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The phenomenal meaning of romantic Love

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THE PHENOMENAL MEANING OF ROMANTIC LOVE

by

Howard R. Giles III

**Bachelor of Arts
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
1995**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the**

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Department of Psychology
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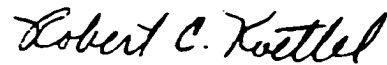
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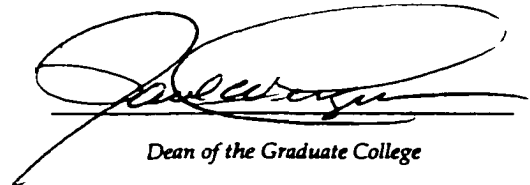
The Phenomenal Meaning of Romantic Love

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Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology



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ABSTRACT

The Phenomenal Meaning of Romantic Love

by

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The phenomenal meaning of romantic love is sought, using the descriptions of co-researchers. A brief discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of phenomenology is provided, and the methods of phenomenological psychology are outlined. The specific methods for arriving at the phenomenal meaning of romantic love are chosen. Six co-researchers were interviewed to elucidate lived-experiences they had with romantic love. The interviews were transcribed into six protocols. The six protocols are phenomenologically reduced into meaning units and their essences. The essences are presented within the context of the protocols. Twenty essential structures are presented in five meaningful groups, including *Descriptions, Events, Temporal Grounding, Emotions and Elements*. The essential structures, Marriage, Sex and Physical Attraction, are common to the co-researchers' lived-romantic-love-experiences and are documented in the literature, while Anticipation and Cry are not found in the literature, yet they are equally essential to understanding the meaning of the co-researchers' romantic love experiences.

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PREFACE

"Love is the hardest thing in the world to write about. It's so simple. You've got to catch it through details"

-Don, from The Lost Weekend (1945).

Thanks to Tom for insisting I write a thesis worth reading, to Dr. Bob Koettel for his generosity of time and spirit, to the committee for their patience, to the co-researchers for their openness and to my parents on earth and my Father in Heaven for all their *Agape*.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The researcher used a phenomenological method to gain a psychological understanding of romantic love. Phenomenological psychology is a descriptive approach to understanding human experiences such as romantic love. Murray (1971) defines the task of phenomenological psychology as "...the elaboration or explication of the basic human experiences that underlie all further scientific investigation" (p. 301). The researcher's intention was to elaborate and explicate the experience of romantic love, and to supply a meaning of romantic love experiences that will support further investigation.

Giorgi (1971) defines phenomenology as "the study of phenomena as experienced by man" (p. 9). Giorgi's use of the word study implies an active and systematic attempt to understand phenomena. Phenomena are perceptions of lived-experiences; perceptions of lived-romantic-love-experiences. One's lived-experiences take place in the life-world: "This is the world as lived by the person and not the hypothetical external entity separate from or independent of him or her" (Valle, King, & Halling, 1989, p. 9). An approach faithful to phenomenology does not hypothesize about romantic love as separate from external reality or the people who experience it. Instead, one can consider both the world and the people in the world: "The life-world is not a construction of consciousness: It is co-constituted or co-created in the dialogue of person and world" (Valle, p. 9). In order to actively and systematically attempt to understand romantic love from a phenomenological perspective, one can analyze the dialogue between a person and the romantic love that the person has experienced.

Giorgi qualifies the experienced phenomena by identifying people as the active subjects. One may rephrase Giorgi's statement; Phenomenology studies people's experiences of phenomena.

Phenomenology, as a way of actively and systematically attempting to understand a phenomenon, constitutes an approach. Giorgi (1971) defines this approach: "The approach of phenomenology is characterized by the attitude of openness for whatever is significant for the proper understanding of a phenomenon" (p. 9). Rather than limit or restrict, through preconceived variables and hypotheses, that which may be significant in understanding romantic love, the phenomenological researcher strives to be open to the co-researcher's experience. The co-researcher is the subject or participant interviewed for the collection of data. The researcher's preconceived ideas about what is significant in understanding romantic love may be wide and varied. Addressing those preconceptions is essential for an attempt at openness. Giorgi writes that "The subject is required to concentrate on the experience of the phenomenon exactly as it is given to him, and not to pre-judge it nor to see it through any specific perspective simply because of previous knowledge about the phenomenon" (p. 9). This attitude of openness is essential throughout the phenomenological approach, and it is most clearly understood in the phenomenological reduction, more specifically through bracketing or actively setting aside preconceptions about the phenomenon under investigation.

Psychological investigations typically begin with an operational definition of some behavior. Giorgi (1970) argues that an understanding of behavior is developed through an understanding of the meaning of intentions:

If behavior partakes of intentional relations, and if the route to understanding intentionality comes through the phenomenon of meaning, then it is clear that the relevant question for understanding behavior is to inquire about its meaning - not its measurement. (p. 161)

In the phenomenological approach, human behavior is understood as the physical result

of intentionality. Valle (1989) defines intentionality as "...the ongoing dimension of our consciousness, that we are always in relation to that which is beyond us" (p. 11).

Behavior is a result of conscious and purposeful apprehending of some object, and one consciously apprehends objects in a meaningful way. The meaning that one consciously gives to acts or behaviors, in apprehending a romantic-love-experience, is what the researcher actively attempts to discover through the phenomenological reduction.

A phenomenological understanding of romantic love will benefit the discipline of psychology: "The task of psychology - generally held to be the understanding of human existence - requires knowledge of the structures that are implicit in the experienced or lived realm out of which our actions and expressions arise" (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 46). It is with this understanding of psychology and the phenomena that constitute experience that a researcher can attempt to gain an understanding of romantic love, that is, as it is experienced in the lived-world.

Phenomenological Method

The phenomenological method is developed through the phenomenological approach. The approach calls for an openness toward the phenomenon, in this case romantic love, and toward the method used to analyze the phenomenon. Rather than applying some pre-conceived methodology, phenomenology calls for a method that remains open to the phenomenon under investigation. Giorgi (1971) describes the phenomenological method:

The method of phenomenology essentially involves the processes of intuition, reflection and description. This means that one should first concentrate to the best degree possible on what is given or being experienced and only secondly ask more specific questions about the phenomenon. In this manner the researcher can deal with a more complete phenomenon because he first lets it emerge as it is rather than selecting those aspects of it that he wishes to see or manipulate, or

defining the phenomenon in terms of his manipulations. (p. 10)

Phenomenological psychology stays true to its focus on human existence by gaining descriptions of phenomena through an interview process. In the interview, the primary researcher's main focus is on the co-researcher's lived-experience. Intuition, in phenomenological psychology, refers to an active attempt to gain understanding; therefore, the primary researcher actively attempts to understand the given experience. Giorgi (1997) condenses the method into three key elements: "One would have to employ (1) description (2) within the attitude of the phenomenological reduction, and (3) seek the most invariant meanings for a context" (p. 235). Each of these three elements can be developed and applied within the context of romantic love. Since the description is attempted within the attitude of the reduction, it behooves a logical progression to begin the methodological discussion with the reduction.

The phenomenological reduction, more specifically the attitude of the reduction, is the cornerstone of the phenomenological method. Giorgi (1970) provides a short definition:

By means of the phenomenological reduction, i.e., by a change in attitude, the world can be considered as phenomenon. That is, by means of the reduction, the acts which in the natural attitude are simply lived are now thematized and made topics of reflective analysis. (p. 148)

The researcher can systematically change their attitude in order to consider romantic love as a phenomenon. The acts of romantic love are lived by the co-researchers. From the natural attitude, the researcher systematically changes to the phenomenological attitude of the reduction in order to reflectively analyze and thematize those lived acts of the co-researchers. Giorgi (1997) reiterates his point:

Remember, the reduction means that a person must withhold past knowledge about the phenomenon he or she is researching in order to be fully present to the concrete instance of the phenomenon as presented by the subject's description; the

second requirement is that no existential claim is being made for the description. That is, the only claim that the researcher will make is that the concrete experience is an indication of what the subject was present to, and not necessarily that the description is an objective account of what really took place. (p. 244)

The primary researcher is required to withhold any preconceived ideas about romantic love and the specifics of the co-researchers' descriptions. This process, commonly referred to as bracketing, is outlined below.

Whereas traditional psychological methods require a hypothesis to be made *a priori* to the actual research, the phenomenological method requires all hypotheses or presuppositions to be set aside or bracketed. Giorgi (1970) provides the theoretical context in which the bracketing takes place: "Phenomenology is always concerned with trying to describe what appears precisely and exactly as it appears, and this is why it uses the technique of 'the reduction' and tries to bracket as much 'knowledge about' phenomena as possible" (p. 162). Bracketing is integral to the phenomenological reduction. The primary researcher is called upon to withhold all preconceived beliefs about the subject of research, in this case romantic love. Giorgi (1997) clarifies the role of bracketing in phenomenological research:

This [bracketing] does not mean that one empties oneself of all possible knowledge. It is a task related project. One 'puts aside' or renders 'non-influential' all past knowledge that may be associated with the presently given object, so that it has a chance to present itself in its fullness in this situation. (Giorgi, p. 240)

The presently given object in this research is romantic love; consequently, the primary researcher is required to put aside all past knowledge of romantic love, whether it be scientific or personal knowledge. Ashworth (1996) identifies a number of places where bracketing is necessary in empirical research and one area, namely the social interaction of the interview, where bracketing is not necessary. All of empirical study is first considered: "Science, whether taken as systematized knowledge or as a methodology

aimed at the search for casual relations, is to be put out of play" (Ashworth, 1996, p. 11). The researcher is engaged in a scientific endeavor to better understand romantic love. Traditionally, the researcher would search for a system by which to understand romantic love, or a causal explanation of the experiences of the co-researchers. Instead, the phenomenological researcher actively rejects romantic love systems or causal variables of romantic love. Giorgi (1970) elucidates this point:

...precisely what variables were operating in the experiment or research situation can be ascertained only after the research is completed-not before. This fact clearly indicates that while a human scientific psychology is not empiristic or positivistic, it is empirical (based on experience) and positive (it affirms a reality). (p. 205)

The romantic love described by the co-researchers is based on their lived-experiences. The phenomenological method affirms the reality of the co-researchers' lived-experiences rather than rearranging the lived-experiences through empiristic systems or doubting the lived-experiences through positivistic, causal explanations. Furthermore, the primary researcher "...adopts no position on the correctness or falsity of the claims which are implicitly made by the research participants in the views and judgments intrinsic to their life-world" (Ashworth, p. 14). This position is directly counter to the methods of traditional psychological research, which includes the use of deception or complex tests in order to better understand the co-researchers' lived-experiences. These traditional methods are based on the assumption that co-researchers do not truly understand themselves. Researchers using the phenomenological method simply report what the co-researcher describes in the interview process, and analyze the lived-experiences without questioning their verity. Ashworth (1996) suggests that the co-researcher's life-world is not suitable for bracketing:

In order to engage in social interaction which will reveal the phenomena of interest to our research, then certain assumptions are made which are certainly

not at any stage bracketed. These include the belief that the research participant is a competent human being whose life-world is open to empathic understanding since it shares at least certain baseline meanings with our own life-world as investigators. (p. 21-22)

This is a subtle point which allows the primary researcher to affirm the reality of the co-researcher. Bracketing the very life-world of the co-researcher would undercut phenomenology's goal: to perform a human science.

Co-Researchers

Many researchers use the terms subject or participant to indicate the people or animals from which data are gathered. Phenomenological psychology uses co-researcher in place of these terms. This difference reflects the current trend in the social sciences to humanize the people on whom science depends. Terms such as participant and co-researcher recognize the active and intentional character of human beings, whereas subject suggests a passive, dehumanized, object of research. Furthermore, the experience of romantic love is the subject of this research, and the people interviewed are considered to be active researchers in the attempt to understand that experience. Polkinghorne (1989) suggests that "The face-to-face interaction of the interview allows the researcher to help the subject move toward nontheoretical descriptions that accurately reflect the experience" (p. 47). Phenomenological psychology's reliance on the co-researchers is especially evident and necessary when considering Giorgi's requirement for the given experience rather than a pre-judged experience. The goal is to gain a better understanding of lived-experiences within the life-world. The focus is lived-experiences as described by the co-researchers: "The turn to others is chosen in order to avoid the possible objection of bias" (Giorgi, 1997, p. 243). The degree to which bias is eliminated in the gathering of data is the degree to which the co-researchers' descriptions are subjective and not influenced by the preconceptions of the primary researcher. In his seminal work,

Psychology as a Human Science, Giorgi (1970) further delineates the roles of investigator and subject:

In any event, we would posit that the investigator and the subject are equals with respect to basic assumptions about their humanity. What does differ, as we explained before, is their thematic presence in a situation. The relationship between experimenter and researcher will have to be based upon appeal and cooperation and understood in that sense as well. In short, if one truly believes that humans should not manipulate other humans, then it seems absurd to try to build a human science on the basis of a paradigm that violates this essential point. (p. 203-204)

In order to reduce the likelihood of manipulation, the primary researcher is required to inform the co-researchers about the purpose and method of the research. Informing the co-researchers about their active roles determines their thematic presence.

The data of phenomenological psychology is comprised of the lived-experiences of the co-researchers: "...it considers experience as original data right along side with the external world and the human body" (Giorgi, 1971, p. 10). Psychological data is often quantitative; test-scores, brainwave measurements, etc., and is sometimes descriptive; an objective observer describing behavior. In phenomenological psychology, the lived-experiences of the co-researchers, as they are reported through the interview process, serve as data.

Stevick (1971) chooses co-researchers simply on the basis of their ability to describe an experience with anger, her subject matter. Similarly, the primary researcher chooses co-researchers who are able to describe an experience with romantic love. Polkinghorne (1989) emphasizes that the phenomenological method requires the primary researcher to choose co-researchers based on a range of experiences and not based on the theories of statistical sampling:

The point of subject selection is to obtain richly varied descriptions, not to achieve statistical generalization. The error that phenomenological researchers make in selection is to choose subjects that produce a narrow range of descriptions. The researcher needs to choose an array of individuals who provide a variety of specific experiences of the topic being explored. (p. 48)

The tendency in psychology is to sort people according to demographic characteristics, to take a random sample of people from that demographic, and to gather data from that narrowly defined group of people. The results of that data can then be generalized back to that demographic group. In contrast, this study, consistent with the phenomenological attitude, attempts to find co-researchers with a wide variety of backgrounds and lived-experiences.

Gathering Data

In an interview environment, the co-researchers are asked, by the primary researcher, to describe their experiences with romantic love exactly as they happened. Polkinghorne (1989) suggests that "The principle of the phenomenological reduction maintains that the protocols needed for phenomenological research are descriptions of what is present in a person's consciousness when he or she attends to the particular experience under investigation" (p. 50). Protocols are typed transcriptions of the primary researcher's interviews with the co-researchers. The first necessary characteristic of the interview is that the co-researcher has had an experience with romantic love on which to attend. The second characteristic is that the co-researcher is able to describe the immediately-conscious experience of attending a lived-experience with romantic love, so that there are two experiences evident in the protocol, the lived romantic love experience from the past and the experience of being conscious of that past experience while describing it. The co-researcher's description of their lived-experience may include a host of variables that are typically avoided in scientific research:

...the details, biases, errors and prejudices that we carry with us in everyday life are exactly what have to be understood. What is critical is that the description be as precise and detailed as possible with a minimum number of generalities or abstractions. (Giorgi, 1997, p. 243)

Giorgi (1997) delineates description from explanation or interpretation, so that the co-researchers simply describe, to the best of their ability, their experiences. The primary researcher is required to objectively intuit, or discern, between the whole experience and its specifics. The degree to which one lets an experience emerge, rather than guiding the emergence through specific questions, is the degree to which the protocol is valid and unbiased. Polkinghorne (1989) suggests that

The way the researcher frames questions can help subjects to report their experiences rather than to give worldly depictions. By asking, 'What did you experience?' or, 'What was it like for you?' instead of, 'What happened?,' the investigator is more likely to elicit experiential data. (p. 46)

The primary researcher is also required to subjectively understand the emerging experience of the co-researcher, as they are describing the experience. There, at once, wishes and manipulations are subjective violations of a subjectively emerging experience. Stevick (1971) outlined the method of her interviews:

Each interview began with the general question: 'Try to remember the last time you were angry and tell me anything you can about the situation, about what you felt, did or said.' From there the questions followed the subjects' responses, asking for clarification and fuller descriptions of their replies. (Stevick, p. 135)

Both Polkinghorne and Stevick suggest that the primary researcher should focus, through simple questions, on the co-researcher as an active, human agent in their own experience. The primary researcher should avoid asking the co-researcher to describe or interpret whole sequences of events or other people's experiences; rather, the co-researcher should be encouraged to be self-focused. Once the data has been collected through the interview

process, the primary researcher transcribes the interviews and performs a phenomenological reduction on the data.

The Phenomenological Reduction

In any psychological research, it is necessary to report results which have durable meaning (Giorgi 1997). The results of phenomenological research are the essences. Giorgi (1997) defines essence as "...the most invariant meaning for a context" (p. 242). The context is the protocol. Through the steps of the reduction, described below, the primary researcher searches for meanings that are essential to the entire protocol, so that if changed the entire protocol is changed.

Once the data is collected, the primary researcher reads each protocol. Each protocol is considered in its own context, the context of the interview and the context of the co-researcher's description: "The phenomenological approach is holistic, and so one would have to read through all of the data before beginning any analysis" (Giorgi, 1997, p. 245). This initial step of reading the protocols is necessary for the primary researcher to develop an understanding of the co-researcher's life-world and for the withholding of presuppositions through the bracketing.

After the protocols are read for holistic meaning, the primary researcher divides each protocol into meaning units. Giorgi (1997) provides an operational description of this procedure:

...the relevant meaning units are formed by a slower rereading of the description, and each time that the researcher experiences a transition in meaning in the description, he or she marks the place and continues to read until the next meaning unit is discriminated... (p. 246)

This is the primary researcher's second reading of the protocol. The second reading is slow and methodical, in that the primary researcher is actually reducing the protocol into parts or units of meaning. In the process of the second reading, the primary researcher's

experience of transition takes place within the description of the lived-experience.

Stevick's (1971) method followed from a basic theory of meaning:

The first principle of data analysis was: allow the data to speak for itself. Every attempt was made to allow even the organizational schemes and categories to emerge from the data. The investigator tried always to stay on the outer limits of the phenomenon, i.e., to include every category or aspect of the experience mentioned by all subjects. (Stevick, p. 136)

These meaning units are determined by the primary researcher's understanding and experience of reading the protocols. The meaning units are units of raw data. This raw data is an expression of the life-world. Giorgi (1970) also focuses on meaning:

Lastly, the difficulty is not so much with experience and the real, as with our formulated ideas of them. Thus our ideas of these phenomena must change, and this can only be done by turning away momentarily (bracketing) from the established ideas, then by trying to be present to experiences and the real in a fresh way, and only then trying to formulate more accurate ideas about them. (p. 205-206)

The primary researcher brackets his presuppositions in order to determine the units of meaning that were given in the protocols. Through the second reading, the protocols are divided into meaning units. After the second reading, the primary researcher conducts a review of the literature regarding romantic love.

The protocols, now a series of units, are then read a third time. In the third reading, the primary researcher titles the meaning units. For a psychological understanding of the life-world, the meaning units are "...to be expressed in terms relevant for the scientific discipline being utilized" (Giorgi, 1997, p. 247). By considering the psychological nature of the meaning units, the suspension of presuppositions, or bracketing, is itself suspended. Giorgi (1997) notes that there are many different theoretical perspectives within psychology, so that "...part of the task of

the researcher is to introduce appropriate disciplinary...terms in phenomenologically grounded ways" (p. 248). The phenomenologically psychological researcher can simply maintain that psychological meaning is that which elucidates the individual.

Once the meaning units are described according to the psychological perspective, the units are then analyzed using free imaginative variation: "in order to determine which are essential for the phenomenon under study and which are not" (Giorgi, 1997, p. 247). Giorgi (1997) provides an operational definition of free imaginative variation: "...one freely changes aspects or parts of a phenomenon or object, and one sees if the phenomenon remains identifiable with the part changed or not" (p. 243). These essentials, as determined by the primary researcher in a psychological context, are the fruits of the phenomenological reduction. The essentials, essences, or essential structures are the simplest units of psychological meaning presented in the descriptions:

The investigation of conscious (or "lived") structures involves distinguishing those aspects of an experience that are invariant and essential, making the experience show up as the kind it is-that is, as the typical way in which a phenomenon presents itself in lived experience. (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 43)

The once varied lived-experiences of the co-researchers are now typical in the essences that constitute them. To vary these essences is to change the lived romantic love experience into something unrecognizable as such. Giorgi (1997) suggests that "...for the sake of simplicity, a researcher should always try to derive a single structure (synthesis) for all of the subjects in the study" (p. 247). This is simply a goal of the research process. The primary researcher does not force each of the co-researchers' descriptions into one single structure; instead, "...if a study is conducted with five subjects, the results could be a single structure or five structures - one for each subject - or any number in between" (Giorgi, 1997, p. 248). Although the primary researcher attempts to limit the number of essential structures, the spirit of the approach and the reduction itself dictates that the primary researcher find the true essence of the lived-experiences.

