



1981

A Study of One Man's Conflict with Intimacy

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A STUDY OF ONE MAN'S
CONFLICT WITH INTIMACY

by
Allan H. Schnarr

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

APRIL

1981

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to express his gratitude to Dr. Gerard Egan, director of this thesis, and to Dr. Eugene Kennedy, whose critiques of the early drafts of this paper were quite helpful. Leila Schnarr, the author's wife, is also deserving of special mention for her patient retyping of the manuscript, and especially for her faithful support and understanding throughout the long process of this undertaking.

VITA

The author, Allan Herbert Schnarr, is the son of Cyril Aloysius Schnarr and Rita (Huber) Schnarr. He was born on June 6, 1949, in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is an attempt to achieve a qualitative appreciation of one man's experience of intimacy at a critical point in his adult life. Paul was interviewed regarding his experience of each of his most significant interpersonal relationships from the age of 18 to the present time, age 40. In the course of these interviews, one heterosexual relationship stood out above all other relationships in its impact on his life. This relationship precipitated a crisis regarding Paul's previous commitment to the Roman Catholic priesthood. In this thesis, the events that surrounded this crisis are explored through the eyes of the subject. An initial understanding of his experience is established. Then a deeper level of understanding is attempted: in this second stage, patterns and themes from Paul's experiences in childhood are used to gain insight into his resolution of the crisis he had faced. This two step methodology is borrowed from the field of psychohistory, to be discussed below.

The present study is a phenomenological investigation. Since this is not a widespread approach to scientific

investigation, the phenomenological method will be briefly described at this point. A complete description of the methodology is reserved for Chapter III. Phenomenology can perhaps best be characterized by Husserl's own words: "Back to the things themselves" (Kockelmans, 1965, p. 18). Edmund Husserl was the father of the philosophical school of phenomenology. The phenomenological method, according to Kockelmans (1965) "can be said to be a precise method which intends to let everything which shows itself appear to us in a clear way, as it shows itself to us" (p. 19). There are several key words in this definition. Phenomenology is "precise" in that it is disciplined and rigorous in its strict adherence, and openness, to that which presents itself. The point is to faithfully represent what is, to do this as completely as possible. "Everything which shows itself" is significant; nothing can be overlooked. The attitude of the phenomenologist is a receptive, listening attitude, allowing the phenomena to become manifest. But this does not occur with any form of objective, laboratory-like distance between the phenomena and the investigator. The events present themselves "to us." They do not occur in a vacuum, but, as the investigator experiences them. Indeed, the phenomenological investigator pays as much attention to their impact upon him or her as to the events themselves.

The present study employs the phenomenological

method. The events surrounding a critical point in Paul's adult life are "represented," as faithfully as possible, as he experienced them. This is the first stage of the present study. It is presented in Chapter IV. The second stage, presented in Chapter V, involves a deeper level of understanding. As the investigator attempted faithfully to represent Paul's experience in the first stage, themes have emerged and these have led to questions. The subject's experience of this critical time in his life cannot be fully understood without placing it in the broader context of other important life-experiences. This is the intent of the second stage. The investigator, having become familiar with Paul's childhood experiences, uses recurrent patterns from this time to achieve a more thorough understanding of Paul's actions during the critical period under study. This is done with a minimum of psychological theorizing. The phenomenological method in Chapters IV and V allows the connections between the events in Paul's life to become manifest in the accurate "representation" of the data of his experience. With such disciplined attention to "the things themselves," that is, to the events of Paul's life, the investigator attempts accurately to portray Paul's experience without the a priori imposition of theoretical meaning. Psychological theorizing is reserved for the final chapter, where a psychodynamic interpretation of Paul's experience is presented.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Several areas of psychological literature are important to establish a context for the present study. First, since this is a study of a single subject, the idiographic-nomothetic controversy is discussed, and a rationale for N of 1 designs presented. Second, since the format of this study bears strong resemblance to the field of psychohistory, this area is discussed as background for the methodology. Third, the use of "retrospective reports" in this study is substantiated by describing the use of such reports in life-span developmental psychology. Fourth, the social psychological literature on intimacy is reviewed to highlight the important components of an intimate relationship. The use of these components in the development of the interview format is explained in Chapter III. Finally, a sampling of recent studies on intimacy is reviewed to provide a context for the present study.

The Idiographic-Nomothetic Controversy

An idiographic study can be scientifically acceptable. Such a design is an intensive investigation of only one subject. A nomothetic design, on the other hand, is

used to study contrasts between groups. For many social scientists, nomothetic approaches are essential to scientific methodology. This viewpoint has been maintained by many, despite the increased frequency of idiographic studies. As Edgar and Billingsley (1974) say:

Among behavioral scientists there seems to exist a basic distrust of idiographic (single-S) designs. Despite an increasing number of single-S studies, the creation of journals explicitly devoted to single-S designs (e.g., Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis and Journal of Experimental Analysis of Behavior) and often eloquent pleas to consider idiographic research (Dukes, 1965; Guralnick, 1973; Shapiro, 1966; Sidman, 1960; Yates, 1970), an aura of "unscientific" remains associated with single-S research (p. 147).

This state of affairs may be currently shifting. Some behavioral scientists, realizing that each form of scientific investigation has its inherent weaknesses and its concomitant strengths, are moving to a more balanced position. For such investigators, the choice of a method results not from a priori assumptions about the best methodology. Rather, this choice is made according to the question to be researched: the method most appropriate to the question is chosen. As Crano and Brewer (1972) say: "Scientific respectability is not defined by the particular method by which data are collected, but rather by the appropriateness of these techniques to the specific research setting in which they are employed" (p. 166).

The proclivity toward nomothetic research that had characterized psychology in the first half of the twentieth

century was soundly challenged by Allport. His claim was that "slavish subservience" (Allport, 1940, p. 26) to statistical verification of group patterns resulted in psychologists' failure to represent the person in his or her unique individuality. Not that nomothetic approaches do not have their place, but they have their limitations also. Complementary idiographic investigations are necessary for a thorough understanding of almost any psychological reality. Allport did not believe that idiographic methods served to make up for the limitations of nomothetic studies, as if the latter remained the method of choice, but rather that both of these were necessary for a full understanding of human behavior (Allport, 1938, p. 15).

For Allport, the strength of the idiographic study was its sensitivity to the unique individual, especially to the intentionality that was so essential to Allport's image of humanity. He defined intentionality as "what the individual is trying to do" (Allport, 1947, p. 186). This implied taking account of the subjectivity of human experience, and this, of course, was anathema to most behavioral scientists in his time. Holt (1962) remarked that "the artist in him had probably dimmed the vision of the scientist" (p. 377). For such scientists as Holt, the critical question regarding the subjectivity of idiographic studies is the question of generalization or external validity. This

generalization of results is the traditional strength of and reason for nomothetic approaches. Birnbrauer and others (1974) argue that this is an over-simplification. Each type of study has its own limited generalizability according to the logic of its design:

The differences are that group logic specifies determination of the subject's membership in the population sampled and, if so, the range of results that might be expected. Single-subject logic, on the other hand, emphasizes generalization to a new case only if it resembles the original subject in terms of functional relationships between the environment and the subject's behavior (p. 201).

The point is that group designs have a generalization limited by the extent to which any individual belongs to the specific population sampled and is exposed to the same conditions as the experimental sample. Individual studies can also be generalized. For example, in the present study, the results of an investigation of one person can be applied to another to the extent that this other person's experiences are similar to the experiences of the original subject.

Several conclusions regarding the present study can be drawn from this discussion of the literature on the idiographic-nomothetic controversy. The phenomenological approach of this study bears resemblance to Allport's concern for individual intentionality. "What the individual is trying to do" is an integral part of the investigation. Paul's understanding of the unique way he responded to significant life-events is explored. This study can be

generalized to the degree that other individuals experience the same sets of circumstances with similar kinds of personal reactions. More is said about the issue of generalization in the discussion in Chapter VI. Finally, from the point of view of design, this study is scientifically respectable if its methodology is appropriate to the question under study. This leads directly to the next section.

