space allowed, very much abridged and will concentrate on the 'bench-marks' suggested by Duck (1983).

Nick; Student, age 19

Nick could be described as a character who had completed a 'how to make friends' course, in that he was aggressively insistent upon entering one's life. He mimicked the 'cool', fashionable young man often portrayed on television and constantly sought to impress with tales of sexual conquest and fighting skill. At the time of our meeting he held aspirations towards the legal profession and was 're-taking' his 'A' levels in an attempt to gain better grades.

In fact he attained worse grades than the first time and eventually entered the family business of 'chemist'.

As previously mentioned, Nick made the first overture to me to develop a relationship. This occurred on my sixth night when Nick challenged me to a fight. He displayed the style of fencing that disconcerts the 'trained' fencer, in that he adopted a style of the film-stars. Oddly, whilst crude and unskilled this style puts the experienced fencer ill at ease due to its unpredictability. In essence the 'film-star-fencer' attacks the sword and not the body and it was with some effort that I gained victory. After the bout Nick stated that I was 'quite good' and 'you've done this before' which I acknowledged. Then he asked if I would like a drink (the club provided hot and cold drinks) and bought me an orange without waiting for a reply. On his return he adopted the interrogator's role: What do you do? Where do you live? Are you married? To each reply he maintained a wry smile and uttered 'That's interesting'. At the end of this exchange, and without offering information about himself, he suggested that I should join him and some of the other members for an after club drink at a local pub. I accepted but discovered that only the two of us turned up, he frequently stated his misunderstanding concerning the lack of members. He maintained his interrogative techniques for the first half-hour of our meeting: How long have you been lecturing....been divorced....lived in Warrington? before I had the opportunity to ask him about his position (as revealed: unattached, would-be law student). After his revelation he suggested that I could be of help to him:

"You know....you could help me a lot. You know I said I wanted to go into law..... well you could help me there.....with your connections."

"It's not really in my line.....I'm a sociologist, or try to be."

"Yes, but you must know who runs the Law Department at the Poly?"

"I could find out....."

"Hey.....I'd be grateful if you could.....you know, put us a word in."

"I could get you a name of who to write to....."

"Well, that's a start."

He reminded me of this suggestion on our departure and in an attempt to honour my word I did indeed find him a name which I delivered at the next session. I suggested that he write to this person for advice about how to gain access to the law-profession and he responded with a conspiratorial wink. We fought again, with similar difficulty, and chatted after the bout. He asked me if I thought that what I suggested was the best approach and I stated that it was at least an approach. He then changed tack and asked if I ever 'got to Wigan'. In reality I occasionally did, to visit students, and explained as much. With this revelation he suggested we exchange telephone numbers and I complied.

Two days later he rang me at home and asked if I was coming to Wigan in the ensuing week, oddly I was. He suggested that we meet at lunch time in a town-centre bar. I again complied with the arrangements and again spent the best part of two-hours being interrogated. In return he informed me that he worked part-time in this bar and gave me a guided tour of his college. At this point the relationship was very one-sided in that he demanded all the information. The level of conversation

was very superficial and I only gleaned from him assertions of his masculinity (? mostly fiction).

At the next club meeting Nick announced that he had brought something that I would enjoy and pressed a cassette tape into my hand. When asked what it was he offered another conspiratorial wink and said:

"Listen to it on the way to the pub and let me know what you think when you get there."

It was a Deryck and Clive tape (Cook and Moore) which I had heard before. On arriving at the pub he immediately asked what I thought and suggested it was a bit 'strong'. I said that I had heard worse. I got the impression he was trying to shock, since he appeared a little disappointed when he discovered that I had two different 'albums' of the same duo. I said that he could borrow them and indeed, delivered them the following week. The rest of this session followed the now familiar pattern.

Over the next few weeks, Nick started to advertise our 'friendship', in that he frequently mentioned my visit to Wigan, often exaggerating the details. He also started to 'bait' other members of the club offering conspiratorial 'winks' to me as he did so. On week nineteen the relationship career touched another 'benchmark', when Nick invited himself to my home for coffee after the pub; up until this time there had been a 'sameness' about its course. On that night he stayed until one in the morning and implied that he knew things about me that the lady I lived with did not. This was achieved more by looks than things spoken. After his visit, Brenda commented that 'outsiders' would get the impression that we were old friends by his attitude. After this

turning point he took to visiting my home whenever he happened to be in the area, usually at lunchtime when pubs were open, or in the early evening for the same reason. He had now started 'pressuring' me to arrange a meeting for him with the Head of the Law Department at the Polytechnic, however I never complied with his request and stressed that he should do this himself. He also sought invites to 'Poly Dos' so that he might meet some of the 'talent'. He had, by this time, become quite entrenched in my life, and, to be honest, I found him quite tedious at times, which I rationalised as the difference in ages. His 'fantasies' were becoming more obvious and he would have everyone believe that he had contacts with the Manchester Mafia. I finally gave in to his requests to afford him access to a 'Poly Do' on week 26. The French Summer School were holding a social and I invited him. He arrived with a friend of his, tried to bait some of my colleagues, quickly realised he was out of his depth and took to wandering around the party on his own. At no time did he interact with a female but at the next club meeting he insisted that he had 'done alright', back to the fantasies.

The final bench-mark in this career occurred following Nick's 'A' level results. From being entrenched in my life he suddenly became apparent by his absence; his visits to the club became fleeting, he arrived late and left early. He declined invitations to the pub saying that he had to meet someone (Paul would often suggest that it was his Godfather in the Mafia). I met him by chance in Warrington one lunchtime, about two months after his change of behaviour, and he appeared more subdued than usual. He informed me that he was now working in advertising (in fact I discovered later that he was trying to sell space on advertisement boards in supermarkets). I asked about his legal aspirations and he disclosed that he had gained worse grades

at 'A' level and now had to work for a living. He was still trying to impress with stories of his success in this venture, but a month later had joined his father in the family business. The relationship had now nosedived and we continued to be conversing-acquaintances. He has ceased visiting my home or the pub after his now rare visits to the club and has lost his 'regular' status within the club.

It is relatively easy to conclude that this was a Utility-friendship from Nick's point of view; but without knowing Nick's feelings it would be foolhardy to make such conclusions. I feel that I did all the right things in terms of exchange but this was not sufficient to maintain or further develop the relationship. Of course one must consider age-difference, different experiences and many other variables. The only real commonality within this relationship was membership of the fencing-fellowship, the decline in the relationship was in tandem with his decline in membership.

Arthur: 32 years, married and crippled by a motorcycle accident. Arthur had been a plumber prior to a motorcycle accident whilst scrambling, he now made wheelchairs to customer specification. Arthur could be described as 'competitive', he was annoyed when beaten and I often suspected him of using his condition as an excuse for not recognising 'hits'. He would often declare that he had to win and had always been like this:

"All that playing the game stuff is crap.....
I play to win and if I don't it sticks in my craw...
It's winning that counts and bugger-all-else!"

On the other hand he proved to be very sociable and placid in everyday

encounters. He appeared to have adjusted to his disability very well and rarely displayed signs of bitterness, indeed he would talk quite freely about his condition.

Arthur approached me on his first night, my week four, and asked me to fence; I accepted but required explanation of the 'code' of chair fencing. Arthur proved to be a good fencer and I achieved a narrow victory by luck rather than skill. I was surprised to discover that he had only taken up the sport a few months ago, this reflects on his competitive nature. Our initial conversation concerned fencing, he informed me that he had been a member of another club, but that it was cliqueish and he had been ignored, hence his arrival in Warrington. He lived some fifteen miles away and so travelled some distance to find an agreeable outlet. After about ten minutes of superficial chit-chat he challenged me to a bout of sabre (my weapon of preference) and during this bout he fell over with his chair. Spontaneous, if somewhat cruel, I exclaimed:

"Get up and fight!"

Fortunately Arthur took this in good part, but still lost, indeed he rapidly out-fenced me with foil and epee, but did not beat me with sabre for over a year. My comment appeared to open him up a little and after the bout he explained how he appreciated people making jokes like that since most people pretended that the chair was not there; this, he said, made him feel a source of embarrassment. He then told me about his accident: He had previously raced motorcycles and his wife persuaded him to give it up for the more 'safe' scrambling. His accident occurred in his second scramble when he was thrown off his

bike and landed on a stone which snapped his spine. He graphically described the tedium of the hospital stay and coming to terms with his condition, which he maintained was not as difficult as people think.

After this session I made a point of fencing Arthur every week, partly because others were reluctant but mainly because I found him affable. He started to introduce his jokes into our second session; normally we would fight all three weapons and inbetween bouts Arthur would throw out his jokes:

"What do you call a man wearing two raincoats
stood in a graveyard? Max Bygraves!"

All his jokes were of this ilk and I started collecting similar jokes to offer him:

"Heard the Wigan knock-knock joke?"

"No."

"You say knock-knock."

"Knock-knock."

"Who's there?"

"I don't know....."

Wigan jokes are similar to Irish jokes in this area, there are many tales of "Wiganer" stupidity. However, every time I told Arthur a new joke he could not wait to try it out on someone and another development of our relationship was his reporting on how one of my jokes went down in another social circle. It was also in week two that he introduced me to his wife 'Sandra', who accompanied him to

meetings but rarely participated.

In my eighth week, our fourth meeting, Arthur invited me for a drink with him and Sandra, I accepted. Arthur devised a game which continued throughout the two years that night: He would race me to the pub, he in the wheelchair, me in my car. The pub was about 300 yards away and he won the race on many occasions. In the pub, Arthur sought information from me, appeared interested in how I had coped with divorce and generally showed interest in other aspects of my life. I felt relaxed with him and we seemed to share information easily. I mentioned that I was having difficulty getting a new gas cooker fitted and he promptly offered to fit it; indeed, he insisted and made arrangements to do just that.

This was another benchmark in the relationship, Arthur and Sandra visiting my home. He fitted the cooker expertly and without aid, pushing himself across the floor on a leather cushion. He also revealed how to 'fiddle' the gas meter (he had been a gas fitter in his past). To my embarrassment he would not take payment and in response to my insistence suggested that we invited them both for a meal. Hence, another arrangement was made for a second visit a few days later when Arthur ate with gusto and confessed his love of food. We had a canary at that time and Arthur declared his wish to have one, so we gave him the bird, my exchange for the cooker.

The relationship developed over the weeks in this vein and I must admit that I felt more intimate with Arthur than I did with Nick, whom I had known longer. We arrived at the stage where we shared intimate secrets and shared histories and experiences. He revealed that he felt annoyed

by the media's portrayal of cripples, especially the implication that they could not have sex. Interestingly, two weeks after this revelation he announced that Sandra was pregnant.

We exchanged telephone numbers and he often telephoned for a chat. Our interactions at the club now included updates on the canary's progress and Arthur stated that he intended to breed canaries. Nevertheless, just as this relationship appeared to be developing very well it seemed to come to an abrupt end. Arthur ceased his visits to the club with no explanation. I telephoned him a few times and he promised to attend the next meeting but never did. So far this relationship had developed over eight months and then entered a period of absence of six months. After the first few phone calls we did not contact each other at all. It appeared that this career had also terminated.

After his six months absence Arthur suddenly started attending the club again without announcement. He explained his absence as being due to moving house, he had in fact moved closer to Warrington. He resumed interaction as though there had been no interruption, except for catching up on club and personal news. I did not press him about the length of non-attendance and he offered no further explanations. However, a change had occurred in the relationship in that it never became as 'intense' again, our exchanges were usually superficial and mainly consisted of swapping jokes. He also started taking the politics of the club much more seriously and constantly berated Paul and I for being flippant. Following a constant attendance of three months he became erratic in his membership once more and our relationship became even more superficial. I tried on several occasions to re-

institute depth to our conversations but Arthur would counter these attempts either by changing the subject or making a joke. Eventually my attempts died off from lack of nourishment.

For a time this relationship would have fallen into my definition of friendship, perhaps this feeling was one-sided. One would certainly argue that the lack of reciprocity starved its further development. I am not suggesting that the period of distance was important here but the lack of response to 'non-superficial' overtures on Arthur's return. At present I would describe the relationship as 'friendly', more than acquaintances because of the past 'intimacy' but not real friends because of the superficiality. Again, I would argue that a common interest did not bond this relationship in totality and in this case age differences cannot be used to rationalise the 'disintegration'. It is possible that Arthur became absorbed in his wife's pregnancy and consequently had little time for others. Whatever explanation is proffered, only Arthur could explain the real reason for his lack of reciprocity.

Paul: 23 years; Head Groundsman, married during this study.

In the previous section, I suggested that Paul 'sneaked-up' on me. The reason for this being that I had not singled him out for study. Paul could be described as aloof, or at least this is the image that he projects. I had known him for some six months prior to my realisation that a relationship was developing since he was a member of the same clique. Up until the first 'benchmark', discussed below, we had conversed only about fencing matters. On occasions he had offered coaching for my foil, not my favourite weapon, and helped my application of that weapon a great deal. There is a term

'esoteric-fencer', that is used in some fencing circles; such fencers do not merely fence, the sport is their religion and they constantly evaluate their style, analyse each bout and try to divorce action from mental process. Such fencers are quite rare, in my experience. I had decided during these first six months, that Paul was such a fencer. On many occasions Paul explained to me:

"You have to make the weapon part of you until it moves without you thinking about it. Those people who think I'll do this so he'll do that aren't fencers.....the true fencer doesn't think.....his reflexes know when he'll get a hit before he does."

This philosophy worked very well for Paul and as I have stated he was by far the best fencer in the club. Conversely, within the group he displayed a lack of seriousness about the sport and constantly ridiculed the coaches, who in turn did not know how to handle him. He refused to participate in any 'outside' competition stating that he had done all that years before and if anyone wants medals they can have some of his. Both sides of his character appeared sincere, he fenced because he loved it not for acclaim. Once I grew to know him better I found that he applied this philosophy to everything he did, in short he was a non-competitive perfectionist; whatever he turned his mind to he would quickly learn all there was to learn about it but never advertised this. He seemed to want people to assume he was stupid and often led them into believing this so that he could embarrass them later.

The first benchmark in this relationship occurred some sixth months after I had joined the club. Paul and Debra (his fiancée) started to join Arthur, Sandra, Nick and myself in the pub. I was immediately

aware that we shared a similar sense of humour and that Paul enjoyed 'winding' people up with outrageous stories. Debra, who knew him best of all, often fell for these stories. Nick became one of his favourite targets and he would encourage him to expound on his 'fantasies', feigning deep interest. He also enjoyed 'setting-up' Nick: He would confide a lie to Nick and make a point of stressing that he should not let on to Debra. This temptation was too much for Nick and he would, as Paul predicted, let the secret slip out in Debra's presence. During the weeks following this first benchmark, Paul started letting me in on his 'Nick-baiting' explaining the plot before he initiated it. He explained later that he did this because he realised that I was the only one who knew what he was really doing.

The relationship progressed on this dual level, club and pub, and I became the regular confidant in Paul's 'games'. At this stage I knew no details of his biography or private life, nor did he know anything of this kind about me.

The second benchmark occurred the night my car was stolen from the pub car-park after a meeting. I had not intended to go to the pub that night but Paul had insisted, saying that he was having a drink with all the fencers to celebrate his forthcoming wedding. I left early to discover my car missing, naturally I returned to the pub to report the loss and Paul would not believe me. He insisted that I was trying to set everybody up and that I had hidden it to get them 'going'. I maintained my innocence and he eventually believed me. I noticed with some concern that my other fencing colleagues were rapidly disappearing, offering condolences, but nevertheless making their wishes to remain uninvolved known. I was soon left in an empty pub with Paul and Debra.

At that point he took control, got me to telephone the police, gave his name and address as a witness (I had not thought of this) and drove me home. He declined the invitation for coffee.

At the following session Paul started to convince people that I had had the car stolen deliberately for the insurance and that he had put me on to the hired thieves, I am sure several members believed this story. This development marked another benchmark in the career and we started playing practical-jokes on each other, an aspect of the relationship that continues to date. We also became regular fencing partners with sabre, fencing Paul's rules: one point for a 'Gnugh'; two for a bruise and five for a weal. The various injuries sustained in these bouts became a focus of conversation in the pub after the meetings. It seemed then that we were devising rituals without negotiation: Practical-jokes, inclusive fencing-styles.

The next benchmark occurred when I was invited to their wedding. In the spirit of our relationship I bought them a draft-excluder for a wedding gift, much to Brenda's anxiety. Our rituals spilled over into his wedding celebrations: I heckled his speech and discovered that I had sat through all the photo-calls with a melon-skin on my shoulder. I also discovered that Paul was a proficient pick-pocket and he continually returned things to me throughout the night claiming that I had dropped them.

Following their wedding, Paul and Debra started to visit my home after the fencing sessions, often staying until late. Brenda remarked that she was surprised how little I knew about Paul prior to and following their first visit. The remark was valid, other than his name and that he was married, I knew nothing about him. It was during these home

visits that we exchanged the necessary information, although I feel this was more for Brenda's benefit and other observers since it was not important in my opinion. These home visits progressed to Brenda and I visiting them. The conversations developed in depth and during one late night session we started to share secrets: How he had never got on with his father, how I wish I'd understood mine; intimacies: How he had met Debra and his initial feeling about her, I confided similar information concerning Brenda. It had taken twelve months for the career to develop from this stage and I cannot explain my attraction to this person. We discovered that not only did we share a common interest in fencing, but also tropical fish (on which subject he is also expert), films, music and we also shared similar sense of humour. These commonalities were revealed at various stages within the career and were recognised accidentally rather than by interrogation. Our present relationship continues to develop in intensity to the extent that our partners regularly joke of an homosexual content, which we of course play up to. We telephone each other about once a week, despite our regular meetings; he asks for advice concerning his part-time course, which has a sociology component, and I seek advice on maintaining healthy fish. The subject of fencing rarely arises in discussion these days.

Here then was a relationship that seemed to develop spontaneously, in that I did not seek to develop it consciously. I only realised that it was a relationship worthy of study once I became aware of the relationship and my retrospective analysis may have omitted certain aspects that prompted its development. In this relationship there is a big age difference, but this does not appear to mar its progress. The common-interest appears to be of similar concern since we do not dominate conversations with them. Our prime concern appears to be finding out about each other.

Conclusions

The three case studies described above share a common rationale in that they attempted to follow Duck's (1983) format for making friends. The notions of exchange and reciprocity were adhered to in all three cases. Two of the relationships were unsuccessful in that they did not develop into real friendships, the third, whilst lacking the more structured approach adopted in the other two, tended to be more successful. In the case of Paul, the elements of the romantic spirit were present: Ritual, closeness, confident support and common interest. Whilst the relationships with Nick and Arthur held components of these they did not develop at the same level of intensity. I argue that common interest alone is insufficient to propagate close friendships and that a structured analysis of the relationship falls short of giving meaning to such encounters. Paul's explanation of our friendship is that 'we are alike', and whilst I would endorse this it does not explain why the other close friendship with John, held similar intensity, since we were quite different. At this stage I can only suggest that the interest factor is of low importance in that friendships develop by way of any medium of placing people together. I also introduce the term 'association' as a label to describe relationships that mirror friendship but do not embrace the tenets of its real meaning. Association has a dual meaning in that a person interacts with associates in order to pursue a pleasurable activity and that others locate a person by taking account of those with whom he most frequently associates. I was often located in the fencing-fellowship as a friend of Nick and Arthurs when being described to others. This placed me in a group picture so that I could be identified. I suggest that Association and Friendship display different careers but can easily be mistaken for each other by outsiders. Association, I believe can only take

place when motivated by an external activity, i.e. common interest/goal; friendship on the other hand stretches beyond that interest and continues in the absence of the external factor. I further argue that it is association and not friendship that develops from acquaintanceship; friendship is more informal and much more spontaneous, indeed it is difficult to recognise until experienced.

These thoughts have had a direct influence on the next approach in which I adopt the role of outsider. The outsider methods were used to try to identify Association and in an attempt to get to the root of the meaning of real friendship. The insider approach has suggested that this relationship (friendship) cannot be structured or forced, but that it is almost intuitive and that similar interests merely reinforce one's initial feelings. The next section seeks to exemplify this through non-participant observations and in-depth open interviews.

Outsider Techniques

I have previously argued that 'insider' methods are inadequate when used as the sole method of investigation in this area since they are, paradoxically, prone to subjectivity. In an attempt to balance the data collected by the insider technique I developed two outsider methods:

- 1 Non-participant observation on a group of 'drinking' miners.

I felt that this aspect of the study would also test the theories of common-interest or goal (i.e. mining) and the notion that 'activity' must be present to cement relationship.

2 Informal interviews: I adopted a very open-ended technique with an opportunity-sample in an attempt to discover similarity/dissimilarity of meaning of the term 'friendship' between persons and sexes.

The Miners' Study

These observations took place between January and December 1981. Initially I had intended to use this data as the focal point of the main discussion until, as I have described, the rationale underpinning my study changed direction. These observations were discontinued because of the sudden 'disappearance' of the subjects following transfer of the landlord. Not being a participant I was unable to find out where the group had gone.

Geographic Location

The miners met in a pub in the village of Gawber, now a suburb of Barnsley, South Yorkshire. Originally this had been a middle-class area of 'private' detached and semi-detached housing arranged in quiet cul-de-sacs and loops. There are few shops, the location being only one mile from the town-centre. The area changed demographically in the early 1960s, concomitant with the rise of the 'affluent' worker and the houses are now mainly 'owned' by miners from the south Yorkshire coalfield. The original residents have largely dispersed to the nearby villages of Cawthorne, Penistone, Silkstone and Wosboro Dale and only a minority of the original inhabitants, now elderly, are still there. Despite the lack of shops there are four public-houses that cater for the village:

The Redbrook: A very plastic and trendy venue that aims to cater for the youth during evenings and offers 'bar-meals' during lunchtime.

The Friendship: A 'folksy' pub that has been a venue for folk-music and its fans for over twenty years.

Tom Treddle 'Ole: A family pub, catering for parents and children, sports and beer-garden and play area.

The New Inn: This pub has doggedly resisted change and retains a typical spartan Barnsley identity. There are no carpets in the 'smoke-room' and females are actively discouraged from entering the room. It does stop short of spittoons and sawdust, but only just. There is a pool-table, darts-board, dominoes and cards in permanent place. Concessions to the technological age, like the juke-box and 'bandit' are located in the lounge (known locally as the 'women's room').

All the observations took place in the smoke-room of the New Inn since this was the regular Saturday lunchtime venue of a group of miners. Sunday lunchtime is the traditional 'drinking-period' of Barnsley miners but this takes place in the Working-mens' Clubs, i.e. Darton and Wosboro Common, and requires membership for access. The landlord of the New Inn, Eddie, took management of the pub, a John Smith's House, nine months before I began the study and holds aspirations to own a pub. He often stated that managing the New Inn was a stepping stone. Eddie was a fanatical golfer and video freak. Although the pub attracted a clientele from a wide area of the Barnsley Borough, Saturday lunchtime was a relatively quiet time and allowed the group to commandeer the smoke-room. A graphical representation of this room is given in Appendix E.

There were nine subjects involved in this study, all working miners but not all employed at the same colliery.

Big Dave: who is about 5 feet 5 inches tall but very broad of shoulder. I later discovered that he was the son of Big Eddie who had been a dominant character in Barnsley folklore. Big Dave was the recognised leader of the group and was about 36 years old.

Eric (Ekker) a tall, thin, youthful member of about 22 years.

Edward (Ted), a quiet man about 45 years.

James (Jack), about 30 years old.

Fred (Barney), a very surly man of about 36 whose nickname was derived from the flintstone cartoon character.

Richard (Dick) about 30 years old.

John (Jed) about 30 years old.

Edward (Paddy), the oldest member, ? 55+, Irish and very chesty (possibly bronchitis).

Charles (Jock) one of the Scottish miners attracted by the mining boom years previously. There is a large Scottish community at Hemsworth some six miles away.

During the course of these observations I discovered that this group only ever met at this venue and only on a Saturday. They had all worked at the same pits at some time in their careers, however, only Big Dave, Ekker and Paddy worked together during the course of this study. It was an unwritten rule that every member of the group spend part of their Saturday lunchtime at the pub, regardless of shift: After 'earlies', before 'days' and well before/after nights. All members of the group were 'fitters' (maintenance mechanics), except Paddy and Jock who were 'shearer' (coal cutter) operators (a much sought after job with an

apparently long waiting list).

Access: I relied heavily on a confidant to gain access; this was an ex-miner whom I had grown friendly with during a previous research programme. Having been educated in Barnsley I was aware of the suspicion and hostility reserved for strangers in certain pubs and felt that 'introduction' was necessary. Jud, (George) my confidant, knew several of the group on a 'nodding' basis from his mining days. When I asked Jud to accompany me to a 'miner's pub' (he had selected the venue not I) he offered this advice:

"I'll tek thee t'New Inn, but when tha gus in keep thi eyes on t'floor, dunt look at owt or nobody and if anyone talks to thi pretend thi esn't heard. I'll go wi' thi a couple o'times then thaon thi own."

Jud accompanied me for the first two visits and then left me to it.

On our first visit Big Dave spoke to Jud:

"Arn't tha talking then?" Big Dave

"Awreight?" Jud

"Ar." Big Dave

Nothing more was discussed between them and following that first session Jud identified the various group members to me. He suggested that:

"Most on 'em are alreight, Barney's a miserable bugger but dunt lerrim scare thi, he's like a spuggy (sparrow) all chirrup and shit. Big Dave's an 'ard bastard, he'd sooner drop thi than argue burre dunt usually start owt."

It was then, with this background that I commenced observation. For the first few sessions, until my presence was accepted, I noticed (in retrospect) that the group's language was excessively sprinkled with swearing, often using expletives to hyphen words:

"Abso-fucking-lutely....."

This style of speech gradually settled down to the extent that I started to notice when they did swear. The swearing-ritual often came into play if a stranger entered the room and particularly if a female came in. Otherwise the swear-word was reserved for jokes, frustration or threat. It seemed that there was no pre-arrangement for the utilisation of the ritual, it was automatic in response to an alien presence. One could argue that the ritual was designed to make the group exclusive, rather than inclusive.

Another aspect of their speech which was inclusive was the frequent reference to colliery equipment:

"Tha's gotten brains of a Dowty (pit-prop)"

This code of speech often left me confused. Another confusing aspect was the group's shorthand code. They would frequently pepper their speech with phrases or words that were meaningless to me but common knowledge to them:

When Big Dave had a series of losses at dominoes he would state:

"I wish I could be like David Watts!"

Whereupon another group member would respond:

"Well tha carn't."

I discovered, quite by accident, towards the end of this study that all these phrases and words were taken from songs recorded by the Kinks pop group who had achieved some fame during the sixties. This knowledge allowed me to provide meaning to the phrases: David Watts is a character in a Kinks' song who excels in everything: He is the captain of the team, he is the best at everything. Another phrase:

"Tha like Tom's old ma!"

Was taken from 'Harry Rag':

"Tom's old ma was dying lass, soon they all reckoned she'd be pushing up the grass."

However, at the time such meaning was beyond me, and suggests that the group had history in that they had developed such a code.

It was previously stated that Big Dave was the recognised leader of the group. This manifested itself in various ways:

Activities: The group had fairly routinised activities during the sessions; four played pool-doubles, two played darts (301) and they tended to swap these activities between the group; Paddy, Jock and Big Dave did not indulge in either sport however. Paddy and Jock would play cards together and Big Dave watched. Usually, up to one hour before leaving, Big Dave would say:

"Get Dommies art!"

and the rest of the group would cease their previous activities.

Ted, Jock, Paddy, Jed and Jack usually played Dominoes with Big Dave, leaving Barny, Ekker and Dick to play pool or darts. This situation rarely varied over the months that I observed them.

Big Dave was also called in to resolve disputes that occurred during the activities and his word was generally accepted as final.

Rules: Big Dave was also the enforcer in terms of club rules. If a member had missed a session he was required to explain the reason to Big Dave. In one instance Ekker missed a Saturday to get married, on his next visit Big Dave greeted him with:

"Tha owes us three pints each!"

"How come?"

"From last week."

"Ah weren't here last week."

"That's norrah fault, we got thi round in as if tha were.....it's norrah fault tha weren't here to drink it."

Ekker was pressured enough to buy an extra round and it was explained to him that marriage was no excuse for not coming, he could have come before or after the wedding. Big Dave's enforcer role was also apparent when keeping Barney in check. My confidant's description of Barney was very accurate and I found him most disagreeable. He grumbled and moaned about everything and anything and would often resort to threatening Ekker. Big Dave would usually control this behaviour in a humorous way; for example:

On one occasion Ekker was partnering Barney at pool-doubles. Ekker miscued and Barney was annoyed and resorted to calling Ekker names. Big Dave suggested that he should leave Ekker alone since he was only just married and needed his strength. Barney argued that Ekker had missed a shot that he could have won with his finger. Later, when five members gathered at the pool table Barney said that there was too many and who was going to drop out? Big Dave stated:

"Thee, tha too good for 'em what wi' playin
with thi fingers an' all."

Barney took himself to a corner and sulked.

On other occasions he would chastise members who had been mixing with 'undesirables' such as managers or 'scabs'. He also asserted the tradition of keeping women out. During one session Ekker's wife came into the pub looking for her husband:

"How much longer you gonna be?" she demanded
"I've had yer bleeding mother here for half-an-hour
already an' it's thi bleeding mother.....hurry thi sen up."

"You tell him love" grinned Big Dave.

"En tha can keep thi bleeding nose art" she retorted.

"It int mi nose ah wanna purin," claimed Big Dave.

Mrs Ekker was shocked by the innuendo and claimed protection from her husband:

"Did you hear what he said to me?"

"What's thi expect coming in here?" asked Ekker

"Tha a mouse norra man thee," she exclaimed before
storming out.

Ekker followed her and Big Dave commented:

"Bloody gob on that, I bet she'd talk a dowty
to death."

Ekker's wife never came near the pub again and this incident was never referred to.

Finally, Big Dave never bought himself a drink during the whole course of these observations, his drinks were bought for him by other members and there was never any trace of resentment about this, indeed they would often insist that it was their turn to pay when other members tried to buy him a drink. Big Dave never asked for a drink, when his glass was near empty another always appeared. The contents of the fresh glass were always poured into the original glass and this ritual was mirrored throughout the group.

Conversation

Apart from the codes described above there was little conversation during these sessions. The average time spent in verbal exchange was about twenty minutes in a two and one half hour session. Members tended to talk about work experiences and rarely mentioned their families. It became apparent that the family life of some members was unknown to others. Other than work, the topics of conversation tended to resolve around the activities they were involved in, football and jokes. Occasionally Big Dave was invited to pass comment on an issue, such as the NUM and Scargill and he would be heard without interruption. However, most of these sessions were more noted for their silent content rather than conversation.

Exclusion: As I have already mentioned, I was unable to gain access to this group. Towards the end of the observations some of the members would give me a nod of recognition but mostly I was ignored. Eddie, the landlord, on the other hand constantly sought access to the group

without any real success. He would attempt to engage members in conversation and was usually ignored; members would talk through him to each other and Eddie offered monologues in the background. On a few occasions he was allowed to play pool or darts with a member, but his efforts at conversation were still ignored. In this respect Big Dave often offered cues that they did not wish to talk to him:

"Backed anything in the three o'clock?" Eddie

"Nobody's interested in horses here!" Big Dave

At other times he would be ridiculed and generally made fun of and Eddie escaped these crises by claiming he had to: 'Check the stock', 'change a barrel' or 'clean a pipe'. Despite his lack of membership I have heard Eddie describe the group to outsiders as his 'mates'. Conversely I had heard the group refer to Eddie as:

"A thick prick."

In essence, then, this group protected its membership by various informal rules and both inclusive and exclusive rituals.

Conclusion:

In many ways these observations may not mesh into the overall data. I was not able to penetrate the group to any real depth, and consequently was unsure whether or not contact outside the group occurred; or, indeed, whether or not there existed a network of similar groups in which a person had multiple membership. I also feel that it may be a unique kind of association based on tradition (a kind of institution where a man is brought into the group by his father). However, because this

group lacked the intimacy and depth of friendship I am inclined to label its members as associates rather than friends. Although the group displayed 'ritualised behaviour' it also displayed the structural components of 'clubmanship', the following of certain rules to gain access: Attendance and use of language codes. In this respect it was quite formalised. It also displayed the inequality not felt to be present in real friendship: to my knowledge Big Dave exchanged nothing but had more status. Also conversation rarely explored any depth and certain aspects of members' lives were rarely touched on. One could argue that the group was institutionalised, in that it had a function apart from its members. It was apparent that the majority of the group only met for this two to three hour period once per week and had no contact at other times (other than the three members that worked together). There was no evidence that any member was closer or more intimate with another, nor was there any evidence to suggest that they contacted each other in times of crisis. Certainly the group were 'materially supportive'; when Paddy's wife died they sent a wreath but the circumstances and implications of the death were never discussed with Paddy.