The primary researcher returns to the raw descriptions and reports the essences within those raw, lived-world descriptions (Giorgi, 1997). It is the life-world that phenomenological research is aimed at explicating, and so the essential structures are only important to the degree that they reveal meaning within the co-researcher's descriptions of their lived-experiences. The primary researcher also considers the psychological meaning of the lived-experiences. The phenomenologically psychological research process reports the lived-romantic-love-experiences through their essential structures.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF ROMANTIC LOVE

The body of psychological literature focusing on romantic love is diverse and growing. Although emotion is a relatively mainstream topic of research, love is often argued into and out of that broader category; furthermore, sub-categories of love, such as romantic love, have languished at the periphery of psychological research while some researchers have dismissed romantic love as a product of western culture, the creation of poets or a troublesome neurosis. With these criticisms in mind, the first step is to determine if romantic love is a psychological topic. Secondly, the success of psychology and its sister sciences in establishing romantic love as a real-world phenomenon rather than a cultural product can be determined. Thirdly, if romantic love does exist, the methods psychologists use to discover its nature, to determine a taxonomy, can be established. Finally, some of the most relevant and interesting results of psychological research into the nature of romantic love are reviewed.

Is Romantic Love a Psychological Topic?

Amedeo Giorgi calls for an exploration of topics neglected by mainstream psychology. Giorgi (1970) lists love as an important human phenomenon which has been sidelined by psychological researchers:

Practically all psychological phenomena are known only insofar as they are measurable. What happens when a particular phenomenon cannot be measured?

Well, it is merely avoided until someone comes along with a technique for measuring it. This, of course, explains why so many peculiarly human phenomena - like crying, laughing, friendship, love - have not as yet made psychological textbooks in depth; they have not as yet been rigorously measured. (Giorgi, 1979, p. 64-65)

Researchers have increasingly tried to measure and otherwise describe love and its sub-topics. While love may not be the focus of many textbooks, there have been many chapters and articles published on the subject since Giorgi's writing.

For instance, Sternberg and Barnes' (1988) collection of articles about romantic love, The Psychology of Love, includes sixteen articles, all examples of research into romantic love. In the preface, Zick Rubin comments that none of the sixteen articles comprising the volume, five of which are included here, are written with a common vocabulary (p. ix). A common vocabulary is essential to conducting any scientific endeavor. If no common vocabulary exists, it must be created or discovered. Psychology gives names to experiences in people's everyday lives. Rubin explains the importance of vocabulary to psychology:

The approaches and results of love research, as they are heralded in the mass media, will undoubtedly shape people's expectations about love. And if researchers define love in unattainably ideal terms, they may create discontent among people who would otherwise have gladly settled for what they had. (Sternberg & Barnes, p. xi)

While Rubin may overreach to find a causal relationship between approaches to research and how *lovers* perceive the *other*, it is clear that psychology creates a vocabulary by which people describe their experiences. The experience is reported by a co-researcher, or the *lover*, and directed toward a specific person, the *other*. Social scientists are responsible for studying real-world phenomena, defining and describing the phenomena

with all honesty and accuracy, so that the concepts and vocabulary assists people as they experience those phenomena and search for meaning in their own lives.

Lewis, Amini and Lannon (2000) provide an impassioned reasoning for the healing sciences' analysis of romantic love. They begin by recording a litany of questions which surround a psychiatrist's practice. Psychotherapy and medication are the two main methods they identify for healing emotional pain. In their discussion on romantic love, they focus on psychotherapy:

The investigation of these queries is not just an intellectual excursion: people must have the answers to make sense of their lives. People who do not intuit or respect the laws of acceleration and momentum break bones; those who do not grasp the principles of love waste their lives and break their hearts. The roots of that suffering are often unseen and passed over, while proposed remedies cannot succeed, because they contradict emotional laws that our culture does not yet recognize. (p. 13)

The advantages of studying romantic love are firmly rooted in the daily practice of these psychiatric professionals. As people suffering from divorce, adultery, and neglect flee to mental health professionals, those same professionals require a logical understanding of the pain they hope to alleviate.

Does Romantic Love Exist?

In his chapter, "A Vision of Romantic Love," Branden (1988) disagrees with psychologists and other social scientists who characterize love as an immature ideal, a cultural product or a neurosis which is detrimental to successful mating relationships. Branden begins his chapter by discriminating between brotherly and familial love with a definition: "Romantic love is a passionate spiritual-emotional-sexual attachment between two people that reflects a high regard for the value of each other's person" (p. 220). Branden classifies romantic love as an attachment, and uses emotion as an adjectival

descriptor, where some writers suggest that all loves, romantic and otherwise, should be classified as emotions. Sex is perhaps the most common descriptor used by theorists to describe romantic love, while spiritual love is far less, if not the least, common. Branden uses spiritual love to encompass shared moral values and the concept of the *lover* and *other* as soul mates (p. 220). He points out that the concept of soul mate is not a necessity, but it is an example of a spiritual experience of romantic love.

De Munck and Korotayev (1999) credit Rosenblatt with being the first psychologist to measure romantic love. Jankowiak and Fisher (1992) review Rosenblatt's research, citing its multicultural implications, and most notably, they make a link between romantic love and marriage. In fact, they relate Rosenblatt's conclusion that romantic love is a basis for marriage. Suggesting that romantic love is necessary for marriage would be a commonplace or obvious connection were it not for the multicultural nature of Rosenblatt and Jankowiak's research. It has been commonly supposed that romantic love and marriage are strictly Western conventions, that is, until this group of researchers have continually shown that romantic love, as a necessary premise for marriage, is a global reality.

Rosenblatt (1967) uses eleven criteria for determining if a society valued or even recognized descriptions of romantic love (de Munck & Korotayev, 1999). The society's relation to these criteria is determined qualitatively, through structured interviews. Rosenblatt's primary hypothesis is that romantic love is a real-world phenomenon rather than a cultural product. De Munck and Korotayev list the eleven criteria Rosenblatt's interviewers use:

- a) idealization of potential spouse, b) ethnographer states romantic love is important, c) marriages are not arranged, d) evidence that faith and loyalty to a spouse is common and volitional, e) high incidence of elopement in societies where arranged marriage is the norm, f) spouses spent time together and give each other 'nonobligated' gifts, g) belief in predestination or a 'soul mate,' h) evidence

of suicide or unrequited love, i) clear evidence that people gain happiness and fulfillment from marriage, j) noncompelled mourning at the death of a spouse, and k) jealousy that reflects 'strong attachment'. (p. 267)

Four of the eleven criteria, a, d, f and j, mention a spouse, which corresponds with the *other*. The *other* is said to be idealized, mourned and given gifts. The *lover* is also required to be faithful and loyal to the *other*, which excludes multiple sex partners or any person who might compete for the *lover's* time. Item g's term, soul mate, can be the same person as the *other*, but it requires the idea that the *other's* existential identity includes the role of *other* to the *lover*. The last item, k, implies the *other*; therefore, item k can be read 'strong attachment to the *other*.' This item's inclusion of the emotion, jealousy, is noteworthy. Jealousy might be thought of as detrimental to romantic love, yet, for Rosenblatt, it is an emotion necessary to defining and recognizing romantic love.

Again, a common argument against studying romantic love presupposes that it is a product of western culture. If a cultural product, then it might be a topic of sociological studies, but certainly not of psychology, which supposes its topics and findings to be universal to the human experience. Jankowiak and Fisher (1992) seek to define romantic love as a human universal, and "...cited the lack of interest in researching romantic love in both anthropology and psychology because it is seen as a cultural phenomenon rather than a real-world phenomenon" (p. 149-150). De Munck and Korotayev (1999) are almost jubilant in announcing that, "Jankowiak and Fischer proved conclusively that romantic love is, at minimum, a near-cultural universal and is found even in societies with strong prohibitions against it (p. 153-154)" (p. 267). They use Rosenblatt's criteria to measure the presence of romantic love in over 160 societies. More precisely, Knox, Schacht, and Zusman (1999) report, "Jankowiak and Fischer (1992) ...found that 89% of the 166 societies they studied had evidence of passionate love (love songs in the culture, elopement due to mutual affection, etc.)" (p. 150). It is interesting to note that love songs, a staple of popular western radio, are so present in foreign cultures as to be an

indication of the presence of romantic love. The researchers conclude "that romantic love constitutes a human universal, or at least a near-universal" (p. 154). If not conclusive, this does seem to be sufficient evidence to support romantic love as a human universal rather than as a cultural by-product. Jankowiak and Fisher describe and define romantic love with two terms of immediate importance to the present research, real-world phenomenon and human universal. Both of these terms suggest that romantic love is as basic to the human experience as thirst and hunger, qualities which have received much more attention from psychology.

Jankowiak and Fisher (1992) reinforce the idea that romantic love is a product of the real-world, citing research by evolutionary psychologists, who theorize that love is a product of evolution (Lampert, 1997, p. 7; Buss, 1988, p. 101). In fact, Walsh (1991) suggests that love is a kind of energy which has benefited human evolution:

I think that we can safely dismiss love as an organizing force at the inanimate level. But a good case can be made for the existence of a biological 'love energy' driving Homo sapiens along the paths of altruism, cooperation, and caring when no tangible rewards are evident. It does seem evident that as the dependency period of the young of a species becomes longer, the greater is the necessity for a form of bonding attachment to evolve. (p. 32)

Briefly, Walsh describes love as an attachment rather than an emotion. As for its existence as a real-world phenomenon, the evolutionary theorist could not invent an explanation for the bonds between lovers and family that might better account for their existence than does love. It is so rooted in the history and reality of our existence, the lived-romantic-love-experience adds credibility to the evolutionary theories of human kinship.

In his book, The Science of Love, Anthony Walsh (1991) cites cultural references to discount the claim that love is an invention. He follows a brief history of romantic love from Plato to Denis de Rougemont, a philosopher who argues that romantic love was

invented in the Middle Ages by troubadours (p. 17). Walsh argues that romantic love is a real-world phenomenon:

Surely the touching stories of the Bible or the Arabian Nights provide ample evidence that romantic love is far older, and far more universal, than that. There was never a more sublimely romantic poem than the biblical Song of Solomon.

Courtly love was a cultural re-creation, not an original creation. (p. 17)

Perhaps our ability to read and relate to these millenia-old classics stands witness to the enduring real-world, lived-romantic-love-experience.

Lewis, Amini and Lannon (2000) insist that love is real and must be studied. The difficulty, they write in A General Theory of Love, is that the neural systems for emotion and reason are separate, so a natural chasm exists between the two (p. 4). This chasm is not insurmountable:

Although the nature of love is not easy to define, it has an intrinsic order, an architecture that can be detected, excavated, and explored. Emotional experience, in all its resplendent complexity, cannot emerge ex vacuo: it must originate in dynamic neural systems humming with physiologic machinations as specific and patterned as they are intricate. Because it is part of the physical universe, love has to be lawful. Like the rest of the world, it is governed and described by principles we can discover but cannot change. (p. 5)

The authors make some distinction between the difficulty of definition and the possibility of description. The modes of detection, excavation and exploration are methods toward meaningful descriptions of romantic love. The clarity of their position ends here, for they make a dynamic link between the reality of love and the methods by which it must be studied. It is necessary, then to turn to the methods by which researchers excavate the realities of romantic love.

How Do We Discover What Romantic Love Is?

Lewis, Amini and Lannon (2000), professors of psychiatry, prescribe a combination of phenomenological and neuroscientific methods for describing romantic love. They write that

In spite of what science teaches, only a delicate admixture of evidence and intuition can yield the truest view of the emotional mind. While science provides a remarkably serviceable tool for exploring and defining the natural world, human beings come equipped with an older means of discerning the nature of the hearts around them. And so, wherever possible, we compared what research had to say against the emotional experience of our patients, our families, and ourselves. (p. 12-13)

The authors invite us to consider the best of what multiple methodologies offer. As discussed in the introduction, any evidence of romantic love which the researcher cannot intuit to a lived-experience must be left behind. While this method is not identical to a phenomenological analysis, the researchers' evidence must not run counter to what they and theirs have lived.

Ellen Berscheid (1988) discusses two methods of determining a taxonomy of love in her chapter, "Some Comments on Love's Anatomy." She introduces two methods commonly used in the literature, describing the first as scientific and systematic, and the second as theoretical and imaginative. Berscheid describes the scientific method:

The systematic approach is to gather together a sample of people and ask them to describe to us their thoughts, feelings, and actions toward others whom they ostensibly love. Then these statements...are subjected to an analysis of commonality of properties, often via factor analysis... (p. 363)

This description is similar to the phenomenological approach discussed in the previous chapter, yet Berscheid takes issue with the use of factor analysis to discover the common properties of romantic love. She points out that only those factors, alone or in

combination, with which the researcher begins the study can emerge in the results.

Berscheid uses a lovely fruit analogy to make her point:

If he or she, for example, happens to put only oranges and apples in the sack, then only an orange factor or an apple factor...can emerge. If the domain properly also includes lemons, but none was included in the sample, then no lemon dimension can appear. (p. 363)

If disaster creeps into the sack with the *lovers* interviewed, but no allowance for lemons is given, the research is limited by the sometimes feeble imagination of the researcher.

Berscheid briefly discusses the typical researcher's fear of bias from self-report and unstructured interviews, dismissing these concerns as small compared to the alternative of limiting the variety of the possible outcome variables.

Berscheid (1988) describes the second approach as theoretical and imaginative. To illustrate this alternative, she refers to C.S. Lewis and his famous treatise, The Four Loves (1960). Lewis, like many theorists before and since, relies upon personal experiences, opinion and literature to construct a taxonomy (Berscheid, p. 364). She does not suggest this method, but she does find a great deal in common between Lewis and the dimensions that resulted from the factor analysis studies. Lewis writes about *Agape* (Christian charity), *Storge* (familial attachment), *Philia* (friendship or pragmatic love) and *Eros* (romantic love). Berscheid suggests that sexual desire is the core dimension of romantic love (p. 365). Lewis writes that

Without Eros sexual desire, like every other desire, is a fact about ourselves.

Within Eros it is rather about the Beloved. It becomes almost a mode of perception, entirely a mode of expression. It feels objective; something outside us, in the real world. That is why Eros, though the king of pleasures, always (at his height) has the air of regarding pleasure as a by-product. To think about it would plunge us back in ourselves, in our own nervous system. It would kill Eros, as you can 'kill' the finest mountain prospect by locating it all in your

own retina and optic nerves. Anyway, whose pleasure? For one of the finest things Eros does is to obliterate the distinction between giving and receiving. (p. 136-137)

Lewis describes both what romantic love is and how we can describe it. He dismisses the centrality of sexuality, describing instead how romantic love acts upon a simple desire. Lewis reveals the fundamental absurdity of reducing the glory of a mountain to neuron firings and reminds us of romantic love's reciprocal nature through 'giving and receiving.' Berscheid ends her chapter with a humorous confession that she does not understand love, but if she were forced to define romantic love, "I would whisper 'It's about 90 percent sexual desire as yet not sated'" (p. 373). She concedes that such an answer does very little to bring psychology and its sister sciences closer to an adequate understanding; however, her clear delineation between the two most common methods of research greatly benefit the present enterprise.

Lee conducts his research by analyzing fiction and non-fiction from the ancients to modern psychology (1988). This is a kind of cross-current between Berscheid's systematic and theoretical approaches. Lee systematically categorizes the theoretical and imaginative writers before him:

Each time I encountered a new statement about the nature of love, I recorded it, so that eventually I accumulated more than four thousand descriptions of some aspect of loving. Then I classified the statements--for example, bringing together all those referring to the role of jealousy in love. (p. 55)

This method focuses on the great works of literature and non-fiction, and the selections were chosen according to the nature of Lee's individual choices. The classification of these statements, numbering over four thousand, includes clustering the statements into meaningful groups or characteristics: "The results included reciprocity, jealousy, fidelity, unselfishness, the power of love to overcome all odds, and fifteen other symptoms" (p. 56). Lee then sorts his thousands of statements into these twenty characteristics. He

clusters the twenty characteristics, with their accompanying statements, into six clusters, and names them with six words for love from ancient Latin and Greek. C.S. Lewis, Robert Burton and Stendhal, (p. 56), all used ancient languages to describe four different types of love, yet they did not choose the same four, so Lee chooses six types in an attempt to be more inclusive.

Armed with the twenty characteristics, Lee (1988) begins a second investigation which closely resembles Berscheid's scientific approach. He collects stories from people on the street: "I went into the streets of four cities--two in England, two in Canada--to ask people to tell me their experiences of love" (1988, p. 57). Lee uses note cards featuring forced-choice questionnaires. The interviewees choose between statements about their experience of love: "This device is based on the observation that at numerous points in any love relationship, there are only a few choices of what to do next" (p. 57). Lee also writes that the note cards not only enable coding the data, but they prompt the interviewees' memories and encourage more honest statements than are possible in a traditional interview. This is the factor analysis approach which Berscheid criticizes above for limiting the possible range of responses. The factor analysis of these cards produces Lee's color analogy of love, published in his book, The Colour of Love, discussed in the next subsection. It should also be mentioned that some portion of Lee's interviewees had homosexual experiences with romantic love, and he finds no significant differences between homosexual and heterosexual experiences, reporting that homosexual experiences fit easily into the taxonomy (p. 51).

The last method is the psychometric approach. These researchers left the collection of experiences and the theorizing to others, who constructed the scales. Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) review Hatfield and Sprecher's (1986) Passionate Love Scale which they correlated with their own Love Assessment Scale (LAS):

Hatfield views passionate love as being composed of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components marked both by strong positives (e.g., arousal, intensity,

intimacy, excitement) and negatives (e.g., emptiness, anxiety, self-doubt). (p. 785)

After factor analyzing five assessments of love, the LAS, the Triangular Theory of Love Scale, the Passionate Love Scale, the Relationship Rating Form and an attachment theory measure, Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) conclude that "Love is simply too unruly to be categorized so easily. It means different things to different people in different relationships at different points in time" (p. 793). Perhaps, with such a conglomeration of theories and hypothesis, it would be more accurate to say that romantic love means different things to different researchers with different methods of discovery.

What Is Romantic Love?

In 1973, John A. Lee published The Colours of Love. In it, Lee attempts to create a taxonomy of love. He describes six love-styles which have been used in varieties of psychometric research:

Lee gave the six major dimensions or styles the following Greek or Latin names to describe their predominant characteristic: *Eros* (physical attraction); *Mania* (dependent love); *Storge* (friendship); *Pragma* (practical love); *Agape* (altruistic love); and *Ludus* (noncommittal love). (Cramer, 1992, p. 679)

Lee uses the analogy of the color wheel, with primary, secondary and tertiary colors to describe love, where *Eros* (red), *Ludus* (blue), and *Storge* (yellow) are the primary types of love. Lee then argues that *Mania* is a combination of *Eros* and *Ludus*, *Pragma* is a combination of *Ludus* and *Storge*, and *Agape* is a combination of *Eros* and *Storge*. Lee also discusses *Ludic Eros*, *Storgic Eros* and *Storgic Ludus*, so that later studies refer to Lee's six types, excluding the tertiary, and nine types including the tertiary.

Mathes (1980) constructs a multi-item scale to determine the discriminant validity among Lee's lovestyles. The results support a more centralized idea of romantic love:

...the present study suggests that there is but one type of romantic love composed of eros and an absence of ludus. It is a love involving intense emotional attraction

and a serious commitment which is incompatible with playing games. This result is consistent with the theories of Erikson (1963) and Fromm (1974). (Mathes, 1980, p. 376)

Both Erikson (1963) and Fromm (1962) recognize the classical types of love, including brotherly love and romantic love; however, as Mathes writes, neither writer describes a love of game playing which threatens the integrity of the commitment. Fromm writes that romantic love is clearly distinguished from familial and brotherly love: "it is the craving for complete fusion, for union with one other person. It is by its very nature exclusive and not universal" (p. 52-53). While brotherly and familial love are both inclusive, readily offered to multiple people at a time, romantic love is given solely to the other. Fromm makes a second distinction by delineating romantic love from the larger field of emotion: "One neglects to see an important factor in erotic love, that of will. To love somebody is not just a strong feeling--it is a decision, it is a judgement, it is a promise" (p. 56). This understanding assumes the insolubility of romantic love and marriage. In fact, Fromm refers to the vows to love forever, asking how such a promise can be made of an emotion that is not fed by will.

Sternberg (1988) introduces a taxonomy described as triangular. At each of the three points of the love triangle lie the components *Intimacy* love, *Passion* love and *Decision/Commitment* love. None of the three components exist alone, though they combine to create *Romantic* love, a combination of the components *Intimacy* and *Passion*, *Campanionate* love, a combination of the components *Intimacy* and *Commitment*, or *Fatuous* love, a combination of the components *Passion* and *Commitment*. At the center of the triangle lies *Consummate* love, a combination of all three components. Sternberg writes that romantic love "...is liking with an added element of physical or other attraction" (p. 126). This taxonomy excludes commitment from romantic love, citing summer romances as an example of uncommitted romantic love. Sternberg also cites Romeo and Juliet as an example of romantic love without addressing

the title characters' commitment unto death (p. 126). Finally, Sternberg describes *Consummate* love as "...a kind of love toward which many of us strive, especially in romantic relationships. We do not seek consummate love in all of our loving relationships or even most of them" (p. 129). All of Sternberg's components and combinations are illustrated by heterosexual couples. Each component and its illustration assumes the possibility and ultimate fulfillment of *Consummate* love, which is not achieved due to the absence of the other components; therefore, the brotherly or family love addressed by other researchers is not included in Sternberg's triangular taxonomy.