Rationale for N of 1 Designs

When are idiographic designs appropriate? Dukes (1965) has outlined six situations that call for studies of a single subject. These are listed below with examples of well known psychological studies.

1. When uniqueness is involved. If the investigator's interest is in a single individual, then only that person is studied. Examples of this are: Allport's (1965) Letters from Jenny; White's (1975) Lives in Progress; Freud's (1919/1957) Leonardo da Vinci; Erikson's (1958) Young Man Luther; Kuhn's (1958) The Attempted Murder of a Prostitute; and Binswanger's (1958) The Case of Ellen West. The present study fits this category. The experience of one priest in a vocational crisis sparked by a heterosexual relationship is investigated.

2. Complete population generality. If an in-depth study of one person accurately represents all members of the

population, there is no need to study other subjects. Marceil (1977) makes a similar point that, given the assumption that there is some degree of homogeneity of processes within a species, it appears nonessential and even superfluous to study large numbers of people in a superficial manner. For example, Ebbinghaus (1895) used himself as a subject to study memory; Stratton (1897) used himself to study confusion experienced with lenses that inverted the perceptual field; Watson and Rayner (1920) studied conditioning by inducing the fear of a white rat into a young boy; Jones (1924) demonstrated a method for de-conditioning a similar fear in another young boy; Bettelheim (1949) reported the rehabilitation process for one severely disturbed delinquent child. Paul's experience, as explored in this study, has possible implications for the experience of other priests. The question of generalizability, as indicated earlier, will be discussed in Chapter VI.

3. Disconfirmation of a universal law. Negative evidence in one case is sufficient to reject an assumed universal relationship. For example, Krauskopf (1960) demonstrated with one subject, by use of a stopped image, that motion of the retinal image is not necessary for figural after effects; Teska (1947) found an IQ of 113 in a six and one-half year old congenital hydrocephalic, eliminating the common notion that congenital hydrocephalia resulted in

feeble-mindedness. The present study does not relate to this category.

4. Subject sparsity. Because of the sparsity of some phenomena, it is difficult or impossible to gather groups of subjects. For example, Prince's (1905) study of Miss Beauchamp was a model for understanding multiple personality disorders; Cohen and others (1955) studied congenital insensitivity pain. In reference to the present study, there may be large numbers of priests in a vocational crisis due to heterosexual intimacy. However, gathering a group of such men who would volunteer to explore this intimate area with a scientific investigator would be a very difficult task.

5. Situational complexity. "When the situation is greatly extended in time, requires expensive or specialized training for the subjects, or entails intricate and difficult to administer controls, the investigator may, aware of their exploratory character, restrict his observations to one subject" (Dukes, 1965, p. 78). For example, Hayes and Hayes (1952) reported on the complicated process of raising a chimpanzee in their home; Burt (1941) tested a 16 year old young man for the retention of material presented in infancy. The methodology of the present study is complex and time-consuming, but could still be practical with groups of people.

6. Theoretical groundwork. An investigator may simply focus on a problem and lay the groundwork for later theorists by clarifying questions, defining variables, indicating approaches, and generating hypotheses. Shapiro (1961) speaks of laws being discovered with one subject and replicated with many. Examples are Freud's (1905/1963) analysis of Dora, the single case study which became the landmark study of hysteria, and many of Freud's other case studies; Ebbinghaus' (1885) use of himself as a single subject in the study of memory; and the studies on conditioning by Watson and Rayner (1920) and Jones (1924), referred to earlier. The present study highlights the importance of several theoretical issues that require further research. These are discussed in Chapter VI.

Experimental Rigor. Though not mentioned in the article by Dukes (1965), the use of experimental rigor within an idiographic study can be further justification for the method. Birnbrauer (1974) discusses the factors essential for the internal validity of an N of 1 study: reliable measurement, repeated measurement, description of the procedures and context, and systematic manipulation of independent variables. An example of the systematic manipulation of an independent variable in a study of one person is the multiple baseline design. In this design the experimental treatment is presented and withdrawn several times to

demonstrate, in its absence, the return to baseline, that is, to a no treatment condition. He also outlines a variety of idiographic time series designs, involving these factors. Shapiro (1961) discusses three conditions for the use of N of 1 studies: experimental control, replication, and appropriate methods of measurement. Edgar and Billingsley (1974) discuss the roles of data accuracy (sources of measurement), internal validity, and statistical manipulation in N=1 studies. It is clear that rigorous experimental methodology is amenable to an idiographic approach. The Journal of Applied Behavioral Analysis and the Journal of Experimental Analysis of Behavior are comprised primarily of such rigorously experimental idiographic studies. Of the experimental procedures mentioned here the present study employs only the careful description of procedures and context.

In summary, then, though this investigation of Paul's experience does not employ an experimentally rigorous methodology, there is ample rationale for the choice of the kind of idiographic design used here. First, there is a legitimate scientific interest in a qualitative appreciation of one man's experience. Second, this experience has some implications for the experience of other celibate men. Third, obtaining a large number of volunteers for such in depth self-exploration with a stranger would be exceedingly

difficult. Finally, reflection on this man's experience does lead to contributions to the process of theory building.

Psychohistory

As many of the above examples show, a variety of idiographic studies are descriptive, rather than, in the strict sense, experimental. The earliest examples of these are the case studies of Freud and his associates, what was called "applied psychoanalysis" (de Mause, 1975, p. 3). De Mause points out that such studies were "confined to the back pages of psychoanalytic journals for five decades," where they were used primarily to illustrate clinical discoveries, "so that, when the Oedipus complex was new, leaders were found to have Oedipus complexes, and when ego psychology was developing, the same leaders were found to have identity crises" (p. 3). The bulk of these early studies were psychobiographies of important people. Investigators used biographical information provided by traditional historians and attempted to guess at the childhood experiences underpinning the adult personality. At this early stage, the development of the field of psychohistory was hindered by two factors. One was the lack of empirical verification. Even more significant, however, was the occasional discovery of evidence that disproved the theoretical guesswork after it had been published.

Nonetheless, psychohistory continued to develop. In

1937 Frenkel presented her empirically respectable "studies in biographical psychology." She investigated three areas. The first of these was behavior, that is, what the subject actually did. The second area was the subject's internal reactions to this behavior, how the subject felt about what he or she actually did. Third, she investigated what she considered to be the person's important accomplishments and productions, and their impact. For example, a publication or a painting was explored for what it revealed of its creator, as well as for the impact it had on other members of society. These three areas were used to form pictures of developmental stages, replicated across individuals. Even more significant in the development of the field of psychohistory were Erikson's studies, Young Man Luther (1958) and Gandhi's Truth (1969). In fact, Erikson has come to be called the founding father of one branch of psychohistory, now known as life-history, which focuses on great men. "In life-history, we are primarily concerned with the motives of an individual, suitably psychoanalyzed, of course, and the way in which these personal motives are shaped by the culture and society as well as by his genetic factors, etc." (Mazlish, 1976, p. 18). Such an investigation of an individual through culture and personal background is modeled on Erikson's format as applied in his work on Luther and Gandhi.

The other branch of psychohistory, called group-history by Mazlish (1976), owes its genesis to the development, during the 1960's, of psychoanalytic small-group process theory. This theory involved the identification of group fantasies, group defenses, and other shared needs on a strictly empirical basis. Group-history is not investigated in this study. For a more complete explanation of its methodology and development, read Mazlish (1974).

From its unsure beginnings in the back pages of psychoanalytic journals, psychohistory has had a slow and uneven development. Given its greatest impetus from the work of Erikson, it has recently emerged as a new and avowedly empirical discipline. Its activities center around the new scholarly journal, History of Childhood Quarterly: The Journal of Psychohistory. The editor of this journal, Lloyd de Mause (1975) refers to "the new psychohistory," characterized by an "attitude of radical empiricism in a new generation of psychohistorians, trained both in psychoanalysis and in one of the historical disciplines" (p. 5). Some examples of recent psychohistorical studies are Ward's (1975) work on Henry Kissinger, Binion's (1975) analysis of the group dynamics involved in Hitler's bond with the German people, Marvick's (1975) analysis of Louis XIII's childhood as it affected his decisions of state, and Davis' (1975) study of Roosevelt and the Progressive Era.