There was an implication, from Jud the confidant, that this was a traditional group; each member had been introduced to the 'fraternity' by their fathers and fathers had subsequently died or retired. Short of interviewing each member, the maintenance of such groups is somewhat elusive. It reflects the 'bonding' process of friendship, would probably be called 'mateship' by its members, but in practice offers nothing regarding the explanation of friendship. I suggest that the outsider could confuse the relationships for friendship, in that they were 'inclusive' and 'friendly' but in turn they do not illustrate the true notions of freindship as outlined by the romantic spirit.

I have then, arrived at a stage when two predominant themes appear to be running in tandem with regard to the explanation of friendship. One is Association, essentially a group activity and bonded by commonality, the other friendship, a person to person activity bonded by something, as yet, not identified. I argue that both relationships might originate in similar arenas, but that they are fundamentally different in mode of bonding, meaning and content. The friendships identified by previous studies tend to conform to the former in that there is an element of common interest and that this can be cultivated, but would essentially remain at a superficial level. The real meaning of friendship, which insiders and other workers claim to be rare, would be encompassed by the latter, in that it happens despite other factors, just like falling in love. This relationship is marked by its depth and lack of formality. In an attempt to illustrate this theme more, I shall now turn to the discussion of the informal interviews.

Interview Data:

I collected this data over a three year period as opportunity arose. Subjects were allowed to describe their thoughts and feelings about friendship with minimal prompting and without time limit. Consequently, some interviews lasted for two hours, others only thirty minutes. Fortunately a selection of friendship-styles emerged, purely by chance: Male-male; female-female; male-female. In the case of two subjects the friend described was interviewed, to compare descriptions.

The method of interview used was to ask each subject if they had a close friend; whether they said yes or no subjects were encouraged to describe what closeness and friendship meant to them. The interview

was unstructured and the themes presented by subjects were utilised to plumb the depths of meaning.

In total, twelve people were interviewed, eight males and four females: Ten claimed that they had close friendships, but two (males) insisted that friendship did not exist. The interviews were informal and, after the initial prompt, allowed subjects to make their own definitions of their particular friendship. The data consists of seven individual accounts for which I was unable to gain access to the friend being discussed, and five related accounts where the 'friend' was interviewed between six and twelve months after the first interview. This time delay was considered to be of importance because immediate follow-up may have allowed the subjects to 'focus' their thinking on the topic following discussion with the first contact. The interviews provided data on three types of friendship: Same-sex (male); same-sex (female); opposite sex (male-female). The individual accounts were concerned with six same-sex friends and one opposite sex friend and were all male subjects. The related accounts were gained from both parties in an opposite-sex friendship. The subject profiles are:

Mick

A nineteen year old male, engineering student; single and living alone in a bedsit. He had no regular opposite-sex relationship at the time of the interview.

Ian

A thirty-seven year old married man; community psychiatric nurse. Ian was a native of London and had moved to the north-west about five years before the interview. He had two children and felt his marriage to be reasonably secure.

Steve

A forty-two year old divorced financial consultant. He had divorced about two years before the interview but insisted that he maintained a good relationship with his ex-wife and two children. He owned his own detached house in Yorkshire and had been co-habiting with a lady fifteen years his junior for three months when the interview took place.

Martin

A thirty-three year old married man. He was a music teacher in Further Education and had moved to the north-west from Kent a year before the interview. The marriage was childless and undergoing 'crisis': Martin's wife, also a teacher, had been unable to secure employment and did not like living in the 'North', she wished to return to Kent and this was causing friction.

Julian

A forty-eight year old single author; now living in London and Wales (weekdays in London). He is a successful author but also 'acts', acting, he claims, is his true vocation.

Brian

A forty year old married man with three children; a lecturer by profession, now living in Yorkshire but originally from the south-west. He was the first person who insisted that friendship did not exist.

Cornelius

A forty-six year old divorced man. Con (his preferred name) had trained in catering but now owned his own bistro. He had been divorced for ten years, enjoyed a good relationship with his two teenage daughters

and had been co-habiting with a twenty-six year old woman for the last two years. Con was 'Yorkshire born and bred' and did not believe in the existence of friendship, although he had had firm beliefs years ago that he did have 'close' friends.

Bill

A thirty-six year old research assistant; separated from his wife for two years but actively trying to repair the marriage. He was the father of two children, in the custody of their mother. Bill is one partner of an opposite-sex friendship with:

Laurie

A thirty six year old married lady with no children. A resident of Cheshire and a community psychiatric nurse in Greater Manchester.

Brenda

A thirty-five year old, divorced mother of a teenage son. Co-habiting for two years at time of interview and employed as a nursing officer. Brenda lives only a few hundred yards from her childhood home in a north-west town. She is the central figure of a same-sex triad:

Jean

A thirty-five year old married lady with two young daughters. Jean works part-time as a staff nurse in the same hospital as Brenda, but their relationship stems back to school-days.

Jackie

A thirty-nine year old divorcee; now living alone since her teenage son went to live with his father in Scotland. Jackie is an enrolled nurse at the same hospital.

The Data

Initially, this data is concerned with quality and meaning; each subject is essentially discussing friendship with a particular person or persons in mind. Even Brian and Con hinge their claims of non-friendship on experienced relationships with persons once felt to be friends. Consequently, following my earlier argument, I suggest that each account of friendship is unique and can only reflect similarity with another at an idealistic level. I considered two fundamental points when examining this data.

- 1 Do the accounts mirror the 'philosophical model' outlined earlier and if so, are such ideals realised in 'reality'.
- 2 Does one subject's definition meet with agreement of friends; previous accounts of friendship have reflected only one side of the story and may in reality be 'fictitious'.

Primarily, the data was examined for common themes that might suggest agreement with a notion of friendship between subjects. Several of such themes were identified and will be discussed individually. I would, however, stress that the basic 'ideals' of friendship were similar within this sample, regardless of sex, age, civil status or location, although most subjects felt that the relationships of opposite sexes were very different.

"....you never see many men sitting down and having close, intimate conversations like you can observe women....." (Brenda)

".....men are not happy to talk about things at a deep level as women are....men are more reticent....." (Jean)

"....friendship is far more important to a man.. women have their families....." (Steve)

".....but women's friendships are different....
men get together to enjoy, women to prattle." (Con)

My own views on the subject at the outset of this study also 'assumed' a different type of relationship; I, like Miller (1983), felt that female friendships were much more intense. From these subject's accounts a more varied view is apparent: Generally females felt that male friendships were less intense than their own, whereas some males felt that female friendships were less important than the male counterpart. Another theme that emerged in this context, as we saw earlier, was that male friendships tended to revolve around an external activity; e.g. sport, pubs, whereas female friendships tended to be home-based; e.g. visiting each other's home. This theme is implicit in the data rather than explicit, but it was touched on by subjects from both sexes and will be further discussed in the next section.

I will now present the common themes that were drawn from the data.

Difficulty of Definition

The majority of subjects (nine) specifically mentioned that attempting to explain and discuss friendship was difficult:

".....you're asking us to tie things down....
which you say yourself are not tied down."

".....it's very difficult to say....." (Julian)

"That's difficult to define....." (Bill)

"Heavens.....how do you tell someone what
friendship is?" (Laurie)

"It's very difficult to say, once you ask....." (Brenda)

Indeed, all subjects indulge in, on average, a seven seconds period of silence prior to making attempts to explain what friendship meant to them. There was also congruence between subjects that it was something people rarely thought about or that they took for granted and consequently eluded 'practical' discussion.

I suggest that since subjects experienced difficulty when discussing the subject they resorted to projecting their ideals of friendship onto a person in order to offer information. In this respect they are offering information concerning what they 'feel' friendship is rather than describing the practical reality of the relationship. I discuss this aspect further below when the related topics are presented. In essence, I suggest that a person's ideals about friendships shapes their feelings of the relationships and in turn causes them to develop expectations of others based on these ideals.

Choice and Negotiation

Another theme that emerged was the concept of 'knowing' the other person. By 'knowing' I do not mean recognition in the ordinary sense of the word, but holding firm beliefs about how another will act or react to certain situations. Nine of the subjects offered firm convictions of this type:

"....you know that you can depend on and trust them." (Jean)

"....I know that she would never ever do anything....against me." (Brenda)

"....I know I can do that and he doesn't mind....." (Steve)

"....If there's any real crisis, I know that I could go at any time....." (Ian)

In essence, what the subjects are suggesting is that they knew that they could rely on their friend to fulfil certain functions, for example giving support regardless of the time of day and without prior arrangement. This theme was threaded throughout all the subjects accounts, but only explicit in nine cases. However, only three subjects, Brenda, Jean and Jackie, had had experiences of such functions being fulfilled, the other subjects stated that they had had no such experiences but still 'knew' that it would be realised if the situation arose.

"Well, I haven't done that (sought support)
and probably wouldn't, but I know that I could." (Mick)

This concept of 'knowing' suggests that the relationship has been negotiated, as previous workers suggest (Miller, 1983; Duck, 1983) and that both parties have agreed on certain 'relationship-content'. Similarly, it could be suggested that a person selects another from his/her pool and that he/she can be certain of offering such qualities. However, apart from the three subjects mentioned, none of these were able to offer examples of this kind. Indeed, most subjects were adamant that the relationships just happened, there was neither choice nor negotiation involved. There was no evidence to suggest that this 'knowledge' had firm foundation and I would argue that these 'projections' were merely expectations that a person held concerning their friend. Certainly, in the two cases of 'non-friendship' the relationships had deteriorated because that which the subjects 'knew' about their friends was in fact unfounded and did not survive the test of experience. In the case of Brian his experiences led him to believe that friendship did not exist at all because the friends he had thought that he had did not conform to his personal specifications. He now argues that:

".....people only want to be friends when everything's all right....."

Similarly Cornelius felt betrayed by his friends when they did not offer the kind of support he expected following his divorce:

"Friends are supposed to be there when you need them, not when everything's okay."

Cornelius felt betrayed because he had offered support to his friends and his expectation of reciprocation was not met:

".....like I did all the giving and he couldn't repay."

and

".....a friend should be around when you need them and I always thought they would be."

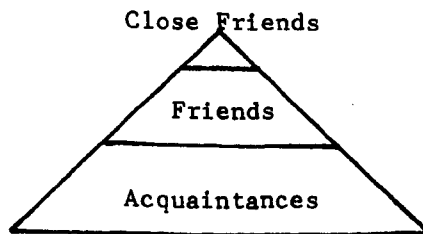
The implication of exchange is evident here, the 'Do, ut des' of Tonnies (1955). It is, to some extent, understandable that a person feels betrayed when his expectations are not met, but it is curious how such expectations were developed in the first place. I argue that neither partner in a friendship has the right to hold such expectations in the absence of negotiation. In all the accounts of friendship collected there was no evidence of friends making promises or obliging themselves to certain duties. Indeed, these friendships appear to have developed along very 'laissez faire' lines. Neither partner had informed the other of what they would put into the relationship although they held firm belief regarding what they could take out. I argue that what a person expects to gain from friendship is a reflection of what they feel that they put in rather than a knowledge of what the other person is willing to offer.

In summary, there was no evidence of 'close friendships' occurring by deliberate choice, nor was there evidence of negotiation within the relationship. This aspect relates very much to the next theme:

Categorisation

All subjects categorised their friendly relations. Although I was more concerned with the meaning of 'close' friendship, these subjects referred to other types of relationships to illustrate points. It subsequently became evident that different kinds of relationships existed within a person's 'friendship-arena'. In essence this arena could be described as a triangle:

Fig 3 Categorisation of Friendly Relations



There was general agreement that a person had very few close friends, quite a few friends and lots of acquaintances. The above labels are my own in order to consolidate the general theme, the subjects tended to use various labels:

".....there are people I choose to spend....
extended amounts of time with....and other
people that.....I wouldn't....." (Martin)

".....close friends, friends and acquaintances...
Pals and mates are in this group (acquaintances)" (Bill)

".....there are lots of people that I know, that I would say were friends.....but they aren't really.....and out of those there are a few people I enjoy doing things with: Having a meal, a drink, playing bridge..... and these are more of friends, but even these aren't really friends.....and then there's Colin who is a friend in a real sense." (Steve)

Jean describes 'superficial friends', who have one common bond such as work; 'close superficial friends', who know more about each other and will share limited confidences; and one close friend who fulfils everything. Brenda, on the other hand suggests that she has about three close friends (at different levels) and that friends are similar to acquaintances:

"Really just an acquaintance or somebody you know a little more maybe than acquaintancesa friend is somebody maybe you would choose to spend time with.....with an acquaintance, I think, that isn't something you seek out."

Although different labels were used there was general consensus that friendly relations exist on three levels:

- 1 On quite an intense level embodying the notion of 'closeness' and encompassing all the virtues proposed in the philosophical model. A fuller description of this type of relationship is offered later.
- 2 On a 'friendly' level; these are people who one would choose to be with, share some confidences with and gain some knowledge of.
- 3 On an acquaintance level: These would be people that are called friends merely to locate them in a social network or to inform others that we are aware of their existence. Essentially this is a very superficial relationship.

The terms 'mate' and 'pal' were used by subjects to label relationships existing in both levels (2) and (3), but never in (1). A mate or pal can be a person one merely knows or a person one chooses to spend time with. There does not appear to be, from these subjects accounts, the connotation of 'closeness' in the label.

I argue that confusion could arise by taking an outsider approach to study relationships on levels (1) and (2), since by these subjects' own admissions, elements of the close relationship are mirrored in level (2). The segregation of relationships could not be identified by observation alone.

Within this theme arises the notion of friendship genesis, or how friendships start. Whilst the subjects identified a natural progression from level (3) to level (2), only one subject, Brenda, felt that close friendship progressed through all levels. The majority of subjects claiming to have close friendships suggested that there was an instinctive and immediate bond from the start:

".....a bit like falling in love....." (Laurie)

".....like falling in love I think..." (Julian)

Indeed, six subjects used the 'love' analogy and suggested that there is an instinctive component to the relationship, claiming that it was known from the outset that a close relationship would develop. However, I argue that such notions are the result of, what Nietzsche suggests, 'retrospective construction'. Many subjects suggested that they were unsure when friendship actually was recognised and resorted to the 'always there' ploy as an explanation. On analysis of the accounts

this aspect occurs regularly and subsequently creates contradictions in some subjects' accounts. On the one hand they suggest that the relationship 'existed' before it was 'close' and then later argue that it was always close:

"I can't say exactly when friendship began,
but looking back I'd say that it was from
the beginning....." (Bill)

In fact, seven subjects claimed immediate closeness even after first describing a progression from at least level (2). I argue that this is an attempt to afford greater meaning to the relationship and reflects the romantic notions of friendship based on personal ideals. In the accounts of those subjects claiming close friendships there is a distinct indication that the relationships were 'built-up' over time, suggesting that the notion of immediate attraction is something attributed to the relationship when the relationship is examined in retrospect. Like the accounts of 'love' it appears much more romantic and 'spiritual' if it occurs at first sight. I tend, therefore, to accept the concept of time-developed closeness rather than claims of suddenness:

"....it was a slow process....." (Bill)

"....it sort of effused...over a period." (Jean)

"....over time we've developed.....
a friendship....." (Nick)

It seems more logical that close-friendships were 'time-developed' when one considers the attributes contained in the relationship are identified by the describer. It seems in fact that the majority of these attributes, discussed below, could only develop over time.

I argue that a person needs experience of another before he can decide whether or not to trust him; similarly a person cannot assume another's loyalty without experience. Many of the qualities that subjects identified in their close friendships could not have been present at the very start of the relationship. I develop this argument further below.

Again, I argue that subjects attempt to romanticise their friendships by suggesting that they originated out of a 'love at first sight' situation. I will illustrate later how this concept occasions disagreement between friends in their accounts and further, how the notion of constancy of closeness causes similar disagreement.

A Concept of Close-Friendship

I have already suggested that ten of these subjects laid claim to 'close' friends and that they segregated this type of relationship from all others. In essence, the general theme of 'closeness' follows the philosophical model, in that the majority of subjects identified certain reasons for closeness: Trust, love, sharing, and loyalty. However, such descriptions were far from immediate and tended to be delivered spasmodically throughout the interview. As has been mentioned in response to the question: "What is a close friend? or "Why do you consider this friend close?" The majority of subjects lapsed into silence before stating that it was 'difficult to explain'. Once subjects became accustomed to talking about their friend certain themes did emerge. From these accounts it appears that 'close-friendship' is prominent because of its lack of formality;

Time: All the subjects claiming close friendship argued that the relationship was not governed by time in that it was not important to maintain regular contact. Indeed, weeks and months could pass by and the relationship could still take off where it left off:

"Sometimes we will have no contact for months and it's no impediment....." (Bill)

".....it doesn't matter.....that I see them regular....." (Ian)

".....there's been times when I haven't seen him for six weeks....the friendship's still as close as if I'd seen him yesterday." (Mick)

".....there'd always be that closeness there...." (Brenda)

(seeing a lot of each other) "....wouldn't be necessary to the quality of the friendship..." (Jackie)

".....time's not important....." (Steve)

This was a recurring theme in subjects' accounts of friendship, particularly when they were attempting to illustrate the difference between close and ordinary friendship. The argument was that time was important with acquaintances and ordinary friends, without it the relationship disintegrates. It is unimportant with close friendship. However, I argue that this concept of time being unimportant, like the dismissal of geographic distance, is part and parcel of 'retrospective construction'. The subjects with close friends could all give examples of lengthy absences, but were enjoying some kind of regular contact that was 'predictable'; to some extent each subject knew that they would spend time with that friend in the near future. In short, although these subjects maintained that extended absences would not be detrimental to the relationship, this had never really been tested.

Demands and Expectations

In line with the lack of formality of close friendship, subjects also claimed that the relationship was special because it created no demands or expectations of each other:

"....it's a very unconditional relationship
.....she doesn't expect me to be a certain
way....." (Jackie)

"....it's a.....non-demanding kind of
relationship....." (Laurie)

".....a close friendship.....is not based
on expectations or assumptions....." (Martin)

"....you accept them whole....." (Julian)

This would certainly elevate the relationship above other intimate relations such as marriage where, subjects indicate, demands, expectations and obligations are rife. It would elevate the relationship if it were true! I suggest, despite these subjects' claims, that definite demands and expectations were made; they demand that a friend stays true to their image, they expect certain actions. When friends do not maintain the images constructed for them, he or she becomes a different person and accounts like those of Brian and Cornelius arise. The expectations are illustrated in the 'known' concept and further illustrated by subjects' view of betrayal.

Betrayal

Subjects were asked how their friend could betray them and how they could betray their friend. In fact subjects offered the same situation in response to both questions. Only Steve could not imagine betrayal taking place. I argue that such responses not only reflect expectations of the relationship, but also suggest that the relationship is based

on personal views rather than knowledge of the person. With respect to the latter point, when friends of friends were interviewed these hypothetical acts of betrayal were different (see below).

Acts of betrayal tended to revolve around disclosing secrets:

"If I told somebody.....something about her which I knew she was very sensitive about...." (Jackie)

".....disclose something....." (Laurie)

".....being indiscreet about.....
(a secret)....." (Brenda)

".....if he'd spoken behind my back....." (Mick)

Other acts of betrayal revolved around refusing to give time or using information for personal gain. However, the interesting thing here is that subjects had already indicated, by implication, that these areas were important to them. When asked how they could be betrayed, invariably the response was:

"In the same way, really."

I argue that subjects revealed more about how they could be betrayed than what they knew to be important to their friend. This further reinforces the notion of expectation since, by implication, they would not expect their friend actually to do this. By examining the personal discussions that describe friends from the related sample it can be seen that different areas are pin-pointed for acts of betrayal: Laurie states that Bill could be betrayed if she disclosed something about him to others, whereas Bill would feel betrayed if he was denied time. Brenda felt that Jean would be betrayed if she disclosed one of her secrets, but Jean states:

"....I don't just see betrayal as telling other people your secrets.....I feel betrayedwhen they.....put you down to make themselves look good.....one of the worst kinds of betrayal."

I argue that this further illustrates that a person projects more of 'self' into this type of relationship than he/she accepts of the other. As Nietzsche suggests:

".....we invent and fabricate the person with whom we associate - and immediately forget we have done so."

I suggest that this is the case with 'close' friendship, that the relationship is a myth based on retrospective construction. A person describes a friend from the evidence of 'self' intention: Because he/she would never disclose a secret this quality is attributed to the friend and because no evidence is forthcoming that secrets have been betrayed, the retrospective evaluation of the relationship firmly fixes this attribute as a 'real' quality. Other attributes are similarly located. The subject will explain that he/she can trust a friend because the friend 'knows' that they in turn can be trusted.

More common themes

It has been suggested, above, that these subjects view close friendship after the 'idealistic' fashion. Close friendship is full of trust, loyalty, affection and sharing; it is also non-demanding, never superficial and totally informal. The frequency of these themes is represented in figure IV. From this data it can be seen that there is a similarity in the way that these subjects explain what close friendship is about. I maintain that these are no more than personal projections since, on examination of the 'related' accounts, clear

FIG IV THE QUALITIES OF CLOSE-FRIENDSHIP, AS DEFINED BY THE SUBJECTS

	SUBJECTS												
	Julian	Mick	Ian	Martin	Bill	Laurie	Jean	Jackie	Brenda	Jean	Jackie	Steve	Cornelius
QUALITIES													
Affection/Love	/	/		/	/	/			/	/	/	/	
Trust		/	/	/			/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Support					/	/	/		/	/	/	/	/
Loyalty							/	/					
Confiding		/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Sharing			/	/		/	/		/	/	/	/	
Protective							/		/				
Non-judgemental	/		/	/	/	/							
Non-superficial	/		/		/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
No expectations	/			/		/	/	/					
Contains rituals language/touch	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Time unimportant	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	x	/	/	/	/
Immediate Closeness	/	/	/	/	x	/	/		x				
Constant Closeness		/	/	x	x	/	/		x				
Time Developed	/	/	/	/	/	x			/	/			
Honesty				/		/	/		/	/	/	/	/
Similar Interests	/	/	/	/	/	x	/		/	/	x		
Similar Humour			/	/	/		/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Distance unimportant	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	x	/	/	/	/
Known (qualities of other person)	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Offers Security			/	/	/		/					/	
Non-sexual	/	/	/	/	/	/	/				/	/	/
Not deliberately selected	/		/	/	/	/	/	/			/	/	/
Rare						/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

/ = claim of this in relationship

x = denial of this in relationship

contradictions exist.

Contradictions

The common source of contradiction between subjects arose from the very nature of the relationship. Jean, for example, felt that her relationship with Brenda had an element of immediate closeness and that that closeness had been constant; Brenda, on the other hand, felt that the relationship had developed over time and had undergone a progressive intensity:

".....I think about sixteen years we've probably been quite close.....it's gone through a lot of stages....(really close).....just the last few years, it sort of got closer as we got older...." (Brenda)

Again Brenda felt that the relationship was based on love, whereas Jean denied any claim to love. The relationship between Jackie and Brenda is also contradictory: Jackie feels that their relationship is full of trust and would be unaffected by time and distance, but Brenda does not trust Jackie one hundred per cent, suspects her motives sometimes and feels that the relationship would deteriorate if protracted absence occurred. When Jackie insists that there are no taboo areas, nothing that they would not discuss, Brenda maintains:

".....I wouldn't want Jackie to know too much of any problems....between me and my partner."

This would certainly indicate that there are taboo areas.

Similar inconsistencies arise between Bill and Laurie. Again, Laurie insists that the relationship was immediate and has been consistent,

whereas Bill, who initially claimed an immediate closeness, suggests that it developed over time, but more importantly:

".....people fluctuate. At times she would be at the top but at others she wouldn't.... it (closeness) fluctuates." (Bill)

Bill argues that they have similar interest, but Laurie suggests that they have nothing in common.

The notion of similarity is quite complicated since all subjects tended to imply that they were very like their friends, only to contradict this idea later; often, upon realising their contradiction they would explain:

".....I think we have different personalities but we've similar views about life...." (Jean)

".....In lots of ways we're very different... but in lots of ways we're very much alike...." (Brenda)

I argue that the feeling of similarity is another manifestation of projection of self: A person attributes his/her values to the friend and consequently claims similarity; it is only when the relationships are analysed that differences are identified and rationalised in the above way. In essence, it seems that the subjects are saying "we're the same, but different". A firm belief that one's friend is the same, or similar, to 'self' would certainly offer support to claims of knowing the reliability of that friend: I would never betray Fred, Fred is very like me, hence Fred would never betray me. This argument would also explain the gross sense of betrayal evident in lapsed friendship. Cornelius felt a greater hurt at his friend's betrayal than he

did from divorce; similarly my own experience would be congruent with his feelings. Simply, one experiences the betrayal of one's own values. But in another view of the nature of reality, since there has been no formal negotiation of the rules of friendship there can be no real betrayal.

Final Themes

The strongest point of agreement arising from this data is that close friends share some type of special language code or ritual that is absent in other 'friendly' relations. Of the ten subjects claiming close friendships, nine offered evidence of such 'rituals' and these manifested as a language code: A certain style of speech (Ian); finishing each others sentences (Jackie); having 'in' jokes (Bill and Laurie); reading between the lines (Brenda); or it might be a ritual of contact by touch: Mock fights, for example, (Martin, Ian and Nick). The subjects also maintained that they never deliberately used such rituals to exclude others. I have previously suggested that such rituals may be 'inclusive' rather than 'exclusive', in that they do not develop to place the relationship apart from others, but arise to display 'closeness' to each other. Such displays might also advertise the 'closeness' to others, even if only unintentionally and it is this aspect of these relationships that Duck (1983) argues must take place for intensity to develop. I suggest that these rituals develop from 'closeness' rather than stimulate its intensity.

A common difficulty that emerged from the data was that the majority of subjects could not pin-point when the relationship actually became close, nor did they feel that they had a choice in the relationship. It would appear, from this data, that close friendship is something that happens to a person, it cannot be sought out and deliberately developed.

"It just happened.....after a time you just realise and know you are (close friends)..." (Laurie)

This notion would also locate it in a romantic context, indeed several of the subjects suggest that it is just like falling in love. After a time it becomes difficult to think of a time when the friendship did not exist and after a time, like lovers, friends accept that they have always felt close.

I argue that, since the qualities of this relationship could only develop over time, that the claims of immediate attraction are suspect. Subjects claim that they share a similar sense of humour, knowledge of this would take time to be revealed; the fact that a person is non-judgemental of one's actions could again only be confirmed with time and one also needs time to share things.

Finally, several subjects claimed that this type of relationship was rare:

"In my sense I think very few people have close friends....." (Laurie)

".....when I look round at other people.... and see that they don't have the friends I've got I do realise it is rare....." (Brenda)

I argue that these subjects are following the same route of the philosophers, in that they are projecting their feelings about their own 'special' relationships into a world where they are essentially outsiders. Since their relationship is unique to them they cannot imagine that it exists elsewhere. I expand this theme in the next section.

Summary

These data suggest in their unanimity that there are very definite commonly held views regarding the nature of friendship. There are common themes concerning friendship, regardless of sex, age or civil status: Friendship, when it is close, is about affection, trust, sharing, loyalty and support. It is not subject to formal demands and does not rely on proximity for its maintenance; in essence, it is about feelings for a person. In all these respects it mirrors the views proposed by the 'idealistic' model of the philosophers.

Similarly, the data illustrates that there is a concept of 'friendly relations' at different levels: 'real' friendship, which is rare; ordinary friendship, which is fairly common; and acquaintanceship, which is very common. This too, is congruent with the philosophical and academic view of friendship.

In the next section I will attempt to draw the various themes arising from the data together and generate a discussion concerning the nature of friendship.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

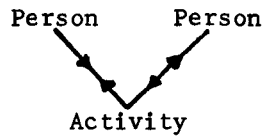
DISCUSSION

The data generated by this study have illustrated two major types of friendly-relations: Association and Friendship. I argue that these are fundamentally different relationships at various levels. Although they may have a similar point of genesis, such as common interest, proximity and common goal, friendship is not a natural progression from association as has been suggested (Duck, 1983; Hays, 1984). I suggest that previous studies have focussed on association, which can mirror friendship and that the philosophers and novelists have tended to concern themselves with friendship; consequently the confusion arises because both relationships are considered to be one relationship of low-high intensity or a point on the acquaintance-friendship continuum. I argue that this kind of 'subjective' judgement masks the true meaning of both relationships: Association cannot be considered as low intensity friendship since the notional philosophy underpinning association is constructed on a different foundation to that of friendship. Similarly, best/close friendship is not the high-intensity version of association. In order to clarify the argument I will initially deal with each relationship separately:

Association

This term is used for relationships bonded by a means external to the actors; such 'externality' could be common interest, common goals or the enforced proximity of working together. In essence such relationships are those of Buber's (1970) 'I-it', in that the person is seen to be part of that externality. In simple terms these relationships can be graphically represented by a 'V':

FIG 5 ASSOCIATION



In such 'V' relations persons are connected via the activity, should the activity be removed the relationship is also removed. Consequently such relationships require regular contact and 'formality' to survive. Acquaintanceship, clubmanship, ordinary friendship and mateship can be seen to reflect the 'V' pattern. From the actor's point of view, it provides a sense of belonging, a location in the social world and the opportunity to become involved in and exercise an interest in an accepted way; by accepted I mean that the actor is offered support for his/her interests. Generally association tends to be a group activity although it can be witnessed in smaller units, for example business relations where the externality is buying and selling. However, whether functioning at group level or person to person level it is to a large degree 'institutionalised'. The relationship has existence independently of the members, in that the 'bonding' activity has existence. The actors in these relationships hold an inferior position to the activity since the activity continues when individual actors absent themselves. Similarly, the activity contains power in that certain commitment must be given to it by the actors in order to belong; in other words there is a strong element of membership bound by a series of informal rules and sanctions. Likewise there is evidence of hierarchy where certain members hold greater status and power than others. This externality also possesses history, in that it was in existence prior to the new member and consequently requires negotiation for entry: New members must meet certain requirements before acceptance.

In this respect benchmarks can be identified within such relationships. The 'institutionalisation' of association also functions to 'exclude' as well as 'include'. By the use of interest-related jargon it identifies its members and excludes non-members in the process. Finally, since this relationship is bonded by externality, any number of relationships are possible with the same degree of intimacy.

In the three groups observed in this study the existence of association was evident. Each group had an activity separate from its members: Archery, fencing and drinking; each group demanded time-commitment in that it was expected that members attended regularly; and each group displayed hierarchical positions: The elites of the archer/fencing, the leadership of Big Dave. The high status within each group offered power and privilege: The elite archers defined club rules and elected committees; the elite fencers held the power to maintain their status and control others; Big Dave organised the activities, had final say concerning disagreement and 'free-beer'. The sanctions applied for irregular attendance have been discussed above, but briefly were concerned with threatening 'non-member' status.

In essence the maintaining factors of association are time and interest-sharing; actors must give time to share the interest/activity for the relationships to survive or even exist. In the absence of such 'exchange' the relationships disintegrate because there is nothing else to bond them. In association the actors invest in the externality and not the persons sharing that activity. To the outsider such relationships can suggest 'friendship' in that they feign its qualities. Indeed, since there are different levels of association, generated by 'time-served', it could be identified as the acquaintanceship-friendship

continuum of Duck (1983) and Hays (1984). Consider the archery and fencing fellowships described earlier: Within both groups certain actors are brought together via common interest. This initial coming together could be identified as acquaintanceship. Once an actor has proved his commitment by regular attendance he/she moves up a stage in terms of acceptance and will interact more with other members; this could be termed friendship. In some cases an actor will be elevated into the elite (as I was in the archery fellowship) and be given access to an 'inner circle' of few members which involves more 'secretive' interaction, this could misleadingly be termed close/best friendship. Certainly I agree that the intensity of interaction increases, but what is not displayed to the outsider is the quality of such interaction. The data generated by this study suggests that such interactions have no validity outside the 'association', there is no investment in the person other than his/her contribution to the activity. The observations suggest that personal disclosure is at best superficial; it may be concerned with views but never feelings.