Mathes (1980) compares Rubin and Maslow's theories of love: "Rubin (1973) differentiates between liking and romantic love, and Maslow (1970) writes about being and deficiency of love" (p. 371). Rubin's research is narrowly defined, differentiating between two similar emotions. Rubin (1970) outlines his own presuppositions about the generic logistics and complementary emotions of romantic love:

An initial assumption in this enterprise is that love is an attitude held by a person toward a particular other person, involving predispositions to think, feel, and behave in certain ways toward that other person. This assumption places love in the mainstream of social-psychological approaches to interpersonal attraction, alongside such other varieties of attraction as liking, admiration, and respect (cf. Newcomb, 1960). (p. 265)

Most notable is that Rubin defines love as an attitude rather than as an emotion. He then includes cognitions, emotions and behaviors as essential to understanding romantic love. Apparently, Rubin considers interpersonal attraction to be a broad category, which includes romantic love as one aspect or variety therein.

Once Rubin (1970) has clearly identified a larger theoretical framework within which to place romantic love, he begins to narrow the definition:

On the other hand, its linkage to a particular target implies a more restricted view than that held by those who regard love as an aspect of the individual's personality

or experience which transcends particular persons and situations (e.g., Fromm, 1956). (p. 265)

Rubin's 'particular target' is synonymous with the *other*. Though a definition or description of romantic love as a personality trait or transcendental experience is not included, this is an important clarification. The *other* is presupposed.

Rubin (1970) suggests that romantic love be "...defined simply as love between unmarried opposite-sex peers, of the sort which could possibly lead to marriage" (p. 265). This definition includes three significant conclusions, all of which have been challenged in later research. The first conclusion is that the *lover* and the *other* are unmarried. Not to be confused with a married couple, this excludes a variety of combinations of married and unmarried people who might profess love for a person other than their spouse or a person who already has a spouse. The second conclusion presupposes the sexual orientations of the *lover* and the *other*. Once again, there are a variety of combinations of sexual orientations between the *lover* and the *other*, whose lived-romantic-love-experiences might resemble Rubin's definition of romantic love in every other way. The third conclusion assumes that there is a definitive bond between matrimony and romantic love. Some definitions clearly state that the *lover* and the *other's* movement toward marriage is a singular indication of romantic love, while Rubin simply reminds the reader of the kind of love he intends.

Walsh (1991) walks through a series of biological and chemical descriptions of the role love plays in evolution and human nature. In 'Part Three: In Love' of his book, Walsh writes that "Romantic love, then, is an intense emotional state precipitated by the stimuli presented to us by the love object. It is perhaps the strongest of all emotions experienced by human beings; at the very least, it is the strongest of all positive emotions" (p. 187). As with most of his discussion, Walsh begins with concise and scientific definitions, then blends into more poetic discourse. The quoted material above is placed at the beginning of a paragraph that ends with a soliloquy on the highs and lows

of the *lover's* lived-experience. Later, Walsh explores an unexpected aspect of romantic love: "While the total absence of jealousy in a relationship probably indicates a lack of value or strength in it, the depth of jealousy is not a measure of the depth of love" (p. 240). This statement facilitates a review of the romantic love literature if Walsh's term, relationship, is synonymous with the live-romantic-love-experience; then, it is clear that Walsh is proposing jealousy as a central feature of romantic love.

Prentice, Briggs and Bradley (1983) conclude that romantic love is composed of three dimensions, including "...Traditional Romance, Sexual Behavior, and Routine activities" (p. 815). They describe *Traditional Romance* with activities and qualities familiar to any reader, including dating, gifts of flowers, holding hands and marriage. *Sexual Behavior* is a broad category which includes any physical contact between the *lover* and the *other*. *Routine activities* are shared between the *lover* and *other*, and can include any daily chore. The researchers use secondary categories to strengthen the three dimensions: "...Marriage and Family was associated with Traditional Romance; Drugs, Aberrant Sex were correlated with Sexual Behavior; and Religion was associated with Routine Activities" (1983, p. 820). Prentice found that the concepts *Marriage and Family* are sub-categories of *Traditional Romance*. It is startling to find *Drugs* not only associated with but a sub-category of *Sexual Behavior*. Their research reveals people using drugs, or being under the influence of drugs, in sexual situations. *Aberrant Sex* includes having sexual relations in public places and performing non-procreative sex acts. *Religion*, a sub-category of *Routine Activities*, includes attending church, bible studies and prayer groups with the *other*. They emphasize that these sub-categories do not exist apart from the original three dimensions, in order to more clearly define romantic love.

In his chapter, "Fools for Love," Peele (1988) cites creative literature, specifically Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice, and modern psychology to explore the psychology of love. At the outset, Peele suggests his central feature of a psychology of romantic love: "The essential dimension is that of love as a heedless involvement whose genuineness is

measured by its intensity and perhaps its very destructiveness to the lovers and others" (p. 160). For readers familiar with the novel, Mr. Bingley is the heedless lover and Jane is the *other*, suffering under Mr. Bingley's destructive loss of interest in her. Beyond Austen's prose, Peele suggests that heedlessness and destructiveness are essential to an understanding of romantic love.

Summary

It is important for psychology to agree upon a romantic love vocabulary for the clarity of further research and for describing the often painful experiences of the public psychology serves, especially through psychotherapy. It has been widely shown that romantic love is a real-world phenomena, found in the lived-experiences of people, both *lovers* and their *others*; furthermore, the real-world phenomenon, romantic love, can be studied and described. There are many ways to research and describe romantic love, including psychometric testing, phenomenological interviews and literary analysis. The phenomenological interview allows variables which the researcher had not foreseen to appear and be described. There are many factors of romantic love reported in the literature. Lee describes love with shades of color, red signifying our object, romantic love. Fromm emphasizes that commitment is necessary for the *lover* to experience romantic love. Rubin suggests that a personal object of romantic love, the *other*, with whom marriage is the goal, is the centralized definition of romantic love. Lee and Rubin's definitions can be found among Rosenblatt's eleven criteria, where jealousy stands out as essential and defining. Since jealousy is studied as an emotion in its own right, its existence may be at the periphery of a romantic love. Some other peripheral topics include the use of drugs, aberrant sex and the heedlessness of the lover. Perhaps, romantic love is the real and lived-experience of a *lover* heedlessly and committedly making love, marrying, courting disaster, giving gifts and cultivating a protective jealousy toward the *other*.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The primary researcher developed a specific phenomenologically psychological method for determining the essential structures of romantic love. The researcher bracketed his presuppositions about romantic love in order to develop an attitude of openness, and he remained in that attitude throughout the investigation. The primary researcher used co-researchers' descriptions, gained through interviews, of a lived-romantic love experience. The interviews were transcribed into protocols. The researcher actively and systematically attempted, by means of a phenomenological reduction, to understand the meaning of the lived-romantic-love-experience. The meanings were reported as essences within the context of the lived-experiences. The steps taken in order to find the meaning of romantic love, within the context of the co-researchers' descriptions, are outlined below.

Bracketing Presuppositions

The primary researcher wrote a cohesive description of his presuppositions about the subject, romantic love (see Appendix, Primary Researcher's Presuppositions). He then read his description. The primary researcher divided his description into meaning units and defined the units in psychological terms. He then performed an imaginal variation on the meaning units in order to determine the essences of the meaning units (see Results, Table 7). The primary researcher re-read his initial description in order to report the essences within the context of the initial description. The primary researcher sought to hold his presuppositions in abeyance throughout the investigation.

Co-researchers

Six co-researchers were chosen because of their ability to describe an experience they have had with romantic love. They were asked to read and sign an informed consent form, and the primary researcher described the purpose and method of the research to the co-researchers. The co-researchers were undergraduate students at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. One prospective co-researcher was interviewed but denied permission for the interview to be used, and one prospective co-researcher refused to participate.

Procedure

The co-researchers were asked to participate in an interview where the primary co-researcher asked them to describe an experience with romantic love. The primary researcher conducted an unstructured interview. The primary researcher sought to gain a description of the co-researchers' perceptions of their lived-experiences with romantic love. The six interviews were audio-taped, and transcriptions were obtained from those audio tapes. The recording began after the primary researcher described the purpose of the research to the co-researchers. The interviews were labeled as protocols one, two, three, etc. (see Appendix, Protocols 1-6).

The primary researcher performed a phenomenological reduction on each transcription. First, the primary researcher read each transcription in order to write a brief paragraph recording any initial and subjective perceptions toward the interview as a whole. Second, the primary researcher divided the protocols into meaning units. Third, the primary researcher psychologically described each meaning unit. Finally, the researcher imaginably varied the psychological descriptions in order to find out what changes affected the units' meanings. Those changes that affected meaning were listed as essences (see Results, Tables 1-6). The primary researcher reread the initial protocols. The essences were reported within the context of the initial protocols.

The primary researcher searched for essences which exist within more than one protocol. Those essences which exist within more than one protocol were described with an essential structure.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The results of the phenomenological reduction of lived-romantic-love-experiences begins with a short description of the primary researcher's perspective on the interview experiences. The essences, capitalized, from each protocol, are reported within the context of their respective protocols. The meaning units and their essences are reported in word tables (Tables 1-7). If an essence exists within more than one protocol, it is an essential structure, composed of multiple essences. Twenty essential structures are identified. Those structures are presented in five meaningful groups of like kinds, including *Descriptions*, *Events*, *Temporal Grounding*, *Emotions* and *Elements*.

The essences of the primary researcher's presuppositions (Table 7) are compared with the twenty co-researchers' essential structures. Only six of the primary researcher's forty essences are found in common with essences from co-researchers' protocols. Those six essences are representative of five of the co-researchers' twenty essential structures. Some representative examples of the essences unique to the primary researcher's presuppositions are described. Those essences which are in common between the primary and co-researchers dwell in four of the five meaningful groups, excluding *Temporal Grounding*.

The Essences of the Lived Experiences

The first co-researcher seemed serious and determined to be as exacting as possible in describing the details of his experience. He rarely fell into the abstract as the second co-researcher did. The first co-researcher's interview was shorter than the rest.

This may have been because it was the primary researcher's first interview, or it may have been due to the co-researcher's succinct and reserved style of storytelling. The primary researcher felt empathy toward this co-researcher, especially when he described still wondering about his *other's* whereabouts.

The first co-researcher describes his first experience with romantic love, which is transcribed in the Appendix, Protocol 1. The essences and meaning units derived from Protocol 1 are listed in Table 1 at the end of this chapter. By considering the essences in the context of the original protocol, it is clear that the co-researcher understands his Age at the time of the experience and the Place it occurs to be important. He describes himself and his *other* as psychological Types. He is a 'rebel renegade long-haired character.' The first co-researcher describes the *other* as a 'principled conservative Christian,' and describes her as a template for future *others* and a guide through a troubled adolescence. A factor in his difficult adolescence is moving from his home to another state, Change of Place. He describes the Tragedy of his *other* being diagnosed with ovarian cancer. In a Tragic Mistake, the co-researcher drives his *other* away from their agreed upon destination, against her will. This meaning unit is defined as Kidnapping. The co-researcher Resolves his differences with his *other*, and he contacts her years later when he is married to another woman. The experience is described in tragic terms while the *other* is idealized and fondly remembered.

The second co-researcher was loud and raucous, using hand movements for emphasis and description. He used many details, sometimes beyond expectation, and he included a great deal of abstract considerations of love. The primary researcher appreciated the co-researcher's ruminations on romantic love. The results proved fruitful, and this is one of the two protocols the primary researcher refers interested readers to as an example of the topic and method.

The second co-researcher describes an ongoing experience with romantic love, which is transcribed in the Appendix, Protocol 2. The essences and meaning units

derived from Protocol 2 are listed in Table 2 at the end of this chapter. By considering the essences in the context of the original protocol, it is clear that the co-researcher's experience is characterized by an Elevated Mood, Creativity and Sex Activity. The experience takes place in internet chat-rooms and over the phone. The communication in chat rooms is described as a Meaningful Activity in a Meaningful Place. The experience features writing in Latin, termed a Novelty. The co-researcher and his *other* discover synchronistic commonalities, termed Common Types. The experience includes a various array of Sex essences, including Kind of Sex, Sex Activity, Sex Gift, Sex and Alcohol, Sex Activity and Phone Sex. The *other* mails soiled undergarments, a Sex Gift, to the co-researcher after a memorable day of Sex Activity, or cyber-sex. The co-researcher writes more poetry and is able to do his daily work at an increased pace, Elevated Mood. The experience is ongoing at the time of the interview and the co-researcher is Planning a Meeting between himself and his *other* in Oklahoma City.

The third co-researcher seemed very nervous. The primary researcher suspected that there were more intimate details which the co-researcher was not comfortable in expressing. On a few occasions, the primary researcher asked about sex-related topics and the co-researcher down-played their importance. Still, the details he did include were very specific. As is evidenced in the protocols, he repeated words, phrases and committed a few malapropisms and spoonerisms which were probably due to his nervousness. The primary researcher was engrossed by the third co-researcher's preoccupation with the money he spent.

The third co-researcher describes his latest experience with romantic love, which is transcribed in the Appendix, Protocol 3. The essences and meaning units derived from Protocol 3 are listed in Table 3 at the end of this chapter. By considering the essences in the context of the original protocol, it is clear that the co-researcher is concerned with the Preparation details and Monetary Cost of the experience, a St. Valentine's night out. The co-researcher takes a day off of work and spends it in Preparation, washing his car,

preparing his clothes, buying flowers and getting a hair-cut. The details and adjectives are evidence that he focuses on the Magnitude of Preparation. During the night out, the co-researcher focuses on sensory variables, including Smell and Sound. Two events stand out as blemishes, or Tragedies, on an otherwise enjoyable night. The couple are stopped by the police for speeding and given a ticket on the way to the restaurant. This is described as a Tragedy since it is an unforeseen, negative experience. The co-researcher adds humor to the Tragedy by describing his attempt to cry; at any rate, he tries to convince the police officer to not give him the ticket. The ploy does not work and the Tragedy compounds as the Monetary Cost of the ticket adds to the total Monetary Cost of the evening. In the second Tragedy, the co-researcher's Social Position is not recognized by the waiting staff who allows the co-researcher to pour his own wine. He takes Retribution on the staff by reducing the amount of the tip and writing a comment on the back of the check. The service at the restaurant and the speeding ticket are outweighed by the success of the co-researcher's planning and Preparation.

The fourth co-researcher, and the first woman interviewed, was a British national who spoke with a London dialect. She was introverted in manner but effusive in speech and detail. The primary researcher was particularly amazed at the depth of her emotional connection with an experience that occurred over thirty years previously. The most memorable moment for the primary researcher occurred when the co-researcher remarked that she thought about her *other* everyday. This seemed an intolerable circumstance to the primary researcher, who felt a great deal of empathy with this co-researcher.

The fourth co-researcher describes her most influential experience with romantic love, which is transcribed in the Appendix, Protocol 4. The essences and meaning units derived from Protocol 4 are listed in Table 4 at the end of this chapter. By considering the essences in the context of the original protocol, the primary researcher is intrigued by the dramatic tension between the co-researcher's Physical Attraction to her *other* and her Speculative Misery, wondering what might have been had she not made the Successful

Attempt to Leave her *other*. Their Physical Attraction is so strong that the co-researcher has a Lack of Concern for the *other's* social position or history; indeed, their Similar Age, their Introduction and their Mutual Physical Attraction are the only qualities attended by the co-researcher for understanding the experience. The Physical Attraction can be described as love at first sight, 'we just looked at each other I mean he and I and that was it.' The *other* proves unfaithful, which is described as a Tragedy, and further into the experience, as the Expectation of Tragedy. The co-researcher makes several Attempts to Leave the *other* and the country; subsequently, her failure to leave is expressed as Paradoxical Misery and Physical Misery. She is torn between loving the *other* and knowing that he can only bring her physical pleasure and Tragedy. Now, thirty years later, the co-researcher reports still thinking about the *other* every day.

The fifth co-researcher was a young woman, approximately nineteen years of age. The most remarkable moment in this interview came when the co-researcher said she became pregnant by her lover. Mixed with her mother's cancer, this experience seemed terrible and painful. The primary researcher was not surprised when this co-researcher said that she was in no hurry to fall in love again.

The fifth co-researcher describes her latest and most important experience with romantic love, which is transcribed in the Appendix, Protocol 5. The essences and meaning units derived from Protocol 5 are listed in Table 5 at the end of this chapter. By considering the essences in the context of the original protocol, the Tragedy of the co-researcher's miscarriage and her valuable Sense of Belonging to the *other* stand out as disparate and yet intertwined essences. There is also a disparity between the No Sex Pressure at the beginning of the experience and the co-researcher's being Used for Sex by the *other* at the end of the experience. The central Tragedy of the miscarriage is both softened and confused by co-researcher's sense of Relief at not having the weight and responsibility of a child. This Relief is enhanced by the significance of the co-researcher and the *other's* Age Difference. They both attend High School, she a sophomore and he a

senior, during the experience. One essence, Approval Due to Comparison, raises more questions than it explains when the co-researcher says that more Tragedy occurred in previous experiences. Used for Sex, Drugs and Alcohol, Fear, and Fear of Loss might not only be essential to this experience but indicative of the deeper level of pain and suffering essential to the co-researcher's previous experiences.

The sixth co-researcher spoke in a very steady and even tone. Her interview was the easiest to transcribe due to the very even pace she kept throughout the interview. The co-researcher seemed to have a very specific prototype for love, which she used to measure the experience she was describing. The primary researcher was never satisfied with an understanding of the co-researcher's reasons for concern over her *lover's* ethnicity. The primary researcher was concerned and suspicious over the co-researcher and her *other's* moving from relative to relative. The primary researcher suspected the *lover* wanted to continually change residences in order to postpone marriage and commitment, and that the co-researcher had been convinced without realizing it.

The sixth co-researcher describes an ongoing experience with romantic love, which is transcribed in the Appendix, Protocol 6. The essences and meaning units derived from Protocol 6 are listed in Table 6 at the end of the Results chapter. By considering the essences in the context of the original protocol, the role of a Lack of Knowledge about the *other* and the *other's* Positive Change over Time dominate the co-researcher's experience. The Occupation and personality Type of the *other* are important to the co-researcher as she increasingly Learns Personal Information about him throughout the experience. Positive Change comes as the co-researcher learns more about the *other*, the Differences between her and the *other* decrease, and they eventually become Engaged to be Married. Changes in the *other* include quitting smoking, working two jobs, moving in with the co-researcher, Cohabitation, and spending less time with his friends. Each of these changes assuage the co-researcher's Expectation of Tragedy, 'maybe he's just a jerk...' The experience is positive and ongoing, while the co-researcher

begins to relax her guard against surprises, relating to the personality Type of the *other*.

Descriptions

Each of the co-researchers describe either themselves, the person they love, the *other*, or both. Four of the co-researchers use chronological age, sometimes emphasizing the similarity or difference between their age and the *other's* age, as a descriptor. The essential structure, Type, describes a person's personality or differences between personalities. Nationality is a descriptor and a reason for the co-researcher's attraction to the *other*. The co-researchers use Comparisons to describe themselves and the *other*. They also use Physical Attractions to describe the *other*. In describing their experiences, the co-researchers describe themselves and the *other*.

Four of the six co-researchers, the first, third, fourth and fifth, include Age as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Age, includes the essences Age (Table 1), Age at the Time of Activity (Table 3), Similar Age (Table 4), and Age Difference (Table 5).

Four of the six co-researchers, the first, second, fifth and sixth, include Type as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Type, includes the essences Type (Tables 1,2, 5 and 6), Common Types (Table 2), Safety in Common Types (Table 2), and Difference of Type (Table 6).

Two of the six co-researchers, the second and sixth, include Nationality as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Nationality, includes the essences Nationality (Table 2), Physical Attraction Due to Nationality (Table 6) and Acceptability of Nationality (Table 6).

Two of the six co-researchers, the third and fifth, include Comparison as an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Comparison, includes the essences Appreciation Due to Comparison (Table 3), Fear Due to Comparison (Table 5) and Approval Due to Comparison (Table 5).

Three of the six co-researchers, the fourth, fifth and sixth, include Physical

Attraction as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Physical Attraction, includes the essences Physical Attraction (Tables 4 and 5), Mutual Physical Attraction (Table 4), Physical Attraction Due to Nationality (Table 6).

All six co-researchers describe themselves and the *other*. The Type of personality describes by comparison, while Nationality and Comparison describe by contrast. Chronological Age and Physical Attraction are described as traits or qualities possessed by the *other*. The co-researchers use similarities and differences in describing themselves and the *other*. In conclusion, romantic love is a phenomenon experienced with another person who is identified by descriptive essences, *Descriptions*. These essences both compare and contrast the co-researcher with the *other*.

Events

Each co-researcher describes *Events* of experience within their larger experience of romantic love. The Introduction *Events* describe the co-researcher's making initial contact with the *other*. The co-researcher and the *other* participate in Activity *Events* together, within the larger experience. Tragedies are unexpected *Events* of misfortune and suffering. Co-researchers describe periods of Cohabitation with the *other*. They also include Sex *Events*, which involve sexual activity and discussions about sexual activity. These essential structures include *Events*, or episodes, shorter in duration than the overall romantic love experience.