Psychohistorians have recently clarified the identity of psychohistory and now claim that it is different from, though related to, psychobiography (a biography of a person emphasizing the psychic components of the person). According to Mollinger (1975):

Psychohistory goes further--it attempts to connect these individual psychic elements with the cultural group to which the individual belongs. This kind of approach focuses on several areas. First, a historical event in the life of an individual is presented. Second, after an extensive factual description of this event, an inquiry is made into its relation and importance to the particular stage of life in which the individual is at the time. Third, the significance of the event is usually connected to its childhood determinants. And finally, after the establishment of the importance of this event in the individual's life, it is related to the history of the community in which the individual lives (p. 315).

The present study focuses primarily on two of these four components. Its first stage is an extensive phenomenological description of a particular historical event in Paul's life. The second stage employs childhood determinants to enrich the understanding of the central event. The possible significance of the particular stage in Paul's life and the relationship of his experience to the community in which he lives are discussed in Chapter VI.

Life-Span Developmental Psychology

A rapidly growing sub-discipline within psychology, whose growth during the last two decades parallels that of psychohistory, is the area of life-span developmental psychology (see Goulet and Baltes, 1970). One of the methods

of data gathering developed in this field of study is called retrospective reports. These are self-reports of an individual's recollection of his past experience. This methodology was used in the interviews with Paul. It seems worthwhile, therefore, to situate the methodology within the larger context of life-span developmental psychology.

Highly critical of cross-sectional approaches to the study of intra-individual differences, Goulet and Baltes (1970) claim that such work as that done by Neugarten (1968) reflects primarily historico-cultural life-cycle expectations, which are actually inter-individual age differences. The study of intra-individual age changes, which is the real interest of the life-span developmental psychologist, is said to require intensive longitudinal studies. Of course, such studies of the full life-span present feasibility problems.

Because of these problems longitudinal studies are scarce. Nonetheless, some longitudinal studies relating to adult development were found in the literature. A number of these studies are listed here to give the reader some idea of what has been done. Vaillant (1977) did a landmark study of the adaptive ego patterns, at midlife, of 92 men. They were chosen in college as likely to succeed, and interviewed at regular intervals since that time. Though his sample is biased in favor of those with a capacity for success rather

than a capacity for intimacy, he does isolate eighteen basic adaptive mechanisms. Haan and Day (1974) studied change and sameness in personality development from adolescence to later adulthood. Later, using the same subjects, Haan (1976) reported on the personality organizations of 136 men and women at four periods from adolescence to middle adulthood. Meddin (1975) did a longitudinal investigation of the relationship between age and subjective outlook. Giambra (1974) studied daydreaming across the life-span. Shulman (1975) investigated life-cycle variations in patterns of close relationships.

The difficulties inherent in doing such studies have led to modifications. One alternative is the use of the psychohistorical methodology described above. Another modification worthy of consideration, according to Goulet and Baltes (1970), is the use of retrospective reports. C. Buhler (1935), the pioneer of life-span developmental psychology, based her theorizing on retrospective reports in the form of autobiography. Levinson and his co-workers (1978) refined this methodology in a technique he called "biographical interviewing," a combination of elements of a research interview, a clinical interview, and a conversation between friends. The goal was to get as much information as possible from an individual regarding the external events and the internal meanings of these events. This methodology

differs from psychohistory in that it uses the memory of a contemporary subject regarding his or her past experience. Levinson studied forty men in their forties and put together a psycho-biography of each. Careful study of these individual life-histories revealed predictable developmental stages and transition periods through which each man passed.

It is clear from their use in life-span developmental psychology that retrospective reports can provide empirical data. The present study uses a form of retrospective report to gather data about the subject's experiences. Paul was interviewed regarding his memories of some of the events of his life, from his earliest recollections to the present. His personal understanding of the various incidents of his life was also noted. The final goal of these interviews, however, was unlike their use in life-span developmental psychology. The focus of this study was one particularly critical event in Paul's life. Information was gathered about other life-events only to enable further understanding of this one critical event. At this point it is important to note that Paul's recollections about various events in his life were not gathered indiscriminately. In the following section the choice of a focus for the biographical interviewing is discussed.

Intimacy as a Focus

The central focus of the interviews with Paul was

his experience of interpersonal relationships. The choice of relationships as the filter through which to view this man's experience has solid foundation in psychological theory. Psychoanalytic object relations theory (Klein, 1948; Fairbairn, 1952), as well as the work of Harry Stack Sullivan (1953), and George Herbert Mead (1934), have established the importance of significant others in the development of the individual. In a reformulation of object relations theory, Laing (1966), a social psychologist, says that human behavior is predominantly oriented towards making, maintaining, and developing relations with others. Erikson (1950) identified a particular period in the life cycle, namely young adulthood, as the time when the formation of intimate relationships becomes the pre-potent need, as well as a realistic possibility. Lowenthal and Weiss (1976) refer to intimacy as the critical intervening variable between life stress and adaptation. Intimacy, then, is highly important in human development. It is in this context that the interview format described below was developed.

Social Psychology and Intimacy

The literature on relationships reveals the variables necessary for a comprehensive understanding of any relationship. One such variable is attraction. Houston and his associates (1979) summarize the research on attraction by suggesting that we are attracted to people:

1. Who we see as generally similar to ourselves
 - a. Who agree with us in our opinions, attitudes or behavioral choices
 - b. Who we think of as being about as attractive as we are
 - c. Who are at about the same status level in our group or community
 - d. Who are about our own age
2. Who are physically attractive
3. Who like us
4. Who we see frequently (familiarity)
5. Who are nearby (propinquity) (p. 635).

Not unrelated to this research is that of Berscheid and Walster (1968), who presented a theory of interpersonal relationships based on equity of exchange. The basic assumption of this theory is that people generally seek to maximize their rewards while minimizing their costs. An equitable relationship is one in which this reward/cost balance is perceived as close to equal by the parties involved. Berscheid and Walster consider the following to be rewards exchanged in a relationship: reduction of anxiety, stress, loneliness, insecurity; reciprocity-of-liking; similarity of attitudes, personality, values, intelligence; the intensification of sentiment through propinquity; and cooperation. Kelley and Thibaut (1978) further develop this exchange model and the evaluation of outcomes into complex predictive mathematical formulas. They suggest that individuals make decisions to risk deepening a relationship according to their perception of the likely outcomes or rewards, and that this is a gradual, reciprocal movement depending on the rewards previously experienced. Osgood

(1962) refers to this as a graduated reciprocation in tension reduction. Deutsch and Kraus (1965), in their role theory, state that an individual has as many social selves as there are persons who recognize him or her, and that these are determined by the individual's perception of how the other person views him or her. Lastly, the skill components of an interpersonal relationship (self-disclosure, empathic listening, challenging, and immediacy were outlined and discussed by Egan (1976). Immediacy is the skill whereby an individual has awareness, in the here-and-now, of his or her feelings in response to another, and is able to communicate these feelings to the other. Immediacy also involves being able to discuss directly with another "where you stand in relationship to him or her and where you see the other standing in his or her relationship to you" (Egan, 1976, p. 200).

In summary, then, the following variables seem significant to a comprehensive picture of any relationship: attraction, similarity, liking, familiarity, propinquity, equity of exchange, initiative or risk-taking, evaluation of the other's view of oneself, self-disclosure, empathy, challenging, and immediacy. As is explained below, interview questions were developed around all of these content areas.