Person to person relationships within association

It has been suggested that a certain amount of self-disclosure does occur within association at a person to person level (Geoff, Mick and Arthur). Certainly friendship-like relationships can arise from association but again these tend to be maintained by externality rather than regard for the person. Although I interacted with Geoff outside the archer group this relationship has disintegrated now that I am no longer able to attend. In the case of Mick, I would argue that utility was the prime motive for outside interaction and similar motives for the relationship with Arthur. In the case of Paul I will

argue, later, that this relationship is more than association. I suggest, however, that these person-to-person interactions outside the group only arose because of my own efforts. In the case of the miners no interaction (in a social sense) was evident beyond Saturday lunchtimes. Similarly in the archery and fencing fellowships interactions rarely occurred outside the aegis of the activity. The elites of both groups did meet outside 'club-nights' but only to exercise the activity elsewhere. My experiences of such associations suggest that once a person no longer gives time to the activity he is rapidly forgotten. Thus, I argue that person-to-person relationships arising from association are an extension of the activity and subsequently short-lived. Although such relationships may present the 'image' of friendship it is, in fact, 'splintered-association' and only maintained by the externality. The negotiations that provide time and venue are located in this externality rather than in personal contact.

Association, then, is that relationship which the interview-subjects define as 'location-friendship'. A person may have many such relationships but does not regard them as true friendship. It is externality that provides such relationships with meaning, without that externality there is no meaning and consequently no relationship. However, because these 'associations' display exchange in varying degrees, and because actors refer to each other as friends or mates, we are offered a false picture of friendship. I suggest that it is these relationships that have been studied by the positivistic school and not friendship itself. It can be seen that association conforms to the theories of common interest, common goals and proximity. It can further be argued that there is a continuum of association that could easily be mistaken for the development of friendship from acquaintanceship. However, the

the data generated by observation and interview in this study endorses the notion that this kind of relationship is not friendship as identified by certain actors. I further argue that it is the personal definitions of actors that provide interactions with meaning:

"If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." (Thomas, 1966)

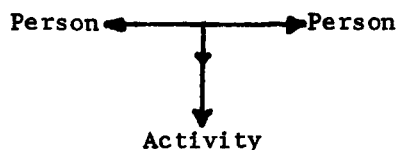
Hence, it is the meaning that an actor ascribes to a relationship that is important, not the subjective judgements of the outsider. I have argued that friendship is a taken-for-granted relationship on the part of individuals, I further suggest that it is similarly taken for granted by those seeking to study its construction. Friendship, I suggest, is far more than its observed actions; the observation of 'friendly' actions cannot be used to give meaning and construction to relationships without consideration to the actor's definition. The display of action in association can be misinterpreted as friendship unless actual meaning is considered: In association a group of people are linked by externality. The coming together can either be by choice (such as in sporting and drinking fellowships) or by accident (such as working and education groups). I make a distinction between these two situations since one is a direct action of association and the other indirect: One does not feel obliged to partake in sport, but there are obligations to take part in education and employment. Essentially the relationships are the same but can suggest difference: Because one chooses to participate in sport and consequently interact with others the outsider can mistake this type of association of common-interest for friendship. In the case of working-relationships, because there is an element of enforcement, the association is, or can be, viewed as proximity or common goal friendship. However, in essence they both

follow similar routes: People are brought together through an external activity/interest; the rate of exchange within the group gives rise to interactions; since some actors will interact (or exchange) at a greater rate than others they are seen to be friends; since the interaction can only be facilitated through the activity it is external to the person and not friendship. The association-career, then, is wholly dependant upon the externality. Long term association could be witnessed where actors have worked together for years, or shared a similar interest for years; just as short-term association can be identified. However, it is argued that association is dependent on time, the time that is shared between actors, whether long or short term. Once the activity is removed, the externality, time is not shared and the relationship disintegrates.

Friendship

This term is used to identify that relationship which by 'individual' definition, conforms to the model described by the philosophers and novelists. There are marked differences both in meaning and structure from that relationship outlined above. In essence, it is a personal relationship and could be graphically represented by a 'T':

FIG 6 FRIENDSHIP



With respect to this relationship the activity is incidental to the relationship; if the activity is removed the relationship continues. In this context it is bonded 'internality' rather than 'externality'. The relationship is bonded by mutual regard or affection at a personal

level. The activities that occur within the relationship are merely designed to pass time together, they have no importance other than this. Such activities do not exist outside the relationship, unlike those activities witnessed within association. This then is Buber's (1970) 'I-you'; in that a person is seen in relation to another and not with regard to an external activity. In this respect friendship lacks institutionalisation as Paine (1969) suggests. Its activities do not have existence outside the relationship; such activities have only the history created from the genesis of the relationship and there is no specific time or hierarchy of friendship. The subjects interviewed in this study maintain that time is unimportant for maintaining the relationship, even after lengthy absences the relationship does not suffer. Association, on the other hand is all about time: There is a time to meet, a time basis to acceptance, a time basis for non-membership. Within friendship this rule of time does not appear to apply. Indeed, time is only utilised as a concept of length: How long the relationship has existed. In all other respects it is not an issue, in fact the subjects of this study could not explain their relationships in terms of time without difficulty. There is a suggestion of immediacy, of instinctive attraction and spontaneity in friendship; I argue that this is a result of retrospective construction on the part of the person. By this I mean that since the relationship contains no externality, and thus no institutionalisation, its meaning is not overt it is just accepted. When a person is prompted to explain the relationship they resort to giving structure to the relationship retrospectively: They assess how the relationship is and this is 'believed' to be how it always was. The internality of the relationship is the cause of such construction since the person is offering a projection of 'self'. With association the reason for interaction is

apparent by its externality, in friendship it is masked by its internality. In this respect we can only accept each individual actor's definition of friendship and this can differ from person to person. Since the relationship is prone to this 'individual-internality' it lacks formal structure and the rules of friendship are purely the projections of a person's expectations. In the cases of Brian and Cornelius the rules of friendship were broken because the actor's expectations had not been realised. Indeed, I suggest that the very fabric of friendship is based purely on expectation of what the relationship should entail. Since this relationship involves projecting the ideals of 'self', to some extent, the relationship is invented by the actors.

".....we invent and fabricate the person with whom we associate - and immediately forget we have done so." (Nietzsche, 1973)

This aspect, I suggest, is reflected in the 'known' notion of a person's friendship definition: Those attributes that they know a friend has but have no experience of.

Another crucial aspect of friendship is that there are no special places to formalise the relationship: Marriage and parenthood are formalised in the sense of ceremony and registering, we do not register our friendships. Association, however, is formalised in terms of place, in that there are places of outlet, the sports-hall, the pub or the workplace. Thus, friendship is devoid of special meeting places, the relationship can be continued or taken up in any location from the home to the pub. The subjects of this study also suggest that it continues, as a relationship, in the absence of place and time in much the same way that the philosophers argue its survival after death. Hence it is

further removed from association in that association is only experienced at certain times and in certain places; there is no time or place for friendship in this respect.

Since our society is structured in terms of placing people together, school, work, community, both association and friendship have their genesis in similar roots, this is not disputed. However, the bonding and progression of the relationships are not similar. In association the externality creates time that enables the relationship to develop; in friendship the process is somewhat reversed. I suggest that the relationship creates the time to indulge in externality; by removing the externality neither the relationship nor the time shared is affected. I accept the definitions offered through this data that affection is the basis of friendship and argue that interests are secondary to this. A person will share the interests of a friend because of affection in the same way that joy, sorrow and secrets are shared. Because affection is, in many ways, intangible it is difficult to provide its career with benchmarks. A person only recognises affection by its experience but once it is recognised it becomes the rule of thumb: Once a person accepts affection for another he/she cannot imagine a time when the relationship lacked affection. Synonymous with affection is 'closeness' and viewed retrospectively both seem to be immediate and constant. From my own experience I argue that I have always liked Paul and certainly we have both made effort to share time and mutual interests. I argue that all friendship starts with similar elements of high interaction: Friendships contain more timesharing at the onset than it does once it has developed; association is opposite to this in that it commences with low interaction and can develop into high interaction (as in the cases of Geoff, Mick and Arthur). In this respect friendship could be seen as an anchorage

for a person's ideals: A knowledge of the person is required before investment can be made in that person, this requires high-interaction; once such investment is made the amount of interaction is no longer important. Since a person holds expectations regarding friendship which inform him/her that a friend is always there, certain acceptances are made that negate the need for constant interaction: I know my friend is always there and having gained that knowledge I do not need to prove it.

Thus, the character of a friend is constructed regardless of the friend's character; similarly the qualities of friendship are accepted regardless of its reality. When a friend fails to conform to the expectations we have of him/her we claim betrayal; my own experience (John) is congruent with Brian and Cornelius in this respect. However, in many cases this testing of expectation does not occur and in some cases is guarded against: Several of these subjects declared that they knew they could, for example, borrow money from a friend but that they would never do this, although they could if they wanted to! This is the 'Catch 22' aspect of friendship, attributing values to the relationship that will never be tested. In this respect, friendship is a myth! Friendship, I suggest, exists mainly in each actor's head - in the realm of ideal - and is projected into reality 'unconsciously'. The situation is defined as real, by the actors, and becomes real to them.

Consequently, I argue that friendship is an existential concept, in that it has its origins in the subjective beliefs of the person, whereas association is essentially ptolemaic, in that externality is the centre of the relationship. Friendship, then, only exists in so far as a

person claims its existence, it possesses no external reality since it is, to a large extent, internalised. Association exists in that it is external and can be observed in place and time. Furthermore, since friendship is marked by internality, which cannot be observed, it is easy to claim rarity. In essence it is the product of that which one wants it to be and consequently 'one-sided'; there are no formal rules to the relationship and if a person feels that another is a 'close' friend, he/she becomes that close friend without negotiation (as in the case of Brenda and Jackie). That which we feel for that friend is identified as that which they feel for us. Association is much more simple in that there are clear boundaries for its existence and maintenance because of its externality. If an associate does not overtly conform to the rules he/she ceases to be an associate. More simply, friendship concerns what the actors say it is, whereas association concerns what others see it as being.

Anchorage

It has been suggested above that friendship is an anchorage for the ideals of self; the accounts of the philosophers tend to describe 'dead' friends, those who cannot defend themselves; similarly the accounts offered in this study are notably 'one-sided'. It can be seen from Figure IV that contradictions exist in a person's description of the relationship. I suggest that this is further evidence of projecting self into a relationship; the fact that a person 'knows' this to be true regardless of experience would indicate an attempt to actualise ideals: I know my friend would never betray me, because I know this I have no need to test it. Such a belief is a projection of self: I would never betray my friend, hence they will never betray me. This aspect is highlighted

by these subjects' views on betrayal; they are not explaining how a friend could be betrayed but how they could be betrayed. In short, friendship is about how a person feels about the relationship whereas association is concerned with what persons do together. There is no anchorage of ideals in association since the relationship is formed on different principles.

Friendship, then, could be explained as mutual attraction that triggers expectations based on ideals; because of the attraction actors will spend time developing interests that can be shared; because of expectations certain attributes are given to the relationship. Because such relationships are manifestation of one's 'inner-self' they become important in one's life. Association is the product of 'interest-sharing' and requires no investment of 'self'; hence they hold less importance than friendship. Similarly, because of the 'personal' nature of friendship, it is difficult to maintain more than two or three friends. However, association is totally concerned with externality and consequently attracts many relationships. Whereas a friend is part of one's life, an associate is only a part of one's interest.

With respect to this data, I argue that although friends develop certain codes and rituals they only do this to include each other within a special relationship: It advertises to each other and observers that they are friends. Similarly self disclosure occurs to advertise to each other that they are trusted and trustworthy. This 'self-confession' of regard for the other person can be seen as the essential component within friendship: Mutual self-regard equates with the external interest of association. Thus, this type of bond is

very tenuous in that it relies on accepting a person's character that has been ascribed. Thus, betrayal is all the more painful since it 'discourages' self-projection: One is interacting because of external rather than internal reasons. In short, one is giving 'self' to an activity/interest, rather than to a person. Since the 'bond' is external conversation only need be superficial, as indicated in the three groups studied. I argue that since friendship is essentially 'internal' the superficial nature of conversation quickly becomes redundant. There are no 'external' distractions that can maintain superficiality, as in association. Within the groups observed when conversation became stilted actors would return to the activity; the activity, then, provided licenced silence. Within the miner's group it was silence rather than conversation that dominated the gatherings. Close friends, in this study, were quick to point out that conversation was never superficial; I suggest that this quality of the relationship is also built on time.

Time as a factor in friendship

The subjects interviewed in this study suggest that time is not important to their relationship, however we must consider that these subjects are speaking of their relationships as they exist now. The average length of time that these relationships had existed was fifteen years (Mick had the shortest at two years but did imply that time could be important). Again we must consider retrospective construction and the inconsistencies of subject's accounts:

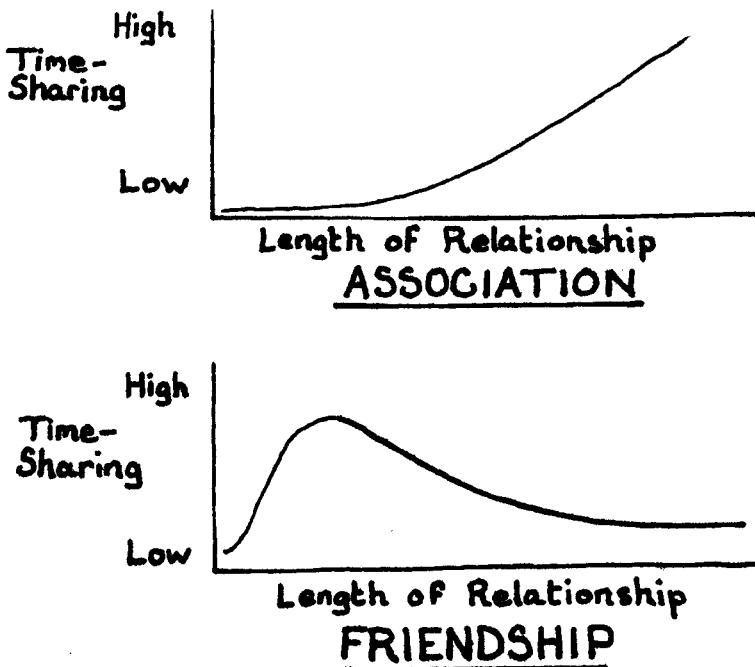
- 1 Retrospective construction: Since the relationship is not time-based at present subjects may assume that it was always so.

- 2 Inconsistencies: Jean implied that her relationship with Brenda had been constant, likewise Laurie claims the same of her relationship with Bill; however, Brenda suggests that their friendship evolved through stages and indeed there is a hint of the same from Jean, so too, Bill argues that the closeness developed from 'ordinary' friendship.

I argue that in the initial stages, the relationship is very much influenced by time and actors use this time to 'test' the relationship in terms of trust, loyalty, and self-disclosure. During this high-intensity of time-sharing the various codes and rituals also develop. Once the framework of this relationship is laid down the relationship moves into a period of low-intensity time sharing.

Both relationships can, therefore, be represented:

FIG 7 TIME SHARING AND RELATIONSHIP INTENSITY



This concept can be illustrated by the case of Geoff and Paul:

Initially my contact with Geoff was only via the club and built up gradually in terms of outside club activity. With Paul, although there was involvement via the fencing fellowship there was a sudden increase of time spent together which is now levelling out. In the case of Geoff, once the activity was removed the relationship became extinct; in the case of Paul this does not seem the case (I recently had to miss fencing for twelve weeks, because of teaching commitments, and Paul and Debra called to my home on a regular basis during the period).

Another important aspect that highlights the differences between the relationships is the place where the time together is situated.

Although I spent a lot of time with Geoff, mutual home visits never arose; in the case of Paul these visits were almost immediate. Thus the location of the relationships also appears to be different:

Association invariably takes a venue outside a person's 'personal geography', club-room or pub; whereas friendship tends to be drawn into a person's 'personal geography', the home, parent's home or a person's local pub (indeed some friends choose a 'local' together). This data is congruent with such a theory, the miners did not appear to visit each other's homes, indeed in some cases the area where a person lived was unknown; there was no evidence to suggest that home-visiting occurred in the two fellowships other than at my instigation. However, the 'close-friends' interviewed implied that home visiting was quite normal. In my personal experience with John, I suggested that we did not make home visits, and indeed we spent very little time in each other's homes, but we did in fact 'call for each other' at our respective homes. The personal 'geography' then is given access within

friendship, but does not arise 'naturally' in association. Essentially it appears that association is 'acted out' on neutral ground and friendship within personal territory. Although this area was not focussed on specifically it is felt to be of importance since it could form part of the sharing mechanism. Not only do friends allow access to secrets, inner self and personal space (touch), but also grant access to each other's 'castles'.

Genesis

The genesis of friendship is worthy of further discussion: The bonding of association appears to be 'external' in that there is an external activity/interest that brings actors together and maintains the relationship. In the case of friendship it is argued that this 'bonding' is 'internal', that something occurs on a personal level between both actors that motivates them to explore similar interests. One factor that could identify this 'internality' is drawn from these subjects' accounts; seven of these subjects made specific mention of 'humour'. I suggest that this is one personal attribute that could draw people together: Finding similar things amusing and making each other laugh. It is probable that within a social situation one's sense of humour is readily displayed. Identification with a person displaying the same humour can be the basis of attraction (as in the case of Paul and I). This could lead actors into an initial 'exploratory' relationship. Indeed many of these friends' rituals are anchored in humour: Ian's joking insults, Paul and my wind-up routines. If people recognise others' sense of humour to be similar to their own they may further deduce that the rest of the person is similar. Indeed, claims of similarity are frequently made in these accounts (see Figure IV), despite contradictions (the 'same but different' pantomime). Consequently, I suggest that subjects claiming friendship

project their own attributes to their friend in much the same way that Cicero (1971) claims. This does not necessarily suggest that friends are similar, merely that they believe that they are. Again, I argue that this is a feature of the 'internality' of the relationship.

Thus, I suggest that friendship is formed by mutual attraction, not in the external way suggested by the previous studies but on a personal level. In many ways I suggest that this attraction is similar to that of opposite-sex relationships - there is something that one person likes/admires about another and vice versa. That mutual attraction motivates time-sharing which in turn occasions retrospective construction, it is this final stage that maintains the relationship. Once a person reflects on his/her friendship there is no awareness of having constructed the friend's attributes; similarly there is no awareness of the insidious evolution of the relationship - hence, in retrospect, subjects assume that the relationship has consistency. Once a definition is made of the person, one only identifies the actions that re-inforce that definition (Lippmann, 1922). This too is part of the 'internality' of the relationship and reinforces the notion of constancy. Even if the friend is unlike the description it is not noticed (the 'love is blind' syndrome), hence it is all the more painful when one has to accept that one's definition was wrong (Cornelius and Brian, and my own experience). Finally, since the relationship lacks institutionalisation, there are no formal guidelines concerning what it is about. Consequently each person ascribes his own meaning to the relationship. It was previously suggested that such meanings can be the projection of the 'ideals of self' and that this data seems to support this notion. The knowledge of a friend, how they will react and what they will offer, is merely a projection

of 'self-knowledge'. To reiterate this point: The actor feels that he could never betray his friend, since he cannot consult a friendship manual his feeling is adopted as a truism of friendship and he ascribes that quality to the friend. The relationship of Brenda and Jackie is offered in support of this notion: Because Brenda is the closest friend Jackie has (indeed she is the only friend), Jackie claims that there is no secret they would not share; in fact she generalises her feelings of closeness to the relationship. However, Brenda reveals that there are areas she would not expose to Jackie and further more that Jackie is not as close as she thinks she is. Friendship, then, is about feeling and projecting that feeling; it concerns what a person feels about the relationship rather than what the relationship is.

Association, on the other hand, is about doing, rather than feeling. This relationship is institutionalised in that it contains 'externality'; consequently one does not need to invest personal feelings into these relationships. One shares time with others who are doing the same thing, be it working, drinking, fencing or shooting arrows.

The fundamental differences between the two relationships identified can be summarised:

FIG 8 ASSOCIATION vs FRIENDSHIP

	Place	Time	Bond	Institutionalised	Attraction	Externality	Self
Friend	personal	low	internal	No	Yes	Incidental	Invested
Associate	neutral	high	external	yes	No	Essential	Irrelevant

	Advertising	Self-Disclosure	Construction
Friend	Inclusive	High	Individual
Associate	Exclusive	Superficial	Group

Since two different relationships have been identified by this study it may be beneficial to attempt a definition of each:

Friendship

An intimate relationship (not sexual), which lacks institutionalisation and is formed via personal attraction; personally defined and requires investment of self to form an internal (spiritual) bond following which a great deal of self-disclosure arises. Access is afforded to self, materially and mentally (touching, home, secrets) and rituals are displayed to advertise 'inclusive' closeness. Not demanding of time. (Close/Best Friend).

Association

An institutionalised relationship lacking intimacy; negotiated in a group context; based on and bonded by externality (interest/activity). Limited access is afforded to self since investment of self is unimportant other than by giving time. Rituals displayed to exclude non-members: (membership, colleague, mate, pal, chum, work-friend, ordinary friend, acquaintance). Also used to locate others in a social network.

In summary, then, I have argued that two types of 'friendly' relationships exist: Friendship and Association. The characteristics of each are different in that Friendship is concerned with feeling and association with doing. The development and maintenance of each are different in that friendship is essentially internal and association external resulting in a tangible relationship, in the case of association, which can be observed and an intangible relationship, friendship, which must be experienced or 'self-defined' to illustrate meaning.

I suggest that evidence supporting these different relationships has been drawn out from the data and the 'mechanisms' of each relationship explained with regard to the data. Why then have previous workers seemed to confuse association and friendship? I suggest that, as described above, friendship can develop out of any social medium. Certainly, as in the case of Paul and I, it can have its genesis in association. The outsider may observe similar genesis and collapse the two relationships into one. Turner (1978) suggests that *Communitas* and *Structure* are essentially different relationships but can coexist and modify one another over time. Similarly, I argue that association and friendship can coexist and influence each other. There is no logical reason why friendship cannot arise out of association since personal investment in another is not confined to special places. Likewise, friends may choose to partake of similar activity in order to spend time together; in this respect they could be viewed as associates if the motive for joint activity is not recognised. Either situation could lead the outsider to deduce that association and friendship are the same, or that they have a similar genesis. The fundamental differences between the relationships are not overt and, I suggest, consequently not recognised by the outside observer. Only the participants can identify and explain the quality and meaning of their actions. The fact that two friends are sharing similar pursuits, in terms of activity, does not necessarily mean that that activity is essential for the relationship. Likewise, because two associates share similar interests does not make them friends (in my sense of the word). However, like Turner (1978) I suggest that association can develop into friendship and can revert back to association (as in the cases of Nick and Arthur). It is this 'coexistence' that causes the misinterpretation of either relationship when outsider approaches are adopted for data

collection. In this sense, I suggest that other observers have projected their own definitions onto these relationships resulting in an 'abridged' explanation of meaning: two different relationships being viewed as one relationship because they appear to reflect similar characteristics. Consider two friends who happen to fence together; they may have developed that friendship through the process of association (as I did with Paul) or decide to share time together by participating in the activity after friendship had developed (as I did with John). The outsider has no way of knowing or identifying the motives underpinning shared activity, but could conclude that because friendship exists within association, all associations are varying intensities of friendship. Such interpretation would certainly explain how the Common Interest/Goal Theories of friendship have arose.

In essence, the structure of my argument rests upon the clear distinction between these totally different relationships which appear to have been previously ignored. I argue that association and friendship are not linked components on one continuum, but that they are clearly different relationships. I do, however, accept that they can easily be confused and viewed to be a relationship of low and high intensity. Since association can lead to friendship and friends can associate together, it would be quite easy to view the relationships as a developing continuum, such as Duck (1983) suggests is the case.

I argue that the distinction between the two relationships will not be identified by pure outside methods and that, in order to differentiate between meanings, more qualitative data is essential.

The final section will offer conclusions based on the above findings in relation to previous work.

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Previous studies have suggested that friendship evolves from acquaintanceship (Duck, 1983; Hays, 1984; Argyle and Henderson, 1984) and that various levels of intensity can be identified along that continuum (Duck, 1983; Argyle and Henderson, 1984). Whilst the findings of this study lends limited support to the notion of varying degrees of 'intimacy/intensity', I disagree with the theory of a developing continuum. I have suggested that two different relationships exist and that friendship cannot be viewed in the same light as association. I argue that when previous studies have attempted to examine friendship they have in fact focused upon association, which to some extent feigns, and can co-exist with, friendship. Furthermore, the notions of Common Interest/Goal and proximity (propinquity) offer little in the way of explaining friendship, but can readily be applied to association. Previous studies have focused on 'externality' which, I argue, is unimportant with regard to friendship. Friendship, it is argued, can only be understood on a personal level and cannot be treated as a group activity.

Another aspect of previous explanations of friendship have revolved around personal attraction (Byrne, 1971; Newcomb, 1961; Nash, 1973; Bensman and Lilienfeld, 1979; Duck, 1983; Hays, 1984) and identified physical appearance, similar attitudes, tastes and values as being crucial components in friendship formation. Whilst accepting the importance of such components I argue that they are not crucial to the relationship of friendship. Attraction is seen, in this argument, as more of a personal factor in that similarity is projected rather than actual. A person only need feel that they are similar for these components to be 'admitted'. The fact that subjects confess similarity

does not mean that such similarity exists. Similar interests, activity, would be identified in association since it is crucial to the relationship, however, as previously argued, this is not friendship.

I endorse as a result of this study the suggestions of Strauss (1969) and Hargreaves (1972) that one cannot get to the root of meaning by outside approaches, which the majority of previous studies have been. I suggest that the variation of theories and explanations concerning friendship are the product of the outsider, positivistic stance. I have sought to approach friendship in a different way and consequently have identified different themes.

With reference to the previous discussion concerning the 'idealistic-model' of friendship, I argue that there is a belief in its existence within society, as indeed history suggests has always been the case; however, a belief of existence does not indicate existence outside the person's head. I argue that friendship (in the true philosophical sense) only exists as a feeling that people invest in others. In terms of a tangible structure that can be measured it is non-existent - a myth. Consequently other workers have been misguided by the 'fake' friendship of association. I argue that in a population of fifty-five millions, an equal number of friendship definitions may exist. This will always be the case since the relationship lacks institutionalisation. People believe it to exist and in that sense it may be real in its consequences, but such consequences will again only make themselves known in a person's feelings.

It has also been suggested that males do not have the same kind of relationships that females enjoy, my data indicates few differences between the accounts of men and of women. Again, closeness is a personal concept and as such can only be measured by those experiencing it. I argue that both male and female have similar concepts of closeness and similar beliefs that they have close friends.

Many authors have suggested that true friendship is rare (Miller, 1983) a view shared by the subjects that I interviewed. I suggest that the claim to rarity arises from people seeking to generalise their personal feeling to society in general. When people observe association they assume it to be friendship and judge this in terms of their own friendship. Such judgements are not valid since friendship is essentially a private activity and consequently closed to observation. Association is a social or group activity but again it is not friendship and is not comparable to friendship.

Since friendship is concerned with feelings it must be concluded that the search for friendship in a quantitative sense, is rather like the quest for the 'Holy Grail': Many set out but only few get a glimpse. I suggest that this study provides evidence of such a glimpse, but is still confined to suggesting what friendship is not rather than what it is. Association, because of its construction, is more readily 'researchable' and data can be more easily collected concerning this relationship; it is this accessibility that allows one to suggest that this is not friendship. Friendship, conversely, is not easily accessible and I have only been able to offer a glimpse of its meaning via a small accessible sample. The numbers prevent concrete conclusions about the real nature of friendship. The safest conclusion to make is that the

concept of true friendship, outlined at the beginning of this study, does attract its disciples in our society. However, the accounts collected in this study suggest that they are projections onto a relationship rather than an 'experienced reality'. The consequences of such projections can only be gathered from the acts of betrayal, witnessed above, since subjects, on the whole, are reluctant to 'test' them in reality. Thus, the positive aspects of friendship will always remain safe since they are projections of 'self' into the relationship. The negative aspects are those actions which the other person displays in that they do not live up to that which is projected, in the case of Brian, Cornelius and myself. Hence the only true test of what one believes friendship to be is personal crisis and the three accounts offered above indicate that friendship can fail to actualise its image.

Consequently, I suggest that Paine (1969) is correct when he states that friendship is personally constructed and devoid of institutionalisation. I also endorse Strauss's (1969) statement that the relationship lacks social structure because it is based on personal values.

Another theme developed in previous studies is that friendship is part of the peer-group and a communal relation (Bensman and Lilienfeld, 1979; Clark, 1981). The suggestion here appears to be that friendship exists in a network of other relationships and is part of a general peer group. This notion is not congruent with the findings of this study which adds weight to Paine's (1969) argument that it is a private relationship. The activities that friends entered into tended to be on a one to one basis: Confiding, confessing and disclosing. Such activities could not take place in a group context. However, if association was confused with friendship, then the notion of groupness

and communal relations can be identified. I suggest that the proposals of communality adds weight to the argument that other studies have focussed on association rather than friendship. The analysis of this data suggests that friends are not part of an 'association-group'. In essence, since friendship is about feeling it can only take place on a 'private' level; association is concerned with doing and consequently finds its outlets in group activity.

With regard to the intentions of this study I now offer some 'cautious' conclusion:

1 Does the romantic notion of friendship have validity in reality?

I argue that the projection of a person's ideals is very much developed from the romantic notion. The descriptions of friendship offered by these subjects certainly mirrors the general theory of friendship developed by philosophers and novelists. To some extent I support Simmel's (1950) suggestion that friendship is developed from the romantic spirit and built on a person in totality.

However, such validity exists only within the person since he/she is, to a large extent, projecting his/her views of friendship onto another. If one accepts the argument that when a person claims the existence of something it is given reality, then one must accept that friendship is real, it has existence. Conversely, one must also consider the opposing view (proposed by Brian) that in a real sense it only exists when it is devoid of demands; once it is required to live up to its image it collapses. In this sense it does not have validity.

This argument introduces a dual concept of friendship which really requires further study. We need to know more about friendship as a

support system before more tangible conclusions can be drawn.

In the sense of definition these accounts endorse philosophical accounts of friendship in that it contains affection; trust, loyalty, support, equality and sharing. I argue that these concepts are part of a person's ideals and that these ideals are projected onto the relationship, it is only in this sense that it contains reality. In this respect it is comparable to a study of 'love', since that too is concerned with feelings and a projection of self. I argue that we have no evidence for the existence of romantic love other than other peoples' subjective accounts; feelings cannot be measured. This is also true of friendship. If we accept these accounts to be 'credible', then both love and friendship exist, if not, then it does not. Personally, I feel that we must accept such accounts in the context that they are delivered - on a personal level. They are the person's construction of his/her own reality and consequently cannot be generalised to all realtionships. The fact that a person cannot identify identical relationships in others does not necessarily mean that such relationships are rare, merely that individuals may differ. Since friendship is personal and private it is unlikely to be overt in its consequences. I suggest that when people make claims of rarity they are observing association, which is overt, and comparing this to their feelings about friendship. In short, I tentatively conclude that the romantic notion of friendship does have validity at various personal levels.

- 2 It has been suggested that the genesis of friendship is concerned with common interest, love, attraction, similarity, predictability or common goal (Festinger et al, 1950; Homans, 1951; Newcomb, 1961;

Sherif, 1966; Byrne, 1971; Nash, 1973; Duck, 1983; Miller, 1983; Hays, 1984). I argue that all these themes play some part in shaping the relationship but are not explanations of how friendship is formed. Indeed, most of these themes are inter-related in that they develop from friendship rather than occasioning it. The accounts collected in this study suggest that there is an initial attraction on a personal level; to some degree this suggests 'similarity' (of humour for example). However, to a large extent other similarities are projected, rather than displayed, they are expected to be the same by each other. I have argued, above, that a person describing a friend is in fact describing 'self', in this respect he/she attributes similarity of values, beliefs and interests to his/her friend; similarly, since the projection is that of self, predictability arises in a metaphysical sense. Since a person is believed to be like self, one can theorise that he/she will react like self. Again, concerning interests and goals, it has been previously suggested that these arise only to pass time within the relationship. Relationships bonded by such externality are those of association rather than friendship. Consequently, I conclude, from this data, that friendship develops from attraction, or more accurately the expectation that one has met a kindred soul. I can only be vague about the genesis since the subjects interviewed were vague in their explanations. It appears that friendship is insidious in that one suddenly realises it is there and then attempts to explain it by retrospective construction. If cornered on this area I would be inclined to support the theory of attraction in the sense of attraction in terms of 'love'. People experience difficulty in explaining why they became friends and I admit that I am not very much more informed about friendship genesis now,

than I was at the beginning of this study. I suggest that this theme is as elusive as the 'Holy Grail' and defies objective study; hence we should accept its elusiveness rather than attempt to ascribe meaning and structure to it.