Four of the co-researchers, the first, second, fourth and sixth, include Introduction as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Introduction, includes the essences Introduction (Tables 1,2,4 and 6) and Difficulty of Introduction (Table 6).

Four of the co-researchers, the first, second, third and sixth, include Activity as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Activity, includes the essences Activity (Tables 1,3), Meaningful Activity (Table 2), Common Activity (Table 2), Sex Activity (Table 2), Clothing for Activity (Table 3), and

Comfortable Activity (Table 6).

Five of the six co-researchers, the first, third, fourth, fifth and sixth, include Tragedy as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Tragedy, includes the essences Tragedy (Tables 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6), Expectation of Tragedy (Tables 4 and 6), Tragedy Due to Proximity (Table 5), and Tragedy of Sickness (Table 5).

Three of the six co-researchers, the fourth, fifth and sixth, include Cohabitation (Tables 4,5 and 6) as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions.

Three of the six co-researchers, the first, second, and fifth, include Sex as an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Sex, includes the essences Question about Sex (Table 1), Decision about Sex (Table 1), Exclusion of Sex (Table 1), Kind of Sex (Table 2), Sex and Alcohol (Table 2), Phone Sex (Table 2) and Time of Sex (Table 5).

These *Events* or experiences are shorter in duration than the overall experience, but they have a distinguishable beginning, middle and end, standing alone as *Events* or episodes of experience. Despite their autonomy, they are essential to understanding the romantic love experience.

Temporal Grounding

The co-researchers use time, Duration and Frequency, and Place to describe their romantic love experiences. They describe and name the locations or places where the whole experience or events occur. The duration of the romantic love experience is essential to understanding romantic love. Co-researchers describe the frequency, or how often they are in contact with the *other*. These structures ground the romantic love experiences in both time and space.

Three of the six co-researchers, the first, second and third, include Place as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Place, includes the essences Place (Tables 1, 2 and 3), Meaningful Place (Table 2), Change of

Place (Table 1) and Journey to Place (Table 2).

Two of the six co-researchers, the first and fifth, include Duration of Experience (Tables 1 and 5) as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions.

Two of the six co-researchers, the second and sixth, include Frequency of Contact (Tables 2 and 6) as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions.

Temporally Grounded essences describe where and when the romantic love experiences take place. The length of the experience, how often the co-researcher is in contact with the *other* and where the experience takes place are all essential to understanding the romantic love experience.

Emotions

Descriptions of *Emotions* or emotional behaviors are essential to understanding co-researchers' experiences of romantic love. The essential structure, Fear, describes the co-researchers' consideration of possible tragedies in the future. The essential structure, Anticipation, describes the co-researcher's consideration of contacting their *other* in the future. The essential structure, Cry, simply reflects the co-researcher's description of a behavior traditionally discussed as an emotional, physical action. These three essential structures are best understood as *Emotions*.

Two of the six co-researchers, the first and fifth, include Fear as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Fear, includes the essences Fear of Loss (Tables 1 and 5), and Fear (Table 5).

Two of the six co-researchers, the first and fourth, include Anticipation as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Anticipation, includes the essences Anticipation (Tables 1 and 4) and Anticipating Time with Nervous Excitement (Table 1).

Two of the six co-researchers, the first and fifth, include Cry as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Cry, includes the essences Cry (Table 1) and Duration of Cry Reaction (Table 5).

These three essential structures are traditionally described as *Emotions* or emotional behaviors. Both Fear and Anticipation are considerations of the future, while Fear describes the prospect of negative events or tragedies, Anticipation describes the prospect of coming into contact with the *other*. Crying, here, describes a negativity or a sadness.

Elements

The co-researcher's descriptions include essential *Elements* which give the experiences a specificity, without which they would be unrecognizable. They introduce Marriage as essential to understanding the experience. Gift is an essential structure, although the specific nature of the gift varies from jewelry to soiled undergarments. Compliment is a specific *Element* in developing the context of an essential Activity. The essential *Element*, Alcohol, also varies from an aphrodisiac to a cause of miscarriage. These *Elements* are essential to the understanding of romantic love.

Two of the six co-researchers, the fourth and sixth, include Marriage as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Marriage, includes the essences Marriage (Table 4) and Engaged to be Married (Table 6).

Three of the six co-researchers, the second, third and sixth, include Gift as an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Gift, includes the essences Sex Gift (Table 2), Acceptance of Gift (Table 3) and Gift (Tables 3 and 6).

Two of the six co-researchers, the second and third, include Compliment (Tables 2 and 3) as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions.

Three of the six co-researchers, the second, third and fifth, include Alcohol as an essence and an essential structure in their descriptions. The essential structure, Alcohol, includes the essences Alcohol (Table 3), Sex and Alcohol (Table 2) and Drugs and Alcohol (Table 5).

These essential structures are *Elements* or ingredients of the romantic love experience. Each *Element* varies considerably within their individual protocols, yet they

are essential to understanding the experience of the respective co-researchers. *Elemental* essential structures best represent the importance of specific details in understanding the co-researcher's experiences.

Primary Researcher's Presuppositions

The five essences presupposed by the primary researcher, which are in common with the co-researcher's protocols, are found in four of the co-researcher's five meaningful groups, including *Descriptions*, *Events*, *Emotions*, and *Elements*. These five are a small minority compared to the total of forty essences describing meaning units derived from the primary researcher's protocol. Some notable exceptions include God, Life Commitment and Volition. *Temporal Grounding* is the only essential structure not found among the primary researcher's presuppositions.

The primary researcher presupposes that Physical Attraction is an essential structure of romantic love. The essential structure, Physical Attraction, is represented by the primary researcher's essences which include Physical Attraction, Results of Physical Attraction, Insufficiency of Physical Attraction and the Necessity of Physical Attraction. Physical Attraction, found in the *Descriptions* group, is essential to the way co-researchers describe the *other*, and it is also necessary to the primary researcher's understanding of romantic love.

The primary researcher presupposes that Sex is an essential structure of romantic love. The Primacy of Sex (Table 7) is essential to the primary researcher's description of an experience which is similar to a romantic love experience but is not a romantic love experience. Sex, found in the *Events* group, is an essential *Event* within the co-researcher's romantic love experience.

The primary researcher presupposes that Fear is an essential structure of romantic love. Fear, found in the *Emotions* group, is essential to the co-researcher's experiences and to the primary researcher's description of failure to commit to the other. The primary

researcher presupposes that **Anticipation** is an essential structure of romantic love. The essential structure, **Anticipation**, is represented by the primary researcher's essences which include **Anticipation** and **Physical Anticipation**. **Anticipation**, also found in the *Emotions* group, is an emotion essential to the co-researchers and the primary researcher.

The primary researcher presupposes that **Marriage** is an essential structure of romantic love. The essential structure, **Marriage**, is represented by the primary researcher's essence, **Marriage is Sacrament**. **Marriage**, found in the *Elements* group, is a specific element of the co-researcher's and the primary researcher's experiences.

The notable exceptions, a selection of essences from the primary researcher's presuppositions not found among the co-researcher's protocols, represent the kind of ideas the primary researcher had to hold firmly in abeyance or bracket. The primary researcher describes romantic love as an expression of God's love for humanity. **Marriage as Sacrament**, an essence found in common with the co-researcher's protocols, betrays the depth and breadth of the primary researcher's bedding of romantic love with Godly love; wherefore, a sacrament is a symbol of God's grace and marriage is one of God's outward signs of His love of the church. The **Life Commitment** and the **Volition** necessary to make commitments, two more essences, are indissoluble from the sacrament of marriage as evidenced by traditional wedding vows.

In conclusion, the primary researcher presupposes that **Physical Attraction**, **Sex**, **Fear**, **Anticipation** and **Marriage** are essential to the experience of romantic love. The primary researcher's protocol includes essential structures, such as the **Primacy of Sex**, which are examples of simply romantic experiences rather than romantic love experiences. **Primacy of Sex** is essential to the primary researcher's understanding of romantic experiences, but it is not essential to the experience of romantic love. This is an attempt by the primary researcher to find the boundary of romantic love experiences. Some of the presuppositional essences, such as **God** and **Life Commitment**, form a meaningful group which is not evidenced in the protocols of the co-researchers. The

primary researcher did not presuppose that the co-researcher's essential experience of time and place, *Temporal Grounding*, is essential.

Table 1 Essences and Meaning Units of Protocol1

Essences	Meaning Units
Age	I was a teen
Place	This was in Greenville North Carolina
Introduction	A mutual friend had said that she thought I was cute
Type	I was a like a kind of rebel renegade long haired character and she was like very principled conservative Christian
Formal Rite of Passage	We went to the prom together
Anticipation	I was just anticipating you know the time that I'd be with her
Anticipating Time with Nervous Excitement	I remember the kind of like the nervous energy and the angst I'd feel and the excitement too wow you know I'd finally get to see her so many hours out of the week
Time	We'd get together like on weekends or the weekdays after school
Activity	We went out to eat a couple times spent some holidays together
Duration of Experience	I think the whole relationship lasted...couldn't have been much longer than six months.
Tragedy	She found out that she had ovarian cancer
Withdrawal	Her reaction to me was a pulling away or a sort of withdrawal
Cry	I might have even broken down in tears a couple times
Change of Place	My dad found out that he was going to be transferred to a whole nother state.
Tragic Mistake	I was picking her up on a date and I was a little late and she hated that she liked to be real punctual
Appeasement	And so I kind of wanted to kind of make it up to her so I went in to this flower store in the mall I ran in real quick and I wanted to surprise her with some flowers there was this big long line to get the flowers so I waited and waited and waited and she was waiting

(table continues)

Essences	Meaning Units
Tragic Mistake	I came out with the flowers and she was just pissed she said I can't believe you made me wait twenty some minutes or something and she was like just take me home
Kidnapping	I didn't want to take her home so I drove her as far away from home as I could
Upset over Tragic Mistake	She said you know you better take me home this is getting serious you know you could tell by her tone of voice she was getting real upset
Resolve	So finally I took her home
Fear of Loss	Oh, I didn't want to let her go, I did not want to let this woman go
Change of Place	That one day after I was late we never got back together and I moved
Question about Sex	She said something to the effect of you know should we do it now to have something to remember or should we wait to have something to look forward to
Decision about Sex	I said oh most surely we should do it now to have something to remember
Exclusion of Sex	We never did

Table 2 Essences and Meaning Units of Protocol 2

Essences	Meaning Units
Journey to Place	I went to this place called the quit net
Introduction	I was on in a chat room and there was this girl on and just something clicked
Meaningful Activity	she'd finish my words before I got to type them
Meaningful Place	we got into a private chat room and we were just open
Common Types	we found out that we have every single thing in common
Frequency of Contact	we've been talking as much as we can
Safety in Common Types	there's no fear of ever saying anything stupid because she says the same stuff
Novelty	I've never received one and she writes me them in Latin
Kind of Education	she's learned Latin and Ancient Greek
Type	She's real cerebral
Nationality	she's Czech
Kind of Meaningful Place	she started up a her own like chat room kind of area so it's private and it's done in real time so you can actually see as you type
Common Activity	we finish each other's sentences all the time
Kind of Sex	we got into the cyber sex aspect of fantasy
Sex Activity	I made her climax through my words like all day and she mailed me the panties
Sex Gift	Opened up the package and there was a note and her panties
Sex and Alcohol	we were getting drunk and horny so we just start talking dirty I have her panties on my head
Place	I'm in the H L
Sex Activity	you know the lights are off I'm in there and she wants me to take my cock out and I can't say no she wants to just tell me what she's going to do with me and I'm thinking I need lube I need lube and I didn't have any and I forage around in the lounge and I

(table continues)

Essences	Meaning Units
	find a first aid kit and I see this stuff called burn gel yeah I didn't I was desperate
Sex Activity	there I am just stroking with burn gel reading her words
Surprise	after about ten minutes my cock goes numb
Surprise	I read the ingredients benzocaine 5%
Common Activity	the L closed I still didn't even leave no one knew I was in there and we were typing away just both drunk both happy both in love
Sex Gift	I made another film of pretty much a mating dance of me making love to her panties
Creativity	poetry's been flowing out of me
Volume of Creativity	by the time I wake up and get onto the computer I already have three in my head
Elevated Mood	she just inspires me I mean at night I can't sleep because I've got so much in my head and I'm transmitting to her and make her dance in her dreams I mean she tells me and it's exactly like what I'm thinking
Planning a Meeting	I'm right now just thinking about how I can get to Oklahoma City
Phone Sex	Last night we had the most incredible phone sex and made me come and she said I made the most beautiful sounds
Compliment	she was just talking about the way she loved me

Table 3 Essences and Meaning Units of Protocol 3

Essences	Meaning Units
Age at Time of Activity	I was twenty-one I think it was Valentines it was definitely Valentines Day
Clothing for Activity	I went to pick her up and of course you know I was dressed up in a very nice suit
Gift	I had a dozen roses to give her and I got her
Smell	she smelled really good
Clothing Color	she wore a black dress
Physique	she's the same size as me so she's you know she's a very muscular girl I mean she's an athlete
Physique	her cleavage kind of showed
Smell	me having my cologne on and her having her perfume on
Place	this was in Alaska
Season	this was in the middle of winter
Temperature	we're talking and can see the breath
Location	we're driving to this really nice restaurant
Place	it's a very expensive restaurant prime rib and lobster
Tragedy	I got pulled over and got a ticket by a woman
Recognition	the people were the way we were being treated by the waitress
Alcohol	Ordered some wine to go with the meal some type of Chardonay
Sound	the light music
Smell	smelled the roast beef
Appearance in Common	she's got hazel green eyes like mine
Gift	I gave her was a ring it was a purple heart
Activity	we go to a little dance club and we dance for a couple of hours

(table continues)

Essences	Meaning Units
Sharing	we shared each others food even though we had the same food
Preparation	Of course I took that day off of work so that I could prepare
Preparation	I got my hair done
Style in Preparation	I decided to go ahead and get my hair done and highlighted
Duration of Preparation	I had to spend like two hours looking for clothes
Preparation of Gift	I reserved the flowers so I had to go and make sure those were done
Clothing Style	it was a jacket and a pair of slacks I had a purple silk shirt so it went with the outfit so it was black and then purple and of course it was like black pin dotted you know pin striped but with dots
Social Position	I mean of course I'm twenty-one years old I'm carrying around a wad of cash I mean I'm going to get pampered
Duration of Preparation	it took me a week to plan out
Magnitude of Preparation	Flowers hair car you know car had to be detailed and in Alaska at forty below you don't just wash your car you have to take it someone so they can clean it
Appreciation	she's smiling because you gave her flowers and the clothes oh you like nice you smell good you shaved finally
Appreciation Due to Comparison	my car hasn't been cleaned in about three months so nor do I wear very nice clothes
Appreciation Due to Comparison	I shave once a week
Social Position	it's a well known restaurant in the city
Compliment	people saying oh your date looks nice and she's getting complimented for me and at the same time people are complimenting me for her
Monetary Cost	I probably spent five or six hundred dollars on that evening
Monetary Cost	the ring the ring cost another four or five hundred bucks

(table continues)

Essences	Meaning Units
Monetary Cost	the meal itself cost almost two hundred dollars well with the wine and the lobster
Monetary Cost	with the gratuity and all that stuff two hundred bucks is what I spent for two people
Acceptance of Gift	she wore her ring and I took her home and kissed her good night
Social Position	I was twenty-one years old and I had spent four years in the army and I'm in college getting my degree in civil engineering
Tragedy	the wine glasses I mean for goodness sakes I notice these things they were always empty I had to pour my own wine
Monetary and Legal Cost	the speeding ticket too which cost me I think it was an additional seventy-five dollars four points against my record
Retribution	when it came to gratuity time I noted it
Tragedy	tears are in my eyes I got a speeding ticket
Tragedy	when I got back into my car I had tears in my eyes I started crying for her and she wouldn't rip up the ticket

Table 4 Essences and Meaning Units of Protocol 4

Essences	Meaning Units
Similar Age	when I was very young I was in love with a young man the same age as me
Exclusion	I didn't marry him
Similar Age	I was twenty and he was twenty
Marriage	We were together for over three years he wanted to get married
Tragedy	he was unfaithful he just loved the girls and they loved him
Expectation of Tragedy	I could see it was going to be disaster but I it was very difficult to break away I mean because I was very much in love but I didn't want to spend my life with him I knew it would be torture
Introduction	I was introduced by a girlfriend of mine
Physical Attraction	we just looked at each other I mean he and I and that was it
Lack of Concern	I didn't care anything about anything I didn't care if he was working or not working or what he was
Anticipation	I couldn't wait for the evening to arrive so that I could be with him again
Tragedy	he used to go off with somebody else and I would find out about it
Attempts to Leave	I would leave him I left him so many times
Attempts to Leave	I would leave him for a few weeks and he would call me or I would call him
Attempts to Leave	I left the country I actually left England and I went to live in Italy for six months
Tragic Return	when I came back I still wanted him after six months and he still wanted me but he was living with someone else then
Successful Attempt to Leave	I left again I went off to the far east with a girlfriend that's where I met my husband
Engagement	he handed me a card showing me that he was engaged

(table continues)

Essences	Meaning Units
Cohabitation	we didn't actually live together
Tragedy	he would go off with somebody and I would find out about it and I'd be furious and split up and find someone new again and the next week we were together
Paradoxical Misery	I was miserable with him and I was miserable without him
Physical Misery	it was an actual physical miserable feeling
Speculative Misery	I was miserable without him I was wondering what he was doing and sometimes I'd ring up and see if he answered the phone
Speculative Misery	I'd look for his car
Curiosity	I still wanted to know everything he was doing
Mutual Physical Attraction	we were very physically attracted

Table 5 Essences and Meaning Units of Protocol 5

Essences	Meaning Units
Duration of Experience	I was with one guy for like two years
Age	I was like fifteen and I broke up when I was about seventeen
Physical Attraction	He was like my best friends brother and he was older than me and he was really cute
Initiative	I was like go for it
Fear	I was kind of scared about it
Fear	Scared about being hurt because
Fear Due to Comparison	By him because of previous incidences that had happened to me
Mutual Interest	I was like hey your brother's pretty cute sort of thing you know and he was interested
Type	he was kind of a wimp when it came to me I guess I was the more dominant one
Age Difference	he was two years older than me and he was he was graduating from high school and you know I was still going to be in high school
Possibility of Separation	he wanted to go to a college out of state
Tragedy Due to Proximity	he ended up staying here and actually getting with one of my friends pretty soon afterwards
Approval Due to Comparison	he never hurt me never did anything bad to me like I've kind of been used to from other people in the past
Return with Regret	a month later he came back and was like you know I made the biggest mistake of my life
Used for Sex	he was using me for sex for about two days and then decided to just cut it off
Duration of Cry Reaction	I cried for about two months straight
Change of Disposition	in pictures here I never smiled and then I was smiling
Sociability Change	it totally it drew me out of my shell

(table continues)

Essences	Meaning Units
Physical Attraction	I was very happy because he was very good looking and all of my friends wanted him
No Sex Pressure	he didn't pressure me for sex
Time of Sex	we did have sex not too long after we got together
No Sex Pressure	he wasn't pushy
Fear of Loss	I was like scared that if anything did happen then it would effect me and my friends relationship
Pregnancy	I had gotten pregnant
Drugs and Alcohol	I was experimenting with a lot of different things and drinking
Tragedy	I had a miscarriage from it
Failure	we were using protection but it just wasn't enough
Relief	I was kind of relieved because I don't know what I would have done if it had actually gone through
Tragedy of Sickness	my mother's sick my mother has got cancer
Sense of Belonging	I would just be like what is there if I don't have my mom but like looking at him I was like there's something you know that I would be willing to spend my time and effort and you know and want to be with
Sense of Belonging	knowing that I belonged to something too
Desire to be Desired	I also wanted to be wanted by somebody
Cohabitation	he was like staying with me for awhile

Table 6 Essences and Meaning Units of Protocol 6

Essences	Meaning Units
Occupation	I worked there for a while as a hostess
Occupation	I saw this guy and he was a buser
Name	his name is D
Lack of Knowledge	I didn't know nothing about him
Physical Attraction Due to Nationality	I thought he was kind of cute but I didn't know what nationality he was because he kind of looked Hispanic and he was Italian and he was dark haired tall dark eyes and he looked cute
Physical Attraction Due to Nationality	I like Italians but just the way he looked he looked I don't know he just looked tall and handsome and he had dark hair and dark eyes
Difficulty of Introduction	I just went up to him one day and asked him what his name was and he didn't even tell me
Type	he doesn't talk a lot
Introduction	I want to know what your name is I'm just getting to know everybody's name and he's like it's D why what's yours and I'm like C
Lack of Knowledge	I didn't really know like the inside of him
Learned Personal Information	he told me about him he was like he was going to school too and he was working there full time and he was living with his dad
Control of Information	I gave it to him but I didn't give it to him right then I gave it to him after like at the door like right when I left I just gave him a little note and put a kiss mark on it with my phone number
Acceptability of Nationality	he told me he was Italian and I didn't know I thought he was Hispanic but he wasn't so that was cool
Expectation of Tragedy	he would probably be this jerk or this mean person but he didn't seem mean
Comfortable Activity	after miniature golfing I felt a lot more comfortable
Gathering Information	we talked about like more personal stuff