Recent Studies of Intimacy

A sampling of recent studies of intimacy is also valuable as a context for this present investigation. No idiographic studies were found. Some of the studies, however, do use a phenomenological methodology. Most are investigations of one or more particular variables salient to the experience of intimacy. The emphasis is usually on a few specific variables as they are experienced by certain groups of people. No studies focus, as does this present one, on the significance of a particular relationship in one person's life.

Studies of Friendship. Many recent dissertations have investigated friendship. It is interesting to note that none of these dissertations employed the experimental method. Most are essentially descriptive explorations into specific friendship experiences of sizeable samples. All used interview formats. For example, Haapanen (1976), on the basis of interviews, formulated the "ideal-typical" characterization of close friendship as seen from the eyes of a number of white, middle-class, college-educated individuals. He found that individuals sought to achieve the rewards of intimate association without sacrificing feelings of freedom and autonomy. Smith (1976) developed a phenomenological interview procedure to elicit the meaning of intimacy for a matched sample of ten Anglo-American, ten

Black-American, and ten Mexican-American community college women. "The results of this exploratory study led to the hypothesis that intimacy is linearly linked, both to the number and intensity of mutually experienced intimacy factors present in an interpersonal relationship" (Smith, 1976, p. 1416). Guinsburg (1973) used an interview format with several questionnaires to investigate the components of "platonic" and "romantic" heterosexual relationships. He found that a "platonic" relationship lacks the emotional closeness and comfort of a "romantic" relationship. Gans (1976) also used an interview format. Her investigation of six couples is the closest to an idiographic study of any studies reviewed here. She studied couple partnerships using the theory of separation-individuation developed by Margaret Mahler (1965): "As the child separates himself from his mother he learns the limits within which he can tolerate aloneness, and he also learns to experience a non-symbiotic closeness" (Gans, 1976, p. 3600). The most prominent factor hindering closeness was pseudo self-sufficiency, seen as a defensive stance against symbiotic wishes. These studies all demonstrate the usefulness of interviews for the phenomenological exploration of the experience of intimacy.

Attraction and Equity. There are, of course, studies on attraction and equity of exchange. For example, Murstein and his associates (1977) investigated the effect

of exchange-orientation on marriage and friendship. Their data generally supported their hypothesis that an exchange orientation in both members of the pair would be inimical to marriage adjustment and facilitative of situationally determined friendships. Marsden (1966) found shared values to be a significant determinant of friendship choice. Weiss and Lowenthal (1975) found similarity, reciprocity, and compatibility to be the major components of an intimate relationship. For an investigation of the verbal, non-verbal, and physical manifestations of these components see Byrne, 1971; Argyle and Dean, 1965; Hall, 1966; Kiesler and Goldberg, 1968. The present study does not focus on any one particular component of an intimate relationship, nor even on the interaction of several components, as do these studies. However, as already noted, the elements highlighted by these studies, that is, attraction, equity, and similarity, are used as filters through which to obtain a comprehensive picture of the relationships in Paul's life.

The Development of a Relationship. Other studies investigate the stages in the development of intimacy. Morris (1971), for example, found twelve stages that male-female relationships must pass through to establish an intimate bond. Heilbronn (1976) conducted a longitudinal study of the development and dissolution of a friendship with 102 male and female college students. He found, among

other things, that the role of social exchange variables changes as a function of time, accounting for much of the variance in the intermediate and later stages of friendship. In the interviews about relationships in the present study, attention is paid to the temporal sequence of events within any given relationship.

Developmental Stages. The relationship of intimacy to various developmental stages has been investigated. Orlofsky and others (1973) confirmed the importance of successful resolution of the identity crisis for favorable resolution of the intimacy-isolation crisis. Orlofsky (1974) followed up this study by investigating "partner perception" or knowledge of the partner's self-conception. Using "partner perception," or degree of mutual knowledge and understanding, as one measure of intimacy, strong correlations were found with intimacy status as defined in his previous study. Shulman (1975) studied life cycle variations in patterns of close relationships and frequency of contact and exchange. He found that "sets of close relationships, conceptualized as personal networks, vary with age and life stage, in composition, stability and degree of involvement" (Shulman, 1975, p. 813). Powers and Bultena (1976) review the literature on the social contacts of older persons, pointing out that, generally, women have more contacts than men. The present study takes into account the

developmental stage at which a given relationship is experienced. In fact, the critical relationship explored in this study is initiated during the age-thirty transition (see Levinson and others, 1978).

Attention to Quality. Powers and Bultena (1976), in reviewing the literature on the social contacts of older persons, found that, while studies have greatly extended knowledge of the social ties of older adults, in terms of "structural elements," little attention has been paid to the "intensity of relationships," so that "intimate friendships during late life remain relatively unexplored" (p. 740). Powers and Bultena proceed to study not only the frequency but the intimate quality of relationships in old age. A similar lack of attention to the quality of the intimacy can be seen in several studies of married couples. Falding (1961), for example, found that married adults did not form many new friendships. Several studies have found that widowed individuals were more isolated than married couples (Berardo, 1967; Booth, 1972; Townsend, 1957; Pihlblad and Adams, 1972). However, Petrowsky's (1976) study of marital status, sex, and the social networks of the elderly contradicted these findings. Lowenthal and Weiss (1976) question the lack of qualitative attention to intimacy:

Scholars studying later phases of adulthood, however, have tended to by-pass dyadic relationships in favor of research on participation in social networks, familial and otherwise. The emphasis is on behavioral involve-

ment and activity patterns, rather than the quality of interpersonal relationships (p. 13).

These authors go on to discuss the importance of qualitative studies of intimacy, especially in the course of adult life-crises, as background to the effective counseling of such individuals. This presents a valuable point of departure for the present study, which attempts a qualitative, phenomenological investigation of one man's experience of intimacy at a critical point in his adult life.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Subject. A forty year old male Caucasian volunteered to participate in this study. Due to the highly personal nature of much of the data, demographic facts have been altered to protect his identity.

Procedure. The basic procedure used in this study was a form of biographical interviewing. A series of ten one and one-half hour interviews were conducted. The first two were used as screening, to assure the emotional stability of the volunteer. This stability was considered a prerequisite to the exploration of the subject's experience of interpersonal relationships. For an emotionally unstable person, such an exploration would likely uncover unresolved conflicts that could be seriously disturbing to the individual. This may then have required a therapeutic rather than an investigative relationship.

In the first interview Paul's social history to the end of high school was explored. This included an investigation of his family system, the educational and church systems that influenced him, and broader societal factors, like the historical period, the economic situation, and the

culture. In sessions 2 and 3 Paul's career and life-style decisions from high school to the present were explored. These data were used, in the context of Levinson's work (1978), to establish hypothetical developmental stages through which Paul had passed. The last six interviews intensively explored the one or two most significant relationships of each developmental stage since high school.

These interviews about relationships, as already indicated, were structured around the significant variables gleaned from the social psychological literature. The variables already mentioned as important are: attraction and first meeting, familiarity and propinquity, similarity and liking, equity of exchange, initiative or risk-taking, evaluation of the other's view of oneself, self-disclosure, empathy, challenging, and immediacy. Questions were formulated around each of these areas. These questions are outlined below.

ATTRACTION/MEETING

How did you meet? How many other significant friends at the time?

FAMILIARITY/PROPINQUITY

What did you do together? How often?

SIMILARITY/LIKING

What did you like or dislike in each other? In what ways were you alike or different?

EVALUATION

Describe the stages of your evaluation of the other. Ditto for your evaluation of the other's evaluation of you.

INITIATIVE

Who made first initiative to deepen? What was the response? Was there reciprocated invitation to deepen further? What risks did you or the other take?

COMMUNICATION

How was affection communicated? Stages?

What values were discussed? Clarified?

What conflicts needed to be resolved? How were they?

What sort of self-disclosure took place? Describe the response. Were there developmental stages?

What kinds of challenges were voiced? Describe the response. Were there developmental stages?

How much "you-me talk" took place? Describe the response. Were there developmental stages?

What sort of interpersonal games were played?

How were decisions made? Who had power?