- 3 There is no evidence, from this study, that friendship is negotiated in the sense that Duck (1983) and Hays (1984) suggest. The argument against negotiation is very much related to point (1) and (2) outlined above. Since the relationship develops into a feeling of 'knowing' the other person there is no need to negotiate. In some respects the concept of a friendship-career has been identified and explained. Briefly, one develops a relationship based on attraction and initially undergoes a period of high-intensity time sharing; during this time one invests 'self' into the relationship and enters low-intensity time sharing. I argue that the friendship-career is based on allowing each other to anchor 'self' onto each other. There is no negotiation about this and providing there are no contradictions the relationship survives.
- 4 I can, however, conclude that friendship is used in various ways, as both the philosophical and academic models suggest. In short, these subjects qualified 'real' friendship by calling them close friends since they felt that friendship, as a term, was used to signify a whole range of relationships. Close friends are described after the 'romantic' notion of friendship and the term is reserved for that kind of special relationship. Friendship, on its own, can mean anything: People known a little better than acquaintances; people one works with; a term to locate others in a social sense. This aspect of the data is congruent with other findings

from previous studies (Wolf, 1966; Argyle and Henderson, 1984; Hays, 1984). However, this study deviates from the course taken by previous studies by arguing that the blanket-term 'friendship' is misused, however I will not labour the point again.

- 5 The concept of intensity also created difficulties for these subjects in terms of explanation. However, this concept was also related to feelings and subjects attempted explanations of closeness in terms of what they felt. One common criterion was the concept of trust: This person is close because I can trust them. I argue that this aspect relates back to the previous discussion concerning expectation and projection. I can only conclude that intensity within friendship is personally defined; it is close because a person believes it to be so. Consequently this cannot be measured nor can one ascribe rules of intensity to the relationship.
- 6 With reference to inclusion and exclusion, I suggest that this has been effectively discussed. Friends devise rituals to include each other in a private relationship, they are not deliberately or consciously designed to exclude others. They do, however serve as a means to advertise the closeness. Exclusion is a feature of association and a deliberate tool used to isolate non-members.
- 7 The sex-issue: I argue that there is no difference, from the data collected in this study, in the way male and female subjects feel about friendship. Close friendship appears to be just as real to the male as it is to the female. Short of interviewing the total population, however, this aspect cannot be quantified. Certainly the subjects of this study used similar terms and reflected similar views concerning the relationship.

8 With regard to my attempts to 'force' friendship, I conclude that these were unsuccessful. Friendship, it seems, defines its own origin and pace. This 'failure' may of course reflect my own lack of skill but I argue that friendship, like love, must have a reciprocal origin; both parties must 'want' it to happen. Consequently a one-sided approach will never meet with success. The crucial factor in the relationship could be mutual commitment and, regardless of the commitment of one party, of similarity of interest and other factors, if both parties are not committed then the relationship is unlikely to develop.

Finally, I set out to discover something about the meaning of friendship, to a large extent this has been achieved even if I have only succeeded in identifying areas that we know nothing about. I have identified two types of relationship that have previously, I suggest, been viewed as one: Friendship and Association. I conclude, therefore, that social scientists should approach the subject with caution since all that is 'friendly' is not friendship. Since friendship is about 'feeling' it is concerned with a person's definition of the relationship, consequently it cannot be observed from the outsider approach. Association, on the other hand, is about doing and cannot be viewed from the insider approach and compared with friendship. I, therefore, suggest that a combination of methods is essential when approaching the study of relationships. Whilst this study does not lay claim to providing the definitive theory of friendship it does, I argue, offer a framework on which to base further study. In total, this study only makes suggestions regarding how some people define and explain friendship, in this respect it forms the foundation stone for further study. I commenced this 'quest' with a firm belief that friendship

was a myth; to a large extent that belief has been shaken. People invest in friendship, hold firm beliefs of its existence and can identify who they term 'friends'. I still however uphold the notion that friendship is an existential concept and being such precludes attempts to enforce structure onto it. To quote the maxim frequently uttered by these subjects:

"It's a bit like falling in love!"

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APPENDIX A

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**The following has been excluded at the request
of the university:**

Appendix A, pages 234-242

APPENDIX B

Interview with Julian Mitchell, author, playwright and actor,
October 8th 1985.

This interview seeks to examine Mr Mitchell's personal views on friendship and how that is reflected in his work. Since he describes some of his own friendships parts of the discussion are included in the data 'Open Interviews'. The session proved to be quite lengthy and caused me to run out of tape (lack of preparation) and the final stages of the interview are reconstructed from notes. This change of recording method is noted in the text.

Q: Would you consider that you had a close friend?

J: Erm.....yes, I'd have to think about that for a moment. It depends what.....erm.....close friendships?for unmarried people are different from close friendships for married.....erm I regard myself as married although I'm homosexual....because I've been with somebody for sixteen years.....er.....therefore I don't regard him as a friend at all. But before that I had many friendsmany of whom were very close but once one settles down into a perminant relationship.....I wish there were some better way of saying it.....er....then you don't need friends in the same way and everybody has, I'm sure, observed this; but as soon as people get married they cease to be your friends....you don't....you loose them as friends...

Q: Even if they marry?

J: Well....that can go on for two or three years then tey can get together agaon...it's a well known phenomenon. I have people though who I regard as very close friends...I should think there are about four.....erm....and I think they're mostly women...erm I don't know whether that says something about me...you know I

define friendship as being certain...non-sexual.... erm one of....the person who I'd regard as my best friend, I suppose in many ways, has died....to my great regret....a couple of years ago....but she was a kind of....erm...mother figure in a way, she was...she was a...a...somebody....because I'd never got on with my own family and had to have a substitute family... now I don't know if that counts as a real friendship....I felt it did. Erm.....then there was a girl I know who's the wife of a (?drumming) friend who I'm extremely fond of and don't see all that much of....because she's a working woman and she's very high powered....erm....but when we meet....I suppose I would define her as being a very close friend....whenever we meet we just pick up where ever we were and carry on as though we'd always known each other all our lives....and....erm....don't attempt to make any kind of excuses to each other about what we feel about anything.

Q: Regardless of distance of time?

J: Yes.

Q: It could be six months?

J: Yes...it often is....indeed I haven't seen her for six months..... erm.....I haven't even spoken to her for six months....perhaps she's busy and I've been very busy and erm.....I live in the country and she lives in London and she has children.....it's quite difficult actually....to meet. But whenever we do....it picks up exactly where it was before. Never quite exactly because you notice the changes in people you're fondest of....and I instantly know if she's having an affair with somebody.....I can tell at once.... without her having to say a word....erm and....that's the second one..... Then, there's another good friend....erm...who's married

and I'm very fond of them both and of their family.....they're sort of.....erm.....I regard them as extremely close friends... again people to whom I don't have to explain myself in any way and don't expect them to explain themselves to me....but they're more critical in a sense....they're more independent....erm.... they're both journalists and it's quite difficult to be friends with journalists because they're always....to me it's difficult because I just disapprove so strongly of what goes on under the name of journalism....er..... but they're very old friends and they go back..... And then I have other friends who go back to University...but they, I must admit, are now beginning to peel off a bit...erm...for one reason or another. Er...some of them are people that...at University I had....were just sort of friends, not very close friends...have become much closer; and the ones who are closest have somehow or another disappointed me or I've disappointed them...so that has changed, but..... Er...your original question was 'do I have friends?'....yes I do, very definite ones.

Q: How do you define closeness?

J: (pause of about 75 seconds)

Q: I assume you have quite a lot of acquaintances.....?

J: I have a million acquaintances....in my world I mean you call everybody 'darling'...which means nothing at all, it's a very selfish world...erm...I mean people are only thinking what they're doing and I'm just as bad as everybody else. You have to be in my position. Erm....I would define closeness by....well....I think it's a changing concept.....it does depend on your age...erm.... as I said I think the difference between being married and single... I think friendships are much more intense when you're single.

Erm.....and then as you get older the length of the friendship in itself becomes a value. I can think of a friend who I've known for thirty years.....er....whom I've never really thought very highly of. He's somebody.....he's a brain surgeon actually.... and I've always thought he was an absolute idiot really.....but I've always been rather fond of him in a way. And he turned up again the other day.....er....and we sort of picked up our friendship where we'd left off as we have done over these thirty years.....and I thought 'he's terribly stupid this person but I'm really quite fond of him' just as I was thirty years ago. But..... so that, in a way, the....the erm...what I'd originally said about, you know, having shared intellectual interests isn't necessarily true. I suppose he's not a close friend....that's a friendship which survived. What I feel about that is the sheer length of it... makes you...or maybe it's me being a writer...interested in people's careers and their lives. I love finding people again after years and discovering what's happened to them; and sort of thinking in terms of being characters one can use to exemplify society...etc... etc. Erm, but that...it has a value in itself.....I mean knowing somebody changes....simply by the fact of having had all that experience of friendship in it.

Q: But what would make it close?

J: (5 secs)....erm (6 secs)....I don't know....it's very difficult to say....it's.....it's like erm....(4 secs)....it's like non-sexual love as it were. Friendship can have...surprise one...like falling in love, I think. One can make a friend as quickly as that..... just like that....erm.....and I actually believe we do fall in love like that....I know I do. Erm....I think friendship....I think again that's more difficult to s..... because you're more critical I think

we all become more.....more inflexible...that's not quite the right word....we become erm.....les open anyway.....to new people and we want them to be....to fit in with our ideas of what people should be like and share our interests, and so on. And we find it much harder to deal with people who don't....erm....what makes a close friendship?....I'm just talking aren't I....? I can't thinkerm....I'll have to examine some of my friendships...I mean....erm...I don't know. I think it is a bit like love in a way that you accept things about somebody else...er...you accept them whole. You...you can see their faults....erm...and they can see yours but you don't mind, you accept them. And, when you hear other people criticising your friends you can acknowledge that what they say is perfectly true but it doesn't matter. That would be one way of defining it, I couldn't say how you came to that.....just like.... I suppose you..... I think you've got to like yourself in order to like other people. You've got to feel the....you've got to want to be liked warts and all. I mean, you've got to know an object that you handle before....erm....I mean if you can say, you know, I know I'm not perfect....the person recognises I'm not perfect and sees things in me that they like, really. Am I being at all sensible?

Q: Yes....you said earlier on about a best friend. What is special about a best friend?

J: Well, I don't have a best friend.....erm....you have a best friend when you're eight....I don't think you have a best friend after that.

Q: Do you think that there are other terms that signify friendship?.... That people use as everyday speech....such as mate or pal?

J: I don't quite see what you mean. You mean friendship as a.....
friend in my world is essentially in inverted commas because it
means 'lover'. It has that meaning in the homosexual world....
erm....best friend? (10 sec pause)

Q: In 'Undiscovered Country'....there was an element in that that
would certainly marry very well into the sort of stuff that
Aristotle and Cicero said about friendship.....

J: I'm delighted to hear it (laughs).

Q: Was that an autobiography?

J: No, it's a fictional autobiography.

Q: Purely fiction?

J: No, it's not purely fiction....erm...what I was trying to do was...
I mean it was a literary device....what I was trying to do was....
I'd decided I was writing trivial novels which I couldn't be
bothered to read unless I'd written them. And that....I was
very influenced by other kinds of books that were being written
at that time....erm, but what I wanted was to try and examine my
own experience.....in a double way. Er....in fact tripple way...
one being an external account of part of me that is never shown to
the rest of the world and the other an internal account.... so the
second half is a kind of internal picture of the character who is
portrayed in the first half. The character portrayed in the first
half is not me 'cause I'm in it as myself....describing the other
person and what that other person is.....in that book, actually, is....
all the ways I myself might have gone at different stages of my
life as it seemed to me. So, he's a kind of potential person....
erm....and what I was trying to do was....as I say....put the two
internal and external things together. But nobody ever understood
that novel....erm, it was too.....I think it was too.....clever.

Q: I don't agree....I felt it was quite logical.....

J: It may be much more acceptable now....at the time people didn't know what to make of it.

Q: I felt that the second half was very William Burroughs.....

J: Well....I don't really like Burroughs....it wasn't cut up like Burroughs....it was actually based on Petronius.....to answer your Cicero and Aristotle (laughs) and it was meant to be a journey, you know, and then the first book is that too..... rather carefully done. At the beginning of the book he goes up to his prep school and meets this other character. I mean, that's when you start your adult life.....that's when it could start anywhere but I'm.....that's the moment I've chosen and the beginning of the second half starts with him arriving at the customs. And, they're both journeys as it were. But, what happened as I was writing it was the character, the invented character, became more and more interesting to me.....erm.....

Q: Charles?

J: Yes.....and I don't know, he...er...he...wasn't me at all, I was me.... but Charles was lots of things from people I did know...there is somebody I know who is now dead. He threw himself under a tube-train, actually.... who was....he was partly inspired by somebody who simply couldn't settle to it...like....who had tried everything and....it was awfully....years after I'd wrote the novel....erm....to write about people and then....it's terrifying.....quite spooky actually. I was trying to tell you something there about friendship which was a non-sexual friendship. I had lots of friends like that.....particularly at that age that I was thinking: University friendships....erm, and in that sense it was based on 'real' friendships and what I.....there's something

naked about real friendship too that you don't have to pretend....
you don't pretend in front of your friends....that's something
again, too, that probably gets more difficult as you get older....
you just don't discuss certain areas.

Q: The friend you instantly knew was having an affair....did that
need to be discussed?

J: No! I'd just tease her about it. It's nothing to do with me....
but it doesn't alter our friendship.

Q: Is it, then, that there are areas you don't discuss because you
don't need to?

J: Yes....probably...it's not an issue. When I was very fortunate in
getting a first at University and that meant that I got something
called a Commonwealth Fellowship....and I went off to America for
two years. And, when I came back I actually....I mean....people
I'd written to during those two years and people....erm....I really
discovered who my real friends were....as I thought. And, of course,
one of the things that is very deceptive is correspondance is
guarded....nobody corresponds unless you go to America as a student....
you can't afford to ring up, and...erm.....the people I'd wrote to
most....er....now I don't. I mean, there's something falsified
about corresponding....erm....you let....er....fantasy creeps into
it....er...but still, seperation is a very good way of reminding
yourself who your real friends are.

Q: With a true friend separation doesn't matter?

J: No.

Q: Would you need to correspond....?

J: Probably not....I don't know how long...if you were me you could
stand it...some kind of trading, even by correspondance, for

contact. Your question about the closeness of friendship is terribly difficult. I mean, I think....erm....we all live in kind of atoms....you know, there are lots of blobs sort of floating about inside the atom of one's world....atomic world....and people do become more attractive and less attractive....I mean....negative and positive...day by day.... And people sort of lose interest in that person but then he comes back again. I mean it's very....you're asking us to tie things down....which you say yourself are not tied down. It's like the principle of uncertainty, actually, which means you can say - I think I'm right in saying this, you can say how fast a thing is going or you can say where it is but you can't say both at once. And friendship is never still, it's never static.... it's continually changing....and one's network of friends is.... is like a net on the sea and it's going up and down all the time.

Q: Are you saying that people move in and out of closeness....one person may be close one day and another the next?

J: Yes....within an individual relationship where a person may feel more strongly than the other, anyway...er...somebody's girlfriend turns up so one feels rather lonely...I mean, you know...that's an obvious example within a male/female friendship...that one...has got some I don't know...your mother dies....your friend is around but he has no part in this so you can forget about him for a bit; but they may be thinking more strongly about you. Obviously, they don't ever stay still....and shouldn't.....because when they stay still they collapse. You can see frozen friendships, actually.... one of those kind of public bar friendships....are frozen, where, actually, one of them, maybe, no longer wishes to have this relationship...but he's sort of stuck in it 'cause that's what you do.'

Q: Yes....I've seen that....

J: Have you ever thought about that...curious form....erm...fishing friendships? I've noticed that among London builders...very often they spend their weekends fishing. They go with their mates and it's completely silent....you may have your sandwiches together, you drive down together and then you get there and spend the whole day nowhere near each other...not speaking to each other....then you all come back.

Q: Yes....it seems that that kind of male friendship has to be bound by an external object....something going on....

J: I think that's probably true. To go back to your thing about close friendship.....I think friendship is in response to needs... and that.....erm.....there are a whole series of needs that people have.....in our kind of society...which are not able to be expressed in a kind of group way. And, erm.....well I assume perhaps quite wrongly that in some kind of....er idealised past people did express friendships and...er...the social relationships were group rather than individual. Er....at the time when the tribe, as it were, ceased to function as a tribe...and became scattered... with agriculture...you notice this particularly in Ireland.....that the celtic societies were not nucleated villages.....were spread... the small peasant farms scattered around the countryside. The amount of people you could actually know was extremely small.... except on market day and church...and, indeed, they often took place on the same day....er the churches in Wales are often..... the old sites of churches are on the tops of the hills between the valleys and the farmers would gather there on Sundays and that's when you sold your sheep. Bsically it was an extremely lonely life.....I can't imagine any kind of friendship existing there at all.

I don't know how you would have friendships at all....erm....In our society, which is more open, friendship is, again.....there aren't sort of tribal ways of expressing relationships except football matches, where it's far too big....you can't invest in a personal relationship....so they tend to be nuncleated...is that....I mean, am I right?.....is this all nonsense?

Q: No, I'm not saying it's necessarily correct. Do you think people look back into the past thinking that friendship was better then?

J: I think it's to do with time.....as a change in the nature of friendship....it is just that everything happens so fast....erm... you can get to anywhere you want, erm.....people, about two hundred years ago....it was bloody difficult to move around....so that you were very much forced back onto that pool, whatever that may be; and then there would be genuine friendship..... You get it very strongly in the coal mines....if you work in Barnsley....I don't know how it works there but in Wales the 'butty'....your relationship with your fellow workman is incredibly important.....but I don't know how you select your 'butty'. Have you seen all those Ken Loach films?...the Price of Coal?....

Q: Yes.

Tape ran out here

J: Well...that's something like those type of relationships. To some extent it is instinctive....watch children at the beach....they always find a friend and are heartbroken at the end of hols. They have no inhibitions but in reality, as you get older, friendship gets harder. This relates back to what I said earlier. I thought I had definite ideas until I thought about it. I would have said they have to have a common interest but when I think about it...some don't. You can't pin it down....you're asking for something almost unnatural.

(pause of 10 secs) There is a lady of sixty-five....she actually wrote the 'Children of the Dean'....now with this lady I can't explain the bond....perhaps I'm not her friend. Is love possible in friendship?

Q: You tell me.

J: I suppose I do love her...I fall in love very easily...but I took to her straight away. I understand she's not a nice person but that doesn't matter. It's difficult to explain....and again I don't really see that much of her.

Q: Do you think friends develop a shorthand way of speaking?

J: Yes....they probably do....I certainly do. It's not shorthand as such, more talking in accents....which signifies what we feel about a person. Certainly this is the case with the person I live with. Old relationships of an erotic nature have a tendency to degenerate into friendship. My lover and I are friends...we have a code...not shorthand but accents and funny voices to let each other know how we feel about a person. We giggle and touch like schoolgirls. But to someone like me a friendship with a heterosexual is very important....particularly with women....it shows that you are accepted for yourself. With those friends it's.....I can't say when closeness started. The lady in.....the one I mentioned who's sixty-five....it's very unequal, we have nothing in common other than care for the person....its adoration, love, openness.... you don't conceal....you don't have to hide. That kind of relationship is not easy with a man....they seem to need an excuse....and perhaps, they are emotionally weaker than women.

Q: What about Another Country?

J: With Bennett and Judd I tried to create a serious friendship, in that they liked each other....respected, and indeed were honest

and it was totally unerotic. When Bennett made a play for Judd it was a tease and was accepted as such. I actually based the character on John Cornford.

Q: Who was killed in Spain?

J: Indeed he was...but friendship...I think....it's about a sense of loyalty in that it's voluntary and informal. Perhaps friendship gives you validity in self....that may be the value-worth of friendship.

The conversation then turned to areas concerning Mr Mitchell's profession which he specifically requested that I did not record. I respect these wishes and consequently do not include them here.

APPENDIX C

Exercises in Examining Friendship

The following are accounts of early approaches to the examination of friendship and are considered important in that they helped to shape the final approach adopted in the main study. They are isolated intrusions into this arena and none of the subjects were included in the final data.

Study One

This study was based on the notion of friendship being a background expectancy developed from idealism. Essentially the assumption underpinning this inquiry is that subjects hold two sets of friendship values; the ideals and those which are experienced. In an attempt to identify these values, two groups of matched, post-graduate students were identified. Each group consisted of twelve subjects (five males and seven females in each) and were matched for age, civil status and educational qualifications.

Method

Group A were labelled the 'experiential-group' and in the absence of Group B (idealistic), were asked to write down the name of a close friend and then list the qualities of friendship. All subjects completed the task within thirty-seconds; the time being recorded by a stop-watch.

Group B were then asked to list the qualities of friendship and, once this was carried out, identify a friend who matched those qualities. There was a silence for one and a half minutes before this was attempted. Only one person identified a friend who matched all qualities; nine subjects asked whether they could identify a friend who matched some of the qualities (these subjects were requested to do this but identify the qualities referred to) and two subjects claimed that they knew of no person who met the qualities.

Results

Group A's accounts were very similar: Honesty was ascribed to 100% of the relationships; good listener - 60%; reliable - 50% and similar interests 40%. One subject claimed that their friend offered help in times of need; one offered trustworthiness; and one 'protection of feelings'.

Group B's accounts also tended to be similar within the group and their lists were longer than A's: Group A listed four qualities on average and group B, seven. Group B's accounts offered: Caring (100%), Keeping Secrets (100%), Loyal (100%), Receptive to Moods (50%), Non-judgemental (50%), Honest (50%); other terms included: 'fun to be with', 'interesting', 'committed', and supportive. However, only one subject identified a friend who met all the qualities described; those who highlighted specific qualities to friends later, all identified honesty. Honesty, then, was the common theme in both groups.

Discussion

Subjects experienced greater difficulty identifying friends by previously listed attributes than a similar group did in listing attributes from an identified friend. It could be suggested that such difficulties arise due to the attempt to project idealistic notions into reality, whereas Group A were basing their accounts on that which had been experienced. A conclusion about the value of this approach will be made at the end of this section.

Study Two

Was conducted on a random sample of twenty-four students, not related to the subjects in Study One and comprised of twelve males and twelve females. All subjects were post-registered nursing degree students.

The rationale of the study was to identify how subjects categorised relationships in terms of closeness.

Method

The whole group was gathered together and offered a list of possible relationships: Spouse, Children, Friends (social), own relatives, neighbours, friends (work), spouse's relatives, spouse's friends. The list was compiled by a similar group of students identifying relationships of a 'close' nature of which they had regular experience. Subjects were asked to rank-order the list in terms of closeness/importance. For the purpose of the exercise spouse could be viewed as boy/girl friend and children ignored if non-existent. In fact, all subjects turned out to be married with families.

Results

Spouse and children were unanimously rated in first position and the mean rating for social friends was third. The mean tanks for all relationships were:

Spouse/children	1
Friends (social	3
Own Relatives	3.4
Spouse's Relatives	4.8
Work Friends	6.2
Spouse's friends	6.3
Neighbours	6.7

Discussion

These results would reinforce the notion that friends are viewed with similar intensity to kinship relations, but would negate the notion that they are felt to be more important than any other relationship. However, the difficulty with interpreting this type of study is that the criteria for ranking was not explored; in this respect it can only be concluded that categorisation of relationships occurs after prompting.

Subsequently six subjects were selected from the group at random and invited to write the names of friends on cards (one name per card). They were then requested to order the cards in terms of closeness and that order used to generate reasons for the ranking via discussion. It should be noted that subjects found both exercises difficult and argued that they were being asked to carry out something that they would not normally do or even think about doing. However, in the discussion concerning the cards, subjects tended to place the person that they had known longest in first position and suggested that these were the people with whom they shared secrets and could trust. Time and distance were stated to be unimportant by all six subjects. Other friends were placed behind the first in terms of 'contact-regularity' and revolved around social (sports and outings) and work reasons.

Study Three

Involved a totally subjective approach in that a structured interview was devised, based on the common/interest/goal and attraction theory (discussed in the main body of this text), each question demanding a simple yes/no response. Twelve subjects were selected at random from the campus population of Manchester Polytechnic and comprised of six males and six females. The interview was conducted on an individual basis and the question devised:

My friends tend to look like me, physically.

My friends tend to think in the same way that I do.

I enjoy the same activities that my friends enjoy.

I can trust my friends.

My friends will always support me.

I share the same values with my friends concerning most things.

We have similar attitudes to life.

We tend to live close together.

We spend a lot of time together.

We come from similar backgrounds.

I tend to work in the same occupation as my friends.

The responses to all these statements were affirmative. From the responses a profile of friendship was constructed and the sample gathered together to witness that profile. They were informed that their friends: Had similar attitudes, likes, dislikes and appearance; that they are close in terms of time and space; usually work together and came from similar backgrounds. Interestingly, when comment was invited from the subjects, all disagreed with the profile offered. It was explained that the profile was constructed from information that they had offered. They then argued that they had not been allowed to qualify their meanings of each response. The general explanation they offered for the results was that one could have a different friend in mind for each statement, hence generalising the results to all their friendships was incorrect.

Conclusions

These mini-studies were carried out in an attempt to 'wet my feet' in the field and to help consolidate my methodological thinking. To some

extent each study was influenced by the approaches used by previous workers and fall short of offering any valid explanations concerning friendship. The positivistic nature of the approaches causes subjects to enforce a structure and meaning to their relationships in a way they would not normally do and could, consequently mask the true meaning of the relationships.

Primarily, each study assumes that subjects have friends without tapping into their definition of friendship. In the final study it was illustrated that subjects often have specific friends in mind when offered certain statements; since they are not responding with a single person in mind the profiles collected are subsequently inaccurate. In each of these studies a pre-defined structure was forced onto the subjects by an outsider, at best they only suggest how subjects respond to such intrusion rather than offering information concerning friendship. From my own point of view they were valuable in highlighting the need for a more objective and individual approach when attempting to examine the meaning of relationships. Consequently I have approached this subject 'openly' in that I have tried not to impose structure, value or meaning prior to data collection. In many ways the main study is a 'backward' journey in that it caused a great deal of seemingly unrelated data to be collected before the search for meaning arose. The mini-studies outlined above do not take into account relationships that are termed 'friendly' but not meaning 'friendship' and this is identified as a major flaw in this kind of approach.

APPENDIX D

Observation Studies

The following are transcripts from notes taken during one period of observation in the three areas used for this study.

The Archery Fellowship

Monday 12 October 1981

I arrive at 6.30pm and shooting had already commenced. The three targets are in their usual positions and I make my way to the 'beginner's corner' at the far end of the hall. The other beginners (Simon, Dave, Ian, Taffy, Martin and Sharon) are already equipped and standing together but not speaking. When I approach I exchange nods with Taffy and Simon and Sharon offers a nervous smile, which I return. Geoff, Bill and Liz are shooting on the elite target; Pete is examining the club equipment behind the beginner's group and occasionally places a bow-string or an arrow to one side (for scraping or repair?). Mike is the only archer using the middle target. I select a bow for myself, string it and choose three arrows. Pete notices me and asks:

"Have we checked your arrow length?"

I reply that he has but he insists on checking again:

"Hold the knock (the bit that fits the string)
to your chest, stretch your arms out taking the
point forward....."

I have done this four times already and carry out the task with some proficiency.

"....yes, they're about right. I'll see you
in a minute."

I cross the target and take my place in the line waiting to shoot. There is no conversation. Two archers shoot at a time and arrows are bouncing from the floor, overshooting the target and hitting the net or just hitting the straw by the target face. Often a suppressed curse is uttered, the word inaudible but the meaning apparant. I shoot and score 7, 5, 9. This proceedure, waiting and shooting in silence continues for about half an hour. The elite often exchange words, but I am not close enough to hear the exchanges. At about seven o'clock, Geoff calls over to Pete:

"Pete, can you just keep an eye on my stance while I shoot....I think I'm letting my shoulder drop."

Pete crosses and stands facing Geoff's bow-arm, I move closer, pretending to change arrows, in order to hear the exchange. This ploy on my part proved unnecessary since Pete was quite loud with his advice:

"Just let off another two....."

Geoff shoots two more arrows, he hits Gold twice.

"Mmmm..... you are leaning forward a bit...watch."

Pete takes Geoff's bow and demonstrates what he thinks Geoff is doing; the movement is grossly exaggerated but Geoff nods with interest. Pete shows him again and Geoff states:

"I can feel myself doing it.....but I don't know why."

"Try a shorter arrow....what are you using?"

"Twenty-eights."

"Try a twenty-six....you could be taking too much pull. It can happen."

Geoff selects a twenty-six inch arrow from his equipment case and shoots. Personally I could recognise no difference in his style and he still scored Gold. However, Pete asked:

"See the difference? I'd stick to twenty-six if I were you."

"Mmmmm.....cheers Pete."

This exchange appears to fire Pete with coaching mania and he crosses to our group. After watching a few arrows being shot he blows his whistle, which means 'Halt'. Everybody ceases firing but Pete turns to Mike and the elite and states:

"It's okay for you to carry on.....it's this lot I want to stop. Now.....what a lot of you are doing is standing all wrong. I know archery looks easy, we've all seen Robin Hood....(I notice for the first time that he is dressed in green, with long hair and for all the world could be one of the merry-men....a smile wrinkles my face and Pete assumes that I am amused by his witticism).....Yes, it looks easy on the box doesn't it (smiling back at me).....well, they don't shoot right.....they'd be hard pressed to hit a barn door....like most of you. Right, all face the wall. (We comply) Legs apart so that you're nicely balanced.....now turn the top half of your body ninety degrees so that you face the target. Right, now keep your head in that position and let the rest of your body go back to its former position. No, no don't move your heads.....your heads should be in line with your left shoulder.....are there any left handed people? No? Good 'cause it's totally different for them. Right, now stretch out your left arm so that it's in line with the target....good. Now, with your right arm, take the imaginary bow-string with three fingers, index above the arrow and the other two below the arrow, and slowly draw it back so that your thumb rests below the ear lobe and your index finger touches the tip of your chin. Release the string. Okay, remember that and let's try it with bows. You and you (he points to Martin and I) Sorry, what's your names? (We tell him)

Okay Martin (to me) try and shoot with that position. (He sculpts me to the stance and I feel very awkward). Right, release.... not bad (I hit a six) and again....."

I hit another six and a seven.....Martin misses twice and then hits a four. Pete states:

"Now that's much better.....keep practicing that. Now another thing I want to say is never cross the firing line when someone is shooting, you've probably never seen someone shot with one of these but I have and it's very messy. And, never practice on an empty bow, it can damage it. Okay, carry on."

He crosses over to his equipment, takes up his bow and joins Mike on the middle target. He hits three Golds with his first three arrows and then another three with a second lot of arrows. Pete is in fact contravening the club rules, since each archer is only allowed three arrows at each shoot. I notice that all the elite break these rules, particularly the one about staying on one target. All the elite have moved from target to target during the evenings I have observed these sessions.

We continue to shoot, very few of us adopting the stance Pete demonstrated, or most had forgotten it already, and not speaking to each other. We are a very civil and silent group; patiently waiting our turn, firing and quickly retiring so that the next person can shoot. This continues for about half-an-hour. During this time Pete and Geoff move to the back of the hall and start a quiet exchange, I can only catch the odd word:

".....field-shoot....sixty-four pounds pull.....
Yamaha.....clicker off....."

".....blind shoot....(without bow-sights)....
took silver....."

Although I could not hear the full content of this exchange, it appeared to be a 'standard' elite exchange concerning archery and its jargon. I had overheard many such conversations by this time, many of which were quite meaningless to me. The exchange continued:

".....compressed.....take-down....."

This was in reference to certain types of bows; I have not seen a compressed-bow, but it is reputedly very powerful; a take-down refers to a bow that is made up of three pieces which screw together to make a bow, in its take-down stage it is very compact and easily transported. The take down is also referred to as the 'hit man bow', since it is the type of weapon the elite imagine a mafia hit-man would use.

At seven-thirty pm, Pete looks at his watch and blows his whistle.

We all stop shooting and Pete announces:

"We'll have to pack up now because we have a committee meeting. I can't leave the keys with you lot, since they are in my trust. Will committee members join me in the bar in fifteen minutes. Okay....let's pack away.....and put the arrows back in their correct boxes.....I'm sick of having to sort them out every week."

We beginners start to pack away the equipment we have been using whilst members of the elite packed away the targets and drew in the nets. I noticed that they each went to one specific task as though they had been previously allocated. The elite did not merely carry out the same tasks that they had on the previous session, but moved around. Last week Geoff had helped pack away the targets, this week he drew in the nets.....it all seemed very well rehearsed. There was no conversation

between anyone whilst this activity continued. My fellow beginners having put their equipment away, gradually disappeared, one by one. Not one person left with another. I decided to 'hang around' in the hope that I could gain an invite to the elite meeting. As it transpired Pete, seeing me, called:

"Will you turn the lights off when you leave....
See you next week."