(table continues)

Essences	Meaning Units
Kiss	we kissed on the rock
Gift	when he first came and picked me up he gave me roses
Frequency of Contact	we started to go out more and we like talked to each other mostly on the phone because our schedules were kind of on top of each other so we talked to each other on the phone
Lack of Knowledge	I didn't really know him
Type	he was kind of a kind of a partier person
Type	he hung out with the boys a lot like he did the boy stuff like drank and did all that boy stuff
Difference of Type	I can't leave that late at night
Warning Expectation	I've been out with a lot of jerks and if you're going to be a jerk just tell me right now because I don't want to be with you if you are
Agreement Date	he had told me the week before that we were going to go do something on a specific day and he had to set time aside to do that and I had to set time aside to do it and it fell on a Wednesday
Tragedy	we had plans to do that and I called him earlier in the day just to make sure like what time he was going to pick me up and he canceled
Expectation of Tragedy	maybe he's just a jerk maybe he's going to do this from now on
Difference of Type	I stay home a lot you know and do what I have to do so and he was more of an out person he was always out no matter what time
Positive Change	the more time he was with me the less and less he was seeing his friends and going out
Difference	he smoked and I don't like smoking
Date of Positive Change	by January he had stopped smoking
Cohabitation	he moved in with me in March into my parent's house
Engaged to be Married	we plan on getting married in like six months so we're engaged in six months

(table continues)

Positive Change over Time

he's made changes like he focuses all of his time with me and we're spending more time together

Positive Change

he works two jobs

Table 7 Essences and Meaning Units of Primary Researcher's Presuppositions

Essences	Meaning Units
Romantic Love Is an Idea	romantic love and eros to be indistinguishable ideas
Concern for the Other	person experiencing a strong concern for another person, the other
Emotion Toward Other	a fundamental, deeply felt emotional reaction towards the other
Concern for the Other	the personal welfare of the other
Physical Attraction	a feeling of physical attraction
God	the most perfect experience of God on earth takes place in the erotic dialogue between a man and woman
Exclusion	to exclude all other people as possibilities for erotic involvement
Life Commitment	to make a life-long commitment to the other
Romantic Experience is Private	a private and deeply personal experience
Commitment is Public	a public expression of their mutual commitment
Marriage is Sacrament	marriage is a sacrament of the Church
Commitment is Public	a personal commitment to each other before God and the world
Responsibility	a responsibility to provide for the physical, sexual and spiritual needs of the other
Heterosexual	a man and a woman meet and fall in love
Volitionless	Love is a state that one finds oneself in
Volitionless	One cannot fall in love through a force of will
Volition	the conscious free will to pursue and develop that state of love
Lack of Commitment	an uncommitted relationship
Lack of Commitment	to actively discover or create reasons for ending the love relationship
Primacy of Sex	a primarily physical relationship

(table continues)

Essences	Meaning Units
Primacy of Sex	perceptions regarding the quality and quantity of physical intercourse
Volition of Commitment	the choice to either commit to the love relationship or not
Commitment	the benefits of committing to the other
Lack of Responsibility	a rejection of being responsible for the other's safety and nurturance
Providing for Self	providing for one's own daily stability
Providing for Other	the regular fulfillment of sexual needs, financial security, and emotional support
Anxiety	anxiety over the uncertainty of a relationship
Tradition	traditionally scripted roles and responsibilities
Anxiety	anxiety over the protracted consideration of commitment
Fear	a fear of falling out of love
Fear and Anger	the fear of losing the other leads to anger
Commitment	once the person realizes that they are in love, commitment is the only viable option
Lack of Commitment	The lack of commitment leads to anger, jealousy and a lack of life-satisfaction
Intent	conscious intent
Anticipation	One continually imagines the other, fantasizing over conversations, chance meetings, living in a future with the other, and sexual relations with the other
Physical Anticipation	one anticipates seeing or meeting with the other, heart rate and perspiration increases
Results of Physical Attraction	Thoughts about sexual relations with the other cause the body to prepare for intercourse
Results of Physical Attraction	an increase in blood flow to the sexual organs, lubrication in women and penile erection in men
Insufficiency of Physical Attraction	physical attraction and arousal are not sufficient conditions for romantic love, they are necessary conditions
Necessity of Physical Attraction	Love without physical desire is better described as brotherly love, storge

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Six essential structures of the co-researchers' lived-romantic-love-experiences, including Physical Attraction, Activities, Tragedy, Sex, Marriage and Gift, are compared to related examples from the review of romantic love literature. The vast number of essences, one hundred and sixty-one, and the variety of essences, from Paradoxical Misery to Age, determine the conclusions relative to the meaning of romantic love. Giorgi (1997) promotes the search for one essence, while the present research discovers a great number and variety of essences. The implications include support for a phenomenological inquiry into romantic love due to its inclusion of seldom discussed but truly essential structures. Further research should recognize the variety of lived-experiences and the essential nature of less discussed aspects of romantic love, especially Fear, Cry, Anticipation and Compliment.

Some Essential Structures and Previous Research

The essential structure, Physical Attraction, is a common theme throughout the literature. Specifically, Hendrick and Hendrick (1989) discuss strong and positive components which include arousal, intensity, intimacy and excitement. Arousal and Physical Attraction are similar if not the same essences. Physical Attraction is evident in the three female co-researcher's protocols, specifically the fourth, fifth and sixth co-researchers.

From the *Events* group, four of the co-researchers describe Activities which they participated in with the *others*. Activities or Routine Activities are described by Prentice,

Briggs and Bradley (1983). Routine Activities included attending church and prayer groups and holding hands, while the Activities of the four co-researchers includes finishing the other's sentences, sharing time around the holidays and going to dance clubs. Also from the *Events* group, Tragedy is any experience of unforeseen suffering. The co-researcher's describe an *other* with cancer, a miscarriage, and an unfaithful *other*. The clearest example of tragedy is Peele's (1988) discussion of Jane's surprise at Mr. Bingley's sudden lack of interest in Pride and Prejudice. That is a Tragedy. Among Rosenblatt's (1967) list of eleven criteria, item h, 'evidence of suicide or unrequited love,' is a Tragedy criterion. At the borders of this essence, Lewis, Amini and Lannon (2000) list Tragedy as a reason people bring their romantic love experiences to psychotherapy.

Again from the *Events* group, Sex is an essential structure of three of the co-researcher's experiences. They talked about Sex, decided not to have Sex, and had cyber-Sex while drinking (the second co-researcher's essence, Sex and Alcohol, found in the *Elements* group). Most notably, Prentice, Briggs and Bradley (1983) describe Drugs as a subtype of their second of three dimensions, Sexual Behavior. Within that sub-category, Drugs, alcohol is given as an example (p. 815). They also include Aberrant Sex within their dimension, Sexual Behavior. Prentice, Briggs and Bradley's category would certainly encompass the cyber-fantasy activities of the second co-researcher. The second co-researcher also performs sex acts in a public place, and therefore qualifies for their sub-category, Aberrant Sex.

The essential structure, Marriage, is described by two of the co-researchers, the fourth and the sixth. They describe the *other* marrying someone else, arguably a Tragedy, and an engagement to be Married to an *other*. Rubin (1973) includes Marriage in his definition of romantic love, writing that this type of love progresses toward Marriage. The primary researcher also include Marriage within his understanding of romantic love.

The essential structure, Gift, is found in three of the co-researchers' protocols.

The co-researchers gave the *others* purple heart rings, soiled undergarments and Christmas presents. The purple ring and the undergarments are examples of Rosenblatt's (1967) 'nonobligated gifts' from item f of his list of eleven criteria. The Christmas present may be more closely associated with Prentice, Briggs and Bradley's (1983) example of the gift of flowers from their Traditional Romance dimension.

Limitations

It is the goal of phenomenological research to find one essence or essential structure in common among all the protocols. The primary researcher did not find an essence which exists within all six protocols. One hundred and sixty-one essences and twenty essential structures derive from the six protocols. The essences are specific and faithful to the lived-experiences, yet it is difficult to draw conclusions from such a large sample. The essential structures, derived from the essences, are more manageable, and they are consistent with popular definitions of romantic love; furthermore, they are in accord with the findings presented in the review of the romantic love literature. The primary researcher is limited to presenting these findings as descriptions for consideration rather than as necessary conditions of the phenomenon, romantic love.

Implications

The romantic love literature supports the majority of the descriptions presented in the previous chapter, especially the descriptions of Physical Attraction, Sex and Marriage in the lived-romantic-love-experience. Simply, any description or definition of romantic love requires attending to the physical aspects and the possibility of commitment. Some researchers deny the importance of commitment (Sternberg, 1988), but the very denial of its role belies its importance to an understanding of the subject. This study supports describing romantic love with Simple Activities, such as a walk in the park and the giving of Gifts, which are also traditional descriptions of romantic love.

The most important contribution made in the present research is the inclusion of descriptions of the more ordinary aspects of romantic love. The review of the romantic love literature lacked an emphasis on ordinary and egative descriptions of romantic love. In the move to provide a more complete description of romantic love, these conclusions add ordinary descriptions, such as Activities, and negative descriptions, such as Cry and Fear. *Descriptions* of the *other's* Age, the first meeting, or the Introduction of the *lover* and the *other*, the specific Places romantic love experiences occur, and the Frequency of Contact between the *lover* and the *other* are important for an essential understanding of the co-researchers' experiences. Fear, Cry and Used for Sex are examples of essential structures that Berscheid (1988) might have described as lemons among the oranges and apples of Sex and Marriage. Compliment and Anticipation are intuitively important essences of romantic love, yet they are regularly overlooked by researchers.

Researchers should attempt to be honest and open to these unexpected essences. Researchers should also be open to finding a variety of essences and essential structures rather than one defining essence. Most questionnaires and surveys focus on an idealized romantic love, while these results indicate that pain and sorrow are as inexorably related to romantic love as is Physical Attraction. The variety of essences may be valuable to psychotherapists as they work with diverse people with diverse experiences. As psychology seeks to describe the human experience, it is important that the conclusions and the details affirm the reality of people's lives and loves.

APPENDIX

Protocol 1

PR: I'm really not looking for anything more than your experience as best you understand it.

CR: But you want a subjective description of it?

PR: That's right

CR: OK...well I think we'll start with the first one the first love that would be M...um gosh...I think I was about...I was a teen of course...somewhere in between fourteen and seventeen and this was in Greenville North Carolina and a mutual friend had said that she thought I was cute or something like that and so...

PR: A mutual friend said that M thought you were cute?

CR: You know I don't even know how we got together at first...but we did.

PR: Got together as in...

CR: We went out on a date...we were introduced...let's see how do I describe it...well here's what was weird about this is I was a like a kind of rebel renegade long haired character and she was like very principled conservative Christian...good influence on me. So we started going out talking on the phone all that sort of thing and man before I knew it I was in love it didn't take long and uh you know we went to the prom together. We didn't actually spend that much time together because she was pretty busy so a lot of times I was just anticipating you know the time that I'd be with her so I remember the kind of like the nervous energy and the angst I'd feel and the excitement too wow you know I'd finally get to see her so many hours out of the week. That sort of thing.

PR: Was it in school that you would see her?

CR: I didn't see her that much in high school. We'd get together like on weekends or the weekdays after school. We went out to eat a couple times spent some holidays together. It was pretty brief in retrospect. I think the whole relationship lasted...couldn't have been much longer than six months.

PR: So this was briefer than other experiences with love that you've had since then?

CR: Pretty much. Most of my other relationships my serious relationships have lasted longer.

PR: Do you remember that point at which you realized you were in love with her?

CR: ...You know I can't really say I did until after the fact. And then...we parted...we didn't part on good terms. What had happened was during the course of our relationship she found out that she had ovarian cancer.

PR: She had a what?

CR: Ovarian cancer.

PR: Wow.

CR: And this caused a strong emotional reaction with her. And her reaction to me was a pulling away or a sort of withdrawal.

PR: What was that like...she wasn't?

CR: Poetically speaking it was like being it was like having a black cloud constantly even when the sun was shining. You know being your first real love experience and this person was like so important and the priority in your life and then they suddenly tell you...you know I don't really want to see you anymore at a tender age when you're a teen. It was pretty difficult and I was basically pretty depressed.

PR: That's what she said that she didn't want to see you anymore?

CR: Yeah.

PR: And you're feeling associated with that was depression?

CR: Oh yeah.

PR: What was that like?

CR: Just kind of real gloomy mopy sad. I might have even broken down in tears a couple times in school and tried not to make it real obvious. We did still kind of communicate. And then what came up was...shortly after that my dad found out that he was going to be transferred to a whole nother state.

PR: This was shortly after she told you that she had the cancer and didn't want to see you any more?

CR: Right so we had resolved...well sort of...and got back together...

PR: Oh, you did?

CR: After a period of time, right...OK...and then this whole issue about me leaving came about and so I was like well are we going to stay in touch you know what are we going to be doing about this you know I'm going to be moving and basically what happened was one day I remember this very clearly I was picking her up on a date and I was a little late and she hated that she liked to be real punctual, right? And so I kind of wanted to kind of make it up to her so I went in to this flower store in the mall I ran in real quick and I wanted to surprise her with some flowers there was this big long line to get the flowers so I waited and waited and waited and she was waiting and I came out with the flowers and she was just pissed she said I can't believe you made we wait twenty some minutes or something and she was like just take me home and I didn't want to take her home so I drove her as far away from home as I could.

PR: Wow! So you mean you had picked her up late and then you had taken her to a flower store and made her wait at the flower store and then she said she just wanted to go home? Wow. OK. So you just took her as far away from home as you could get?

CR: Drove her away. It was a big mess. She said you know you better take me home this is getting serious you know you could tell by her tone of voice she was getting real upset. So finally I took her home.

PR: What was your feeling during all of this?

CR: Oh, I didn't want to let her go, I did not want to let this woman go. So I think kind of behind the scenes there was that issue about the she was real concerned about having children I remember so that's where this ovarian cancer came into play. And then the fact that I was late and then the fact that I was going to be moving. So that one day after I was late we never got back together and I moved. And I was really really upset. But I called her like years later and felt like I hadn't resolved some of the issues. She was real nice.

PR: You felt like you resolved it with her on the phone?

CR: Yeah I felt more at peace about things like I know that when I had to move and I didn't really get to see her and I didn't even get to see her before I left she didn't want to see me and I didn't get to express myself. And I was just totally totally bummed. And here I was in a new place I didn't know anybody you know I was in a new school and I was just depressed all over again, you know it just didn't do anything good for me.

PR: What can you describe getting back together with her after she realized she had the cancer and you broke up?

CR: Yeah.

PR: What was that like?

CR: Even after she came around it was still a pretty touchy situation. And I think that was still having an effect on events like with being late and her not wanting to see me and that sort of thing. I'm not sure what ever happened with that if she got it cured or what happened.

PR: So when you called her after you had moved years later you felt like that you did resolve things between the two of you over the phone?

CR: Oh yeah.

PR: What kinds of things did you resolve, what did you feel like you had to say to her, was there something you had to hear or say?

CR: Well after so much time had passed it was nice just to talk to her again and she had her own life and I said I still think about you sometimes even though it was you know I had already been married actually and I called her you know out of curiosity because I thought she was such a great person.

PR: So she was married when you called her?

CR: No, I was. I was married and called her and I was actually able to get in touch with her and I said we kind of you know we kind of touched on old times like you know like remember how we used to do so and so and she was like yeah. And she said yeah I still think about you sometimes too. And I was really surprised by this because I didn't think she would. And I think to me I would have really liked to continue the relationship with M because I really wasn't happy with the person I was with at the time.

PR: You weren't happy with the person you were with at the time?

CR: No as a matter of fact the person I was with that relationship didn't work out. But this first relationship with M I think it was all in all I think it was good and I think it was a nice template to match other things she was a good person to use as a standard because I think she was a great person. That's what I remember most about her she was just very influential on my thinking as kind of a I think she was almost more like a guide that the God or the Universe put there for me to help me through the hard times I was going through.

PR: So you had been going through hard times before you had met her?

CR: Oh yeah I had been moving several times I was the new kid in high school you know we were moving around quite a bit from state to state and I was having trouble dealing with this and she was just kind of...you know the teens are already a frustrating time and she just kind of put me at ease and when she was present she was she was able to listen and give advice she was stern too that's what I remember about her. She was like you're going to do this because it's good for you otherwise you're going to make me angry and I respected that.

PR: So how do you feel now looking back on that?

CR: I'm glad she was that way, I am. I don't know what to say here.

PR: Well that sounds like a good description of an experience.

CR: Good. I picked first love because I don't think it was something I'll ever forget. I don't know if people a lot of times make a go of it with their first love. I think in relationships a lot of difficulties arise maybe there's uncertainties or insecurities where if we had stayed together through the geographical move there probably would have been other problems that would have arose and we probably would have broke up but the way I see it I was still on the road traveling and you know trying to find myself and do some spiritual or soul searching or whatever I think she was a kind of a guide not a place to stay but a stop along the way. But I'd like to see her see how she's doing out of curiosity today not necessarily because I want to have a relationship with her but just because I liked her so much. Hey how ya doing nice to see you again nice to see you're doing well that sort of thing. I think the thing that made it difficult too was when you're a teenager you just haven't had enough experience you're full of sexual angst you're full of angst concerning the world and yourself hormonal problems and this sort of thing and I think it's a really tender tough time to have a relationship too.

PR: So you think you had sexual desires during your time with her that influenced it?

CR: Oh yeah. I don't think sex was the defining factor in the relationship though. I think it was just two kindred souls who had a chemistry and were compatible.

PR: Did you have any kind of physical relationship with her?

CR: Yeah but we didn't have sex it was I remember when we left or like before I parted or like before that last time I made her mad and she decided that she was gonna cut me off so to speak that's what I felt like, like I was cut off by the way. It's starting to come back to me. We were talking about it you know.

PR: Talking about?

CR: Talking about having sex you know she was very upright very moral like I said she

was Christian coming from a Christian background and she said something to the effect of you know should we do it now to have something to remember or should we wait to have something to look forward to? Right, and of course this was before all the conflict came up. And I said oh most surely we should do it now to have something to remember. But she wasn't you know she was hesitant about it so we never did. I don't think it ever bothered me I was just happy to have a girlfriend I think.

PR: OK is there something else that you want to include there or do you think have described that experience?

CR: Do you?

PR: I think you have a pretty complete experience there, a good description.

CR: I think someone like M would make a great wife to somebody I just think that I met her not necessarily at the wrong time but like I said before it's a good she provides a good standard to measure up to someone that you want to have a relationship with so I'm thankful for that.

PR: Good well thank you very much I appreciate it.

Protocol 2

CR: So I have good info

PR: Cool.

CR: It's sexy man.

PR: all right.

CR: No holds barred for ya.

PR: All right I'm ready I appreciate you doing this.

CR: The twenty-ninth?

PR: Yeah something like that. All right start wherever you want to.

CR: I don't know you find love when you're not looking for it that's the truth. At work I get a lot of computer time and on the computer just looking around on the net and seeing what kind of places there were to go and I went to this place called the quit net.

PR: The what?

CR: The quit net which is a site for people who are trying to quit smoking. You get support people post forums you get in a chat room and talk to other people going through the withdrawals going through the psychological addiction. Gives people books to read and things like that. I was on in a chat room and there was this girl on and just something clicked something she'd finish my words before I got to type them and then we got into a private chat room and we were just open it was just it was like talking to how would I refer to it I look at my sex chromosomes I have an X and a Y and she had an X and an X so she's pretty much an XX doppelganger you know that similar. We fell in love really fast.

PR: Over the internet as you were talking over the internet?

CR: Yeah. Just through time and opening up and we found out that we have every single thing in common.

PR: This was just one time that you were on the net?

CR: No we've been talking as much as we can ever since. Poetry just flows out of me it's

like I'm in a trance like I'm in the feeling itself and that's what's coming out that's what's being expressed and there's no fear of ever saying anything stupid because she says the same stuff. I've always written poems to like the special somebody since I was in sixth grade but I've never received one and she writes me them in Latin.

PR: Wow in Latin. Can you read Latin?

CR: A little bit she helps me I mean from the French I know and the Latin you go through in all science classes so yeah she's learned Latin and Ancient Greek so she could study the Classics in the original languages. She's real cerebral. Her name's B, BK from Texas she's Czech. I have a picture she mailed me a picture also. It's been giving me a chance to explore my more naughty side.

PR: Wow she's beautiful.

CR: And she's Czech.

PR: And she's going to school in Texas?

CR: In Oklahoma she lives in Oklahoma now from Texas born in Wichita Falls. It's funny because I've come into contact with her blood line before she said she has an uncle in Vegas but she doesn't know him and he has a daughter our age and I had like a nuance that somehow I knew her and she gave me her name and her name was A P and I went to Junior High with her and worked with her at W. W. with her after High School.

PR: Wow.

CR: So I mean I've come in contact with like I said with her lineage in some way so everything like that just seems to solidify and make sense and make it justified and make the love feel love.

PR: So this whole thing has been over the internet it's been conversations you've had in the chat room?

CR: Well it gets better. She has she started up a her own like chat room kind of area so it's private and it's done in real time so you can actually see as you type and everything and we finish each other's sentences all the time and then we got into the cyber sex aspect

of fantasy.

PR: What's that like?