What kinds of competition were there?

Paul was given a copy of these questions prior to the interviews on his important relationships and invited to spend reflection time in preparation. These questions provided only a guide to structure his recall when such structure was helpful. Frequently his own associations were followed from one experience to another without particular reference to the guiding questions. At all times the emphasis was on maximizing the concreteness of the recall in terms of specific behaviors, experiences, and feelings (see Egan, 1976). The questions were relied on when the subject

was feeling a need for direction, as well as in the later stages of an interview, to ensure that all questions were adequately covered. This minimally structured format was used since it seemed, in pilot interviews, to facilitate recall.

During the course of these interviews, it became clear that a specific heterosexual relationship eclipsed all others in its importance in Paul's life. This relationship had precipitated a crisis between Paul's identity as priest and his desire for intimacy. The time period during which this crisis persisted will be referred to as "the critical period." During this "critical period" Paul attended a retreat weekend during which he attempted to resolve the crisis for himself. The journal which he kept on this weekend was obtained. This added a degree of historical accuracy to some of the data in a manner similar to the methodology of psychohistory.

Organization of the Phenomenological Data. As already outlined above, this study organizes Paul's experience in a manner akin to the psychohistorical format outlined by Mollinger (1975). The first stage, presented in Chapter IV, is an extensive phenomenological re-presentation of Paul's experience of the "critical period." In other words, the events of this period of Paul's life are presented as closely as possible to the way he experienced

them. This includes presenting much of the personal meaning of the events in his own words from the interviews and from his journal.

The second stage of this study, presented in Chapter V, is an attempt at a deeper understanding of the events of the critical period. After prolonged immersion in the data of Paul's experience, the investigator noticed recurring patterns which began early in life. This immersion was a process of reading numerous times through the interviews with Paul. Patterns and themes that emerged were noted. Experiences were organized according to their support of a particular pattern. These patterns were then used to shed further light on Paul's understanding of, reaction to, and resolution of, the crisis he had faced.

Uniqueness and Generalization. The two stage methodology just described is an attempt to achieve one of the possible goals of an idiographic design as mentioned by Dukes (1965), namely an intensive, qualitative appreciation of one individual's unique experience. The phenomenological methodology is used to bring the investigator, and the reader, as close as possible to Paul's experience. The point is to understand the events of his life in the unique way that he experienced them. This study of a unique individual is worthwhile in itself (Dukes, 1965), but the present study does not stop here. Dukes (1965)

also mentions that a single case may be representative of the experience of many others and may also make contributions to the process of theory building. In Chapter VI, a psychodynamic analysis of Paul's experience is presented. The possibility that this analysis may represent the experience of other celibate men is discussed. Lastly, some hypotheses relevant to a psychological theory of intimacy in celibate men are outlined, with suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER IV

PHENOMENOLOGICAL DATA

This chapter is the first stage of the phenomenological methodology outlined above. The events of a critical time in Paul's life are presented from his perspective. In other words, the behaviors, experiences and feelings surrounding the crisis appear, as he experienced them. The data is taken from a journal kept by Paul during the crisis time, and from interviews with Paul eight years later. Before beginning the phenomenology of the critical period, it is important to outline some of the facts of Paul's social history.

Social History

Paul was born in 1942, the second child and oldest son of an upper middle class family of British descent. The youngest in the family was a girl born eight years after Paul. There were also two brothers between them. When Paul was a child his father owned and operated a store. This enterprise was successful enough to enable the family to live a comfortable life-style in the New England countryside. Here their British heritage was preserved, within the family environment, and especially through their schooling. Paul and his older sister both went to an expensive

private girls' elementary school. This school was chosen for Paul because it was located quite near their home and because it had a reputation for excellence in education. While Paul was at this school, however, his father's store began losing money. Paul says it was because his father extended limitless credit to anyone who asked. Eventually his father closed the store and took a job with an insurance company in the city of Boston. This required his commuting to Boston, over a hundred miles away, and returning home only on weekends. Paul was eleven years old when his father's prolonged absences began. He finished grade school and won a scholarship to an exclusive all-boys private high school. This school also preserved British tradition. Its rules were quite strict. Standards were high, both in terms of learning and gentlemanly conduct. Paul's younger brothers and sisters all went to public schools. The family could no longer afford private schools. Paul's mother remained in the home, occupied not only with her own five children, but with numerous foster children that were placed in their home for periods of a year or more. The family adopted a two year old girl a few years after Paul left home for the seminary.

Paul went to the seminary at the age of seventeen, with one year of high school left to complete. He was ordained a priest eight years later and stationed at "St.

Andrew's," a large inner city parish in Boston. He worked in this parish for seven years. After this, he served three years each at a country parish and at a parish in the suburbs of Boston. Then, at the age of 38, he was appointed Director of Counselor Training at the Catholic Marital Counseling Services (CMCS) of the archdiocese of Boston. To prepare for this role, he went to St. Louis University to complete his studies for an M.A. in counseling psychology.*

The Inner City: Conflict and Distance

The events surrounding the crisis time will now be presented. Sections in quotation marks are Paul's own words, recorded in interviews. Paul was 27 years old and had been a priest for a little over two years when he and Sylvia first met. He was still at "St. Andrew's," his first assignment. He had found ministry in this inner city parish difficult and challenging. Having come from an upper middle class family and having been raised in the New England countryside, in private schools based on the British tradition, his first experiences in the parish were extremely jarring. In the early days, he would frequently return to St. Andrew's appalled by what he had seen that day. Giving the last rites to a murder victim

*The reader is reminded that this data is fictitious. It is provided to create a realistic environment similar to Paul's actual experience.

in one of the inner city hospitals, or visiting one of the families in the slums were disturbing experiences for him. "Totally different from anything I had experienced. To see this young man, with a hole--a dagger hole is extremely small--completely all right except for this tiny hole, dead. It was most extraordinary." Several times he was so upset by the experiences of the day, he would come home and vomit. He wondered how any priest endured this. In fact, only a few did. Most lasted a year or two and moved on. Paul would be there for seven years. He accepted the challenge with the same spirit that had carried him through his early seminary years, "I knew it would not be easy. The sacrifice aspect is certainly a very real part of being here for others. There's a considerable self-risk which I quite enjoy and I've always found affirming." For Paul, then, the struggle was invigorating and meritorious. He felt proud of meeting this challenge in his usual fashion: "Yes, you see, I always succeed."

The first meeting between Paul and Sylvia was uneventful and distant, typical for the way Paul had come to live his priestly role. He used to practice frightening people to keep them at a safe distance: "I could go into a room and I didn't know exactly how I did the look, but I could quell them and I felt that that was a big power in me. And it was undoubtedly very difficult for people to

break through that and for me to drop it." Nonetheless, Sylvia was drawn to him from the start, and after a few brief conversations and attending many of his Masses, she approached him for counseling.

Sylvia was the only child of a family of Scottish descent. Her father died when she was five years old. A few years later her mother deserted her. She was raised by her grandmother. Immediately following high school, she joined a religious order, whose primary apostolate was to children with emotional problems. She got a degree in mathematics and had taught school for three years. Then, at the age of 24 she was sent to Boston by her religious community. She was to get a degree in psychology and return to supervise one of their residential treatment centers for problem children. She eventually graduated with first class honors, according to Paul, the second highest marks that year at the university. Here is Paul's first description of her:

She's about five foot, three inches, quite short, a little plump. I would say that I feel she's attractive without being what you would call classically good-looking, but I think that people who meet her find her a vital sort of person. When she first came to me, I saw her as pudgy, and heavy, and dull. She was in a depressed sort of state. Now that's how we first met.

Paul says she came to him for counseling because she was in a vocational crisis, uncertain whether to stay in or to leave the convent.