The elite left as a group and snatches of archer jargon drifted back into the room. I turned off the lights and resolved to call in the Union bar, in case they had retired to that location. They had not. There are seven more public houses within easy walking distance of the college, I did not feel I had the stamina to visit them all. Consequently I had one drink and went home.

This is the fifth session I have attended and still have not had a real conversation with another person. The evenings are prominent by their silence and I wonder whether or not this is a worthwhile exercise. If friendship can start in such a group it must take a long time, we beginners are joined in common interest and ascribed to the same group, but it is not stimulating any real exchange. There is no evidence that any of us even know each other. The real exchange occurs in the elite but I cannot seem to gain access. Within the group that I find myself I seriously doubt that archery is a group activity, indeed, I could be shooting alone.....in fact I am shooting alone, although others are present. I have observed one and a half hours of silence, punctuated by occasional words. However, if all sessions continue thus, they should prove interesting material on silence and will certainly be easy to write-up. Next session: Wednesday 14 October at 6.00pm.

The Fencing Fellowship

I selected a portion of the earlier observations from the archery group, however, there was very little change in the state of play between the groups over the observation period, as discussed in the data section. I have, however, selected a later period from the fencing observations since it represents the time when Paul became quite prominent in my experience of the fellowship.

January 18, 1983: Tuesday 7.45pm

I arrive some fifteen minutes after the session has commenced. Graham (recently having completed a coaching course) is conducting a coaching session. He sees me enter and says:

"Hello David....join us when you're ready,
you don't need a foil yet....or a mask."

I change into my jacket and join the line. We are all lined up facing Graham who holds a plastic bag in each arm (Marks and Spencers) and has two boxes, about a foot high at his feet. The line comprises (from my left) Paul, Tim, Alf, Helen, Gordon, Roger, Nick and Jo. Paul mutters to me:

"We'll be here for an hour now....Blue Peter's
learnt a new trick."

Graham:

"Right, as I was saying.....I'll just recap for David's sake.....Paul (Graham often directs his comments at Paul when he feels that Paul is not paying attention).....this is an exercise to strengthen the thigh and calf muscles....very important in fencing. All you need is two bags like these with a house brick in each and two boxes."

Paul: "What if you haven't any of those boxes....?"

Graham: "Good point....well you can always use plant-pots or books....."

Paul: "Should we take the plant out first?"

Graham offers Paul a quizzical look and I suppress laughter. Graham chooses to ignore the question and continues:

"All you do is.....arms outstretched by your sides and step onto the boxes, one leg at a time and off again." He demonstrates five times. "You should do about twenty of these and that will strengthen your wrists and legs and it's very simple and cheap. You can easily make this equipment at home.....two bags like these and there's always housebricks lying about."

Paul puts his hand up like a schoolboy.

"Yes Paul?"

"Well.....I'm not sure I could make one.....we only have Tesco carrier-bags."

Graham actually takes this statement seriously!

"Well.....maybe they're not as strong....but if you put one inside the other it should hold."

"Do we get a Blue Peter badge if we do it?"

"Ah....you're joking....very good."

Graham is irritated by this jibe but tries not to let it show. He proceeds to have us all running around the hall and jumping when he jumps (a sort of follow my leader) for ten minutes. He then calls for us to stop and continues:

"Now another warm up you can do, which strengthens the ankles....very important in fencing....is the toe jump."

He stands in the fencing position, bounces up on his toes and demonstrates several short, rhythmical jumps - moving backwards and forwards as he does so.

"You shouldn't try too many of these at first.... perhaps thirty forwards and the same amount backwards....and build up gradually to about one hundred. Okay, let's try that shall we?"

We all start jumping, after I have done about twenty Paul taps my shoulder and says:

"Come on, get a foil and lets get a few hits in before he thinks of something else."

I collect my foil and mask and we start to fence at one end of the room. Nick follows us and asks (while we are fencing and causing us to stop):

"Give us a few hits after Dave?"

I nod and we continue. I am aware of Graham frequently glancing at us whilst he hurriedly sums up his session and hear him say:

"Okay.....that's all for this week.....I'm sure you'll find these very useful. Carry on fencing and I'll select people for individual coaching throughout the evening."

The remains of the line disperse and collect their weapons. Alf crosses to the 'administrative-corner' and starts looking through the club register. Helen joins Graham for a fight; Nick seeks out Tim; Roger and Gordon pair up with epees and Jo sits in one corner 'catching her breath'. Paul is toying with me during the fight, I find it virtually impossible to land the blade and before I recover he takes a hit from me. After about five minutes of this fight he suggests we go 'the first to ten'. I argue that five is enough since I'm a lot older than he. He

agrees. Jean enters the hall and shouts an hello to everyone before joining Alf in the administrative corner. Paul quickly gets three hits off me and raises his hand to stop.

"Can I just tell you where you are going wrong?"
He asks and without waiting for an answer.
"You're not committed to your attacks.....
you've been fencing some years, you've got the skill, why expose yourself? Let the other person come to you....even expose your target to draw them in....it's instinctive after that....you take command of the fight. Show you what I mean... come on guard."

I take up guard in 'sixte' (the most common on guard position).

"Right, move your guard off a bit...so that I can see your chest."

I do so and Paul lunges, I parry and reposte. It is obvious to me that he allows my blade to hit the target.

"See what I mean.....try it again."

We continue this activity for about two minutes, when Alf shouts:

"Notices....can you all gather round while I read notices, please?"

We all wander over to Alf and he goes through his 'practiced' speech, well known to the regulars by now:

"There are no new members today....so I don't need to say that you can only come to one session, to see if you like it, before you have to join.... but I've said it anyway. Next week is the end of

a six, so fees are due next Tuesday....it's a pound a week, or four pounds for the six in one payment. Anybody owing money for tonight can they see me after and pay please. Helen took part in the North-West beginners Foil this weekend and won a silver medal.... can we all give her a big hand."

We applaud and Helen blushes.

"The next competition is the over eighteens Foil, which will be held at Stockport a week on Sunday, anyone interested see me after. You have to be a member of the AFA to compete and must wear whites."

"Can I just say...." cuts in Graham, "that you must wear white trousers for this competition and an underplasteron....that's the sort of vest that goes under your jacket. If there are any dents in your mask the judges consider it dangerous and are within their rights to stamp on it.

Paul puts his hand up again and says:

"Am I within my rights to punch his teeth in if he does?"

Tim lets out a loud guffaw. Graham continues:

"Well, it may seem harsh, Paul, but a dent shows a weakness and that could cause someone to loose an eye..."

"Or teeth...." interjects Paul.

".....well, yes indeed, teeth and eyes. Good equipment is very important in fencing."

"Do you have to have the glove?" asks Nick.

"Well," responds Graham, "It is better to have the glove....."

"....and lost", states Paul, "than never to have gloved at all."

Graham will not be drawn and perseveres:

"But, you can probably get away with a leather glove that isn't a fencing glove but a glove that's similar.... a cycle glove or some such glove...but everything else must be standard."

Alf takes over:

"Anyone interested who doesn't have these.... the club can loan some items to you. It costs five pounds to enter and you must be a member of the AFA. The Club Sabre competition is due in three weeks. Would all competitors see Jean after, or myself. Any more notices?"

"Anbody wanting to order equipment can they see me." from Roger.

"Yes, Roger is the equipment Secretary....anyone wanting to order new equipment see Roger. Anymore notices? Okay, carry on with what you were doing."

Paul approached me and said:

"Now, what you need is a foil, which is very important in fencing. But, it doesn't really matter if it's not a white foil.....a white foil is preferable, but any foil will get you by....er....kitchen foil or some sort of foil. Anyway, why don't you challenge Tim to a fight and remember what I said. Let him come to you."

I challenged Tim who accepts and Paul's advice helps, I win 5:1.

After my bout with Tim, I accept a challenge from Nick, who is very difficult to fence, not because he is good, but he is unpredictable. I manage a narrow victory of 5:4. Following this bout I sit down to catch my breath and Paul approaches me.

"See what I mean....you thrashed Tim and he's a fast fencer. Don't worry about being old..... you've got the skill. Going for a beverage later?"
(a drink)

I make an affirmative response and we arrange to go to the 'Butcher's Arms' (a pub that Paul has christened 'The Meat Vendor's Limbs'). During the arrangements Alf announces that we are to have a 'ladder', but only for fun since some members are missing. We line up in two rows and start to fence. Each fencer aims for only one hit, if you win you move up a rung, if you lose, you stay where you are. This

ladder continues until 9.15pm, and lasts about twenty minutes, before Alf calls a halt and instructs us to pack up:

"Can we have all club equipment in now please. And put it in the right boxes....me and Jean don't want to be here half the night cleaning up after everybody. We'd like to get a drink as well."

Jean nods agreement. Paul announces:

"We're going to the Meat Vendors Limbs if anybody's interested."

He doesn't explain what he means by this. After changing I follow Paul and Debby (Debra does not fence but waits around for Paul) to the pub. We get there in separate cars, although it is easily within walking distance. Nick is already at the pub and we buy drinks and join him. Paul speaks the first words:

"What's happen to Arfur these days?"

"I haven't heard from him for a few weeks," I respond.

"Perhaps he's doing another marathon," suggests Nick.

Arthur has previously entered the London Marathon)

"You might have something there," suggests Paul.

"I know what it is, he's had a puncture and not got back from the last one yet."

"What did you think of Graham's session?" asked Nick.

Paul nudges me under the table.

"I thought it was excellent," he replied. "It's something I wouldn't have thought of. Simple and cheap, like he said."

"He rabbits on a bit though," stated Nick.

"No," said Paul, "you might think he goes on a bit, but.....some people are new and need a lot of explanation. What Graham has to do is aim it at the lowest level because that is very important in fencing."

I have grown to recognise when Paul is 'winding' people up because of the way he speaks, at best it could be described as 'exaggerated seriousness'. Nick decided to change the subject:

"Hey, have you seen American Werewolf?...."

"Is that the one about the two Americans who go hiking around England and one gets bitten by a Werewolf and the other is killed and comes back as a ghost to persuade the other to kill himself?"

"That's the one," replied Nick.

"I don't think I've seen it," said Paul,
"What's it about?"

"Well, it's about.....piss off!" Nick tumbles Paul's ploy.

Graham and Helen enter, but do not buy drinks. Just before they join us Paul enters into a 'mid-conversation' as though it had been going on for some time:

"Yes, but if your arm isn't straight and I hit you.....it's still my hit, whether or not you started the attack....isn't that right Graham?"

"What's that?" asked Graham

"I was just explaining to Nick," (Nick looks confused)
"that even if he started an attack but doesn't straighten his arm and I hit him before he does, it's my hit."

"Yes," said Graham, "That's right. It's termed under the preparation."

"See," taunts Paul, "I told you."

"I wasn't arguing." argued Nick.

"Yes you were, you heard him, didn't you?"

Treacherously I agreed that I had.

"Yes, but" continued Paul (Debra kicked him under the table, knowing that he is winding Graham up) "If his

arm isn't straight and I attack but he straightens his arm before I hit, whose hit would that be?"

Tim joins us while Graham ponders this. He replied:

"Well, technically, if his arm wasn't straight before you straightened yours then it's still your hit, but if your arm isn't straight then it's his."

"Yes, but, what if neither arm is straight?"

"Then the judge would have to decide....he'd probably not allow a hit." responded Graham

"Yes, but, in theory, would you say that it was his hit or mine?"

"Ignore him," cut in Tim, "He's trying to wind you up."

"You might think that," explained Paul, "But this type of thing is very important to fencing....a match could rely on it."

"You never go into competition anyway," objected Tim.

"That makes no difference.....I was explaining to Nick...."

"Don't drag me into it!" Nick said.

"How do you mean?" asked Paul. "You started this after that fight we had today."

"Did we fight tonight?" asked Nick.

Paul offers a puzzled look around the group and said:

"How long you been in here? You don't remember our fight and you can't remember starting this conversation?"

Nick did not fight Paul this night but he looked half convinced that he had done so. Nick turned to Helen and started some inaudible conversation with her. Paul attempts to revive the conversation with Graham but Tim, realising what is going on, interjects:

"That was a good 'en of yours Paul.....It is better to have gloved....."

"I didn't say that, it was Graham," responded Paul
"But I agree I thought it was very funny, I had to laugh. Did you make it up Graham, or had you heard it?"

"I can't remember," replied Graham.

"You can't remember making it up or saying it?"

"Shut up Paul. I don't know why I sit with these two," declared Tim, indicating Paul and I.

"What have I done?" I ask.

"You encourage him, you're both as bad," replied Tim.

"Yes, but...." Paul gets no further, since Tim recognises another potential wind-up and cuts in:

"What's Bradford like?" to me.

"Depends whereabouts," I replied.

"Well, I might be offered a practice there," explained Tim. "I was wondering where a good place to live might be."

"Well, Shipley's popular for the professionals, but it's easily commuteable from Burley, Osset, Ilkley and the like."

"Right, I'll have a look round there."

"Yes, but back to this straight arm," insists Paul
"anybody want another drink?"

Tim declines, Nick said he will have to go and Graham and Helen said they did not drink. I still had an almost full glass so refused the offer.

"Right," stated Paul "I won't have one either."

He turned to Debra.

"Fancy coming to my place to look at my kinky underwear?"

"Give up Paul," she said, standing.

"Your turn next week," Paul whispered, loudly to me.

Debra and Paul left and Graham watches them go. When they have safely left the pub Graham said:

"You know, Paul could be a really good fencer if he'd take it seriously."

"He's good enough now," said Tim, standing to leave.

"But he could be better."

"Doubt it," replied Tim. "Anyway, see you next week." He left.

I decided to go before Nick invited himself home, I felt very tired rather than unsociable. I made my departure known and left.

I feel that a potential friendship between Paul and I has developed without my being aware. We appear to be on the same wave-length and he certainly seems to seek me out at the meetings. I shall keep the development recorded, even though my main focus is on Nick and Arthur.

Comment

Both the above recordings relied heavily on memory since I could not overtly write things down in front of the subjects. In some cases the time lapse between happenings and recordings was up to four hours. I have tried to include the more important things, which I was able to scribble 'prompts' about, at the time, on cigarette packets and scrap paper. Obviously some detail will be omitted due to memory lapse. With the next set of observation a more rigorous method was used in that I periodically went to the lavatory to scribble down observations immediately after they occurred. In this sense, the content is more accurate.

The Miner's Group

Saturday lunch-time: 7 February 1981

I arrived at the New Inn and discovered the 'smoke-room' to be deserted so I stood at the bar to enable a clear view of the window, and witness

the arrival of subjects. Eddie saw me from the other room and comes through. He looks around the room and stated:

"None of the lads in yet then?" and pulls me a pint without checking.

"Maybe they've gone to the away match," I suggested.

"Not this lot," he replied. "They're not that keen."

I take the pint, pay for it and sit in my usual corner. I took out a newspaper to pass time and, hopefully, to make me inconspicuous. I arrived at 12.30pm. It was 1.15pm before I heard Big Dave's motorbike roar into the car park. Eddie noticed him arrive and pulls a pint. Dave enters, looks around, takes his pint (no money changed hands) and sits in the opposite corner of the room, facing me.

"Ever seen Carrie?" asked Eddie.

"Tha wot?" asks Dave.

"Carrie....it's a film."

"Dunt talk daft, when do I get time t'see films."

"I saw it last night....it's about....."

"Arh.....a course it is." Big Dave looks directly at me but addresses Eddie. "Who's yon cunt?"

I admit that I felt slightly nervous in view of Eddie's previous warning.

"I don't know," replied Eddie, "He comes in regular."

"Does 'e work at 'pit?"

"I don't know."

"Live rahnd here?"

"I don't know.....suppose so."

"Tha knows fuck all, thee. Tha'd berra find arht ent tha?"

Eddie appeared as uncomfortable as I felt but fortunately Paddy and Jock entered before any further exchange occurred.

"First in today, Dave?" asked Paddy.

"Arh," grunted Dave.

Jock goes to the bar and orders:

"Larger and a Larger Shandy."

"Shandy, who's on that?" demands Dave.

"Paddy," replied Jock.

"What's up wi' thee?"

"Larger's a bit gassy," explained Paddy.

"So tha puts pop in it....yer pillock, that'll mek it more gassy. Typical bloody Irish that."

"What do' you know?" objected Paddy. "There's more brains from Ireland than Barnsley."

"Dunt talk soft," argued Dave. "Mindst thi, tha could be reight seeing as how t'Irish 'ardly use their brains."

"Piss off! The Irish have given more to learning than any other peoples."

"Tha talks like a cloth-checked cap," suggested Dave. (I assume this meant like an iddiot, although I am not familiar with its use).

"Oh, I don't know....." began Jock.

"That ses it all," interrupted Dave, "tha doesn't know."

Barney enters with Ekker, Ted and Jed.

"Nar then lads," continued Dave, "Paddy was jus' saying as how 'Irish invented' atom-bomb."

Paddy: "No I didn't."

Barney: "It were a German weren't it?"

Dave: "I've jus' teld thi, it were Paddy."

Barney: "Wot?"

Dave: "That said 'Irish invented H-bomb."

Barney: "No, I mean as it were a Germon wot invented it."

Dave: "There thi are then, an Irish-German."

Barney withdraws from the group and starts setting up the pool table.

Ekker: "Eh up Dave, is it reight they're gunna close ah pit?"

Dave: "Who's teld thi that?"

Ekker: "Shorty." (I do not know this character and assume it is a work mate of Ekker's).

Dave: "Tha teks no notice on him, he's puddled. He'll only just 'ave heard (pro. hered) abart 1930s closures.

Ekker: "It's not reight then?"

Dave: "Not 'es ave heard. 's norroften tha reight Ekker, but tha wrong agean.

At this point Dick and Jack entered.

Dick: "'s bloody cold in it?"

Barney: "Is it chuff....tha must hev blood like chip 'ole vinegar, Surry." (Surry and Seth are common nicknames in Barnsley, similar to John in London).

Dick: "Well tha wouldn't feel it anyroad, tha too fucking mean to even feel t'cold.

Barney: (indicating pool-table) "Who's playing then?"

Dave: "Thi are, nobody else wants to."

Barney: "I've put money in nar!"

Dave: "Well, tha should hev checked first."

Barney: "But we ales play."

Jack: "Sithee, I'd berra laik wi' 'im afore he brings his dad."

Barney and Jack started to play pool, Jack taking the break; Ekker, Jed and Ted start playing darts (a game called killer where each player throws one dart with his left-hand (if right-handed), that is his number. Each

player then has three lives, the object is for other players to kill off the opposition by scoring 'doubles' on that number). Jock takes the dominoes from the bar and he, Dave, Paddy and Dick started a game of 'Fives and Threes'. (Apparently the object is to place a dominoe that creates a number, when both ends of the table are added, this is devisable by five or three; the number of divisions dictates the number of moves a 'doubles' match can move up the cribbage board. Although they usually play doubles at this game I have witnessed the group play individually with a group of five). Once these games were under way a period of silence followed, except for the occasional expletive when Barney miscues or misses a pocket. Oddly these curses are quite tame compared to those used in conversation: "Sod it" or "Chuffing Hell". Dave was loosing, or at least causing his partner to lose, and turned his attention to Barney; whether or not the two factors are related I cannot say.

1.55pm

Dave: "Nar then Barney, I saw the suppin' wi' Bollock Brain t'other neight." (Bollock Brain I discovered from my confidant was the name of a Pit-Deputy, and not one man in particular).

Barney: (Still playing pool) "Tha didn't."

Dave: (Stern) "Av jus' teld thi ah did."

Barney: "Arh might er been in t'same pub, burra weren't wi 'im."

Dave: "Weren't tha? Tha'd er needed a blow torch t' cut thi tongue from his arse 's I could see."

Some of the group laugh, I was too frightened to laugh.

Barney: (Almost at everyone). "Balls!"

Dave: "Ah thought it were his arse but thar should know."

More laughter, Barney appeared irritated.

Barney: (Snapping) "'av teld thi ah weren't wi' him."

Dave: "Shorty (see earlier) told me he saw thee an' 'im regla'."

Barney: (Angry) "He's a fucking liar then. He'd berra watch out worree sez an' all."

Dave: "Tha'll do nowt."

Barney: "Wont I just."

Dave: "Tha like a sparra, all chirrup and shit, thee. Tha'll probably be heving another pint wi' 'im t'neight. Tha's more faces than t'tarn hall clock." (Barnsley Town Hall clock has four faces).

Barney: "Wot's up wi' thee?" (This appeared to be a declaration of I do not want to take this any further.)

Dave: "Thi are! Does tha call us behind us backs?"

Barney: "Arh dunt call anybody."

Dave: "Aye, and t'Pope's no catholic either."

Barney reddened, either with embarrassment or anger. From the venom of Dave's attack I suspected that someone had informed Dave of Barney's disloyalty to the group, although this is pure speculation and I must admit that I do not like Barney. He now sought to take attention from himself by having a go at Ekker, whose last dart fell out of the board.

Barney: "She's sapping all thi strength by t'look on it."

Ekker: "Gerron wi' thi own game."

Barney: "Eh up, 'ev some respect for thi elders young Ekker."

Dave: "Tha 'es t'earn respect."

There is another long period of silence following this exchange. I get another pint and worry about the dangers of becoming more drunkard than observer (after Whyte: Street Corner Society). The pool game ends and Barney looks over to me.

2.17pm

Barney was watching me for about two minutes before:

Barney: "Can ah 'ev a look at thi paper cock?"

(The joke I expected from Dave never arrived). I handed my paper to Barney and he sat and started to read, isolated from the others. They did not seem to notice, or to be interested. Another period of silence. The darts is still in progress and Jack joined this group. The dominoes is still underway.

2.30pm

Paddy: "Jeez, you've the luck o'the devil, Dave. How many times you won now?" I notice that they have changed games, the cribbage board is relegated to the floor.

Dave: "Not often I lose, burray won again."

Paddy: (standing) "Well, I'll go and see what poisen she's made for my snap."

Jock: (Standing and draining glass) "I'll walk on with you."

They both left and Jed and Ted joined the dominoe-set.

Ekker: "Wanna dame Barney?" (from the dart-board).

Barney: (surely) "Ah'm reading."

Dave: "Tha can't read that (Guardian) there int enough pictures in it."

Barney: "Well ah'm trying."

Dave: "Aye, thi are that."

Ekker crosses to the dominoe-set and watches, Jack throws the darts on his own. There is another period of silence.

2.40pm

Barney hands back my paper and nods.

Barney: "See yer next week."

Dave: "Norrif we see thee first."

Jed: (to Dave) "Tha gorra bit ratty (angry then dint tha?"

Dave: "Ah's tha mean?"

Jed: "Wi Barney."

Dave: "Ee's like a bloody kid. He can dish it art burree carn't tek it."

A few minutes silence. I retire to the lavatory and jot down some key words, when I return Eddie has come from behind the bar and is sitting on one of the tables. He is speaking as I enter.

Eddie: "Yer right Big Dave."

Dave: "Ah dunt need thee t'tell me."

Eddie nods and corsses to the TV which he turns on and after flicking through the stations finds the horse racing.

Eddie: "I've gotta cert on the three o'clock."

Jack: "Thi on neights Dave?"

Dave: "Rest days. Earlys from Munday."

Eddie: "I've purra tenner on it."

Dick: (bangs dominoes down) "Jammy bastard!"

Dave: (smiling) "Ah's tha mean, that's skill."

Dick: "If ah dint know thi better ah'd se' tha were cheating."

Jack: (pushes some coins to Dave) "Well, tha's seen me off Dave." (leaves)

Ted: "Ah's he mean? He weren't playing. Anyway ah'm off anall." (leaves)

Another period of silence, until Dave notices someone at the window, out of my field of vision.

Dave: "Eh up, is that your lass looking through t' winda, Ekker?"

Ekker looks up to see.

Ekker: "Chuffing 'ell, that's all ah need."

Ekker goes out of the pub.

Dave: "She's dragging him art o't'pub nah."

Ekker enters again followed by his wife.

Mrs Ekker: "How much longer you gonna be? I've hed yer bleeding mother here for half-an-hour already, an' it's thi bleeding mother. Hurry thi sen up."

Ekker: "'ad er been 'ome in a minute."

Mrs Ekker: "Ah know, but thi mam's here now, Ekker, what could I do?"

Ekker: "Tha's no need t'show us up by coming here."

Mrs Ekker: "Show thee up, yer cheeky get, how can I show thee up?"

Dave: "Thee tell 'im lass."

Mrs Ekker: "En' tha can keep thi bleeding nose art." (to Dave).

Dave: "It int mi nose ah wanna purrin, love."

Ekker's wife is about 19/20 years, blond and attractive. She is obviously upset by Dave's remark and turns to Ekker, angry.

Mrs Ekker: "Did you hear what he said to me?"

Ekker: "What's thi expect coming in 'ere."

Mrs Ekker: "Tha a mouse norra man thee. Come on, thi mam's here."

Ekker: "Ah'm coming."

They both leave, Mrs Ekker muttering something inaudible to him.

Dave: "Bloody gob on that, ah'll bet she'd talk a dowty to death."

Jed: "Ee's gonna get some earache."

Dave: "Mindst thi, she's a tidy piece."

Jed: "Well, ah wouldn't roll o'er her t' get t' thee."

Eddie: "He shouldn't have let her come in."

Dave: "Tha wouldn't roll o'er a doughnut, thee."

Jed: "Speaking o'which, I'm off for some snap."
(he drains his glass and leaves)

Dick: "Ah'd berra be off." (He leaves but not with Jed)

Dave sits in silence for a few minutes.

Eddie: "Backed anything in the three o'clock Dave?"

Dave picks up his crash helmet and stands.

Eddie: "I have, a cert, only a tenners worth."

Dave: "See thi." (leaves)

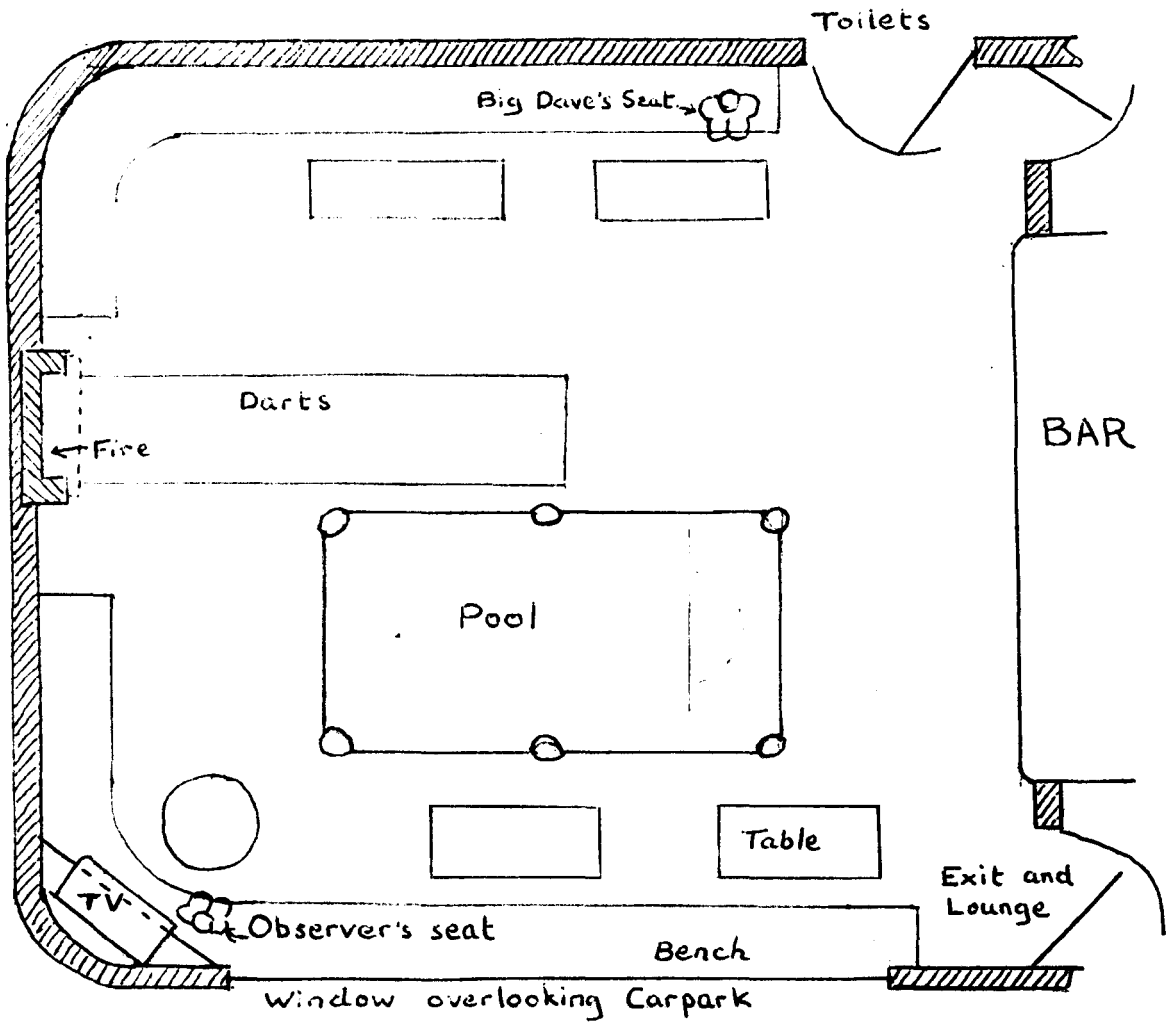
Eddie: "Drinks all round if it comes up. (to me) Want anything before I shut the shop?"

Me: "No thanks, I'd best be off."

Comment

I selected this period from the miner's observations because it contains the most verbal exchange than any other session. Like the archers the miners were prominent for their silences. It also illustrates the relationships within the group. Barney is always put in check by Dave, who attempts to get back at Ekker. Eddie always tries to get into the group but is ignored and at best tolerated. Further discussion is offered in the section covering data.

APPENDIX E



Smoke-Room: New Inn

Appendix E

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEWS

A SAME SEX (MALE) STUDY

Subject: MARTIN, 30 years old; lecturer in FE College (Music)

Q: Can you bring to mind a close friend?

Martin: Yes.

Q: What attracted you to that person?

Martin: Erm.....the fact that we shared erm.....similar likes and silikes you know in a school situation first of all....erm....which was clinched.....erm....one day when we both discovered that we hated kicking rugby balls round a wet field....you know (laughs) nasty days....stuff like that....er that's what originally drew us together.

Q: In terms of time, how long were we talking about?

Martin: We're talking about way back....erm....in my secondary school days when I was eleven....oh in fact before that....er.....whenerm....when I was....er....when I was ten.

Q: So it's almost twenty years?

Martin: Oh yes.

Q: What then signifies it as a close friendship?

Martin: Erm.....in that erm....at that particular very formative time erm.....in both our lives we sharederm....a great deal emotionally you know, with what was happening in our private lives, that grew as we grew.

Q: And that person is still close now?

Martin: Yeah....we're, we're still in contact now and I'd regard it as close but....er....at a certain....at a certain level.

Q: Are you saying by that that at times other people are closer?

Martin: In certain areas....yes I'm closer to other people and that's just because erm.....in those areas I have not been as intimate or shared with that person....with that person....shared those things with that person....erm....on that level.

Q: So what would you say you get out of that relationship?

Martin: It's special for me in that....erm.....I know that....erm...er.
ther's mutual respect and trust in our relationship in that...er..
what ever I might do and say....erm...would be accepted by him
and...and he will know that....erm...what I do and what I say
is.....erm.....erm....based on....erm....a caring relationship
that we have established over the years, there's trust and it's
and it's safe because the trust has been built up over the years.

Q: So in what sense would you feel betrayed...?

Martin: I'd feel betrayed if something that....erm...I had said to him
in confidentiality about me....erm...was reported to another
person without my consent....erm...on a level that...er...I would
have hoped that he would have known was private and personal to
me.

Q: And that's never happened?

Martin: No.

Q: Would you feel a betrayer by doing that?

Martin: Very much so, yes.

Q: Is there any other way that you'd feel a betrayer?

Martin: (Pause, 5 seconds)erm....I suppose....I feel I'd betrayed
him if...erm....a point came...erm...in our relationship where
(pause 6 seconds)...erm...I had...in fact...judged him....erm...
without being....without basing my judgement on knowledge of the
character.

Q: Some people say that they could go to a close friend no matter
what time of the day it was and this person would give them time;
do you feel this way about this person?

Martin: Yes.

(Pause 10 seconds)

Q: Have you ever done that?

Martin: Er...yes

Q: Has he done that to you?

Martin: Yes.

Q: And no problem at all?