CR: It's better than any sex you can possibly imagine it's the only thing that turns me on right now.

PR: Really?

CR: Really.

PR: Wow.

CR: And anyway I made her climax through my words like all day and she mailed me the panties...

PR: Wow!

CR: And I got them and I was waiting in the mail and I wanted to show I was so excited I had never been more excited to get a package and I borrowed my friends video camera and oh wait I'm getting ahead of myself this was last Thursday actually. She wanted to go to a concert to see her favorite band and her boyfriend that she lives with oh I didn't tell you that part but...

PR: She's living with a boyfriend?

CR: Yeah but she's moving out in a week.

PR: So she's breaking up with him?

CR: Yeah I kind of wrecked a home.

PR: Wow.

CR: Well no not wrecked it didn't it feels so right it doesn't make any difference they he's not bitter he knew that she wasn't the one for him for a long time.

PR: So you don't have any bad feelings about that?

CR: No I don't feel guilt or anything I mean just not at all. He was supposed to take her to a concert of her favorite band and he had to cancel on her and she was mad and didn't want to go by herself so I called and I well I was on line and I told her you know just play the CD and meet me at 9 your time which was 7 here so I decided I'd go get the CD of the

favorite band because she said I'd like them and I go I knew the panties would be in the mail it was Thursday she mailed them Monday I just knew it so I went and borrowed my friend's video camera and from he lives in the dorms so I walked while I filmed and just talked went to the store the Big Bs over there bought the CD of the favorite band so we could be in concert together and filmed myself walking all the way home showing her the areas with the camera there were some cops pulled up in front of my apartment H was over there singing the Bad Boys song off of the Cops.

PR: He was singing Bad Boys?

CR: No he wasn't he gave some advice he said don't speed and don't do speed. And I filmed myself walking up to the mail box opened it up and there it was the package. Opened up the package and there was a note and her panties just preserved. I didn't have much time to do anything with them there but I brought them with me went and bought three big bottles of Newcastle and went to the L. for our date had my headphones had the CD and met for the date listening to the same CD in synchrony as we typed then eventually things got heated we were getting drunk and horny so we just start talking dirty I have her panties on my head I'm in the H. L. you know the lights are off I'm in there and she wants me to take my cock out and I can't say no she wants to just tell me what she's going to do with me and I'm thinking I need lube I need lube and I didn't have any and I forage around in the lounge and I find a first aid kit and I see this stuff called burn gel yeah I didn't I was desperate. So there I am just stroking with burn gel reading her words and after about ten minutes my cock goes numb. I read the ingredients benzocaine 5%.

PR: Oh my gosh.

CR: Cracking up I mean my cock was numb for about 24 hours.

PR: Oh my gosh.

CR: But you know the L. closed I still didn't even leave no one knew I was in there and we were typing away just both drunk both happy both in love. Then finally around

eleven I had to go to the bathroom and I'm dancing in the bookshelves and the custodians see me and I play it off like I thought the L. closed at twelve and said I'd get my stuff and then we left and that on a computer was the best date I've ever had the most fulfilling enjoyable time I've ever had with anybody the most real experience. Since then as some kind of reciprocation for something as personal interpersonal as sending me her sweet unmentionables I made another film of pretty much a mating dance of me making love to her panties.

PR: What did you do set up a tripod?

CR: Yeah set up a tripod in my room and just put on a little show and finished off on the panties and mixed up our gametes. But since then it's like poetry's been flowing out of me like as we write without even thinking about it like by the time I wake up and get onto the computer I already have three in my head.

PR: You already have three poems in your head?

CR: Yeah just on the walk to school.

PR: And so are you both like writing the same poem at the same time kind of a thing?

CR: Well we play with words together we look at words the same way just as like constructions of letters basic locks and she's been like in Latin sometimes and she teaches me Latin what I didn't know and she just inspires me I mean at night I can't sleep because I've got so much in my head and I'm transmitting to her and make her dance in her dreams I mean she tells me and it's exactly like what I'm thinking. I sleep peaceful I don't even know and I feel like I'm in a dreamstate the whole day dancing I say hi to strangers I just try to be as good as I can basically.

PR: Throughout your day you're trying to be as good a person as you can be?

CR: Throughout the day the entire day yeah.

PR: Wow.

CR: And since she's so similar to me I mean we're both Aquarians and we just flow into each other.

PR: Sounds like a beautiful experience.

CR: It is it's the best thing I mean I'm right now just thinking about how I can get to Oklahoma City.

PR: That's your big goal right now is to get to Oklahoma City?

CR: Yeah like the real work in my life that I have to do I do twelve times as fast just so I can have time with her. Like she'll write one line of the poem and I'll write the next and then she'll write the next and then we'll write the same thing in a different way but the same way.

PR: Wow. Have you talked to her on the phone?

CR: The phone. Last night we had the most incredible phone sex and made me come and she said I made the most beautiful sounds.

PR: Wow. In the phone sex are you describing to each other what you're doing and what you want the other person to do? Is that the way I understand that?

CR: Actually she was just talking about the way she loved me.

PR: What's that like? Can you describe that any more?

CR: She thinks I'm Eros the god of love she's never felt this way and I haven't either. I mean I've felt love before what I've thought but I look at it now the analogy is kind of like the rest have been just flying kites trying to get that spark from a cloud but now it's like we're both building a space ship ready for launch saying t minus together we're ready to take love to the stars.

PR: Wow that's a beautiful description.

CR: We want to make love like you don't just sit in love and think it's going to take care of you you have to continually make it. It takes work but work is energy and that's the whole jewel of it you know.

PR: It's the jewel?

CR: It's a play on words. Jewels the SI unit of energy and it's a precious stone. Yeah we've been talking on the phone I don't even know how my phone bill is going to be.

PR: So you've talked on the phone multiple times not just last night?

CR: Three or four times.

PR: And this has been going on for three weeks?

CR: About six weeks.

PR: Oh wow that long. And you're e-mailing every day?

CR: Yeah like direct e-mail like immediate yeah it's the most real thing the real feeling it's like an encompassing feeling it's like through the feeling I maneuver and act out every event in my life handle my business or whatever.

PR: That's an amazing experience.

CR: I mean I've experimented with drugs MDMA codeine things that are supposed to give you a euphoria and this feeling by far is natural it's done I mean even if it's just from the oxytocin centers the hormone that forms bondship and courtship and kinship even if it's just that I mean it's a natural pharmaceutical way to happiness.

PR: Happiness. That's cool.

CR: Yeah just don't ever use benzocaine.

PR: That sounds like a whole experience does that sum it up?

CR: That sums it up in a nut shell yeah that sums it up I mean I could talk forever about it that's how it feels.

PR: Well thanks thanks for sharing I appreciate it.

CR: You got any specific questions or anything.

PR: No as long as...

CR: I mean what are you trying to get to the bottom of because I feel like I understand it all.

PR: Right. I just wanted an experience as best you can describe it your own experience as best as you can describe it. It sounds to me like you've described an experience that you've had so the feelings that you've had and...what you've done as best you understand it is what I'm looking for so I really don't want some kind of objective description of love

itself or any kind of a real explanation I'm looking for more of a description and so it sounds like that's what you have given me.

CR: Well it feels like it happened I mean you've got electricity going through circuits and you've got her computer terminal and my computer terminal and I'm touching the computer she's touching the computer and it's like some kind of electrochemical conduit somehow because I don't know how she could know what I'm thinking so well don't have even when I misspell a word or say something in a nonlinear fashion it's like I do that because I'm thinking three things and somehow I can get those three things out in one phrase and she knows and hears all three things and it's versa visa.

PR: And so how do you feel about that connection or...?

CR: I think it's the thing I've been looking for my whole life. I mean to know that there is someone just like you that you can be with makes you feel so comfortable with just being yourself because you know it's not just you.

PR: Not just you.

CR: Kind of like when people created god in a way not to feel so alone or maybe just a projection of the future of evolution and the future of mankind or the love itself to me is a divine thing and it fulfills me like I think religion a lot of people.

PR: Because you've had in communicating with her you've you don't feel alone you feel some kind of connection you feel understood?

CR: Completely understood.

PR: Cool thank you very much I appreciate it.

CR: You're welcome.

Protocol 3

PR: What I need is an experience...

CR: That I found romantic?

PR: Right some experience that you've had with romantic love.

CR: Okay this dates back when I was twenty-one I think it was Valentines it was definitely Valentines Day. It was with my ex-girlfriend who I had been dating with for dating for about six years straight from high school.

PR: Wow that's a long time.

CR: Yeah and I decided hey what the heck you know I always go out go all out with dinner the way I dress the way I clean my car and different scents and flowers and stuff like that.

PR: For Valentines Day?

CR: Oh I love it. I just love you know just the idea of being able to give and receive and you know the cuddling part toward the end you know and all that stuff.

PR: Right.

CR: The most romantic part about the evening was when I went to pick her up and of course you know I was dressed up in a very nice suit of course you know I went all out. And I had my flowers I had a dozen roses to give her and I got her into the car after I gave her the roses she put them in we walked out got her into the car and she smelled really good she wore a black dress it was I mean the girl I mean for goodness sakes she's the same size as me so she's you know she's a very muscular girl I mean she's an athlete so anyways and she was really dressedly nice I mean dressed nicely and her cleavage kind of showed and so the atmosphere was just perfect. So just the drive to the restaurant was very nice it was very pleasant in an atmospheric sense and you know me having my cologne on and her having her perfume on and just the car was the smell you know. But this was in Alaska. And this was in the middle of winter so you can imagine how cold it is. So of course you know we're talking and can see the breath.

PR: In the restaurant?

CR: In the car we're still traveling.

PR: Oh O.K.

CR: OK so anyways so we're driving to this really nice restaurant it's called the Turtle Clucks it's a very expensive restaurant prime rib and lobster that's what they're known for and I'm traveling down a hill and this is what makes it more romantic in a way I'm traveling down this hill the speed limit is fifty-five. It was too steep to be traveling any slower than I was I was basically coasting down. I was stepping on the brake and at nine o'clock at night it was pure pitch black you know you can see the tail lights in the snow and all that stuff. Sure enough there was a cop at the base of the hill. I got pulled over and got a ticket by a woman and of course...

PR: The police was a woman?

CR: Yeah the policeman uh the policewoman was a woman.

PR: The policewoman was a woman.

CR: Yeah she gave me a ticket for speeding it was my first ticket ever so I...

PR: Oh wow.

CR: Yeah what really topped it off was once we got there the people were the way we were being treated by the waitress you know because they saw that we were dressed up nice...

PR: So you were getting good service?

CR: Great service and hospitality out of this world. Ordered some wine to go with the meal some type of Chardonay and of course had to sample it (motions as if sniffing and sampling the wine) tastes great thank you. And finally after the first five minutes of sitting there in this environment where you know you have the light music atmosphere smelled the roast beef oh we love meat so smelled the roast uh prime rib we just oh let's go for it. Anyways we're talking and all that stuff and she smiles every so often and it's just her eyes she's got these really I mean she's got hazel green eyes like mine but they're

passionate you know and her eye brows just cover you know they have emotion. But anyways her facial gestures kind of got me goin' and all that stuff...

PR: Goin' as in you were aroused or...

CR: No no just happy just happy I had been dating the girl for almost six years I mean arousal is more of in a keen way I mean yes we were sexually active and stuff like that but you know that's for other time this was our romantic time this was our scene. So anyways we talk about I don't remember the conversations just anything and everything and smile and look around at people and other couples and so on and so forth. And sure enough of course the gift that I gave her was a ring it was a purple heart and it was a gold ring so it was really you know it kind of fit the occasion so it was black hills gold and then of course fourteen karat black hills gold on top and a purple heart. I'm not quite sure what kind of stone it is it's purple.

PR: But the stone was cut in the shape of a heart?

CR: That's right so I thought it was pretty neat she still has it she likes it she wears it every so often.

PR: So you're still in contact?

CR: Oh yes we're friends now we grew apart and starting at a young age eventually yeah you can imagine that two people at sixteen years old by the time they're twenty-one twenty-two they're hormonal changing they're physically changing their ideas of life and concepts are changing so we weren't compatible basically I mean we had a great time over the six years I would never give it back so. But the evening would continue on and eventually the dinner was served and all that stuff and tried to be as proper tried to conduct ourselves in a certain way because you know we're dressed up in a certain fashion so we're watching our ps and Qs and dotting our is and crossing our Ts and finally the meal is over and we decide to go dancing so up in Alaska you know you can only dance up until twelve you know places close so we go to a little dance club and we dance for a couple of hours and that was pretty much it. The part that I found most

romantic about it was the actual eating experience you know because we shared each others food even though we had the same food.

PR: So were you like serving each other like you would take a piece of food with your fork and put it in her mouth?

CR: Yes of course that wasn't like exciting for us you know it was just like I'm giving to you you're giving to me you know that's how we work it was the gesture. I got to say after spending so many years with one girl things like that high-light an evening.

PR: So for you that whole experience was romantic, the preparation and...

CR: Preparation yes good call on that. Of course I took that day off of work so that I could prepare. I got my hair done you know getting your hair done up in Alaska that's a cool thing.

PR: Why is that?

CR: Well you know number one the sun doesn't bleach out your hair up there you're only getting like sixty percent of the ultra-violet rays instead of what you're getting here so you actually go and get your hair highlighted and styled and so on and so forth and of course I've maintained the same style all my life right here ever since I was seventeen even when I was in the army and of course my dad was in the army so I've always had a certain type of hair style but you know I wanted to be an individual so I decided to go ahead and get my hair done and highlighted and then also on top of that my outfit that I wanted to wear it wasn't clean so I had to go and find another outfit and I don't like going out and buying clothes I hate it it's the worst thing ever. So I had to spend like two hours looking for clothes and of course you know I reserved the flowers so I had to go and make sure those were done oh...

PR: So you had to call ahead of time to order the flowers. You went and spent two hours and you bought new clothes what did you buy a suit or slacks and a shirt?

CR: Actually it was a two piece suit. It was it was more of well you know I'm an eighties guy so it was you know I looked good in it it was just out of date but I liked it

she loved it she liked me so. So yeah it was a jacket and a pair of slacks I had a purple silk shirt so it went with the outfit so it was black and then purple and of course it was like black pin dotted you know pin striped but with dots. You know it was a pretty neat outfit and I still fit in it even but the pants like tore a couple years ago I think it was two years ago. But it was pretty neat I was able to do that I can't imagine I mean she must have spent four hours getting her hair done. And of course it fell on a Sunday so you can imagine finding a place to get your hair done and stuff like that.

PR: So what was your feeling during the preparation. I mean what were your thoughts and feelings while you were doing the hair cut, shopping for the ring, the flowers your clothes.

CR: Pampered actually enjoyed that. I mean of course I'm twenty-one years old I'm carrying around a wad of cash I mean I'm going to get pampered. I'm talking for any good occasion you'll see that I want to be treated a certain way so on and so forth because it does build up that mood towards the end of the evening. I mean if the people treated you right while you were preparing while you were going through preparation for that evening you will most likely continue on in that good mood in that good atmosphere.

PR: So you had expectations about...

CR: I mean I knew how it was going to make me feel yes. I mean that was going through my mind I mean I'm not the type of person who sleeps in until ten or eleven I get up at four o'clock in the morning I go to the gym and then I go directly to work if I have to but this time it was preparing to get myself ready for my date. Six years yeah we had been dating for quite some time so every date is always a date but on certain special occasions you have to make the date different so I of course you know it took me a week to plan out exactly what I was going to do so finally on Saturday I made the decision on exactly what I was going to do from all these different certain scenarios and options I could pick up by Saturday I was set. Flowers hair car you know car had to be detailed and in Alaska at forty below you don't just wash your car you have to take it someone so

they can clean it.

PR: Oh so you had to pay for it to be detailed?

CR: Yeah it's expensive.

PR: Yeah that is expensive.

CR: Well you can imagine at forty below you can't just take it outside with your hose so yeah what else interior exterior flowers suit had to get it so it fit...

PR: Oh tailored?

CR: Well I'm the type of person who if I like something I'm going to get it if I have to work hard I'm going to get it and that goes for outfits if it doesn't fit make it fit make sense?

PR: Yes my question is as you were going through...

CR: Was I worried about expenses?

PR: Yeah were you worried about that or were you looking forward or what kind of a feeling did you have.

CR: I just wanted my expectation about the feeling I wanted was satisfaction through her if she was happy I was happy and ...

PR: Can you describe what satisfaction...

CR: By seeing a smile on her face by seeing that she's happy by seeing the smile that's the kind of person I am unfortunately she's not that kind of person if I'm sad then she's happy that's how it worked out toward the end (both laugh) but I'm the type of person that makes people happy not just her but people in general so I'll go out of my way to make something special for someone.

PR: OK so satisfaction then you were going to great lengths in order to get a certain reaction of pleasure happiness and because you had gone to these lengths to do that and then you saw the smile you were satisfied that what you had done had brought about that emotion.

CR: Correct. Basically by going through all the ordeal that's the fun part even though I

hate shopping and all that stuff it's still fun all the preparation until that point and then opening the door to the car letting her in you know that's you know right there that's the satisfaction because she's smiling because you gave her flowers and the clothes oh you like nice you smell good you shaved finally you know stuff like that...

PR: So she had noticed your hard work.

CR: Well of course that's the one thing I have to hand it to her well I make it very noticeable I mean yeah my car hasn't been cleaned in about three months so nor do I wear very nice clothes other than when I have to but for a special occasion I'll be in a new outfit very nice you look nice you shaved I shave once a week at least in Alaska when it's cold up there you don't have to shave for some reason you get wind burn and stuff like that but of course our favorite restaurant there was no doubt as to where we were going...

PR: So you had been to this restaurant before?

CR: Oh yes it's a well known restaurant in the city and of course other people in the community get to see us together its a small community so you can imagine people saying oh your date looks nice and she's getting complimented for me and at the same time people are complimenting me for her and so on and so forth so there's satisfaction there too and plus you know for some reason I want her to be proud of me as in this is my man I'm with him because I want to be with him not because I have to does that make sense

PR: Right and that she was willing to go in public and then happy.

CR: And carry a nice smile. So was that a good experience or a bad experience?

PR: Yeah I think that was a good experience let me see it there is something else I need to ask.

CR: Well if you want to ask a question about the monetary thing I would never actually put a price on the satisfaction so yes I have never actually had an unlimited amount of money but when it comes to being happy and actually spending money for it in my mind I have already put money away for the future anyways I can spend x amount of dollars if

I exceed it or go under it so be it but if I exceed it I'll earn the next dollar the next day I'm pretty darned responsible about money anyways yeah I probably spent five or six hundred dollars on that evening alone not including the the ring the ring cost another four or five hundred bucks so that's a lot of money for one person out of six years on one evening and the meal itself cost almost two hundred dollars well with the wine and the lobster I mean with what they charge up there for that kind of stuff I mean figure its a really nice restaurant all I know is that with the gratuity and all that stuff two hundred bucks is what I spent for two people and I said you know I'm happy this is well spent money because she's happy.

PR: So what was the end I guess the beginning of the experience was it's going to be Valentines Day and you started to plan what was the end of the experience like?

CR: The end of the experience we went dancing and it started to get late which is twelve o'clock and of course I get up at four and so the evening was pretty much winding down and she wore her ring and I took her home and kissed her good night and all that stuff and of course I left and but throughout the whole entire week and the month she wore that ring and showed it off so that evening carried on and of course we continued dating and she got new rings and stuff like that but each ring signified a different time or occasion that's the way I look at it and of course on Valentine's she always wears that one so the object will carry it on for ever.

PR: So you took her home and kissed her good night and that was the end of that day but the ring will carry it on forever.

CR: And it still does she still has it and occasionally talks about the past and how good it was.

PR: Well I think that is a good experience. Is there anything else that you can think of that you want to mention.

CR: Something that might be bad I think that on one occasion I think when we were being served you know I believe when you are spending x amount of dollars you are

treated a certain way no matter how old you are and then being being seventeen years old and joining the army and going to college I mean forget it you're a grad student and all that stuff you're entitled to certain kinds of respect and stuff like that I mean granted I was twenty-one years old and I had spent four years in the army and I'm in college getting my degree in civil engineering and so on and so forth. You would expect more out of the service the wine glasses I mean for goodness sakes I notice these things they were always empty I had to pour my own wine no that's not how it works I apologize but that's not how it works this is supposed to be I mean believe me I work in retail I mean how many years since I was fourteen. I always cater to the customer I mean it takes a few seconds to lose a customer but years to gain them. Does that make sense?

PR: Yes you expected service on the wine but...

CR: Everything had to be perfect for me and of course not everything did and one was one of the things that stood in my mind it was not perfect it made me unhappy but yet she was still happy and of course I took my own I took the liberty to pour my own wine but I don't believe in it I believe somebody else should be pouring my wine for me while I'm eating and talking so I won't be distracted. But anyway other than that the evening was pretty damn good other than the speeding ticket too which cost me I think it was an additional seventy-five dollars four points against my record. I was doing sixty-seven in a fifty-five.

PR: Oh man.

CR: Yeah, of well.

PR: So when you were pouring the wine you had the expectation that they would be pouring it and that expectation wasn't met. Was there a feeling there?

CR: It didn't cloud it my vision of for the rest of the evening but yes when it came to gratuity time I noted it. But of course you know that's how you show them. And of course you know a little note message on the bottom next time water wine glasses should be filled and that's exactly what I did.