This relationship began in the late 1960s. The effects of the Second Vatican Council were beginning to be felt throughout the Roman Catholic Church. Changes in liturgical rubrics and other formal procedures were accepted by almost all priests. More basic changes in ministerial style were not as widespread. Younger priests like Paul were enthusiastic about these changes in the style of their service:

We were trying to be modern thinking people: that basically we're here for the people. We weren't cultic mass-sayers but social and religious change-agents. I wouldn't have used those sort of terms, but that's how I would translate them today.

Such human responsiveness had not been part of Paul's priestly training. So it was that his desire to be of service to young couples preparing for marriage involved him in a variety of counselor training workshops and informal supervision offered through the Catholic Marital Counseling Services (CMCS). The training was essentially Rogerian. One result of this orientation of his priestly service was an increasing contact with people on a day to day basis.

At one discussion group for nuns that he was leading, Paul was walking slowly up the stairs from the church basement and Sylvia remarked that he seemed a bit tired. Paul responded with his usual distancing mechanism, "Oh, yes, I'm worn out carrying my cross; it's a terrible hard-

ship but I struggle on." The sarcasm, calculated to block any response, was ineffective. After a brief pause, Sylvia asked again, "Now after all that, how are you really?" This threw Paul. As he recalls it: "I was in a situation where I had done my usual thing and it hadn't worked and I had to face the fact that she was actually concerned and interested in me and I remember that as being a very significant event." They had been seeing each other in weekly counseling for around nine months. Sylvia had worked through her relationship with her mother and resolved to remain a nun, had decided to stop wearing the habit, and had faced some parts of her own sexuality. Paul was "emotionally involved" but in a manner akin to his "attachment" to all his clients: "I had quite a lot of people in counseling relationships, which is, I'm quite sure, why I was so involved in counseling. I found most of my emotional contact in that state, the formalized counseling relationship." This emotional involvement, however, was not without professional distance:

I was really very strict about not muddling up a counseling relationship. I didn't have meals with the people I was counseling. I didn't see them outside the time that was scheduled. That was the thinking at the time and in many ways it made things very clear for people. And it gave me a great deal of freedom which I valued.

Relationships for Paul, especially with women, were always on the basis of the other's need. He speaks of another

nun, seeing him for counseling, with whom he felt more involved than with Sylvia: "I think that she was more needy, and in some ways, wherever the need is greatest, there I would be involved." These were Paul's ways of having emotional contact with minimal risk: he would intentionally "quell" people with his facial expressions; he kept his counseling relationships professionally distant; and he related most intently when the other's need was greatest. It is easy to understand, then, that when Sylvia's concern, in the above incident, penetrated all these defenses, he was disoriented, "I had to face the fact that she was actually concerned and interested in me and I remember that as being a very significant event." Nonetheless, Paul soon reestablished the distance. This was a counseling relationship and he dealt with it in his supervision at CMCS as a transference issue. The counseling relationship remained stable and controlled.

His Father's Death: A Release and a Crisis

Several months later, however, one powerful event upset this carefully guarded stability. Paul's father died. Sylvia called to cancel their scheduled session out of deference to Paul's grief. Paul responded, "You may not feel you want to talk to me, but had you thought that I might need to talk to you?" This admission of emotional need to another--and indeed, to himself--was a first for Paul.

Not that the paternalistic pattern of always deferring to the greater needs of others was overthrown; but a shift did occur. Paul felt some kind of increased freedom. For example, shortly after the death, he went to his first strip-tease show, "a thing which I could never do, would not have done, though had always wanted to do; and I was quite clear that this act was saying something to my father."

The seeds were sown and the relationship between Paul and Sylvia began to grow, however slowly. Paul remained counselor and priest, convinced of his control and allowing only the smallest gestures towards mutuality. Their counseling roles were his safeguard, even when they were around each other at various parish activities. Paul continued to receive supervision at CMCS regarding this counseling relationship. Then, on January 6, the Catholic feast of the Epiphany (literally, the unveiling), Sylvia, aware of the meaning of the feast, sent Paul a short note declaring that she loved him. Paul's feelings of fear, kept out of consciousness to this point, erupted. He met with Sylvia and attempted to reestablish a sense of control by dealing with the transference, but his own counter-transference became evident. He could see then that the counseling relationship was no longer a reality, so they discussed their future from a new perspective. They resolved to be friends. At the end of the conversation Paul

demonstrated his ambivalence: "Well, if you want to go on with this, it's all right with me, but let me tell you, you've chosen a very hard nut to crack." Sylvia's response was again penetrating: "But you don't seem to realize that I'm not out to crack you."

The relationship now entered a period of intensified shared activity. Sylvia was to leave Boston in five months, so they made good use of the remaining time. They frequently chose to spend time together after parish meetings. One night Paul suggested they walk home along the river rather than taking the subway. Another night they went out to a bar. They began to visit certain parishioners who applauded their friendship. Paul would sometimes drive Sylvia to appointments since she had no access to a car. He drove her to her final exams and picked her up afterwards to celebrate with a few drinks. Physical contact gradually increased. In the last month they spent time kissing and holding at the end of evenings.

Nothing very involved sexually, no real sexual contact. And that was a confusing aspect for me, made doubly so by the fact that I was a celibate priest and she was a nun. This added to it considerably, but that was only a symbol for my personal fears and reservations: basically fear of being taken over, a fear of being out of control, which was the thing that frightened me the most. . . . It felt like she was the one who was controlling, you see, in charge of me, and I was not my own boss any more.

In the last month before she left, a great deal of their talk was explicitly about his felt conflict.

But nothing was resolved and Sylvia did leave in July. She returned to her community assignment 250 miles away. They attempted to maintain the intense communication that had developed. Letters supplemented telephone calls several times a week. Once a month they would both travel half-way for the day, or Paul would travel all the way to her home town. Through this sustained output of energy they grew even closer. Paul's fright grew as well:

I was becoming more and more panicky about how I could continue in this relationship which seemed to be getting closer and closer and where, naturally speaking, marriage would seem an obvious resolution. . . . It was an increasing panic, an increasing feeling that I was not in charge of my own life, that I couldn't think clearly enough. I was becoming very confused.

The conflict seemed beyond resolution. Either Sylvia or priesthood. He could not choose either because he could not give up either.

The Unilateral Declaration of Silence

Paul's feelings of losing control of his life continued to increase. One day he realized what he felt he had to do. He must get back on control of himself. That day he sat down and wrote Sylvia a carefully worded letter, which he has since come to call his "unilateral declaration of silence." There would be no communication between them for three months.

That same night I dramatized the break for myself. I burned everything, but everything she had given me. And I kept, as far as I know, I really kept nothing.

I planned it with great tears and sorrow. It was terrible. I decided that this has got to be a complete break if I'm to, it was that sort of decision, between God and Sylvia type of decision. And she was a very good knitter and knits lots of things and she had knitted me a blue cardigan which was her first big present to me and this was included in my burning. I set off in the middle of the night, ten or eleven o'clock and the only place I thought I wouldn't be disturbed was near my own home. There was a very large park. And I had planned where I would burn all these letters and papers which she'd given me including this woolen cardigan. And what was extremely clear to me as I was doing it, and still is, was Abraham's sacrifice. I think I felt all that Abraham felt, except I knew the end of mine and I knew there would be no rescue for me in a sense, having burned everything. But I think I did have a vague hope that this would bring her back to me alive.

A month later, in September, he travelled to San Francisco, just to get away for a while, and also to check out what sort of marriage enrichment program he might find to bring back to his parish. He met a priest who was organizing a Marriage Encounter weekend and accepted an invitation to be paired with another priest and experience the weekend with the married couples.

A Marriage Encounter weekend is a tightly organized, extremely intense, high-energy program designed to improve a couple's knowledge of each other and ability to communicate. Feelings are the focus of the weekend. All communication is to be around feelings. Time is spent alone, preparing for any communication by writing, in a journal, answers to probing questions provided by the leaders. After each exercise journals are exchanged and read by the partner before

they are talked about (with the partner). On the first day each individual encounters the self. On the second day the encounter is with the partner. The last day they dialogue--individually and as a couple--with their God. Couples are not allowed to talk at any time with anyone but their partner. Priests who are invited are paired with other priests and told to consider Christ their spouse. What follows is a distillation of Paul's journal. Quotes are directly from the journal. Underlined portions are questions or directions from the leaders.