Martin: No...no real problems that I would say that has...er...made me think less of the relationship, no.

Q: If you needed money do you feel you could ask this person for money?

Martin: Yes I could do...but in fact I would not do.

Q: Why is that?

Martin: Because it's....erm....it's an area that...erm...I don't feel as safe about....erm...because....erm...we have...er...as children in fact.....it sort of goes back that far...erm.... I could do it and....er....there'd be no problem about it but.. erm...I would choose not to.

Q: Do you touch a lot?

Martin: Yeah....we've touched and part of the relationship is touching, yeah.

Q: Do you touch with other people?

Martin: Yeah, that's the nature of me as a character...I...I...I... when I... when I know people...erm...I like to touch them.

Q: What about your friend...is he a toucher?

Martin: Less so than me.

Q: But he does touch you?

Martin: Yeah.

Q: Are there sort of functions for this to take place?

Martin: We'll often...erm... hold each other....erm...or grab an arm or a hand or (pause 5 seconds)...erm in fun abuse each others bodies you know like...er....hitting them or kicking them or whatever you know...erm...but it isn't...it isn't an area that we don't like to look at...erm...although it isn't as open as I'd like it to be.

Q: How would you feel about doing that with other men?

Martin: With other men?....erm....awkward...erm...because it's not based on that kind of long term relationship.

Q: Is it the length of time that makes it close or is it just something special about that relationship?

Martin: In this particular relationship...based on time? I've known since then that...er...I...I've met people and...er...we seem to have built...erm...and grown incredibly quickly over a very short period of time and I feelerm ...easier about doing... er...or....er....being close to them physically touching them much quicker than I have done with this particular friend.

Q: So did you choose this person as a close friend because it is the person you have known the longest?

Martin: (Pause 7 seconds)....Erm...the person I'm thinking of I...I happen to have known a long time but what I'm saying is that.. er...as I have grown and my experiences broaden I've found that... er...I've...er...with some people I have...I have crossed many bridges...very quickly....erm...in the relationship that I'm talking about it's taken quite a long time...that doesn't sort of...erm...undermine the relationship I..I have over the long term.

Q: How then would you define friendship?

Martin: (Pause 10 seconds)....er, (pause 5 seconds).

Q: Why is it different to any other relationship?

Martin: Why's friendship different from any other relationship?.... because it's based on knowledge...it's based on trust and respect.. and...er...and with time....erm...love sets in and....er....love is part of that relationship and....er....and I, and I want....and I want to embrace that.

Q: What qualities do you expect in a friend?

Martin:Do I expect?...er...expect's a word that I find...erm... difficult...I...I...I try not to have expectations.

Q: Assumptions then?

Martin: Well assume's just as bad.,...erm I...a relationship that becomes a....erm...a friendship....a close friendship...erm... is not based on expectations or assumptions in my view....be... because you find yourself naturally growing together and being together...erm...and it's easy to be together and move together.. erm....when expectations and assumptions come in...erm...it's rather like your previous question, I mean because I have a close friend I don't naturally assume it's going to be perfectly alright to borrow money from them...in times of my difficulties... I think it's an assumption I...I'd choose not to make, I would er...I would...er....well part of my respect is to say is this alright? How do you feel about this for God's sake be honest about it.

Q: How different do you see friendship from marriage?

Martin: (Pause 6 seconds) Well, to start off with....erm...there's, erm...there's the context of sexuality I mean...er...if we're talking about the marriage we're talking in....er...in twentieth century terms...er...men to men....women to women, man to...er man to woman...erm...I am married and have a relationship....erm... with my wife that...er...for me is...er...erm...is very special.... erm...but it is based on a fact that...erm...we are...we are best friends to each other...erm...that happens to extend....er...into our desire toer...sexually express our love for each other which I erm...I don't sexually express my love for a close friend.. or I haven't done so...er...yes I have (laugh) but erm...in the long term I wouldn't particularly with male friends...erm...er...I'm just...(pause 14 seconds) there are many parallels...erm...it's...

it's the notion thater...a point comes in all relationships, in my opinion, where...erm...in order to express yourself you have to cross different barriers...er...frontiers...erm....and my relationships with close friends means that there...er...there are certain frontiers that you cross and in crossing you find yourself in a different place. In the marriage....er..in a marriage situation I find that...er...I have crossed from different frontiers and come up with different things and...er...these lead me to take the relationship in a different direction....for me... is that clear?

Q: Yes....is there any essence of possessiveness regarding this close friend?

Martin: Erm....there have been moments when I have felt possessive... yeah...I haven't wanted to feel possessive and er.....and yet I've found actually that....er...through sheer...erm...sheer space...he lives in one part of the country and I live in anotherwe actually can't see each other regularly and so...erm..the idea of that has been eroded but there was a time when I...er...I felt very difficult about...er...about his relationship with other people...erm...when I was younger and er...I'veer...my trust has grown.

Q: Has the relationship become less close because of spatial separation?

Martin: It's certainly different but...er...what's so...what's so good about it is that when we....when we meet each other it doesn't take us very long to....erm...get back into...erm....a relationship... well,.....it's a closeness that...er...we....er...we know we've got there anyway...I mean there's a bit of estrangement at first, a bit of shyness...you know..basic...er...catching up on you know what has been happening materially...physically...erm...but we

that our heads are not very far apart.

Q: Do you physically look alike?

Martin: No.

Q: Do you share similar attitudes?

Martin: Yeah.

Q: Are there any attitudes that are different?

Martin: (Pause 5 seconds) Yeah. A few...a few things that are in fact issues for us.

Q: There are things that are issues...does this detract from the relationship?

Martin: Yeah...we kind of celebrate our differences.

(Pause 10 seconds)

Q: Do you segregate your friends?

Martin: Yeah...er...I would say...yes...erm.....there are people I choose to spend...erm...extended amounts of time with...erm..without thought and other people that I would say...erm...for instance I wouldn'tI wouldn't choose to spend a weekend with.

Q: You say without thought...is it difficult then to say why?

Martin: Well simply that...er...if your going to....erm...if your going to be with people and it's going to be over an extended period of time you want to know that...er...the difficulties that might arise in spending extended periods of time with them....erm...are going to be negligible there gonna be easy ones to overcome...like...erm...simple things like...erm...you know...when you want to go to bed...is it okay to go to bed or is it difficult...things like that...erm..

Q: That wouldn't arise with a close friend?

Martin: That wouldn't arise with a close friend because it would be...er...it would be okay to say 'look I'm tired...I'm going to bed.'

Whereas with people I...er...felt less close to or...erm..
I knew less well....er...it would be something...er...that
I would be more sensitive about. I would...er...I'd be aiming
to...er....find out what was right, you know, in that situation.
I find that...er...if Ier...if I think that being with
certain people will be aer...strain in the long term I'd
rather not put myself in that position...time is precious.

Q: Have you ever met anyone that you knew you could be instantly
friendly with?

Martin: Yes.

Q: How did you know that?

Martin: Erm....because of the use of language...erm...because of.... erm...
certain areas or attitudes that become apparent in....er....when I
first spoke to them and...er...and in their humour.

Q: Is this something that you've analysed or did you think it at
the time?

Martin: Erm....I'm aware that when I er...when I'm ...when I'm....when I
meet somebody...erm...I'm...I kinda home in on the fact that we
are similar...we share similar ideas...similar attitudes....erm...
and humour...humour's very important to me...erm...and ...yes
when I see that...when I meet it I respond very quickly and er...
I'm aware that...II know in myself that...I consciously...
I want to pursue that...I want to investigate a bit further....
er...and seek that person out...erm...I put energy in....erm...
it's an existential thing I...er...I'm aware of it...erm...as I
become aware of it I seek it...yeah.

Q: Thanks.

MICK 21 Single

(Student - FE - Law)

Q: Have you a close friend?

M: Yes I have.

Q: Tell me why this is a close friend?

M: Well he's a close friend because...I can trust him very much.. it's somebody that I've never any fear of - er - that he'll never do the dirty on me...somebody that I can trust...somebody I have complete faith in and somebody that I find appealing; in a way that he is appealing because - erm - he's got a lot of things to offer.

Q: Can you take your mind back and tell me how the relationship started?

M: It was at school acutally erm...I'd met him a few times at the school I was at. We developed a friendship over a girl, actually, funnily enougher...we both fancied the same girl.... he got her I didn't...there was a bit of amnity (sic) initially and.... one night in a bar he came over to me and we got chatting and we hit it off very well because we're very like minded people....

Q: Did you know before you actually spoke to him that you could get on with him?

M: Er...no, I didn't acutally, - no - in fact I hated him....

Q: You hated him?

M: Oh - yeah?

Q: So it was actual contact that -

M: Yeah, oh yes it was - yeah.

Q: And how long has this relationship gone on?

M: I would say two years - yeah.

- Q: How much time do you spend with him?
- M: Well it varies - he works shift work but I would say - in a week, probably we go out about twice a week.
- Q: Is that important?
- M: Yes, I think it is - yeah.
- Q: Do you live close by?
- M: He lives about five miles away, which is near enough for contact. Erm....yeah.
- Q: Would it be detrimental to that relationship if you didn't meet that often?
- M: No it wouldn't because it's a very very - it's the sort of relationship that we can see each other, we can...there's been times when I haven't seen him for six weeks. The friendship still as close as if I'd seen him yesterday.
- Q: How do you know that?
- M: Well, its, its, its....er - there's no fear of him...with er... with running off, so to speak, other friends really. You know... I know that when I ring him or if he rings me - we'll go out for a good beer and a good piss up. Rather than - er - being a relationship with a woman when you've got to be constantly in touch.
- Q: So in other words you know that he'll give you time?
- M: That's right- yeah - yeah.
- Q: Is that something that important?
- M: It is yeah, I think it's important in every relationship really.
- Q: So.....let's just look at betrayal - How would you feel that this person could betray you?
- M: Betray me...? Erm...well the only time he ever betrayed me was with...over the bird really. There's no other time that he's.... obviously he's betrayed me since then....

- Q: I'm not really talking about previously - let's talk about now...what sort of thing would you think he'd betray you with?
- M: I suppose really if he'd spoken behind my back without consulting me - if he'd said something and not confronted me with it, to other people, or he'd had a pet hate which he'd expressed to other people, then I would find that a betrayal - instead he confronted me with it. (?)
- Q: What about your betrayal of him?
- M: In a similar way, really, if I'd said something to somebody else, without firstly clarifying it with him. You know, if I'd called him this and the other.
- Q: Do you have a kind of short-hand language?
- M: Yeah. We have a nod and a wink....erm....sort of language as you put it...er...which er...if I tend to say something to him - I don't have to express it very fully I can say something and he understands immediately because we're in close contact...we share the signals.
- Q: What about touching - do you touch a lot?
- M: Erm - I touch him in a bar occasionally - when I say touch him - if its a joke or something I give him an embrace and say Ha! Sort of laughing but no more than that....only a friendly er - male touch as apposed to a....caress (prompt)...that's right.
- Q: Do you do this with other people that you consider friends?
- M: No - not to the same extent: Onlyouh...acquaintances...erI wouldn't...I wouldn't touch at all. With close friends perhaps I might occasionally shake them by the hand which is something I do with friends but not really with acquaintances unless its in a business, you know, situation.
- Q: Could you define close friendship?

- M: Yes, I think I could - erm....a close friendship to me is... something you can...it's not having a fear that they will do the dirty on you - you can trust them and you also realise that reactions to things without actually expressing it to them.
- Q: Do you also reveal personal secrets that might be damaging to you?
- M: Yes - I think I could - yeah.
- Q: Do you do that?
- M: Yes...I do - yeah. It's something that might shatter my ego to somebody I wasn't quite sure of...but I could do it to this person and it would just be discussed in the wink of an eye.
- Q: Is that reciprocated?
- M: Yes it is - yeah.
- Q: What marks this as being a special relationship?
- M: The thing that makes it as being special...is the fact that, as you said before...I can express my inner most feelings - as he can - without any fear at all that it might be used to anyone's advantage.
- Q: Is that something that has grown over time?
- M: Yes it is it's something that's come with trust really.
- Q: About trust - I assume that you'll know other people longer than this particular person?
- M: Yeah!
- Q: And you've chosen this person as a close friend?
- M: That's right - yeah.
- Q: So what is different with the other people?
- M: Usually of course that I haven't - I haven't got on with them to the same extent because I haven't found them...the sort of people...that I, that I could lay my trust with. Something indefinable that...which...I thought well I won't trust this guy to that extent. So it's...fond but never over fond as a close friend.

- Q: Are you saying that it's a conscience decision?
- M: Yes I am - yeah - it is...it's not something you fall into.
- Q: You decide that this person is going to be a close friend?
- M: Yeah- yeah. I would say so.
- Q: Do you use terms like 'mate' and 'pal'?
- M: Mmmm!
- Q: What does it mean to you?
- M: Well - a mate to me means somebody who's a good friend but not a very close friend. I use the term mate or pal...as a guy who I get on very well with and I have a drink with...a chat with, but a close friend I define as a friend and not a mate or a pal.
- Q: So it's really a kind of location that you know this person quite well?
- M: Yeah - that's right.
- Q: But you're not really friends.
- M: Yeah...I would only use the term friend with a close friend, because I think mate or pal you use for a lot of people...a mate of mine down the pub...doesn't intimate that you're particularly very very friendly with him.
- Q: Do you find that you categorise people; would you say everybody's friends or?
- M: Erm....I would say that I have a lot of people...as...er acquaintances really and a few people as friends and perhaps two or three people as close friends.
- Q: Is one closer than others?
- M: Yes....I would say so.
- Q: What is the difference then?
- M: The difference is that...over time we've developed....er....a friendship which is being strong, which doesn't need any -

anybody to say 'I am your friend' it's something which is, which is unsaid, but its always there.

Q: What wouldn't a friend do?

M: I don't think a close friend would criticise you in public.

Q: Anything else?

M: Erm...I don't think he'd run off with your wife - that sort of thing.

Q: Where did you get your ideas of friendship from?

M: I think we're influenced by the media...er...but I do think that it's an intrinsic part of your nature - which defines friends from acquaintances. It's something that has grown up inside you but obviously you are influenced by external forces as well.

Q: Do you feel that you could ask for money from this person?

M: Well, I have done in the past - yeah that's not something that holds any barriers.

Q: Would you feel a burning need to pay back?

M: Yes I would, just because of my own personal na....nothing to do with the friendship side but I believe if you do borrow.... pay back.

Q: What if this friend asked for money from you?

M: I would...I would....I would give him it.

Q: What about asking for it back?

M: I wouldn't do that...

Q: I get an impression that a lot of this has to do with time - shared together if you didn't spend time together would the relationship diminish?

M: I think...I think if it was a long time and somebody didn't keep in touch I would agree it would diminish, but a period of a few weeks - it wouldn't diminish because I had a very close friend a few years ago, as was, he hadn't seen me for two or

three years and the friendship just 'blew' because personal contact is needed in a friendship to renew and strengthen it.

Q: Do you have similar interests?

M: Yes we do - yeah, we have interests going out drinking, womanising - the usual interests.

Q: Similar attitudes?

M: Yes. Yes...I would, I would say perhaps I'm just a bit more extrovert than he is - but we do get on very well.

END

IAN, Married, 37

Nurse

Q: Have you got a close friend?

I: Yes.

Q: Why do you consider them to be close?

I: Er....the first reason is that erm...I've known them for quite a long time and we've always been interested in similar sorts of things....and I consider him a close friend because I'm able to disclose things to them without fear of anybody else knowing about it.

Q: Do you spend a lot of time together?

I: No not really no....not that much....you know I see them and whenever we do spend time we're able to talk either really intimately or just about basic things but it doesn't matter. Er - that I see them regular - it's just that they're available whenever - and the same here.

Q: Are you saying then that they're available anytime you need them - you could go there?

I: Yeh - if I needed - yeh.

Q: At any time?

I: (Pause) well - no - probably not at any time, no.

Q: Well what sort of times wouldn't you go?

I: (Pause) Well....I think...well with this particular friend thaterm...the main time I would go is - if there's any real crisis then I know I could go at any time - there wouldn't be anyif they were there and available. But....er...most times I - it would be things that would - we would restrict things to talking about when we meet and even urgent things could - could wait a cople of times....that's the way we tend to deal with it... and it worked better so I don't really consider - a crisis would alter it.

Q: How long has this relationship been going on?

I: 14 years.

Q: How did it start?

I: It was mainly through a sport.

Q: What sort of things attracted you together?

I: (Pause) Well - we were both interested in the same types of sport, were both sort of doing it fairly often. I've always been interested and fairly good at running and football and things like that....but I tend to not....like to follow.... certain problems - for....to do.... for running - I don't particularly like being a member of a club....or you know - well obviously with football you do - but say for the running....I don't particularly like being a member of a club, and we used to sort of just do our training sessions and not really stick to any rigid pattern, we both tended to like that sort of thing and we both like to....a drink, you know - a good few pints (you know)....so that was one of the basics of it - and we both tended to like off beat humour...the fact that he was very sort of personal natured we sort of...really sort of...taking spots off other peoples....you know...the way they talked or the way they did things but you know what is meant by it - you know - its sometimes very hard to understand for other people....that's how we really got together, we both sort of liked the same sort of things - and we fell into a network of other sorts of associates who were very similar.

Q: What do you mean by it would be difficult for others to understand? Was it a secret language or....?

I: Well yeah...I suppose we did. Well we used to greet people - say - 'Oh bleeding hell he's here' or something....it wasn't quite like that but similar - you know you'd say 'Oh God' or

'Watch your pockets' or something like that - only it was that sort of thing which people wouldn't assume would do as a greeting for a friend.

Q: Yeah, did you notice that you had a sort of shorthand speech?

I: Yeah; I think that's what I was really trying to say by - you know - that you'll have a sort of code. I think the only way I can tell you is it's not something you talk about; it's not something you say that if you say this it means that....it's just something that grows up...

Q: How long had the relationship developed before you knew it was close?

I: It was almost close from the start - yeah - I don't know whether this - this is actually relevant but we both happened to spend quite a lot of time in the South West - you know, he was born in... er...Exeter and I'd lived in....in the Devon area for four or five years prior to coming....and I'd lived in London for 15 years so - you know - so we had southern accents and that; not necessarily southern habits but - certainly southern accents.

Q: Did you seek this person out?

I: No, in actual fact, he was....this happened when I first started at the hospital and I'd obviously been in jobs before - some of the jobs I'd had before had all been outdoor jobs - you know - and this was the first indoor job - that I'd ever had...as such and er....I was in training school and he was a couple of blocks ahead of me and I just met through the sport - you know - it was within six months of being in the hospital or within 3/12's was totally different - you know - we - it wasn't really to do with work although we are both doing the same job which helped.... you know that you had similar things to talk about to a certain extent.

Q: So initially would you say that the fact that you were in the same location maintained the relationship or was that irrelevant?

I: No - I think probably the fact that we were in the same proximity did not maintain the relationship - but then he's - we both had several years - well several times out for SEN or different things which we both did in different places and we stayed together and that was fairly early on in the relationship - really.

Q: So there are times of spatial separation?

I: Yeah - yeah.

Q: And it was still maintained through that?

I: Yeah.

Q: So how did you contact each other during those times?

I: We've never written a letter - and never made phone calls we usually just tend to go to the same places - you know - usually he'd sometimes turn up at the house or...we used to keep it fairly well on an accidental basis...there was no need to say - well - I'll see you in a couple of months or I'll leave you a message - used to get a lot of indirect messages - you know - odd - odd phone callsbut there's never a sort of deliberate phone call...you just know to be about.

Q: It's sort of unstructured then?

I: Yeah! (Pause)

Q: What about touching - do you touch each other?

I: (Pause) Well...I suppose we do - but it's very much in that sort of joke - in that sort of jokey atmosphere - you know - it's never really sort of designed to arm round shoulders routine - anything like that.

Q: What do you mean by jokey?

I: Well you know - sort of punching people - and sort of touching and saying.....oh you know - push off like, or oh yeah I know.

Q: Would it worry you if any other of your acquaintances acted like that?

I: Not really no, 'cause I tend to be a toucher myselfit's really something...you know if you've really offended somebody - you obviously don't do it but normally I tend to do it all the time.

Q: And this person?

I: Is very similar.

Q: Did this occur early in the relationship?

I: To be honest I think it's one of those things that always happened and I'd just be really hard pushed to say when it started...when you're running a lot you know - you sort of - you know - your'e playing any particular sport a lot of time by defunction you're that shattered - you know - you always put arms round shoulders and things like that you don't say - after coming off the game - well done business - you know - it sort of built up from that really - that's always -always been the pace - I don't know but I think that's how it started.

Q: You said you were able to confide - would you confide potentially personally damaging secrets to them?

I: (long pause) No I don't think I'd do that to anybody.

Q: Well what sort of things would you confide?

I: Financial problems - which then again I'm not into doing that. I tend not to do it to very many people - apart from in general - you know - you might mention that there's only one wage coming into the house - you're struggling - that's a very sort of vague statement anyway - I'd be much more specific with this person - it's the same with relationships - if I was going through some relationship problem I would mention - you know - that I was and I would, perhaps be more specific with him - even then I

wouldn't go into detail - I tend not to.

Q: Would you feel you could ask this person for money?

I: Yes.

Q: Without offence?

I: Yes, I would.

Q: And you would be offended if he asked you for money?

I: No.

Q: Have you ever done that...would you?

I: WellI mean, when I say money - you know - often we've lent each other the odd fiver of you know when I say often that happens you know it's implicit and you give it back whenever, but it's not that often.

Q: But a large amount of money?

I: No - because I've been offered - you know - especially when I was changing over jobs I was offered some money - you know - on a loan basis - you know he said you can have this until you get your loan through - which could have been a period of six months - a substantial figure - but we chose not to do that.

Q: Why?

I: Well erm...I mean, I suppose - my wife, we tend to discuss - I tend to find that I discuss most things with her - with Wendy - so really I've not needed somebody other....

Q: So this person's a friend of your wife's as well?

I: Well - he's well known to her and she likes him - but he's not as close obviously.....

Q: Would you tell this friend if you were having an affair?

I: I think he'd know anyway.

Q: There'd be no need to tell him then?

I: Probably - probably there wouldn't be a lot of need to - but I mean I would probably tell him.....

Q: How could this person betray you?

I: (long pause) I think that because of the way the friendship iser....a sort of implicit thing....by totally disassociating himself and saying I wouldn't want to see you. That's the only way I can see betrayal.

Q: That could be said without actual words?

I: Mmm - mm.

Q: If the actions displayed....

I: Yes.

Q: What about your betrayal of him?

I: That if I ever said anything about him that wasn't absolutely true - because he's one that never bothers about what people say about him - as long as they let him know - you know - and if I ever sort of had someone to talk about him and I sort of agreed and it wasn't true then - he would be betrayed....I wouldn't do that.

Q: Finally - could you define what you mean by friendship?

I: Mmm....I think friendship is really not having to think about what you're saying.

Q: What differentiates this from other friends?

I: Well, there's the fact that I don't have to regularly think about.. what I'm doing - why I'm doing it, or what I'm saying when I'm with him - or the way I'm dressed or other ways - you know - I've had other friends you know - if you weren't in Warrington you weren't supposed to go in their house - you know - I've known people like that.

Q: Is friendship something you're very selective with?

I: Yes, yes I think it is - I don't erm - I mean - I meet and see a lot of people in doing what I do - but I don't consider that I should call them friends and that's not the way I'd like it -

- you know - I prefer my own counsel every time - then again
I've got one or two people I feel really close to.

Q: Do you use terms like mate and pal and...?

I: Not really - no.

Q: How would you interpret that?

I: (Pause) Well I put it down as someone that I did associate with -
but I mean a lot of the time when you go out you sit in a certain
group - you know - but there again groups like that...tend to
sway around a bit anyway - they contain the same types of people
over a fairly wide range - you know - probably about 12 to 14
depending on what time you go in or whatever...I suppose if I was
then they'd be acquaintances - well - mates if I had to use them...
but they're not people I'd tend to ask too many things of... I
prefer to be very sure of what I'm doing.

Q: Is friendship something you've consciously thought about?

I: Yes,....I have - quite a bit. I prefer it on the level I've got
it now.

Q: Do you find it difficult to categorise?

I: Yes - yeah I do - I mean I like things the way they are - you
know - that I'm committed to having certain numbers of - having
to do certain things.

Q: Are you conscious of getting ideas of friendship from anywhere?

I: Well - you know - with reading different things you obviously get
ideas but no these are purely my own thoughts on that.

END

STEVE, 40 years, Financial Consultant, Divorced

Q: Do you have a close friend?

S: Certainly, yes...yes I do....Colin.

Q: Why do you feel him to be close?

S: (40 secs) That's incredibly difficult to answer! (5 secs)

Perhaps if I told you the circumstances it may go some way towards an answer. Essentially, it's because he's....well.... there. I've known Colin...what, about ten years, but we've only been close about two years, or at least I to him. I don't know whether or not he feels me to be close. About that time we went through particularly horrendous times in our lives...together...in that we both divorced at more or less the same time. He coped far better than I...I was a wreck and he helped me through it all.

Q: In what way?

S: Well, by organising things to take my mind off it...talking me through it....showing me I wasn't alone. He used to say 'things will be different, but not worse'. He'd take me off for trips, sailing, walking and drunken binges....that sort of thing. We spend a lot of time together during that period, although we don't now.

Q: Is time together important?

S: Well, not now...no....I mean, we rarely see each other.... he lives some forty miles away....

Q: But you're still close?

S: I am...yes ...I ring him rather a lot, write occasionally....not as much as I should....but we don't often meet....except for special occasions.

Q: What do you get out of it then?

- S: (8 secs) Support, I suppose....he's a man I respect....trust...
he can give a certain clarity to things that I can't initially see.
- Q: So what sort of things do you contact each other about?
- S: (10 secs) This sounds terrible really, but I always contact
him when I've had, or got, some problem...you know?...relationships,
finance or just feeling low, understand?.....but that's okay. I
know I can do that and he doesn't mind...that's the sort of relation-
ship it is. And he, of course, knows that he can always rely on me.
- Q: And does he ever reciprocate this....?
- S: No....he doesn't, or at least he hasn't yet....but he knows that
he can. There's never any strain, understand?...none of that
fencing...er....in a verbal sense....to test the water....all that
'how have you been' stuff...it's straight in to the meat and we
both appreciate that we can do that with each other. He can tell
me I'm being stupid and I can accept that without taking offence
....and....er....vice versa.
- Q: How, then, does this relationship compare to others of your
friendships?
- S: It doesn't really....I suppose.....well...in my line of work you
seem to acquire lots of friends....but they're not friends as
such....they're people one knows...understand?....and er....er...
(6 secs)....God this is rather difficult...I've never considered
it to be....erm.....well.... (5 secs). Yes, let's put it this
way.....there are lots of people that I know, that I would say
were friends....but they aren't really...and out of that...er
out of those, there are a few people that I enjoy doing things
with....such as...er...having a meal or a drink, playing bridge,
chess...that sort of thing....but even these are....erm...not
really friends....and then, there's Colin who is a friend in a
real sense.

Q: So why is he special?

S: He's special because(10 secs).....I suppose it's love... really...now don't get me wrong....I mean....I don't fancy him or anything in that sort ofer...sense of how some people use the word 'love' today. I owe him such a lot...he gave me a lot...it's a sense of respect, affection....erm...admiration, trust and knowing he will be supportive. Oddly, I think we know virtually nothing about each other....in a material sense... understand?...and yet we know lots. Our relationship is very much based on....feelings...or how each other feels about certain objects....situations...rather than where we have been....and that makes it special.. It's that sort of....sharing that I would find...impossible with anyone elseman or woman.

Q: Do you share similar interests?

S: Oh no...not at all....erm...he's more the rugged, outdoor type... climbing, sailing, jogging...that sort of thing...whereas, I'm definitely the sedate....erm...non-strenuous type...bridge and chess. No, we don't share things in that sense.....I suppose it's all at an emotional level rather than a doing level.

Q: What about attitude?

S: Yes, what about them....?....Do they exist? Are they the same in the sense that you asked about interests? Is that it? I suppose they are....well...no...no, they're not really. I mean politically we are poles apart....he's a socialist and I'm...not. (5 secs) No....we're not alike in that respect, either.

Q: Do you discuss politics?

S: Never....Good God no (laughs). I think that friends deliberately preserve friends from their own sense of right. In that way one avoids conflict...don't you agree? Colin and I certainly do...I mean, I know that he's socialist and he does....er...knows

of my particular stance....and we respect that. We're both passed the age when one says 'if you carry on like that,... thinking that way....I'll take the bat home'....no, things like that don't trouble us. Perhaps we feel that the other is a little naive...for holding a particular view...but we'd never make a fuss about it.

Q: What about these other friends then?

S: Well, yes, they have to be the same...do they not? Because they are far more....erm...superficial. Certainly without that interest....or that overt common pursuit....there would be absolutely nothing to keep you together. One adopts these people for enjoyment....you do not have to try, because they are similar, in almost every respect, to oneself....but that can never be close. Is that...er...is it sensible?

Q: Yes...do you have to try with Colin?

S: No...no...you are misunderstanding what I say. One has to try, at least in my particular line, with people one does not particularly care for....understand?...pretend that you think on the same lines...with friends you don't because you know you share similar things. With Colin, it's even deeper....it's emotional and we can differ but it doesn't get in the way.

Q: Is time important with these other friends?

S: Oh....definitely....the time and interest thing run side by side... I think....I mean...if a chap doesn't put the same amount of time into something....that you do....it reflects his degree of interestdoesn't it?.... If you don't see them for any length of time it becomes strained...or they do...erm...they seem to become strangers again.

Q: And that doesn't seem the case with Colin?

S: No...as I said...time's not important...but that is a totally different ball game. If one needed rules it wouldn't be the same.

Q: Did you choose this relationship?

S: (5 secs) I don't feel one can ever choose that sort of relationship....it happens...it's...erm...I don't know.... you can't nail it down. It's that kind of....erm 'some enchanted evening' type of thing. Suddenly you just know.

Q: Do you have a special kind of language?

S: I'm not sure of what you mean....elaborate code?

Q: No....some friends have special codes of speech that others don't follow.....

S: No...we don't. He seems to know how I'm feeling...there's that sort of telepathic element that one finds in close relationshipsbut no, no kind of secret code. I know what you mean, though. I suppose that kind of thing develops with...erm...physical contact and we don't contact in that sort of way. One cannot pass a look over a telephone.

Q: You said you were friends before?.....

S: In a sense that we knew of each other....working in the same office, or rather, passing through the same office...a sort of work friend, a colleague.

Q: Do you still do that....?

S: No...he's retired now...well, he's about ten years older than I am. When I say that he's retired, he took early retirement and then started his own business. I don't know that much about it.

Q: How do you feel you could betray him?

S: Betray?.....I don't feel that we are linked enough into each other's lives to betray. I can't really begin to answer that. I suppose if we made public the other's secrets...which is an obvious form...but that's unlikely anyway.

Q: Could you define friendship?

S: Well....it's a term that people use....really, isn't it?

It doesn't, in itself, mean anything outside a personal level
....we all have friends, or, at least, people we call friends,
but you don't really know what it is unless you experience it.

Q: Would you say it was rare, then?

S: Yes....I most probably would....I was forty before I realised
that I had had that experience. Before that I talked of having
friends....in a sense that I explained to you....but I didn't
have feelings for them. It's a sort of....well...one drifts
through life, from person to person, for different reasons.....
I think most people have friendship on that level....particularly
women, oddly enough....but then again I don't think that they
need friendship as much. Friendship is far more important to
a man....women have their families. But, to be close, you have
to....one must share something and most people don't (looks at
wristwatch)....er....look here....I'm afraid I must be going now.
We could continue this another time, but I feel I've just about
drained the subject.

Q: Okay, thank you.

END

CORNELIUS, Male, 45 years, divorced and remarried; Bistro owner

Q: Do you have a relationship that you consider a close friendship?

Con: No.....I don't think I've got any friends, at all.....mates, yes, but no friends.

Q: What's a mate then?

Con: Someone you know and maybe have a drink with.

Q: And a friend?

Con: Should be more than that.....someone you can share things with.... be close to....confide in....someone who cares. A mate wouldn't give a toss if they never saw you again....maybe years later they'd think 'wonder what ever happend to....what's his name?' A friend would try and find out.

Q: Have you never had a friend?

Con: I used to think I had two or three....but it turned out to be in my head.

Q: How do you mean?

Con: Well, one guy...I'd known since school....what 25 years...we'd met every week....grown up together, in fact. I felt we were very close....we shared a lot...secrets and that.....did each other's sports...

Q: How do you mean?