PR: And you wrote that on the bill?

CR: You know at the bottom...comments. But you know other than that the evening was pretty much perfect. I would alter or take away anything from it it worked out just great.

PR: So even the speeding ticket...

CR: The speeding ticket just set it off it was the midpoint of the evening you know because the evening started around seven o'clock you know with the flowers and pictures and stuff like that and we get into the car. Nine o'clock I get the speeding ticket because we're traveling out to there and when of course I take her home around twelve so it was at the midpoint of the evening it was like it's not going to get any better than this (both laugh) which is the opposite you know it's not going to get any worse than this getting a speeding ticket. So you know at first tears are in my eyes I got a speeding ticket (mimicking weeping) you know because in Alaska you get out of your car and get into the cop car and that how you do it because you don't want them to be out there they could get hit by another driver or it's too cold I mean forty below so you know it's customary to get out of your car and get into the police officer's car. So when I got back into my car I had tears in my eyes I started crying for her and she wouldn't rip up the ticket. She wouldn't rip up the ticket it worked for my mom but it wouldn't work for me so.

PR: Crying didn't work?

CR: Right she wouldn't rip up the ticket. Right so the evening was perfect and the preparation for it and the time after.

PR: So that was the midway point the preparation to the traffic ticket the traffic ticket to dropping her off the traffic ticket was the midway point.

CR: Yeah it was basically the midway point for that evening.

PR: So you were taking as much enjoyment out of preparing for the night as...

CR: And just seeing the satisfaction on her when I picked her up...

PR: That sounds like that was the highlight

CR: Yes and just the smile that struck...no go ahead

PR: Now you said something about pictures you had pictures taken?

CR: Yes they took pictures of us her mother.

PR: Oh your date's mother took pictures of you.

CR: I call her step-mother believe me she had her hands in our relationship so other than that it was perfect it was the perfect evening and I haven't been able to have another evening near similar to that as in you couldn't highlight it or match it you could not match it I've tried I've taken someone to Voodoo Lounge for dinner very expensive pretty darn close pretty darn close to the expense I must say that the service was excellent. The filet mignon oh my gosh just melted in your mouth it's just that the environment was so rowdy it was there was no warmth soft music atmosphere. The harshness of preparing for that day I mean that date you know and afterwards you know you can stay out for the whole entire evening you know so it wasn't the same it wasn't the as like Karen's you're only allowed so many hours and this is your hours and it costs so much money to prepare for it and it costs you know and then so afterwards so on and so forth so I'd say there's no way of matching evening so. I've been trying but unfortunately I've been studying a lot and I haven't been out for like a year and a half now so...

PR: Yeah school gets in the way of that okay I think that's...

CR: Am I good to go?

PR: Yeah that's it.

Protocol 4

PR: Okay so what I need is just a description of any experience that you've had that you'd like to share with romantic love.

CR: Okay uh well when I was very young I was in love with a young man the same age as me and I didn't marry him he was too good looking (laughs) too young and I just didn't trust it.

PR: How young were you?

CR: I was twenty and he was twenty. We were together for over three years he wanted to get married but uh I he was unfaithful he just loved the girls and they loved him and I could see it was going to be disaster but I it was very difficult to break away I mean because I was very much in love but I didn't want to spend my life with him I knew it would be torture I could see myself ending up with six children and being alone so my head ruled my heart. But um of course I'm sure that you've talked to quite a number of ladies or men that when you're in love you just don't care but even if you can see that it's a very bad situation and it's very very difficult to break away and you never get over it you just don't.

PR: So this is something that you still think about.

CR: Oh yes every day

PR: Oh my...

CR: Yes still and I wonder what it would have been like I mean on my silly days I think it could have worked but when I look at it intelligently I think no way it's so unsensible.

PR: So where did you meet and what was that like.

CR: Well we I was introduced by a girlfriend of mine who was visiting at the time we were sharing an apartment and um we just looked at each other I mean he and I and that was it. I mean I didn't care anything about anything I didn't care if he was working or not working or what he was. And of course at that time because he was young I didn't think about him being married and he wasn't. But um I suppose that I can understand it

happening that you look at someone and you're smitten.

PR: Right

CR: And you just don't care.

PR: What does that feel like...smitten?

CR: Well it's wonderful...it's just wonderful I mean I was walking on air and I couldn't wait for the evening to arrive so that I could be with him again. He was working and sometimes I would work sometimes not and it was very very exciting it really was it was very very exciting. There were painful times of course because he used to go off with somebody else and I would find out about it and...

PR: So he did this multiple times.

CR: Many times yes many times and I would leave him I left him so many times I mean we were making up and breaking up all the time. Maybe I would leave him for a few weeks and he would call me or I would call him. I couldn't stay away from him and the only way that I finally got away from him was when I left the country I actually left England and I went to live in Italy for six months I had to get away from him because I felt it was wrong because it reaches a stage when you're unhappy really miserable but you really want the person you can't stay away from them but you know it's just going to bring you pain but you still want them.

PR: So that was your primary reason for going to Italy was to...?

CR: That was my primary reason to get away from him. But even when I came back I still wanted him after six months and he still wanted me but he was living with someone else then.

PR: So what was that like to want him?

CR: Well it was terrible it was just awful so I just then I left again I went off to the far east with a girlfriend that's where I met my husband. But um I left again and I was away for months and then when I came back in the Spring he handed me a card showing me that he was engaged. So he couldn't wait to get married but I know that he's been

unfaithful to that girl too and in fact she came back and found him in bed with somebody and she actually left him and went off home because she's a German girl she went back to Germany for months and he called me but I wouldn't have anything to do with him.

PR: So...then he called you back?

CR: He called me yah.

PR: After he had been married...?

CR: After he had been married this was a couple of years had past only a couple of years and he told me that he didn't love her and uh but I knowing him I thought that he was probably lying anyway and he told me what happened and he said definitely over so I said well you know in a year or two when you're actually divorced I will see you again then. But he didn't divorce her she went back to him and they continued this back and forth thing but you know he was always on to somebody and she was taking off and coming back they're still married.

PR: And so over that three year period how often did you see him I mean did you ever live together or...

CR: Just oh no when he was actually married I wouldn't I wouldn't have anything to do with him I would talk to him on the phone we would even have lunch together but I wouldn't go to bed with him I wouldn't sleep with him.

PR: But I mean during the three year period that you were together...you said there were three years...

CR: Oh yes it was on and off we would be together for a month or two or three and then he'd go off and do something because uh...

PR: But during that time you never lived together or...

CR: No we didn't actually live together no because it was in the sixties you know people frowned upon living together it isn't like now you know living together oh my god how terrible. And although that was the time in the late or middle to late sixties that actually people started being very sort of promiscuous and loose and so on but it was still frowned

upon I mean it just wasn't done. People didn't live together. I yes but that's the way it was I mean it was a very exciting relationship but in the end it was very painful.

PR: What kinds of things would you typically do together?

CR: We used to go dancing together I mean discothequing and go club dancing and uh used to go out to dinner or lunch or and I used to go most weekends and we'd go down to Brighton actually we used to go and stay with his parents and uh sometimes stay with friends. But if I couldn't go on the weekend or if I had something to do if I had to go abroad to work because I was in the movie business then uh then he would take somebody else not to his parents house but he would go off with somebody and I would find out about it and I'd be furious and split up and find someone new again and the next week we were together you now that's how it went on. So actually whenever I went away I couldn't trust him I just thought oh he'll be off with somebody. I actually it reaches an impossible passé because you are so miserable with someone and you're so miserable without them and uh you know that you must pass either you're going to get married or you're going to pass.

PR: So you were miserable at some point when you were with him?

CR: Yes I was miserable with him and I was miserable without him.

PR: What was that like to be miserable with him?

CR: Oh it was terrible...it was a sort of dead feeling. And I was...

PR: So it was an actual physical...

CR: I mean yes it was an actual physical miserable feeling...I mean you sort of say nasty things to each other I mean a battle of wits and it's just miserable.

PR: And then without him...

CR: Well I was miserable without him I was wondering what he was doing and sometimes I'd ring up and see if he answered the phone or I'd look for his car and you know London with all those people it was ridiculous but you know I would look to see if his car was there and I would ring people who I knew who knew what he was doing you

know it was really very masochistic.

PR: It was primarily thoughts that you were having...

CR: Yes...

PR: Expectations and looking for him and...

CR: I still wanted to know everything he was doing.

PR: And when you were with him was the feeling primarily physical?

CR: Yes it was we were very physically attracted but I but I uh...

PR: But at the the feeling of um when you were with him of you said it was like misery or it was miserable...

CR: Towards the end it was at the end of after about two years actually. I would go away on vacation hoping that I would forget him but I just couldn't it was just awful it was awful.

PR: Well that's a pretty good description. Is there anything there that we've left out that uh...

CR: Oh well uh I mean when I was I went overseas with my husband which was probably a plus in many ways I mean we lived in South America we lived in East Africa we lived in Barcelona Spain we lived in Hong Kong which is where we actually met. So I was abroad all the time I was out of harm's way but when I came back to England I always asked my girlfriends what he was doing these kind of things and I was always interested. And I actually what I thought once when I was forty you know and many years and past and I hadn't seen him and a girlfriend of mine said well guess who called the other day and she told me you know it was him and she said that he'd like to see you he said his marriage is on the rocks and all this kind of stuff so he actually led me to believe that everything was over but he was a liar because it wasn't his wife was away on vacation and I did see him and we did spend the afternoon together and it was just absolutely wonderful but I knew that it was danger and I talked to him seriously about everything then he let me know that his wife was only on vacation I mean she she was

coming back and that they were together and and so so I decided that I would never ever see him again I said if you are ever divorced or you are ever seriously apart I'll see you but otherwise I won't see you and it almost came to a time well I did ask my my husband for a divorce because I felt so awful I thought oh god you know if I can't have him I have to find somebody that I can be madly in love with. And and the excitement was over with my husband you know (laugh) but we're still together I mean we've been married for thirty years and I love him he's a wonderful wonderful person and there's no way I would leave him for anybody actually because there is just no one as wonderful as him I mean I am blessed I have a wonderful husband and...

PR: But at one point that you thought that that being madly in love...

CR: Well the excitement was over and I was bored and it reaches that point I mean my husband and I never had any children I mean I don't know why but we just never had them so I really blamed him and and and I was forty and I thought oh god you know I really still might have a chance with D that was the young man and I was going to leave H and I told D this and he was horrified horrified because he was just looking for an exciting afternoon he wasn't looking to get a divorce and start raising a family forget it but I was prepared to do that and I was just tortured and I rang my father who was alive at the time and I said what a terrible thing I've married the wrong person and my father said well you know come live with us then if you want to leave him and I did seriously think and I discussed it with my husband and he said if you really really want to go I won't stop you...and then when I really thought about it then I became depressed about being on my own because I couldn't be with D I mean that was over it was over as far as a serious sort of commitment was concerned I mean he would still like me as a lover on the side but I didn't want that and I felt terrible because I'd really feel terrible about breaking up somebody's marriage and being involved in anything like that I think it's a terrible thing to do and I've always disapproved of it when my girlfriends have done it. And so here we are now...I decided to come live with him in the United States but we've never made love

since I mean we have a friendly relationship and we have a great respect for each other but no sex I mean...

PR: This is your husband now...

CR: My husband so that I don't even look I'm not interested and especially with AIDS around because when we came back from Africa I mean I wasn't even aware of things such as AIDS and we were living in Africa nobody we didn't hear anything about AIDS in Africa and when we came back to England that's all anybody was talking about and that's all they were talking about in the United States I thought my god here we have been living in Africa and there could have been an accident or with the needles I mean my god I used to go out and get shots because in Africa I mean needles are precious they don't use throw away needles...but touch wood you know there's nothing wrong with me where's the wood (gets up from chair searching the room for wood)?

PR: I don't know if we have any in here (laughing).

CR: Oh my god it's frightening...oh there's some (knocks the wall).

PR: There you go there's some on the wall.

CR: I mean you don't know because I mean they don't really know so we are friends and intellectually he and...

PR: You and the young man...

CR: I mean my husband and I we are friends and he's not interested and I'm not interested but we're together and I'm sure we'll be together.

PR: And so this is a and so you say that you love your husband and...

CR: I do but I still love D I love them both but I love D in a romantic way but I love my husband and I respect him I love him in a different way but if I had to choose I would take my husband any day because my husband is honest and good and faithful where D is a liar I mean he is handsome and he's a womanizer and I bet he gives his wife a really hard time...I bet she's thoroughly miserable and...they did have a child although the child is grown up now they had one child and so there you are that's D.

PR: All right well that's a good description of an experience

CR: Yeah...well a lot of people they just don't allow their head to rule their heart and unfortunately then they finish up divorced because a lot of men I mean they take off or sometimes the woman takes off and there you are one or the other is left with unhappy children and...

PR: So finally because of the misery that you had suffered because of being upset over his unfaithfulness and the arguments and everything...

CR: Well I did I could only see a miserable life ahead because a lot of people do they decide to get married anyway and think well when children come along it's going to be okay and it isn't and they finish up getting divorced and being unhappy and bringing children into the world who you know who are going to have an unhappy life it's just so I just could see it all but it was very difficult I had to put physical distance between him and myself...

PR: Because if you were close there was more of a possibility that ...

CR: Well yes when I was miserable I could have just picked up the telephone and I probably would have seen him especially in the beginning it was a great temptation.

PR: Okay thank you very much I appreciate it.

CR: I hope that has helped you.

PR: Absolutely absolutely.

Protocol 5

PR: So do you understand what I'm looking for just a description of an experience with romantic love.

CR: Like what do you mean like exactly where should I start like an experience that I had?

PR: Wherever you think that you should start.

CR: Well I don't know there's a lot of different things that I could talk about I was with one guy for like two years...

PR: Okay...

CR: And that was like the most prominent romantic love situation that I've had...

PR: Okay...

CR: Basically I was sixteen...when we broke up I was with him well actually I was like fifteen and I broke up when I was about seventeen. He was like my best friends brother and he was older than me and he was really cute so I was like go for it and then just ended up being really serious and in the past in previous because I started I was kind of sexually active early you know earlier than some people and so I was kind of scared about it...

PR: Scared about?

CR: Scared about being hurt because...

PR: By him?

CR: By him because of previous incidences that had happened to me but you know over all it ended up being a pretty good experience. Two years.

PR: Okay so you know and go out this is a friend of your brothers...

CR: No friend of mine's brother...

PR: Oh a friend of yours okay so you had a female friend...

CR: No it was a guy friend and it was his brother.

PR: Okay a guy friend and the guy friend's brother...

CR: Yeah

PR: So you knew him just on a...

CR: Yeah I just I was like hey your brother's pretty cute sort of thing you know and he was interested so I was like okay that's great and then we got together it was overall pretty you know we were pretty happy most the time considering that you know people my age don't usually you know they consider a relationship to be like one month or two weeks you know and everybody was like kind of passing me by I kind of almost felt like I was like a part of an old married couple and I was only sixteen years old you know. It went on pretty good I have sort of a bad temper you know which I confess you know I'm kind of quick to get mad just as long as you leave me alone and let me get mad and but he was kind of a wimp when it came to me I guess I was the more dominant one and which you know I guess he felt like he was being like belittled you know I realize this now I didn't think that then but know I've had time to think about it and realize I was wrong.

PR: When you broke up you think that was part of the problem?

CR: Ya definitely his excuse was you know he didn't think it was really going anywhere and you know and whatever plus he was two years older than me and he was he was graduating from high school and you know I was still going to be in high school and he wanted to go to a college out of state but then he ended up staying here and actually getting with one of my friends pretty soon afterwards she wasn't a good friend but it was you know somebody that I knew. And it didn't end there though and then I was devastated because I really felt that I was really in love with this guy you know it was the first time that I actually felt this way about somebody because he never hurt me never did anything bad to me like I've kind of been used to from other people in the past and then like a month later he came back and was like you know I made the biggest mistake of my life sort of...

PR: A month after you broke up?

CR: Ya and I was like of course you know I'm stupid everybody is and and I was like I

fell for it and basically he was using me for sex for about two days and then decided to just cut it off...so that was the end of that (laughs).

PR: How did that feel when you found that out?

CR: I cried literally I cried for about two months straight. Like I really I have depressive tendencies anyway like from other things that have happened to me and my family and everything but it was just devastating you know and it was right around Christmas and New Year's so of course the holidays weren't very fun you know. To this day like every once and a while he'll just kind of stop by if he's got a problem but I'm like why are you coming to me I don't really care what your problems are you put me through enough problems why should I care about yours you know...so I kind of hate him now (laughs).

PR: So you don't love him anymore that's over?

CR: No no no and I know that some people as a matter of fact we were just talking about it in my psychology class how some people can talk trash about people constantly but then when they finally see them then all those new feelings come up and there is not one single thing I can I stop and look at him and I'm like what did I like about you...what was I so infatuated in love with you for.

PR: So what was that like infatuation being in love.

CR: I was just happy all the time everybody said that I made a total transformation from being I mean I was a good student but you know I got into some trouble outside of school from going to being that and being I was I was pretty depressed kid and going from being that and then all sudden you can even see it in pictures here I never smiled and then I was smiling you know it totally it drew me out of my shell a little more being more compatible with other people and that is one good thing that I can say came good from that relationship because I haven't had one like that since and that is why it stands out.

PR: So you changed as a person you became more social...

CR: I changed as a person a lot...ya and I realized that I have to control my temper because you know you don't realize how you start like pushing somebody away like if

somebody says to you you know don't this and this and this and then I just fly off the handle you know I realized can't do that know I can't be so stubborn either.

PR: Okay so you saw the effects of your actions how they affected other people?

CR: Yeah.

PR: Okay so when you first got together what is that what is that like?

CR: Well I was I was very happy because he was very good looking and all of my friends wanted him and then I for me to be like I got the trophy you know I came in first place ha ha to all of you and it was really good and he didn't pressure me for sex you know I mean we did have sex not too long after we got together but it wasn't like a one night okay now I'm with you let's have sex sort of thing like I respected that he respected me...you know...so that was good because he wasn't pushy like a lot of people I mean even now a lot of people are.

CR: What about the getting together part so you got together and then you became more intimate what was getting together what was that like?

PR: We just like he'd come over and we'd hang out and you know talk on the phone and just typical you know I didn't really know what I was doing you know I just figured that this was going to be a guy that I would be with for a couple of months and then something bad would happen and he would hate me you know because that's what I'd had before and you know I was a little scared because I did like him and you know plus being you know his brother was my best friend for a couple years you know so of course I was like scared that if anything did happen then it would effect me and my friends relationship as well so like when we first started getting together it was more like hi how ya doin' you know because it was kind of a big step because I knew that if it ended bad then that would totally end a lot of stuff...

PR: Okay so getting together meant you were spending more time together and on a regular basis and expected to talk to each other at certain times?

CR: Yeah yeah.

PR: And was it at that point that you realized that you were in love or...?

CR: No no I think it took a while you know because like I said I was you know kind of scared and because of the person that I had been with previously to that you know I started thinking wow am I in love you know and I mean I'm sure that it was just lust or infatuation or whatever you want to say but you know I didn't want to feel that way you know and still to this day I don't want to feel that way.

PR: You don't want to feel...

CR: I don't want to be in love. Still I don't like I have a boyfriend right now that I've been with for a few months and he's an excellent person but I don't want to fall in love with him pretty much because of you know like this main relationship that we're talking about right now because I really it took a while and like he at first was like oh I love you...

PR: Took a while to...

CR: To think that I was in love with him to actually get myself to believe that like we had been together for at least at least three quarters of a year you know I mean it was a while and like of course you're like I love you honey (in high pitched voice) but it wasn't genuine you know not on my side anyway for him I think it was I mean I cared about him deeply and I would have laid down on the in the middle of the road and died for him like I would for any of my friends and you know but I think it just took a while before I realized like that I actually and one of the key points I think that really affected it was that I had gotten pregnant and I didn't know and because at the time I was experimenting with a lot of different things and drinking and all that sort of thing and I had a miscarriage from it and I think after that happened I kind of realized wow this is a really serious thing and I'm taking on adult responsibilities now and I think that was the turning point where I realized that I loved him.

PR: Okay so the responsibilities that you were taking on were a factor and becoming pregnant by him?

CR: Yeah definitely because like when I started thinking wow like we could have a child like it's that easy like before that it had just been like yeah whatever I mean not that I would I wasn't using actually we were using protection but it just wasn't enough and actually after thinking about that and being like wow that could happen would I want that to happen would I want to be with you or maybe not even with you but would I have to want to see you for the rest of my life if we had like a bond and I was like yeah I would you know and I...I did.

PR: So part of that realizing was that you were going to have something between you that was a bond.

CR: Yeah not saying that I wanted to have kids and in a way I was kind of relieved because I don't know what I would have done if it had actually gone through but it was the idea yeah.

PR: Saying yes to that idea was part of realizing that you were in love?

CR: Yeah.

PR: What else was it like how else would you describe it...a feeling?

CR: I was just always happy like even when I was mad I could sit back and be like you know my life is really good right now because even with all the little things I new that I had that one big thing that could keep me going through you know because there were times because my mother's sick my mother has got cancer and there would be times when I would just be like what is there if I don't have my mom but like looking at him I was like there's something you know that I would be willing to spend my time and effort and you know and want to be with and that that was just something that just meant so much to me I don't know if I'm making any sense but...