A Basic Theme Emerges Early: "Look At
Me, Aren't I Clever On This
Tightrope!"

What are my feelings about what I find most attractive in Christ? Paul liked most the clarity of Christ's conviction about what he was meant to do, not that "he had it all on a plate or that it was clearly mapped out, but what I admire is his certainty about who he is, as though he is the center of his existence and this sureness had an ability to give strength and direction to others." Paul wanted this certainty for himself, but was aware at the time of feeling mostly lost, uncertain, and anxious in a way that affected his stomach.

What are my feelings about what I like best in me?

"I like myself for risking, for being out on a limb, for

being uncertain! There's a damned paradox for you, the quality I like best in myself is the one that worries me the most!"

What are the masks that cause me to behave the way I do? "Nothing worries me: I'm competent. I can manage perfectly well by myself, thank you. I'm sick and I need mother/need someone to worry about me. Look at me, aren't I clever on this tightrope!"

Do I really like myself and what does this mean? Paul's first words in response to this were, "I don't really like myself much." He was afraid he was a phony, uncertain about his motive for "doing good things." His conflict was about wanting and not wanting to be liked by others:

I feel frightened if I admit that people like me as much as I think that they do. It frightens me to know that people love me. In an odd way I'd prefer them not to. And if they don't it worries me to death. Once I'm sure that someone loves me I treat them cruelly--almost testing them to the limit. . . . A part of me only wants shallow relationships and another part something so deep that it is all absorbing.

Dutiful Service Or Selfish Warmth:
Either/Or

Write a love letter to your spouse. Paul's letter to his God struggled again with his motivation for priestly service, "the sense of emptiness when doing things for your people. So often I feel, what's the point? Couldn't I do this sort of thing even if I weren't a priest?" He was

frustrated with the shallowness of his relationships, the lack of warm human love. "My life is more served out of duty, rather than being a warm heartfelt reaction on my part to the needs of your people. I feel frozen up and mechanized in relationship to you and your people." His fear, however, was that allowing a warm relationship to develop would result in its being exclusive of God and his people.

So I feel split, I need to love someone deeply, and in many ways this has enabled me to love others more fully, but in another way I have concentrated too much on her and not enough on you and your people so that I fear loving individuals deeply will lead me away from you who were my first choice, my decision, dominus pars, I have chosen you as my "lot" in life.

This conflict between a cold, dutiful service and a warm human relationship left Paul, in his words, insecure in his sacrament. Service without human warmth was empty. He could not choose it. Warm human love was exclusive and selfish. He could not choose it either.

The subsequent letter to Phil, the priest who was his partner, developed this conflict further. He expressed clearly and forcefully his frustration with the

lack of sexual relations. I really feel that I am missing out on something really important, that I've got a warm body with a peter attached and I can't express myself by being intimately and sexually close to someone who loves me and whom I love deeply. . . . But what I feel about celibacy is the real physical hunger to have a gentle, yielding, soft, warm, live woman in my arms to hold, and her holding me. It nearly drives me crazy sometimes when I allow myself to feel how much I want this.

Acting on these feelings was taboo but he was still glad to have them since they proved to him that he was a man.

In the next letter to Phil, Paul admitted being afraid to face what it was like to be in Phil's position. Phil was in an unguarded vocational crisis and moving towards leaving the priesthood to get married. Because this touched Paul so closely, he told Phil that he found it difficult to really listen to him. Paul was sad and disappointed with himself. If only he'd had a real grasp of what priesthood meant to himself, he would surely have been more helpful to Phil.

An Initial Decision

Name three instances in which I have felt closest to you. Describe these feelings of closeness fully and in loving detail. The first experience of closeness with his God that Paul described was a mystical experience in the seminary chapel, knowing God like a bright light that came from inside and outside of himself and filled his "heart and chest with enormous wonder, gratitude, joy, and certainty." The second was at a Mass he said for a discussion group where he felt deeply identified with Jesus as the Good Shepherd: "As I looked on my small flock, like you I was moved with compassion for them, I wanted to gently hug each one and assure them that I would lay down my life for them, in fact that is what my life was, it was given for them, and

for all men." The third experience was quietly sexual: "I was half awake, half asleep when you came into my room to wake me. You sat on the side of the bed and kissed me, so gently, oh so gently that. . . .!" Paul did not state who it was that had awakened him with this morning kiss.

What feelings do I have that I find difficult to share with you? Describe them fully in loving detail. Paul told Phil about his reticence to be fully open, considering the fact that they probably would not meet again. He then went on to give Phil some of the credit in the confirmation of his decision to remain a priest. "Somehow I feel that you have a trust in me which has made me feel more certain that I am right to remake my daily decision to continue as a priest and thereby express my love for God and his Church. This is something really valuable that you have given me." This realization of Phil's helpfulness to him led him to express his feelings about the possibility of Phil's leaving:

I can't get it out of my heart that it will be a pity for the Church, a real loss, if you finally decide to leave the priesthood. In many ways I can resign myself to it and not take it as a personal failure on my part. But the feeling I find most difficult is my frustration at not getting you to stand on your own two feet.

Reworking the Decision

What are my reasons for wanting to go on living?

Paul's answer to this question filled the last eight pages of his journal. He begins by reasoning that is appropriate

that he be writing to Phil and Jesus,

because that is what my life is about, loving God with my whole heart and you Jesus who he has sent, and loving my neighbor, you Phil, at the same time and somehow by the same act of love and will. This is one of the most important things for me, to have real heartfelt love for you Phil and Jesus in you and for you Jesus, and Phil in you, in the Church.

This integration of a previously irreconcilable dilemma (warm love or dutiful service) excited Paul. "I see this as a great challenge, one that frightens me, but one that, because it is difficult and 'unreachable,' has a strong fascination for me, and in reaching for it I feel an excitement that makes me come alive and feel real." Paradoxically, the moment of certainty was not without doubt: "Even as I say this though, I doubt how much I mean it." Paul reflected on his lack of complete warmth with Phil and the many times he had been distracted from Jesus with thoughts of Sylvia.

Though I know you live in her too, just as you do in Phil and in loving her I am loving you, there is something that makes me fear I will stop giving selflessly to you Jesus, in your church and in all your people, and instead start reaching for a reachable star, because to love Sylvia exclusively would be so natural to me and apparently much more fulfilling. But I have made a decision, and I am determined to stay with that decision to love you Christ, in your personhood as Jesus my Savior and healer, in your whole Body the Church and in each individual, you Phil my friend. This decision is one that I intend to practice daily, but as I say it I have a real worry that shouts from my stomach that I'll never be able to do it, that it is too much for me.

He went on to assure himself that he must, could, and would rely on Jesus for the essential help to continue the

impossible task: "I have so often said to you, alone I can do nothing; with you I can do all things." Paul wrote this with concurrent feelings of being "shit scared."

Further theologizing led to his identifying with Jesus in saying to his people, "This is my body which is given for you and This is my blood poured out for you." He reasoned that this giving of himself to all people precluded any exclusivity and any half-hearted service. It must be all of him given freely to all people. Finally he had found some satisfaction.

It is strange that in writing this my knotted stomach has begun to loosen, because I do feel a confidence that I won't be alone in reaching out but that you and your Spirit, and you in your People will always be present to give me strength and love to continue, to reach, risk, and grow. I can only say that I need your love, and the more you give me the more I will be able to love you.

However, his satisfaction was not complete peace. He remained aware of the "nervousness and anxiety and uncertainty about the risk" involved, but was resolved to live with this. Then, after stating that he hoped he was being honest, he again asked Jesus to "give me what I need in order to be able to give to you. Lord I'm trying to be honest, help my dishonesty. Lord I'm trying to trust, help me in my distrust. Lord I believe, help my unbelief. Lord I love, help me in my unlovingness."