Con: Well, if he ever wanted to do ought I'd do it with him even if I didn't fancy it...and vice versa. Same with birds....if there was two...you know?....you've probably done it as well. Lots of people thought we were brothers (a bit emotional)....but at the end of the day....(shrugs).

Q: What went wrong?

Con: With this one? My divorce went wrong. I mean, I'd known him longer than my missis and his....but being friends we started

to go out as couples....that's always a mistake...we still met alone, like. Anyway, when I separated he started making excuses... probably his missis didn't like the thought of him going round with me....being free and that. But that shouldn't have mattered....he sold me out and real friends are more than that.

Q: You felt betrayed?

Con: Worse....I felt used...I felt he was a cunt and I resented ever liking him. Friends are supposed to be there when you need them, not when everything's okay. (see Brian's views).

Q: Have you ever met since?

Con: Yeah....he came to see me some years after....well, 18 months after the divorce...I told him to 'fuck off' (sneers).

Q: What did he say?

Con: Nothing, he fucked off. You can't start again after that....I'd trusted him and he didn't put up after all that time. Bit of a mug aren't I?

Q: Do you regret it happening....the break up?

Con: Of my marriage?

Q: No, the friendship?

Con: Not now.....I miss what I thought I had...and felt let down when I realised I'd never had it...that it was a joke. But then again.. a lot of life is.

Q: Would you have supported him under similar.....?

Con: I have done....I've lied for him, watched his back and that.... you know?....when he was after a bit on the side....and that makes it worse....like I did all the giving and he couldn't repay. He only had to be there.....I didn't want money...or a place to live. (8 secs) Anyway....it'll never happen again.

Q: What about the others?

Con: Same thing....divorce. They say that you don't just divorce a wife....you divorce a way of life....that's true in my case.

Q: So these other friends couldn't cope with your divorce either?

Con: Oh, no! One was worse....wait...see I had three close friends who I felt I could trust. One, I've told you....I thought he was the closest....known him longest. Eddie I'd known...what...ten years, maybe more. Jeff, the first one, didn't wanna know when I got divorced....Eddie was different....he tried to give the wife one! He didn't even try to deny it either. Now that is a cunt's trick if ever there was, right fair, in't it? Friends don't do that. His missis once offered it to me on a plate, but Eddie was my mucker and you don't shit on a mucker. He tried to though.... I wish I had with his missis now. I mean Eddie was like that, a right cocksmith....ought in a skirt if it stayed still long enough he'd fuck it.....but we had an unwritten law...no meddling on a mucker's patch.

Q: But you were separated.

Con: What difference does that make? Look....when you're giving one to a bird you tell 'em things, don't you? He knew things about me...he could tell her things that she could use...see? You don't sell out a friend like that. He didn't manage to give her one....but he tried, and didn't she just love telling me. I'ts the principle...see what I mean? Like, the sex isn't important in itself....it's all that goes with it. By even trying Eddie blew it for me....the shag happy twat. It still makes me mad thinking about it....ten years on.

Q: That Eddie tried to seduce your ex-wife?

Con: No...that's Eddie. The whole act, I mean, what he did to me. Christ....Sally was an attractive woman and she liked a good rodgering...that didn't bother me...it was that it was him, a

so-called friend. If you can't trust your friends....maybe any other time it wouldn't have mattered....but with what I was going through it was like putting the boot in. Like I said, a friend should be around when you need them and I always thought they would be.

Q: What about the other friend?

Con: Jack?....well he was a joint friend and preferred to say hers. Well, the wives were friends....I didn't expect it any other way. He was scared of Sandra...mind you Jack was scared of everybody. But, he was alright. No it was Jeff and Eddie that hurt.

Q: What made them friends?

Con: They weren't, were they?

Q: Well, why did you think they were?

Con: (10 secs) You can't describe it...it's a feeling...a wrong one as it happens. I mean, you never say 'let's be friends', do you? It just happens! But they're only friends when things go right... it's not just me...I know other people who've gone through the same...men and women (see personal account). But women's friendships are different....men get together to enjoy, women to prattle.

Q: What should friendship be then?

Con: It should be....well.....friends should stand by you, no matter what. They don't take sides...they don't shit on yer...that's what it's all about, in' it? You look after a friend and they watch out for you. When you find out it's all bollocks, well.. in my case finding out was much worse than getting divorced... it just shows that in the end you're on your Jack Jones.

Q: Do you think you'll ever have a friend?

- Con: No....it's not worth it. Like, I say, I've got mates now....
you expect nothing, they can't let yer down. Oh, I can tap them
for a quid or a lift...have a laugh and that.
- Q: Do you miss anything that you had with Jeff or Eddie or Jack?
- Con: (12 secs) Yeah....the sense of belonging...you know?...being
able to have a deep talk...confiding and that. I've got the
missis as a friend...I suppose, but it's not the same.
- Q: Do you need a friend?
- Con: Everybody needs something...but like I said, I don't think
friendship, as I saw it, exists.
- Q: Where did you get your ideas about friendship from?
- Con: (15 secs) What an amazingly stupid question....where does anybody
get....? I don't know...I just had them. Stories I suppose....
Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer....I can't say...I just had those ideas.
Nobody tells you what it is, if that's what you're after, well,
they never told me....all I know is what it isn't and that's what
I had.
- Q: You obviously spent a lot of time with Eddie and Jeff...could you
ever forgive them?
- Con: No way! Not a chance...a friend is always a friend...or should be
....in my case what they did was worse than....well, the worst
crime. You can't pretend that it never happened....you can't
go back....and like I say, it'll never happen again. They abused
loyalty and trust...no one else'll get the chance. Look...I've
got to open soon....so can we end this...? I've nought else to
say anyroad.
- Q: Okay....thanks a lot.

END

BRIAN, 42 years, married, 3 children, Lecturer

Q: Have you got a close friend?

B: I ain't got any friends, it doesn't exist, at all. People just think it does.

Q: Have you never had a friend?

B: Nope! There's people I'm friendly with but they're not friends.
(5 sec pause) I used to think I had friends but I didn't.

Q: Can you elaborate?

B: People only want to be friends when everything's alright.
There was a chap I thought was a friend...we did lots together, talked and all that, then, a good few years ago, his daughter tried to commit suicide. He called me, I went over and helped the whole family through it, took over in fact. It didn't matter to me, he was a friend. After that he never bothered with me, it was like he was embarrassed that I'd seen him at his worst. Then, a similar thing happened with another chap, you know, I'd had a glimpse of his personal life...I won't say what 'cause you might know who it is from what I say. You probably won't but you might. But, the same thing happened.....After that I decided that friendship doesn't exist. As long as everything's alright it does, when they're not it doesn't. I don't bother anymore, don't think we need 'em. No one has friends but they pretend they do.

Q: So you don't think friends exist?

B: If I ever find it I'll let you know. And, if you do you let me know. You got any friends?

Q: Yes.

B: No you ain't, you think you have! You wouldn't tell me anyway if you hadn't. What is friendship then?

Q: That's what I'm trying to find out.

B: How d'you know you got them then? If you don't know what it is you don't know if you have 'em. You're wasting your time anyway, 'cause people'll only say what they think it is and it doesn't exist. It's like that other load of old....Love, that don't exist either.

Q: What does your wife feel about that?

B: She agrees! Just 'cause you don't believe in love don't mean you can't get on. I'll let you know about that if it happens to me as well.

Q: Can you tell me anything else about friendship?

B: Nope, nothing to tell. You come back when you've got all your info., and I'll talk about that with you. But, I can't tell you about my experiences when they don't exist, can I?

Q: So for you it doesn't exist?

B: It doesn't exist for anybody, not just me.

Q: But you can't speak for everybody.

B: 'Course I can...anybody who thinks he's got a friend's a wooden-top....it don't exist.

Interrupted at this point. Brian later said that he had said all he could about the subject.

JACKIE, divorced, 738

- Q: Could you bring to mind a particular friend?
- J: Yes.
- Q: First of all would you consider this a close friendship?
- J: Yeah.
- Q: What do you mean by close friendship?
- J: Er - well it's more than just seeing her everyday....it's at a level of talking. erm..yeah...(mumbled sentence) We know where each others life is up to now...we don't need an introduction to talk about it.
- Q: How long has this friendship existed?
- J: Erm...it's been closer about the last 12 years.
- Q: Is it necessary to see a lot of each other?
- J: No - no.
- Q: So that has nothing to do with the closeness - spending time together?
- J: I think it helps that we see each other a lot - but it wouldn't be necessary to the quality of the friendship...I don't think.
- Q: What about distance?
- J: Geographically?
- Q: Yes.
- J: Do you mean where she lives and where I live?
- Q: Well, let's say that...do you think if you lived any further away it would destroy the relationship?
- J: Not necessarily - because, I think, we'd still make the effort to see each other.
- Q: Do you feel that you enjoy a special kind of language with each other?
- J: Yeah - very much so.

Q: Can you describe it?

J: Erm, she can anticipate...I can say something and I know she's gonna find it funny - and I haven't necessarily got to complete what I'm saying...because I know she'll pick up on that - and the same goes between her and I. Very often it...it's not a word that needs to be said, it's just a look (mumbled sentence, unclear).

Q: Is there anything you wouldn't talk about?

J: I think the thing I talk least to her about is politics.

Q: But you would?

J: Oh yes....it's not a taboo subject - no.

Q: So can I assume you share secrets?

J: Mmmm.....

Q: Would you tell this friends something about you that could be personally damaging?

J: Oh, she knows a lot about me that could be damaging...

Q: Is there other people you'd share this with?

J: Erm...possibly...

Q: What I'm trying to find out...is...what singles this out as a special relationship as opposed to others?

J: I think it's a very unconditional relationship. Erm...I've not got to be nice on the occasion(?), I've not got to talk about nice things...erm...and...she doesn't expect me to be a certain way. I think it works on a lot of levels.

Q: Do you touch a lot.

J: She touches me more than I touch her.

Q: Is that because she is a toucher?

J: Erm...yeah...yeah.

Q: Does this bother you?

J: No, it doesn't worry me in the slightest...I wish I could be more like that.

Q: How would you define friendship?

J: (long pause) Erm...what do you mean how I'd define it?

Q: Well assume I'm an alien and ask you what is meant by friendship?

J: Erm...well it's trust (mumble) and basically being tuned into each otherit's difficult to say.... (long pause).

Q: Do you categorise friendship?

J: Yes.

Q: In what respect?

J: Mm....well some people I can talk to about some subjects.... other people I can talk to about other subjects. But there are very very few people I can talk to about anything...and that's what puts it apart from other relationships.

Q: I see. Does the term mate and pal mean anything to you.

J: (pause) Just a friend.

Q: Would it be any special kind of friend?

J: I don't think they...er...the only thing...er, the word mate... er...I've been conditioned by my mum and dad that it's a...work mate...he used to call people mate...never their name. He just called him my mate and therefore they'd be quite friendly...erm no pal is nice, I feel, a man's friendship.....

Q: How would you feel you could betray this friend?

J: If I told somebody...something about her which I knew she was very sensitive about and if you like she trusted me with that information...it would expose her vulnerable (sic) side to me and I had used that to get some sort of quidos for myself...that would be betrayal to me.

Q: What about reversing the situation?

- J: I think if she did the same - mm.
- Q: Is this someone you could go to whatever the time - day or night?
- J: Yeah - yeah.
- Q: Is it something you've ever done?
- J: Erm - never in the middle of the night, but I have contacted her at times when really....I've been quite desperate and I know that she will make time.
- Q: Do you feel you could ask for money from this person?
- J:I could do...
- Q: Your tone implies you wouldn't?
- J: I wouldn't do but that's because I feel awkward about it or embarrassed...it's just personal...I wouldn't do it because I've never ever needed to....but it wouldn't embarrass me....
- Q: Would this feeling apply to her in this context?
- J: Erm....I hope so...er...I think so.
- Q: What about this person's other friends, would you consider them friends of yours?
- J: Er...Jean's more of an acquaintance than a friend.
- Q: What difference is there between acquaintance and friend?
- J: Jean and I talk on a very different level....I don't feel that I can trust her...the conversation is...er...very superficial and whatever sort of depth we get into we tend to that depth we tend to generalise....
- Q: You know of her through this friend of yours?
- J: I know a lot about her from...
- Q: But did you know her before?
- J: Only ...only in passing.
- Q: What about other friends...do you share any mutual friends?

- J: Erm....(long pause)...not share...apart from people at work... and I'd not call them friends - no...we share acquaintances rather than friends.
- Q: Back to time....If there was a protracted time when you didn't contact...would it affect the relationship?
- J: Erm...I feel eventually - yes....obviously if you're along time apart ...(pause) without the day to day chatter you wouldn't really know where their life had been up to - but I don't think it'd take very long to get back...the innateness of the relationship would survive.
- Q: You also said, if I paraphrase...you don't have to try to be superficial together?
- J: That's right.
- Q: Are you implying then that you could be emotional or angry?
- J: You mean towards each other or about something?
- Q: Either.
- J: Oh, yeah.
- Q: Is it something you control with others?
- J: Yeah - more so yeah.
- Q: How do you mean...more so?
- J: Language is usually empty...
- Q: Is there then a greater freedom of language in this relationship?
- J: Yeah.
- Q: And a lot doesn't need to be said.
- J: That's right.
- Q: So it's more than just speech?
- J: Erm....yes...it is more.
- Q: What separates a close/special friendship from an ordinary one?
- J: (long pause) erm...I think maybe the confidence that you feel in the relationship...that..erm...confidence and trust really.

BecauseI trust her...erm and therefore I can be very
very vulnerable with her...without feeling that that's gonna
be used or misinterpreted or...her approval of me would be less...
I think I can differentiate that from other friendships which
would be...er...more conditional.

Q: What do you get out of it? Personally?

J: Er....a lot of warmth...erm....a lot of feedback about myself
as well...and...and...a hell of a lot of laughs.

END

Same-sex friend: JEAN 35 years in network BJ

- Q: Have you got a close friend?
- J: Yes.
- Q: Why do you consider this person close?
- J: (pause 30 secs) Because....she knows everything about me... so there's no...pretending to be in any situation 'cos she can see through it...so it's close in a physical sense...erm...and because I feel I can trust her in any situation as well. I think sometimes...that you...you have friends on different levels ...like at work that wouldn't normally be good friends in a social sense. (5 secs)but this one...fitsevery occasion...(10 secs) She's tailor made really....(laughs).
- Q: And how long would you consider it has been a close friendship?
- J: (10 secs) Wooo...(sigh) (10 secs).....oooo...dear! 'Cos it's been a friendship that's gone on for a long time...but...say... close.....
- Q: How long has it been a friendship then?
- J: Well...the friendship has been...(counts...10 secs)....about twnety-four years...(5 secs)...firendship..but only close...erm.. I would say (5 secs)...erm ...(15 secs) about sixteen years.
- Q: Can you remember it actually becoming close?
- J: (10 secs) well it didn't sort of happen over one...situation... erm..it happened when we both starting working in the same... environment...where we were seeing more of each other...and it sort of effused...over a period.
- Q: So you couldn't say that there was one event that....?
- J: No.
- Q: But it grew close?

J: I'm not really a one event person though...I don't ...put a lot of significance on one event.

Q: So how did the friendship start...originally...?

J: At school...(15 secs)...

Q: Did it just sort of fall together or...?

J: No...because it was part of a group...erm..and I initially became more friendly with another person in the group. (5 secs) and in fact the friendship that we had then was quite on a surface level...(3 secs)...because..erm...it was a bit awkward at first because the girl that I became more friendly with ...(2 secs)... was this other close friend's best-friend...but they'd had an argument...they'd fell out...(6 secs)...and I sort of came into the group through this third person. So...it wasn't a very realistic friendship...we were just part of the same group.

Q: How long was it superficial then?

J: Oh...I would say it was probably a superficial friendship for about...(3 secs)...four...four years. (5 secs)

Q: So you couldn't really say that there was anything that really attracted you to this person?

J: Do you mean over them four years or when we first became....

Q: When you first became friends.

J: Yeah....there was something that attracted me because we had similar outlooks...similar views about things, similar likes, similar interests....you know...which I think is how most friendships start. You enjoy doing the same things, same sense of humour...(3 secs)...

Q: Is that the same today?

J: Yeah.

Q: To a greater or lesser extent?

- J: Greater....(4 secs)
- Q: Do you tend to like the same people?
- J: Mmmmmyeah...(5secs)...you know who I'm talking about...
(laughs)...it's terrible...(laughs)...Is it okay to laugh on
that tape?
- Q: Don't worry about it...Is this person a part of your network?
In other words do you share friends?
- J: Yeah...yeah...(3 secs)...I mean she has friends through me...
superficial friends...and I have friends through her...that we
wouldn't normally have if we were just individuals and...er..
didn't share our friendship.
- Q: It's interesting about superficial friends...what is the difference?
How do you categorise?
- J: Well I think that with a superficial friend there's usually at
least one common bond...(3 secs)...it can be your work, it can
be your social life....I don't think...sometimes...like if you've
got friends at work then it can go into your social life...burrit's
not a proper friendship...they're not people you would call upon
....erm...if you were in...any need...(3 secs)...You know, you
keep it at a superficial level it doesn't tend to go any deeper
than that....(7 secs).
- Q: How many superficial friends would you say you had? At a rough
estimate?
- J: (4 secs)...I've got lots...I'm a very superficial person....
- Q: Lots?
- J: Lots...yes...lots and lots.
- Q: Well, how many close friends?
- J: Do you mean close superficial friends?
- Q: No...close friends.

- J: Oh, I've only got one close friend.
- Q: Only one close?
- J: Only one that fills...you know...that...er....covers everything..
- Q: What's a close superficial friend?
- J: Well I've got some close superficial friends...yeah...(laughs).
- Q: How many?
- J: (laughs) Why did you find that funny? I think it's quite normal.
- Q: Let me recap...you've got superficial friends, close superficial friends (echoed) and a close friend?
- J: Yeah...I see friendship like a circle with me in the middle and like (illustrates with air-diagram) there's me close friend.... her line is closer and the lines go out and out.
- Q: So what is special about the close-superficial-friend?
- J: Well...they're the ones that know more about me...as a person....
- Q: And you've revealed that...?
- J: Yeah.
- Q:or have they come to know it?
- J: No...I've revealed it...
- Q: And you wouldn't do that to a superficial friend?
- J: No.
- Q: Is there anyone else in that circle that is neither close, close-superficial or superficial friend?
- J: (7 secs)...well..there are people I have to put up with.... because they are part of the ...family group...or..(6 secs).
- Q: Would you at any time call them friends?
- J: (3 secs)...yeah...yeah...yes I would (laughs)..I'm sorry...
- Q: Why would they be friends?

J: It's just a word that covers.....

Q: A word that covers people you know...? It locates them...?

J: Yeah.

Q: So would you qualify the term? How would you describe this person...as a close...?

J: A very good friend.

Q: Do you touch a lot?

J: No.

Q: NO?

J: No...we've talked about this before....

Q: Well..knowing this person...she is a toucher...

J: Really?

Q: With lots of people...it's something you didn't notice?

J: No.

Q: So you wouldn't feel offended if you were touched?

J: No.

Q: I get the impression that you confide....

J: Hang on...when you say...I mean consider...hand on arm...yeah
I suppose that is touching.

Q: Yes...I didn't mean anything threatening....

J: No...no...but warr I mean...when you say touching I...sort of
mean very close things by touching, like arm around...you know...
linking together...but yeah...if they touch it does mean that.

Q: Just to labour this a bit...you wouldn't feel offended by this
person...would it bother you if a superficial friend...?

J: Extremely...I can't stand people!

Q: So you notice that?

J: Yeah....yeah...

Q: Fine...confiding...is it reciprocated? ...You both confide
in each other?

- J: Mmmmm....
- Q: Is there anything you wouldn't tell her?
- J: No.
- Q: Nothing at all?
- J: No.
- Q: Even if it is personally damaging, you wouldn't mind her knowing?
- J: No...yeah.
- Q: Is it purely trust?
- J: Mmmmm..and because it also helps me to think things through because she..er..helps me to see the situation much more clearly. (3 secs) So, it's like a therapy for me as well to talk things through.
- Q: How then could this person betray you?
- J: (5 secs) Well, I don't just see betrayal as telling...other people your secrets. I think betrayal can be far more hurting ...but probably far more subtle.
- Q: In what way?
- J: Erm...(20 secs)...well. I think if you're friends with someone you're always aware of the other person, and...erm..it's almost like a psychic thing, you don't have to be sitting watching 'em all the time... you know)...you're sort of aware where they're at. What...what they're doing...perhaps in a social situation. Now I don't mean to climb the ladder, I don't mean like that..I mean if they wanted to show off to somebody else and use you.. to put you down and to make them look good. That, to me, is... erm...the worst, one of the worst kinds of betrayal.
- Q: Knowing this person, how do you feel you could betray them?

J: (10 secs) Well, I think similar...what I've just said. Erm...
(10 secs).....also if I...if that person was being discussed
by somebody else...and I just sat back. I mean if they were
being discussed in a very negative and horrible way and I just
sat back and said nothing because I was...or perhaps the third
person is intimidated by...'cause somebody else is there. I
think that's betrayal as well, you know?...it's like...no matter
who's present you should...not let them be slagged off by.....
whoever..know what I mean? It's not too clear....

Q: Is time important?....that you spend it together, or is it
unimportant?

J: No, I don't think that's relevant.

Q: But it would be with a superficial friend?

J: Oh yeah, very much so.

Q: So you could spend a year apart and it would not interfere with
the relationship?

J: No, I don't think so,....not with a close friend.

Q: So you feel that whatever crisis you had, you could take it to
this person and be sure of their support?...without having to ask?

J: Yeah....

Q: And you feel they could with you?

J: Yeah...well, that to me is a true definition of a friend.
....That in any situation at all...you can rely on them and can
trust them and the loyalty's there.

Q: You sound confident....has it happened?

J: Yeah.

Q: And did it tend to bring you closer together or.....

J: Well, at first...I know from my part it makes me feel warmer
and closer...perhaps it's a nuisance to them.....but still...
(inaudible).

Q: Can you elaborate on what friendship is about for you....
not the superficiality....?

J: (10 secs) NO...'cause I think that just sticks out in my
mind above everything else...that in any situation....irregardless
of inconvenience, time, anything....you...you know that you can
depend on and trust them.

Q: What do you think other people think about your relationship?

J: (8 secs) I think other people...have a good idea about how
close it is....I think some people are perhaps irritated by it.

Q: Like who?

J: Well, no specific person but I know when sometimes we get
together and get very....reminiscent and giggly...I'm quite
aware of how it irritatesother members of the group, 'cause
I would probably be irritated on the outside. It sort of cuts
other people out.

Q: Other people have said that it is a bit like a love relationship.
Would you agree?

J: Nobody's said that.

Q: No, other's have said this in the past.....

J: Oh, with friendship?

Q: Yes.

J: (6 secs) Erm....no because I don't ...I think of love in a
romantic....well, within...adult, in a romantic....(tape change).

Q: If it's not love, is it a kind of affection?

J: Mmmmmmm.....

Q: If she was hurt would you be hurt?

J: Well, shall I quote you an example? A very recent one from
Monday night...you know?...when we went out and after the
performances on Friday and again on Monday (referring to a work

problem) I mean, I could see she was very much affected by that. So in a way that affects me. I seem to pick up on her moods...now sometimes we can...erm...laugh it off and everything's alright...but that...I sensed that she couldn't really...couldn't laugh that off...you know?. You can talk about other things, but...and I went home and had the most terrible night's sleep...I went to bed, which is a daft thing to do, I went to bed before I was tired...when you go to bed before you're lying awake, thinking and you think about what's just happened and yer mind goes round. And, so I'm thinking about it before I went to sleep and feeling that awful, you know?...how she must have felt, and then I had the most awful night's sleep that was disturbed with fragmented dreams about all those people and her...And I woke up with a flipping headache feeling absolutely shattered as if I'd had no sleep at all...and I know it was because....of that.

Q: And is that reciprocated? Can you share each other's joy?

J: Mmmm....yeah.

Q: In the same way?

J: Yes ...'cause it can have a very lifting effect on me.

Q: What about the past....obviously you were friends before you were both married...?

J: Yeah.

Q:has there ever been problems in terms of your other relationships?

J: What d'you mean, with men?

Q: Yes.

J: Oh, yeah...I think that's the norm in any friendship....'cause it takes things onto a different level, dunt it?....I mean, when we first...erm...no that weren't first, but...when we came more

close and started going out more together and then o' course a man comes along...on the scene with either one...you're torn between your loyalties...then, really. So, yeah...that does come into it.

Q: Okay...putting you on the spot...after all this time, which is the most important loyalty....Obviously you've known this person longer than your husband...if you had to make a choice, who are you most loyal to?

J: (10 secs) Why do you ask such an unfair question?I mean that is a question that perhaps some people can answer....am I expected to answer them?

Q: Not if you can't.

J: Well...ask the question again...who would I be most....to....

Q: If you had to make a choice.

J: (15 secs) I don't know....that's really difficult....the funny thing is, you see, I'm expected to be loyal to Dave 'cause I'm his wife....I'm not....that....society expects that....society doesn't really expect me to be loyal to her just because she's my friend. But I personally feel that....that loyalty should be much stronger simply because...er...not because it's such an important part of...the friendship that it just...is.

Q: An interesting point...! In that kind of relationship....like marriage there are a lot of external expectations...you said that basically there are none in friendship....so how have you learned about it?

J: (6 secs) I think you put your own standards on it...how you would expect people to behave...and be with you.

Q: You're a self-confessed romantic...do you have a romantic view about friendship?

- J: (5 secs) Do you mean romantic in the sense that it's all got to be wonderful and perfect?
- Q: Well...a bit how you imagine people to think about love.
- J: (5 secserm....no.
- Q: Your inner thoughts on friendship are fulfilled in reality then?
- J: Yes...I think so.
- Q: Could you have more than one close friend?
- J: Oh...I think it's possible.
- Q: But you haven't?
- J: No.
- Q: Would you want one?
- J: I don't feel a need for one...because I have these close superficial friends (laughs).
- Q: Do you think it's possible to have a close friend with a member of the opposite sex?
- J: For me? No...don't think so. I'm sur...I know it isn't....I envy people who do...but..because I don't really understand men very well because the only men I've known have been...like my dad and my husband...known closely...'cause I've never had any brothers. I only went to an all girls school, I don't really work with men...a great deal...you know?not in a close working relationship...so it would be very difficult for me to have a man as a friend...I mean meet 'em....
- Q: Is it because you don't understand them?
- J: I think it's...I think there's a few reasons why. I think it's difficult to get a close friendship with a man because of the way men are. It's like...erm...men are not as happy to talk about things at a deep level as women are...so that..doesn't erm.... like with...with close superficial friends you can still talk

about things at quite a deep level. Erm...but men are more reticent. Also, because I'm married to somebody who would not be happy...in that situation...he'd be jealous...(4 secs)but I don't care about...it would bother me what other people think.

Q: If you knew that this close friend's partner was having an affair how would you handle that?

J: If I knew he was having an affair?

Q: Yes.

J: (16 secs) That depends on a lot of things...I cannot give you a set answer to that. It depends on if it was a flirtation, a fling...it depends if I was very very sure or if I accepted... I wouldn't say anything unless I was absolutely sure and other people were also talking and knew and this person didn't know.

Q: If your close friend knew for a fact that your partner was having an affair would you expect her to tell you?

J: Erm...well let's just say I wouldn't be devastated if she didn't tell me...'cause I'd understand the reasons why.

Q: Is this a kind of protection?

J: Who for...?for me?

Q: Not necessarily...let's say you have the information...would you feel the need to protect your friend from that knowledge?

J: Well, in some ways, but I'm also a great believer in a lot of what you don't know doesn't always hurt you. So, I'm putting my own standards on it you see?....maybe their standards would.... would be different and they wouldn't think like that....Burr I would still go along with what I feel.

Q: You obviously know shared people, mixing in the same circles...is there an obligation to like each other's friends?

J: (6 secs) Yeah...I think you feel some obligation.

Q: Would there be any offense if either of you....

J: No...no..no, but I think that you make that extra effort that you wouldn't normally do, 'cause obviously if they see some good things in 'em...you also look for that.

Q: So....you invest in each other's judgement, as well?

J: Very much so.

Q: Can you tell me in your own words what friendship is?

J: (3 secs) Well, I've said this about three times haven't I?

(10 secs) Well I think it's somebody who's loyal...to you, that you can trust in any situation...and who you know will not say no...unless it's a matter of life or death...(8 secs). I can'tI'm hopeless at this...you're asking me to be concise...I cannot be concise...(laughs). It's not a lot of help for you really is it?

Q: It's fine. Let's put it this way: What do you get out of it?

J: What do I get out of it? (5 secs)...(clears throat)...(5 secs)... I think you get out of it a lot of closeness..it's like a feeling of not being alone. I suppose it's a bit like having a twin, you know?...that you're just not alone...no matter what.

Q: Do you have a private language?

J: No, not a private language...I mean there are certain words... that both of us understand the whole situation behind..so that can trigger off...a response in us that other people wouldn't understand.

Q: Would you say that this had developed over time?

J: Yeah.

Q: Do you ever use it to exclude other people?

J: Mmmmm.

Q: Deliberately?

J: Yeah...deliberately.

Q: Do you plan it?

J: No...(20 secs)...that telepathy was there quite early on though.... because even before we were close friends...we would go out and buy similar things or send people the same card...you know? So I think it's a good basis for friendship really...that you are very similar.

Q: How similar would you say you are?

J: I think we're very different...in personality.

Q: Very different? But you've been talking about.....

J: Being similar..yeah, I know...how can I qualify that...erm...I think we have different personalities but we've similar views about life...morals...other people...similar views on things but different personalities.

Q: How different are you then?

J: Oh, very different...she's a much nicer person than me (laughs).

Q: That could be part of your loyalty!

J: No...I really mean it. I mean she's ...erm...(5 secs)...I think she's much nicer about people...I tend to make snap judgements and can be horrible for just sheer amusement...she would never do that really. She's much kinder, she thinks more about other people.

Q: Does that bother her..? How you are?

J: No...I think that basically she knows that I'm not mean and horrible...that it is very superficial and when it really matters I'm not like that at all.

Q: Are your close superficial friends as understanding?

J: (3 secs) They are understanding but I temper it...I must admit.

Q: Have you ever fallen out?

J: Who with?

Q: This particular friend?

J: Erm...(4 secs)...no..no I don't think we have...no.

Q: So if either of you are bothered about something in either of you you 'd just say it?

J: If anythings bothering?sometimes yes...I think sometimes there are ways of making people aware that things are bugging you without it actually coming out and because they are quite perceptive they pick up on that without the harsh spoken word being said.

Q: Someone once said that friendship is not having to be tactful....

J: No..I don't agree with that. I think tact comes into every walk of life...I think that's an excuse for being cruel sometimes.

Q: I would take it to mean that you don't have to go through the efforts of talking superficially.....

J: Oh no...no you don't, no you don't. I mean, are you saying if that person had B.O. that I would say...'Oh my God you stink'?

Q: No I'm not saying that...I mean in a more, let's say, civil way... you would feel free to chastise this person if they had done something that you considered particularly stupid.

J: Yeah....in that situation...yeah...but not personal comment... about appearance.

Q: You mentioned that the telepathy was there from the start.....

J: Yeah...it was...I think we were probably close from the start.... looking back on it...it's sort of instinctive...you know how they will be, if you know what I mean.

Q: So would you say you had a constant closeness?

J: A constant closeness?

- Q: Well, does it, or has it, been less intense..or..
- J: No...since we became close...it has been constant.
- Q: It doesn't fluctuate?
- J: No...no it doesn't.

Tape ran out and Jean said that she had to go anyway.

BRENDA : TALKING ABOUT JEAN

Brenda is a thirty-five year old, Nursing Officer. Divorced, but co-habiting, and has one teenage child. The interview took place four months after Jean's.

Q: Would you consider Jean to be a close friend?

B: Yes.

Q: What makes it close?

B: Erm...it's very difficult to say once you ask...I think the thing that makes it close is for one thing we've been friends a long time...a very long time. But more important than that is I think that I could...I know I can trust Jean...not just with confidences, because I've trusted other people with confidences, but I know that she would never never do anything that could slightly be interpreted to be against me.

Q: How long have you been close friends?

B: This close? Just the last few years...it sort of got closer as we got older really.

Q: So you started off as friends?

B: Yes...erm...well it goes back a long time, really...it's gone through a lot of stages...

Q: Well how long does it go back?

B: About ...erm..about 24 years...I think, something like that.

Q: How many of those years have you been close?

B: To some degree..well..about..I think..about 16 years we've probably been quite close.

Q: Do you know what made it close?