PR: No you were...

CR: Yeah and that's what it felt like because like and knowing that I belonged to something to.

PR: Okay that makes sense. So it was something to look toward when you were

depressed. And you also...

CR: That I also wanted to be wanted by somebody...

PR: Okay so you also wanted this reciprocated.

CR: Yeah.

PR: And so you realized this halfway through or...

CR: Yeah and you know it's like I appreciated it to begin with you know like I was like you it's really cool that he's here but then after awhile you know you get used to it you get used to being with somebody because he was like staying with me for awhile and you know we were always together it's like I wasn't taking it for granted anymore...

PR: He lived in your house?

CR: Yeah for a short for a short period time before he got his own apartment. He was having some troubles himself and so it's like at first I think I was taking it and toward the end I think I started taking it for granted too but like at first I thought okay this is just a boyfriend and then after awhile it was just like this is something good for me this is a really it's a turning point in anybody's life to feel that way especially for the first time that you really truly know that you feel that way I mean I was like you know I'm kind of young probably it's just me being young and stupid but I really don't think it was. You know so like I went through it's like I realized that I had to I had to I just accepted it as being...(heavy sigh) I don't know how to say it in words it was like I wasn't like being like okay yeah this is it I was like okay this is special you know put it here keep it safe you know?

PR: Okay so it was something that you had or possessed in your life?

CR: Yeah.

PR: Is there anything else that you think would help in my understanding your experience that needs to be said?

CR: I don't know but for me it's like when people tell it like there are butterflies in your stomach and you're so like your high but like maybe that's what it's like when you see a

guy that you have a crush on that you see walking across campus oh you know he's so cute maybe that's what people think is love but I don't I think it's deeper than that like you know you feel it in your gut like when you think about this person it's not just oh he's so wonderful it's like this is it is that this person is wonderful but it's more like you would do anything like if you could you would like crawl inside the person and live in their stomach for ever you know like we were an old married couple like you see these people and they sit out on their porches because we were like when it came to a point you know we were together so long it was like do you want to go to the movies no okay because we were together for so long it was like he was always there it was also a stabilizing thing in my life you know...

PR: So not as many ups and downs emotionally...

CR: Yeah it was very even.

PR: And that was a good thing you appreciated that?

CR: Yeah definitely because I had experienced so many ups and downs it was like come on give a girl a break I want a little stability here I'm not saying that I live on the streets and I don't know where I'm going to eat next it's just emotional stability I know what I wanted there was a spot for me to be.

PR: Makes sense to me.

CR: I know when I'm talking I ramble and I don't make sense.

PR: No you said a lot that makes good sense. Is there anything else that you want to add?

CR: Just I learned from it you know basically just like I said that it just became like a normal thing and you do start to take things for granted and because for that experience I try so hard not to not to talk I'm not saying that I'm a raving lunatic that runs around saying I hate you I'm going to kill you I'm not like that it's just especially with the boyfriend I have now I'm very very happy with him and it's the first time since the last boyfriend that I'm talking about to you that I've actually felt this you know belonging sort

of a thing I'm not saying that I'm in love with him yet but when he does something and it irritates me a little bit I don't say anything because I know that if I say anything I know that it's not going to accomplish anything because I learned that when I used to open my mouth way to much all's it would end up with is arguments or crying or some turmoil that is just nicking off little pieces like I have this hard base that I was chipping off of every time I would say something stupid I mean I know that sometimes it was reasonable but a lot of the time it's not like why are you looking at me that way there's no reason to get mad about that so now I make a conscious effort not to be so quick to get mad because that starts to break away the foundation of what you've got because sooner or later that erodes and you don't have anything.

PR: So now you think more before you speak.

CR: Yeah.

PR: That makes sense. And in this current relationship you're saying that you're not in love or that you don't want to be or you are taking your time?

CR: When I met him it was only supposed to be a one night thing basically I mean because that's just what I wanted at the time because I just decided you know I'm young and the boyfriend I had before him started getting a little weird when I broke up with him saying this isn't good enough and you're not so I was just like I don't want a relationship I just want to have fun with somebody to hang out with or whatever and it just became something more and I'm very I feel like I've known him my whole life and I care about him but I'm not in love with him I don't really want to be just because I had the preconceived notion that I wasn't even going to see him again let alone you know still be hanging around with him.

PR: Makes sense to me thank you very much.

CR: That's it?

PR: That's it.

Protocol 6

PR: So all I need you to do is to describe an experience for me that has to do with romantic love.

CR: What type of experience?

PR: The first one maybe that comes to mind the most important...

CR: So it can be anything?

PR: Yeah as long as it has to do with romantic love.

CR: Okay so like when I first met my boyfriend?

PR: Sure.

CR: I went to BH restaurant on R and LM and...

PR: Which restaurant BH?

CR: BH

PR: BH?

CR: BH it's a restaurant like a kind of like a TGIF and I went there and I started last year in January or so in March maybe anyway in January or March and I worked there for a while as a hostess and I was just barely starting to get to know everybody all the employees and stuff and my mom worked there as a waitress and I worked there as a hostess and then for the first couple of weeks I didn't get to know that many people except for the hostesses themselves and most of the waiters and the busers and not too much more than that and after the first couple of weeks I I saw this guy and he was a buser and I never noticed him before and his name is D and I started to ask small little questions here and there from different hostesses like what they knew about him and no one really knew anything so they asked him for me but I didn't want him to think...

PR: Now why did you why did you ask about him?

CR: I didn't know nothing about him just I don't know I thought he was kind of cute but I didn't know what nationality he was because he kind of looked Hispanic and dressing like he was Italian and he was dark haired tall dark eyes and he looked cute but I had never

talked to him but I never really even noticed him before or knew that he was even there...

PR: And what was the interest in his nationality?

CR: I don't know I like Italians but just the way he looked he looked I don't know he just looked tall and handsome and he had dark hair and dark eyes so then people started to ask questions and then tell me and then I just went up to him one day and asked him what his name was and he didn't even tell me because I don't know he was really shy you know he doesn't talk a lot like that's just his personality he's like why do you want to know and I was just like because I want to know what your name is I'm just getting to know everybody's name and he's like it's D why what's yours and I'm like C and that's all that happened like the first day and like a couple weeks later like I found out more stuff about him like how old he was and stuff and I didn't really know like the inside of him but like how old he was and that he worked there as a buser and what his shift was and stuff and I ended up working there like two months and nothing ever happened and then I moved I put in my what was it my two week...

PR: Your two week notice?

CR: Notice that I was leaving and the day I left it was a Sunday and I remember and everyone kept telling him to come up to me and like because other guys like waiters would come you know this girl really likes you you should talk to her and he'd be like no I don't know you know because he didn't really believe that I like him and on the day that the Sunday that I was leaving I was eating in the back room of the dining room and he came up and talked to me and asked me why I was leaving and what I did and what I was going to school for and if I was going to school and just a whole bunch of questions and he told me about him he was like he was going to school too and he was working there full time and he was living with his dad and all this stuff and then he asked me if he could have my phone number and so I gave it to him but I didn't give it to him right then I gave it to him after like at the door like right when I left I just gave him a little note and put a kiss mark on it with my phone number...

PR: And so what was the reason for not giving it to him right then?

CR: I didn't I just wanted to wait I was going to give it to him anyway I just wanted to give it to him when I left I didn't want to give it to him right then because then I would just be like that (gestures giving with hand) just wanted to wait I was kind of surprised that he came and talked to me because I didn't think that he was because I knew that I liked him but I didn't think anything was going to happen I didn't even think anything after that...

PR: Even after you gave him the phone number?

CR: Right because right there I was just like boys you know I thought he was cute but I thought that's not going to go anywhere and after that he didn't call me for a week so...

PR: And that's a that's a long time?

CR: That's a long time.

PR: You expected him to call...

CR: Well I don't know I mean boys have this thing about calling like waiting a long time to call like from that Sunday to the next Sunday he waited until the next Sunday to call me so...

PR: So two weeks?

CR: Well my last day was a Sunday so he waited that whole week and I was no longer working there he was still but I wasn't so he called and then we set up a date to go out which was about a week and a half later and then we went out and like that was our first date and we went to an Italian restaurant and we had dinner there and he told me he was Italian and I didn't know I thought he was Hispanic but he wasn't so that was cool and we ate there and I was so nervous so nervous I couldn't even eat and he was so nervous because we didn't know anything really about each other we just thought each other was nice you know and cute and so I showed him my pictures like my pictures my photo album that I had like my family and stuff like that and like we talked about his family and stuff...

PR: So you brought pictures with you...

CR: I just had like in my wallet you know just simple pictures of friends and stuff and my brother and stuff so I showed him that and he told me stuff about him the only was we were just so nervous I'm a really nervous person and it made me even more nervous and he was nervous too...

PR: So what were you nervous about?

CR: I don't know I didn't even know him that was the I didn't know anything about him like he would probably be this jerk or this mean person but he didn't seem mean but I mean you know when you first meet somebody you can never tell what they're really like you can never tell if you really like them or what they are you know and he was nice and a real gentleman and you know he opened the door for me and everything so that was cool...

PR: So you were thinking maybe he wasn't going to be that nice a guy he was going to be mean or...

CR: Not really mean but I don't know just a jerk you know like some guys are just jerks but we missed our show because we were at dinner for too long so we were like what should we do and he said do you want to go golfing miniature golfing and I was like okay and right after miniature golfing I felt a lot more comfortable because we were like playing a game and there's not so much you have to think about what they're doing you know so we like loosened up and got comfortable and miniature golfed and stuff and we were there for a while and it was like eleven-thirty or it was like eleven o'clock and we decided to go to the park and take a walk so we drove back on our side which is on the North-West side so we drove back there and we took a walk and we talked about like more personal stuff because we were kind of getting used to each other then so we just talked about stuff that we liked to do and our hobbies and stuff like that and then we kissed on the rock and that was kind of weird because when you kiss somebody for the first time you never know how they're going to kiss it wasn't the greatest kiss but it was

nice just because it was the first kiss it was kind of weird I was kind of nervous I was nervous the whole time but I kind of calmed down and then he drove me home...

PR: Kind of weird because something about the kiss was weird or just because it was the first kiss...

CR: Just because it was the first I was just scared I was like oh my gosh...

PR: So you had stopped and you were on a rock talking and then you kissed...

CR: Yeah it was cool but it was kind of scary so then he took me home and he walked me to my door and when he first came and picked me up he gave me roses so that was nice he gave me flowers and that was cool because I love flowers and when guys give me guys who never give me flowers are jerks so before him there was this long gap where I didn't do anything I just focused on my school and did what I had to do so...

PR: Before you met...

CR: Him right so meeting him was kind of awkward for me and scary because I hadn't been out for so long just like been on a date and that was why it was so scary and we started to go out more and we like talked to each other mostly on the phone because our schedules were kind of on top of each other so we talked to each other on the phone and this was still when I was first getting to know him I didn't really know him you know because he said he went out a lot he always left at a late night you know because he was kind of a kind of a partier person but he hung out with the boys a lot like he did the boy stuff like drank and did all that boy stuff and I was just like oh well you know I don't know about all that because he always left at like eleven or midnight and like my parents were really strict then because now I'm twenty-one and before they were like I can't leave that late at night you know I was like nineteen or twenty but my parents were still very strict so to me that was like whoa what kind of person is he what is he doing that late at night because I didn't know but then I just asked and he was like I'm just hanging out with my friends I'm just hanging out but he still went and got his school work done but he wasn't doing that well in school he was having to take a lot of credits over so he was kind

of slacking so it took me a really long time to get used to him it took me a really long time to think that anything was going to come from this but we started to date in March and by the time I really really got used to him was like in...October.

PR: So get used to him as in...

CR: Just to feel comfortable like I felt comfortable around him but it was just I was so nervous and I don't know I don't know why I was so nervous I was just...

PR: What were you thinking about or what did it feel like to be nervous around him were there specific thoughts or feelings?

CR: I just thought like what should I not do or not say what should I do how should I act I was pretty much my self but I was just conscious of like little things...

PR: So if you said something that maybe you shouldn't what did you think would happen?

CR: He would be like what is she doing or what is she saying you're weird...

PR: So he would change his mind about you or wouldn't like you as much...

CR: Right I was just paranoid I guess but I don't know because we'd always go to the movies and stuff and I didn't think it had been going right but we kept going on dates going and doing stuff and I was like okay this is cool but I was thinking did he really like me I wasn't sure I don't know like he told me that he really liked me but that really shocked me because I was like okay but obviously if somebody goes out with you for that long they do but sometimes they just realize okay they do so...

PR: So him saying it was a big...

CR: Yeah and I just decided that I've been out with a lot of jerks and if you're going to be a jerk just tell me right now because I don't want to be with you if you are...

PR: So what we he do if he was a jerk what would that be like...

CR: He would just from the time that I was seeing him he seemed like a nice person but I was just conscious about what he was doing going out late at night like a lot of guys go out late at night and who knows what they do you know they're not really going to tell

you so I was like okay you know the one thing thought that I was really worried about was...

PR: Was him being a jerk but I'm still not sure what does a jerk look like what do jerks do like what could he have told you that he was doing for you to say gee maybe he is a jerk?

CR: Okay well one of the times was he had told me the week before that we were going to go do something on a specific day and he had to set time aside to do that and I had to set time aside to do it and it fell on a Wednesday...

PR: What was it you were going to do?

CR: We were just going to go to dinner and a go to a movie simple but we had plans to do that and I called him earlier in the day just to make sure like what time he was going to pick me up and he canceled and I was so mad and I was like oh my god...

PR: He didn't have a good reason?

CR: No.

PR: No?

CR: He had the reason that he was going to go play paint ball with his friends and I was like I was mad I was like what the heck I didn't say anything I was like oh okay I guess we're not going to do anything and he was like well I want to go do this la la la and I was like okay like I didn't want to make any big deal but for me I was mad maybe he's just a jerk maybe he's going to do this from now on you know but that's the only time he ever did that and I don't know I mean I hang around my girlfriends but yet I'm a real homey person so I stay home a lot you know and do what I have to do so and he was more of an out person he was always out no matter what time and I was like are we going to get along like that way because I don't want to be with a person who like always has to be out who doesn't like to stay home you know so the longer that we were seeing each other like by the time October came around I was more comfortable around him you know we could talk about more things he was still kind of he was less he was the more time he was

with me the less and less he was seeing his friends and going out.

PR: That was a that was a good thing.

CR: To me it was I mean I didn't want him to not have any friends but I wanted him to get focused on school and get what he had to get done and you know he was always asleep he was like a bum I mean he worked and stuff but he was like always sleeping I was like oh my gosh this is not working out because I never slept you know and around that time after October we really got comfortable and by that time it was almost Christmas and we gave each other gifts and stuff and we got more comfortable he was still going out once and awhile and before he smoked and I don't like smoking it irritates me it like really does I hate it and that was one of the things I was like of you smoke I was like whoa I was like oh no I mean like the smell just bugs me and I just didn't like the fact that he smoked either so by...

PR: Just the idea of him being a smoker...

CR: Yeah for me it is I mean I just don't like smoking personally and by January he had stopped smoking so that was cool and then by January of this year he had stopped smoking and then we had really gotten to be like a serious couple and then he moved in with me in March into my parent's house so we had been together and everything had just like moved along basically like at the beginning there were all these bumps and all these questions and stuff like what are we going to do and like all this stuff what's it going to be like all this stuff what's it going to be like in the future but then in January we got really comfortable and he had to move out of his parents' house because they got divorced or something happened so my parents offered and he moved in with me...

PR: So were you in the same room or...

CR: Yeah because we were my parents wanted us to get married first but we weren't going to get married right now because someone tells us to we want to be able to be comfortable doing it I mean we're always comfortable with one another and so like we're married but we're not so and then this month is what October so yeah October so yeah we

were living there from March until now we moved out a week ago and we moved in with my...cousin who has a condo so we're just renting it from her because we wanted to be away from my parents so we're there and we're still together through all this stuff it's been like a big bump but we plan on getting married in like six months so we're engaged in six months so...

PR: So you'll get engaged in six months and then married a year from now?

CR: Yeah...

PR: And so how is it that you feel about it right now?

CR: I feel good about it I feel really comfortable like at the beginning I had a whole bunch of questions about him smoking and all of that but he's made changes like he focuses all of his time with me and we're spending more time together and he works two jobs it's hard on him but we're saving for a house so all of his priorities he's made for himself like he's more focused on school he's doing a lot better he's back on track he's not smoking he's working and he's smart like he's using all his smartness like where it should be you know like not letting it go to where other stuff could go so for him it's been good for him and I'm happy.

PR: Well that's good that's good well that sounds like a good experience...

CR: The best one I've had all the rest have been horrible (laughs).

PR: Well that's nice to describe a good experience is there anything else about the experience that would help me understand it?

CR: He's the only person that I've really felt comfortable with that I could like tell everything to there was one in the past but he ended up getting married and that kind of took that away but out of all the other people he really cares and he really like you can tell like I used to date one for a while they really don't want a commitment they just want to date for fun but and I feel a whole lot different than I have with anyone else like we've been together for a long time and that's like I mean we've been together for over a year for me that's long.

PR: Okay well thank you very much.

CR: Is that enough?

PR: If that's the best description that you can give of that experience (nods) okay well thank you very much.

Primary Researcher's Presuppositions

My earliest understanding of romantic love was within the four Classic Greek variations of the verb to love. My mother explained the distinctions among *Agape*, *Philia*, *Eros* and *Storge*. I consider romantic love and *Eros* to be indistinguishable ideas. All of the four loves share the underlying commonality of a person experiencing a strong concern for another person, the *other*. This concern is a fundamental, deeply felt emotional reaction towards the *other*. The emotions are widely varied but center around the personal welfare of the other. *Eros* is distinguished from the other variations of love by a feeling of physical attraction, the desire to engage in sexual relations.

My conception of *Eros* centers around my religious practices and personal faith. I believe that the most perfect experience of God on earth takes place in the erotic dialogue between a man and a woman. Each person has been designed by God to be a physical and spiritual fulfillment of the *other*. Once a couple has made the realization that they are suited to fulfill each other spiritually and sexually, it is appropriate for them to exclude all other people as possibilities for erotic involvement. It is also appropriate for each person to make a life-long commitment to the *other*. This commitment is a private and deeply personal experience for both people, but they will then prepare each other and themselves for a public expression of their mutual commitment. This public commitment, or marriage, was consecrated by Christ at the marriage of Cana; therefore, the marriage is a sacrament of the Church. The person and the *other* make a personal commitment to each other before God and the world. Once married, the person has a responsibility to provide for the physical, sexual and spiritual needs of the *other*, as far as the *other* allows according to their own bodily and spiritual rights and freedoms.

So, a man and a woman meet and fall in love. Love is a state that one finds oneself in; to be in or out of love. One cannot fall in love through a force of will, persistence, or any formulaic act; however, one does make a conscious decision once they

realize that they are in love. In that instant of recognition, the person has the conscious free will to pursue and develop that state of love into the committed relationship outlined above, or they can choose the alternatives. The alternatives are wide and varied. An example might be an uncommitted relationship where the person recognizes and validates the others right to actively discover or create reasons for ending the love relationship. Another example might be a primarily physical relationship where the person and the *other's* perceptions regarding the quality and quantity of physical intercourse determines the commitment to the relationship.

Regardless, once the person realizes that they are in love, they have the choice to either commit to the love relationship or not. Not committing to the relationship rejects the benefits of committing to the *other*. It is a rejection of being responsible for the other's safety and nurturance. It is a rejection of providing for one's own daily stability which includes the regular fulfillment of sexual needs, financial security, and emotional support. The conscious choice to not commit to the *other* is an invitation to jealousy over unknown people, who may interlope and make a commitment to the *other*. There is the possibility of anxiety over the uncertainty of a relationship that exists without traditionally scripted roles and responsibilities. The anxiety over the protracted consideration of commitment leads to a fear of falling out of love, and the fear of losing the *other* leads to anger, as I believe that fear unchecked inevitably leads to anger. I believe that once the person realizes that they are in love, commitment is the only viable option. The lack of commitment leads to anger, jealousy and a lack of life-satisfaction.

Being in a state of love has mental elements. One's thoughts continually, without conscious intent, turn to the *other*. One continually imagines the *other*, fantasizing over conversations, chance meetings, living in a future with the other, and sexual relations with the *other*. This is the mental aspect of being in a state of love.

There are physical aspects of being in love. The physical aspects are in direct relation with the mental. When one anticipates seeing or meeting with the *other*, heart

rate and perspiration increases. Thoughts about sexual relations with the *other* cause the body to prepare for intercourse, including an increase in blood flow to the sexual organs, lubrication in women and penile erection in men. While physical attraction and arousal are not sufficient conditions for romantic love, they are necessary conditions. Love for another person without physical desire is better described as brotherly love, Storge, rather than romantic love.

A person's experience of romantic love for the *other* is characterized by concern for the *other's* welfare. The primary concern is for the *other's* basic welfare and needs, including material and spiritual needs. The secondary, although necessary, concern is for the *other's* sexual needs. The person promises, in a marriage ceremony, responsibility for fulfilling the primary and secondary needs of the *other*. Marriage is the natural aim for the people in love, and, once married, is the vehicle for expressing the romantic love.

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