B: Well..yeah..it was getting closer, really....because we were thrown together with going to Winwick (hospital)to work, and

then we started going out with each other, exclusively. Before that we really...although we were friends we had other friends...who we were going out with. But when we both went to Winwick...we started going out with each other more or less all the time. And that's when we started to get closer, 'cause we lost touch with other friends who we'd had at school.

Q: Do you think that it's important that you meet regularly?

B: Mmmmm.

Q: Would the relationship deteriorate if you didn't?

B: No I don't think it would really. I think the time that we spend with each other has become more important the older we've got...'cause, we tend to want to...see each other to tell each other things that we probably wouldn't be able to share with other people.

Q: So there's nothing you would not tell this person?

B: Probably not...no.

Q: If you knew for a fact that Jean's husband was having an affair... would you tell her?

B: Yes, I think I would do.

Q: And if she knew your partner was having an affair...would you expect her to tell you?

B: Yes...I would like her to, but it's not as easy as that when faced with it.

Q: How do you think this person could betray you?

B: How could she betray me? Probably being indiscreet about something that..that I'd told her...that could be damaging to me.

Q: How do you feel you could betray her?

B: Probably the same way.

- Q: Would you say it's a relationship based on affection?
- B: Depends what you mean by affection?
- Q: Say 'love' for instance.
- B: (10 secs) I suppose in a way I do love her.
- Q: What else do you get out of it?
- B: Well...(5 secs)...I identify quite a lot with her...I feel we have a lot in common and...we're never short of anything to say. We can share things at all sorts of levels and erm... we can usually..I enjoy the time I spend with her.
- Q: Do you have a shorthand way of speaking?
- B: Oh yeah...I mean, you can say something...I'll say something to her or she'll say something to me and we know exactly what we mean and we might laugh about it.....and somebody else... we often have that situation when Lesley comes along...that we can talk about something and she's quite excluded from it.
- Q: Would you use this code deliberately to exclude others?
- B: No...no...we've never usually done...no I can't say I've ever been in that situation. Ohoccasionally yes...I suppose... yes we have done. If her Mum's been there, or the children and she's trying to tell me something that she doesn't want the children to understand, she will tell me in a certain way.... cryptic way...and I'll know what she's talking about. Yes, so there are times when I do that.
- Q: But by and large the exclusion is unintentional?
- B: Yeah...yeah.
- Q: Has it taken time to develop....or have you always had it?
- B: No..no we've not always had that...in fact really from.... I wasn't that close to her when I met her...she wasn't really my type of person. She was always very abrupt and erm...well not

a very giving person. You would take her as being cold...which is the way I took her. But, I think over the years that I've got to know Jean hides all that...and doesn't really show or say much but I know she feels quite a lot.

Q: Would you consider that you are not similar?

B: (5 secs) No...in a lot of ways we're very different...but in a lot of ways we're very much the same. Certain emotionally we're very different...although..no, I would display emotions quite different. Erm....but I think we are both quite emotional people....so in that way we're alike.

Q: What about values and attitudes?

B: Oh yes, I think we're very alike as far as that's concerned.

Q: Would it matter if you weren't?

B: Well, it depends to what degree...I think if we were totally different....and we...everything was different...I think it could become a strain there. But, I mean there are certain values, maybe, that...and attitudes...that we don't share, but the majority we do. So, it doesn't become a problem.

Q: You say you always have a lot to talk about?

B: Mmmmm.

Q: Is that usually deep or superficial?

B: Oh it can...it goes through the spectrum...depending on what's happened to either of us. Sometimes it can just be about work, sometimes it can be just about the hassles of what you've done that week, and sometimes it can be something quite personal and revealing. So it covers everything.

Q: With this person in mind could you define freindship?

B: (10 secs) I find it difficult...but with this person in mind I would say that there is a lot of affection between us, although

I don't mean that in an outward display...but just in the constancy and trust of the relationship. And, I think we're both recognised from other people around and we have a very strong bond...that we're not the sort of person...that neither.. nobody would say anything..detremental about either of us in front of the other one. Because, that's...I think we're recognised and that is just not because neither of us would do the same....but I've not had that with some other people...with some other relationships. So, I think it's constant and solid and trusting.

Q: Do you categorise friendships?

B: Yes...not conciously but when you say do I categorise them I can see friends at different levels.

Q: What sort of term would you use? In your circle of friends where would Jean be?

B: Probably next to me, or just a bit at the side of me.

Q: Would you use a term for that?

B: Only 'close'.

Q: If you describe someone just as a friend, what would you take ' that to mean?

B: Just a friend? Really, just an acquaintance...or somebody you know a little more, maybe, than acquaintance. A friend is somebody, maybe, you would choose to spend time with rather than just having...with an acquaintance...I think that isn't something you seek out, that just happens...that you might spend time with people. I think, with a friend you might choose to spend time with them.

Q: How many close friends would you say you had?

B: (10 secs) I think I've got two or three...and all them are very different...and close in a very very different way...and Jean more...close than the others.

Q: And is that just because of time?

B: Yeah, yeah...and I think because Jean and I share far...when you talked about values and attitudes...we're the same age, we grew up together in the same era...we shared the same interests...we still share the same interests....which I don't with the other two friends. So, I've got far more in common with Jean that's seen us through...as I'm growing old.

Q: Would you consider that you consciously made friends with Jean?

B: Oh no...it wasn't a conscious act at all...no it just happened.

Q: When did you realise you were friends?

B: Well it depends at what level you mean friendship because I was not originally Jean's friend. I was someone else's friend and we fell out....and she brought Jean into our group...that's how we came to be friends...but it was because of that third party. So, I would have classed her as a friend....she wasn't a close friend like...but she was a friend in that I might go out with her...without anybody else...Normally it would all be in a gang...and I had another very best friend then, during the time I was at school...so she was only the sort of friend that I talked about before....a bit more than acquaintance....not a close friend.

Q: Would you say that Jean is a very best friend now?

B: Yeah.

Q: You didn't use that term before?

B: (5 secs) Well, I don't think of it in really....very best friends...and it sounds very childish...that...a very best friend. I'd prefer to say she's the closest friend I've got.

Q: Do you think your friendship was more intense when you were both single?

B: No...I think it's more intense now...which seems strange with so many more demands on our lives. But, I think we've settled down to a very nice friendship that we didn't have before.

Q: Do you think it's rare?

B: Yes, I do...because when I look...I mean it's difficult asking me that because I think I've been very fortunate. Well, maybe not just fortunate...but I put quite a lot into friends anyway...but then when I look round at other people and see that they don't have...the friends I've got I do realise it is rare. I see people at work...who while I've worked with them..have had like...the friend of the month...sort of thing, and they've gone in and out which I would have classed as just maybe acquaintances...social friends, and they claim them as friends. And I feel that in comparison to other people...it must be quite rare 'cause there's not many other people like me.

Q: Would it matter if you were separated in terms of distance?

B: No...not at this point now...no. I mean other than I would miss seeing her...I think that it would matter in that it would have an impact...I don't think it would ever, ever...I mean if she went to the other side of the world, obviously there'd be difficulties about seeing each other, but we'd never ever lose contact. There'd always be that closeness there...I think so anyway.

Q: You mention affection, trust, loyalty.....

B: Oh yes...it's trust and loyalty...understanding. She's always willing to listen to me and try to understand my situation. I've always got a ready ear.

Q: You've already implied that there's an automatic understanding...

B: Of what?

Q: Of each other....

B: Yeah, yeah....but she'll always give the time to listen.

Q: Is there an instinctive quality in it?

B: ~~Mmm~~..there must be something instinctive in it, but when I think of Jean it's nothing that's been instinctive from the start...but now it is very instinctive. I mean, you're asking me about it and I don't think about it...I suppose in some ways you take it for granted 'til you're asked to stop and think about it.

BRENDA TALKING ABOUT JACKIE

Q: Would you consider Jackie a close friend?

B: Yes.

Q: But not as close as Jean?

B: (5 secs) If you'd have asked me a few years ago...quite a few years ago...I probably would have said Jackie....but now I wouldn't because I don't feel I can trust Jackie as much as I can Jean. I trust Jackie not to...(6 secs)...I don't feel I get total support from Jackie other than...she's very good in a crisis, Jackie. I find her extremely good in a crisis but I find it difficult to share my highs and my good times with Jackie.

Q: But you can with Jean?

B: Yeah...I can share most things with Jean.

Q: And vice versa?

B: Oh yes...yeah.

Q: But not with Jackie?

B: No...I mean it's complicated with Jackie by the fact that we work together...although had we not worked together I don't know that we'd be friends.

Q: Do you have that same kind of shorthand with Jackie?

B: Oh yeah...yeah..mine and Jackie's friendship was really based on a sharing of the same sense of humour. That's what brought us quite close together.

Q: Do you and Jean have the same sense of humour?

B: (4 secs) Yes, yeah...but...Jackie has the ability to make me laugh at her...the way she says things and what she says...she is the comic; and ...whereas Jean and I laugh....usually together at things...Jean doesn't particularly say things that would make

me laugh. Although she can describe situations that make me laugh...but I find Jackie quite humourous.

Q: So you would say Jackie is close in terms of being a supportive friend?

B: Yeah...yeah.

Q: Whereas with Jean it's more or less everything?

B: Yeah...I find it difficult...there's certain areas...and I suppose it's difficult now with me with this job 'cause Jackie and I's relationship is going through yet another stage of adjustment....to me actually being her boss at work...and trying to er...tie that in with everything she knows about me...is not easy...and I suppose both of us find it...it's not as bad as I anticipated...but it isn't easy. So it is difficult asking me about Jackie at this moment in time, really.

Q: But you're also Jean's boss?

B: Yes, but I don't work in close proximity to Jean...in fact I don't work with Jean at all...never come into contact with her...so it's not complicated.

Q: If you did...would it place the same stress...

B: Oh yeah...definatly...yeah I think it would be impossible...and she recognises that as well. Yes it would be most unhealthy.

Q: So what else is different...between Jean and Jackie? She's very supportive in a crisis...but you feel you couldn't trust her as much?

B: Yeah.

Q: What about loyalty then?

B: Well, with Jean I would say that she was 100% loyalty...with Jackie I would say about 95%.

Q: So, she'd be slightly more distant?

- B: Yes, very slightly though...you know it doesn't make a huge gap, but it does make a difference this...a bit of a difference... about how much you can implicitly trust her.
- Q: Would you say that time and distance make a difference in this relationship?
- B: I think it could do because we have gone through times when I first got this job...that's been very much a work-friendship and I didn't see as much of her when we didn't work together.... I mean, I would make a point of maybe once a month...we'd go for lunch at Winwick together. So, we wasn't actually seeing each other everyday...and we came closer when she came into the community (a hospital department) and I was on me own and she was on her own, and we started to actually go out together.
- Q: How long have you been friends?
- B: I would say about...eleven years.
- Q: And how long has it been close?
- B: Erm...I would think quite close about...past...seven...seven or eight years.
- Q: And, again, could you recognise any significant event that occasioned this?
- B: Yes...yes I do really. I had...certainly she was around at the time me marriage breaking up. I was working with her then, so that was very significant...'cause she did give me a lot of support...through that, but that was tinged with, I think.... I've got sort of a lot of conflicts about Jackie because even thinking back to it now...erm...she was sort of encouraging Sean to go out with her husband...and then she was having a relationship with somebody else and it was me who was left at home. So, I wonder whether there's always another motive...this is like the

not...the not complete trust...so yeah...and I did turn to her in other crises as well and she gave me support in that.

Q: So, with both your friends..there is this element of someone you could ring whatever the time of day or night? Would you endorse that?

B: Yeah.

Q: Have you done that?

B: Yes.

Q: Could you borrow money without feeling embarrassed?

B: (5 secs) Yeah...I think I could.

Q: Have you?

B: (6 secs) Yes, I meanno substantial amount. I mean, I am able to say to Jean, 'God, I've got no money can you lend me a fiver for tonight?'....and with Jackie I've been able, but I mean Jackie's in more or less the same position as me....I don't usually borrow off her but, I could do, I mean...simple things at work, we're always 'lend us a quid, lend us a quid', we're always doing that type of thing...yeah.

Q: Would you reveal the same amount of confidences?

B: (10 secs) Like I say, had you asked me a few years ago I might have even said I would reveal more confidences to Jackie than Jean, but, at this moment in time, no.

Q: So there are certain things you wouldn't tell her?

B: Mmmm...more so now.

Q: Are these things that you consider personally damaging?

B: (3 secs) Well, sometimes not even personally damaging. I feelthat I wouldn't want Jackie to know too much of any problems I had, not any problems I think more problems between me and my partner.

Q: Does that relate back to what you were saying before?

B: I'm not sure, I've not really thought about it. But...(10 secs)...mmmm, I feel that if I told Jean a problem I was having with my partner she wouldn't particularly feel it was very serious, or damaging, because she would recognise that's things all relationships go through. Whereas, if you told Jackie something like that...I feel that...it would be... she would dwell on the negative side of it and maybe tend to unsettle me more rather than saying oh...rather than agreeing with me then saying, oh you know?... 'that's the same, that's the way it always is'...you know?... So, we don't actually share the same thoughts or attitudes about things.

Q: So would you consider that you are more different to Jackie than you are to Jean?

B: Yes, definitely more different, a lot different in fact. Yes, I think I'm a lot different than Jackie.

Q: Could this person betray you in the same way that Jean could or would it be different?

B: No, I still see it as being pretty much the same.

Q: And yours of her?

B: Mmmm.

Q: Can I consolidate?...you are talking of two different types of closeness?

B: Mmmm...well, I think one's more close than the other.

Q: And they are close for different reasons?

B: Yeah, yeah....I sometimes think that Jackie and mine's closeness is passed...and it's built on a past thing..whereas I feel that Jean's...Jean and I are constant now, and although to some degree I will always be close to Jackie, I feel that Jackie does not reveal as much about herself to me as I do to her.

Whereas, with Jean and I it's an equal revelation and that makes it...safe. I feel Jackie's quite closed about things.

Q: If you put it on a simplistic level, if you had Jean...could you do without Jackie?

B: (3 secs) Oh...yeah.

Q: What about the other way round?

B: Well, it's...no...it would hurt me far more to loose Jean than it would to loose Jackie.

Q: Do you share friends?

B: (5 secs) No...oh, yeah...well, I don't 'cause you're getting into the area of, like, what is friend? Yeah, Jean and I have shared friends...Jackie...I'm not aware has another friend besides me.

Q: Do you feel an obligation to like their friends?

B: No...no...er...I've been in that situation.

Q: And you didn't feel an obligation?

B: No...none whatsoever...we don't really...I think Jean and I are like...both in the centre of each other's friendship circle if we overlap...and we are the core...and then everyone on the outside, when I say is not important...when I say that I mean that we don't have people who have got to come in with us. We are there and then we share time with other people...outside of us, really...to different levels, and that's how I see us both...we're both probably at the centre of each other's...that's us two (illustrates with air-diagramme) and then we both have different people in relation to us. We don't expec...and don't want to share... you know?....We don't want to share friends. (5 secs) I think it's quite healthy actually.

Q: Do you think female friendship is closer than male?

B: (6 secs) Well, not knowing very much about male friendship, only from my own experience of observing...yes, I don't sort of think that men..sit down very much and talk to each other about how they feel...like if they're feeling miserable or depressed or sad or guilty or ashamed or anything. I can't imagine men sitting down and saying that. When I've observed men out...it's usually in a gang or stood at a bar...you never actually see many men sitting down and having close intimate conversations like you can observe women doing...or it's quite rare...it's certainly not common.

Q: Would you think your definition of friendship is very close to the definition your friends would give?

B: (5 secs) erm...yeah...I would think certain things must be common...in all...all what you class 'close friendship'. Certainly, loyalty and trust and that's the fundamental.

Q: Where did you get your ideas of friendship from?

B: What ideas?

Q: About friendship...loyalty and trust?

B: I got this idea from experience...from having friends I discovered I couldn't trust and weren't loyal to you.

Q: But you expected them to be before that?

B: Yes, I suppose it comes from your family, really. They give you trust...loyalty...and you extend this to your friends.

END

AN OPPOSITE SEX FRIENDSHIP

BILL 36 years old; Officer in Charge of a charity home for the mentally disordered.

Q: Can you bring to mind a close or best friend?

B: Yes...does it have to be the same sex?

Q: Not necessarily, as long as you feel it is a close friend.

B: Okay. I'll tell you about Sally.

Q: Can you tell me how you came to be friends?

B: (pause of 38 secs) Well...it was a slow process, thinking back on it. I think neither of us thought we were friends, or even thought about it, at first...it was just sort of accepted. Maybe 'cos we were working in close proximity could have had something to do with it. I think that before we accepted that we were friends we both recognised that we had a similar humour. We both were working in an out-patients' clinic, that's how we met...but we had no working network. (pause 23 secs) What I mean by that is that the secretaries and receptionists were allies, the EEG technicians seemed to hang about with the psychologists but we nurses had nobody to hang about with, so we just seemed to become a subgroup. In with that she was enthusiastic about the job and asked for my help a lot. I can't say exactly when a friendship began but looking back I'd say that it was from the begining...but no one thing caused it.

Q: Did you meet socially during this time?

B: Well, the first social meeting was...wiat,...yes it was via work, patient dances and things. Our first personal social meeting, if that's what you mean, was about three years after we first met...lunch time drink and that.

Q: What do you mean by that?

B: Well, I say lunch-time drink but when I think about it we rarely met in a pub, it was usually in a cafe or restaurant for lunch. At about the same time the department grew...we got more nurses in and they started having 'outings' at night... to a pub or club, you know? Initially I'd either give Sally a lift or vice versa until the others decided that we went together. They assumed other things too but that was never an issue.

Q: Do you mean sex?

B: Yes....there were lots of hints and jokes about us but it was never an issue between us.

Q: Was it, sex, ever an issue at any time?

B: I've often talked to Sally about this and neither of us remember it being an issue. We talk most of the time at our meetings, usually at lunch time. It's always me and her, not partners and we talk about all sorts...work, philosophy of life, our aspirations and relationships. I can't think of anything we wouldn't talk about.

Q: How do you think the relationship is maintained?

B: I used to think it was proximity....you know with working together, but we haven't worked together for eight years and we're not less close. I think now(pause 34 secs).....well it's somebody you care about and it's reciprocated. If I had nowhere to go, to sleep for instance, I know I could always knock on her door, whatever the time. It's a type of affection, not sisterly (sic) or lovers...sex would infer incest...it's taboo. We both know that each other is promiscuous but we never discuss this privately. We joke about it when others are present...that's our private game. I think that we must, at sometime, we must have negotiated non-sex but I don't know, or can't remember how.

Q: Do you touch each other?

B: Well, I'm by nature a toucher...Sally doesn't like touching normally and avoids it, but she doesn't mind me touching her (pause 18 secs) At times she playfully pushes or links me... but again it's not sexual.

Q: How do your partners feel about your relationship?

B: Harry, Sally's husband, knows about our friendship. Sally wouldn't go out of her way to say 'I had lunch with Bill today' but she doesn't hide it either. I feel that I'm acceptable because I don't threaten Harry...he's very secure. I've been out with both of them and been to their house. When I lived with my wife, Jean, she knew Sally and I think it took a long time for her to come to terms with the fact that Sally was just a friend... she seemed to eventually accept it...after several meetings. I think, in some way, Jean was jealous of the relationship but I can't really say how, it was just a feeling. Perhaps there is a spontaneity with friendship because you probably don't see one another that much, so the relationship is more spontaneous than marriage. It's like wives see this as a secret mind you keep from them.....I can't say that I ever noticed similar reactions in Jean towards male friends, but I'm not as close to male friends.

Q: Was this relationship anything to do with the breakdown of your marriage?

B: (laughs) No, that was someone else...but Sally was the first to know...I told her.

Q: What was her reaction?

B: She was constant...didn't criticise.. In fact she declared that it wasn't anything to do with her. No....there was no criticism

and equally no sympathy. My separation didn't affect our relationship....she was very supportive in an adult critical manner. My situation didn't seem to threaten Harry, either.

Q: How does Sally fit into your circle of friends?

B: She's known to other friends but doesn't communicate with them. We've no shared friends, if that's what you mean....we have the same, or had the same, working acquaintances but that's broken down now...so neither of us is a part of the other's social network. Kate, the girl I live with, isn't a close friend of Sally's but they are friendly.

Q: What do you mean by closeness?

B: (pause 51 secs) That's difficult to define.

Q: Okay what do you mean by friend?

B: It's someone you go out of your way for a bit more than you would others (pause 15 secs) I can't understand why you initially do it. There are aspects of my friends I do not like... they annoy me and yet I still go out of my way. With acquaintances I would avoid the person if I was annoyed. Humour, intellect and interest all play a part but that isn't the answer. (pause 11 secs) You really sacrifice for friends. Perhaps, in that, closeness... (pause 23 secs)....I'm not sure how to phrase this....it's a mental thing...perhaps a measurement could be...there is no trivial conversation....you get into deep conversations without a lead in...there are no taboo areas and you can display emotion in closeness. You can confess that you feel like crying...this would be taboo normally...perhaps this is some measure of closeness, I'm not sure. (pause 15 secs) Predictability...that's a lot to do with it. We, me and Sally, are the world's worst at contacting each other, there are no recriminations and we both know this.

Sometimes we will have no contact for months and it's no impediment...we make time for each other and this is predictable. I know how she would react to situations and vice versa. This is important in closeness...the predictability is honesty. She wouldn't edge away from saying 'I think you're a fucking fool for doing that' and yet she says she has difficulty being honest. I also find it easy to compliment her without it being a sexual overtone. She can accept it in the same manner and reciprocates this. This is spontaneous and not planned.

Q: How is Sally related in closeness to others in your life?

B: (long pause 92 secs) That's hard to do...people fluctuate. At times she would be at the top but at others she wouldn't.... it fluctuates, but if there is such a thing as pure friendship she would be at the top. Then Kate, Dave, my two Kids, Jean and Eddie...but it's a thing that changes, it wouldn't always be in that order.

Q: What do you get out of friendship?

B: Enjoyment. pleasure. It's...er....security..knowing someone cares and also that there are times when you can let your guard down. (pause 24 secs) I've just thought something about closeness.. with Sally it sort of plateaued...reached a peak and levelled out and it could have had something to do with proximity, but I'd maintain that I'm as close to her as I would be to anybody. When you look at it like this...it's like...well, you realise that you expose yourself more, your fantasies...sex would cause you to betray secrets that could damage you. With Sally I can share aspects of any relationship without it being damaging. You can reveal part of yourself and feel safe doing it. You give parts of each other and put them on trust. You can't label these

or name them but they are there, whatever they are.....
instinctively you would never betray these. You're more
likely to stand by them....defend them against others and
yet you can criticise them yourself.

Q: What would you see as betrayal in this relationship?

B: I couldn't identify an act of betrayal (pause 17 secs) it
would be something relationshipwise...perhaps refusing time...
I can't say.

Q: When would you feel a betrayer?

B: Letting her down in some way...not giving time or refusing something.
It seems to be to do with time...if she rang me and needed to
talk, whatever the time, I would. If I didn't it would be
betrayal, and vice versa.

Q: How would you describe this relationship?

B: Well, it's unique, it's that relationship and it's opposite
sex. (pause 19 secs) Every relationship is unique really.

Q: How would you categorise these friendly relationships?

B: Well...sort of close friends, friends and acquaintances, now
these at times might be close, like at times you need them.
I wouldn't reveal much about myself to an acquaintance. Pals
and mates are in this group, but again they fluctuate. A lot
of this fluctuation occurs because of laziness of language and
how you are asked about a person. Mate, pal,....they're lazy
words used to locate people....they aren't friends..it's a way
of saying I know that person. Acquaintances can ask you how
you are via an introduction to talk...politeness, friends want
to know. I don't know how others would react to these labels...
some might say a pal is a friend...I wouldn't. The slang words
really inform another that you know someone. People also use

them to impress others like: 'I saw Professor X the other day' and someone will say 'Oh he's a mate of mine'. What is really meant is that they met once in a pub. It's a very difficult area to define...mates and that...they are superficial, friends are special but I can't say how. I think that you instinctively know who you want to be friends with and equally those you don't want to be friends with. People make overtures and you can manoeuvre it so that friendship can't happen. With others you open a door and offer loose invites by revealing where you'll be in terms of time. They then must take the initiative to enter.... but you can't say why you do this and likewise with those you shut the door with. It also causes instinctive consensus in group friends....you don't need to verbalise it.

Sally got close early on, we've known one another for twelve years and I'd say we were close from the very start....it's like closeness was there before friendship, we'd both admit this.... but it is difficult to locate these things because you never think about them. Friendship is something you just accept....a bit like love. I think I've said all I can now.

Q: Thanks...you've been very helpful.

END

S: That's different...it's a totally different relationship. I wouldn't like Bill to see my physical flaws....a lover or a husband is either blind to them or grows with them.

Q: Did the question of sex ever arise?

S: No...not that I remember. It did with others and that was a great deal of fun...others expected it and we played on that....winding them up and we'd laugh about that. But it was never an issue. That's what's safe about it really...he's not the type of man I'd fancy.

Q: Did you ever discuss the sex aspect?

S: No...it was something that never happened...we never needed to ...it's not important.

Q: What about your husband?...what does he think about it?

S: Not a lot...he's not the jealous type. I don't really talk about this because of how Len is...he'd try to make me feel guilty.

Q: How?

S: Well..you know?...He'd never make any accusation, but has a way of implying...'how would you feel if I was doing that but more?' ...know what I mean? It's difficult to explain and I'd rather not go into it.

Q: Okay...how do you think Joan (Bill's wife) felt about it?

S: Well, we only met about two or three times...we know each other, or know of each other, but didn't have a relationship. Bill told me that Joan had made comments, but not what comments. There wasn't really very much said about it. Bill didn't really like to reveal too much...either because of secrecy or protection. I don't think she was too bothered about us.

Q: What about Kate (Bill's lover)?

S: Well, she was a bit suspicious at first...I mean, 'who is this other woman that he keeps taking out?' She's okay now though....

perhaps because she's seen us together.

Q: Okay, how would you describe your relationship with Bill?

S: Totally undemanding.

Q: Is it close?

S: It's close when we're together...it's very comfortable. But it doesn't matter if we don't see each other for six months... time isn't important...we're not bothered...it sounds awful... but it's really free. That makes it special.

Q: How do you categorise friendship?

S: I don't know if I do. I don't have any more than three friends and I've had those for ten years or more.

Q: What makes this person a friend then?

S: That's hard to put into words...it's a feeling...non-demanding kind of relationship with lots of empathy...there's limited expectations...he accepts me for what I am.

Q: What do you get out of it?

S: What do I get out of it? (10 secs) Friendship in general? Caring and support...they don't have to be there...it's a knowledge that they care...that they would allow themselves to be used by you.

Q: How did you start your friendship?

S: With two of them it started by disliking them which we worked through and friendship developed. With Bill, it just happeneda bit like falling in love...I wouldn't like to say there's a chemistry attached. I suppose I'm idealistic, but I'm not aware that love exists...that's another hard to define thing...perhaps friendship is love without the sex.

Q: Are your friends related to your work?

S: One is, the others aren't. We're all very unlike in lifestyle and personality, really, which may be part of it. With Bill

there's lots of empathy...no, you don't need to work together. God! I find this impossible to verbalise...friendship is hard to verbalise...you just can't pinpoint it. It happens...you can't set out to make a friend.

Q: Do you think everyone has friends?

S: No...definitely not. In my sense, I think very few people have close friends. Those of us who have are very lucky.

Q: How do you think Bill could betray you?

S: (6 secs) That's hard to imagine. I suppose...(4 secs) ...if I disclosed something and found it was related all over...to others by him...or if he'd lied about the relationship or if he'd lied to me at all...about anything...important.

Q: How could you betray him?

S: In the same way.

Q: If he, or you, moved...would the relationship end?

S: Not really...distance and time are not important. We've lived some distance apart for the last five years and still meet with the same irregularity (laughs).

Q: How close would you say these three friends are?

S: One is closer than the others.

Q: Can you tell me why?

S: (10 secs) Perhaps there are degrees of friendshipI don't really know. If you asked me to rate them: one, two, three, the ranking would always be the same.

Q: What is special about this one person?

S: Because of all the things I said....The degrees of those thingsgood heavens!....this isn't easy. There's a tactile basis to this relationship...touch is important to me and I can't do that with the others...you know?...touching arms when talking, that kind of thing.

Q: Is touching easier because it's opposite sex....?

S: No....it's an unusual relationship really, because sex is not an issue.....it's been a joke but never an issue. I think that if it did become important something would be lost from the relationship and we're both aware of what we'd lose...so I'd say the touching is more a mark of closeness than sex.

Q: Do you tend to like the same people?

S: We don't move in the same circles....we'd certainly dislike the same people...we have disliked the same people we worked with. I can only answer that in a work situation, so it's not really something I can comment on.

Q: Do you confide in each other?

S: Yes.

Q: How would you feel if he didn't confide in you?

S: I'd feel let down...that sounds unfair because it is placing demands on the relationship. I feel that he'd have wanted to and didn't because...I remember a similar instance...he was being dishonest with others, obviously so, and this upset me, mainly because I knew there was something wrong and he didn't or couldn't tell me. If I bring this up now he changes the subject. But, I defend him...lots of people are threatened by him...so I defend him.

Q: Have you thought about your relationship?

S: Yes, but not to come up with answers....one thing I've often thought about is that we share a kind of telepathy.

Q: Do you have your own language?

S: Yes...we finish off each other's sentences...that's what I mean in that we seem to know what each other is thinking. It's definitely a shorthand language between us....but I couldn't

give you an example now. It's spontaneous and it's always been there...certainly within the first few meetings....and it's very obvious to others. In fact, it was always assumed by others that we were a couple, because of this.

Q: What about honesty?

S: He's one of the most honest people I know. Some people don't like him because of this. He's also terribly moral...which took me some time to realise.

Q: Is there protectiveness towards each other?

S: He wants to protect his image even though it doesn't matter to me...but more so, he wants to protect me from his emotion.

Q: What about when Bill separated from....?

S: I knew straight away...something awful had happened...by looking at him...and I felt sad, very sad, because he was. He was very unhappy....but that's what I mean about being moral...because he was caught he did the gentlemanly thing. He didn't want to leave his wife and move in with Kate...but he wanted to protect his image. We talked a lot about it and cried a lot together.

Q: You had empathy with the situation?

S: Very much so...and that's something I can't share with others to the same degree...that marks closeness. I never feel as close to other friends at anytime.

Q: Has it always been this close?

S: Well...certainly for eight or nine years...I held constant feelings about this relationship.

Q: What sort of things do you confide?

S: Anything...and it's reciprocated. The main thing is that we know we won't be judged. In this type of relationship you don't have to try at anything...even silence doesn't matter. I know

that he understands what I would say...and often, with both of us, we know that something is wrong and ask...so you don't play the word games..you know?...all that 'nice to see you, what have you been up to' stuff. You can go straight to the point without worrying about the outcome.....what'll be said back. It's because of this that I feel privileged to have friends...I'd put it on a par with spouse/child/parent.... it's just as important, if not more.....It's a very important relationship and a very powerful one.

Q: You'd put it on a par with spouse? Can you be friends with a lover?

S: (10 secs) No...sex negates friendship because it totally alters the structure of the relationship. There are different demands made once sex comes into it...being a lover means that there's much more you can be betrayed with...even if they find someone else more attractive that's betrayal. It's the physical importance that allows that...you don't get that in friendship. For instance, if Bill said 'that girl is attractive', I might not agree but could talk about why...you can't do that with a lover because the fact that he finds someone attractive detracts from you. A lover relationship is more confined...restrictive... for both parties. Time and distance is important and your image to them...it's not honest like friendship. It's all those things that sex brings into it...the physical and because it's important that you are always important to them you try to be what they want rather than you. It's not as free as friendship.

Q: In the lover relationship, certain things cement the 'closeness'... what about friendship?

S: We have the same birthday...that cemented our closeness, but it's not that important. I don't think you work on that level

....the past is not as important as it would be to a lover...
likewise with displays of affection.

Q: There are shows of affection though...you touch a lot, you said?

S: We've always touched...not in a threatening way, and the obvious
places are taboo, but this signifies closeness, like I said.

Q: Do you ever castigate him?

S: I have done....about his behaviour, you know?...with Joan....
but I've been sorry after about it. It's not about rule
enforcement...that sort of thing is with a lover, but not a
friend.

Q: Can you say how this friendship started?

S: I can't rationalise how it occurred. It definitely wasn't personal
attraction...it just happened...I think we both assumed it. No
one said 'let's be friends' (see Con)...after a time you just
realise and know that you are. That's why I don't think you
can force a friendship...it has to occur naturally and without
effort...otherwise it's false.

Disturbed at this point and it seemed a good place to terminate the
interview.