To this point Paul had used carefully elaborated

identification with Jesus to assuage his fear and his doubt. This intellectual labor had been partly successful. He had brought himself to some excitement about the challenge, the unreachable star, and this seemed enough to carry him through the persistent fear and self-doubt. His theologizing had, for the most part, convinced him that he would not be alone. But he remained aware that this was all somewhat forced. "So much of it seems to be in the area of decision and will, my heart feels so cool and detached, not uninvolved exactly, but unfeeling in comparison with the love and warmth shared by the married couples." This led Paul to plead again for "what I so desperately need from you Lord and from your people," a genuine warmth that would enable him to break out of his

unfeeling shell, out of my self-made and family-society-made prison so that I can be fully alive and joyful and vibrant . . . not afraid to be gentle and loving and not afraid of my feelings, nor of showing them, because to others I am as hard as I look and I look hard. Make me approachable, feeling, and gentle, and totally a man as you are. Help me to throw away my fears and nervousness and knotted belly because they only keep me back from others and drag my attention to myself and leave me un-free to live as I would for your sake.

What do I feel is the most significant thing that happened to me this weekend? What do I now think is my most endearing quality?

The most significant thing is that my uncertainty and indecision are largely gone, my stomach is unknotted and tension headache gone, I feel calmer, more certain, and moving in a direction that is clear (though not easy).

I feel more resolved about my decision to love Christ and his Church.

This declaration of certitude was immediately followed by a slightly antithetical statement: "I still think I like best my willingness to risk, to continue on even though things are not that clear."

With this assertion the journal ended much as it had begun. Paul would continue on the course he had already chosen, even though it was risky and unclear. He had circled through his conflicts at several levels. He had begun by admiring Christ's certainty and rationalized liking himself for his willingness to live with uncertainty. His dislike for himself had surfaced in the face of seemingly impossible choices: to live with shallow relationships or be absorbed by one; to offer lifeless, dutiful service or to relish exclusive warmth; to respect celibate abstention or to satisfy his physical hunger. He did not approach these conflicts directly, but slid into an initial confirmation of his vocation through his experience of Phil's childlike trust as it called forth paternal feelings of serving Phil's needs. This identity as here for others was clarified in his recollection of his identification with Jesus, the compassionate Good Shepherd, and crystallized in a prolonged intellectual opus in which he joined Jesus in pouring out his life, in warm human love, for all people. This theol-

ogizing circled several times through his doubt in his own sincerity, and his anxiety, physically manifested, at reaching for an unreachable star. This fear that he could not do it led to an admission of his need for love and his pleading with Jesus to give him what he needed. Only then would his icy distance from others, and from his own feelings, be overcome.

Paul left the weekend resolved in his priesthood, but resolved also that the only way to give life to this identity was in finding there the loving warmth that he craved. He had not resolved the dilemma that in warmly loving all there seemed to be no defense against his exclusively being absorbed in one. But his priestly service, and he himself, needed unfreezing. There seemed only one way. He sent Sylvia a postcard dissolving the "unilateral declaration of silence."

His Desire for Sexual Intimacy Is Satisfied

Paul returned several weeks later to Boston convinced that he could walk the tightrope. The challenge remained invigorating. He went at his priestly service with new zeal, determined to make mutuality the hallmark of his contacts with people. He visited Sylvia ready to embark again on the perilous course of intimacy. He was jarred but not deflated by her guardedness and distance. He had naively misjudged the depth of her pain at feeling rejected.

She was extremely confused and found me very difficult. I'd just been very blind to what it had done to her and how little she had understood of it. But also how confusing I had made it in my panicky You see it was so clear to me, in my stupid male way, that I hadn't stopped loving her, I had just got to have some time to sort it out. . . . She just thought it was a way of actually saying it was all over, but me not wanting to say that. . . . That's what annoyed me about it was that she must have known, you know, I never said that I didn't love her, why should she now think that it was a result of not loving her, or that I was trying to work out whether I loved her or not?*

Paul could not understand why it was all so difficult and painful for Sylvia. It seemed so clearly logical to him:

The statement was that, because I love you so much I've got to sort out about being a priest or being with you. I think it was that explicit. I could say it was a pretty clear message I had given her, and that's what confused me, that she was holding onto something I didn't feel she should be holding onto.

With hindsight he now feels he understands some of the impact of his "unilateral declaration of silence" on her.

I mean, looked at from a psychological point of view it was the worst thing that anybody could have done to her. It was the worst thing and it was I who did it. It was disastrous. I mean, how she survived it is amazing really because her self-esteem was quite fragile with her childhood background, having a father that died and a mother that deserted her; it just re-established an old pattern which reminded her, told her that of course, it is all nonsense what you've been going through.

Aware, at some level of himself, of the staggering impact of his actions upon Sylvia, Paul decided to right her

*The rest of the quotations, in this chapter and the following one, are taken from interviews with Paul.

misconception that he did not love her. He would prove to her that what they had shared was not "all nonsense." A period of intensified communication followed:

I would say once or twice a week writing letters and sometimes more than that telephoning, which is very expensive. It cost me a lot of money. . . . Yes, and I'd send her small presents and cards. She could hardly imagine that she wasn't loved by me with all the tokens that she received. And in the end she believed it again.

But his recollection is that it took about "three years before she actually felt confident about it." The letters were as openly self-revealing as Paul could imagine anyone being. Much of this communication was processing the hurt from both sides. For a long time letters and phone calls were the primary vehicles for this self-disclosure and response. When they met there would be little intense talk:

It would sometimes surprise me that we spoke so little. I mean, for instance, we might meet halfway, in which case, my experience was just enjoying each other's presence, having a meal together, or walking through town, or window shopping or buying something that she wanted.

Paul felt they were both responding to the need to be physically close: "And at that time, I didn't mean necessarily sexually. But I mean just being physically together. It was certainly for me a need." Slowly the physical expression became more and more intimate.

I mean it actually took a long time before we became completely involved sexually, and it was as though there was no turning back. It was like being involved in an inexorable process and that to go the opposite way would have felt less natural than moving onwards, less right.

In fact it was five or six years after the "unilateral declaration of silence" that Paul's resistance was worn down and coitus was allowed:

I was the one who was so slow about it, in fact I hid it from myself. For instance, after the first or second time, I would sort of make excuses to myself--well, it wasn't really intercourse--or it was so quick, or it just happened, or I hadn't planned it, or you know. I was absolutely explicit in my denial to myself that it, I hadn't done it because part of the way I had been dealing with the morality of it was well, it isn't actually intercourse: sort of skin of the teeth morality. That was a brinkmanship by which I was trying to kid myself. Now it took quite a long time for me to actually face that reality. And it took a long time, so it took a long time to get to explicit sexual intercourse and it--not that it took awfully long--but it took some months for me to face that that is what I was actually doing.

About four years have passed since the first occasion of sexual intercourse. Paul and Sylvia have held the relationship in careful balance. Both have continued to affirm their ministry as first priority. The relationship has not been allowed to interfere with her community or his priestly service. Both feel that their service has greatly improved in the quality of its human responsiveness as a direct result of their ongoing love.

She has humanized me in a way that nobody else has done or could do. I'm much more understanding about human relationships, marriage relationships, the human condition. I'm not an absolutist now, I don't think, about anything; I think very much of the sacredness of individuals' lives and of the uniqueness of every relationship. I mean all the values by which I try to run my life now stem from this relationship.

CHAPTER V

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF PAUL'S EXPERIENCE

In the previous chapter Paul's world has been presented as he experienced it. An initial level of understanding has been obtained. Paying careful attention to his understanding of his experience leads one to wonder why Paul attempted to resolve the conflict by choosing both Sylvia and priesthood. Why did he not choose just one or the other? This quandary is best explored by looking at the question from two different points of view. First, why did Paul choose to remain a priest when this choice left such tension over the meeting of his affectional needs? Second, how does a celibate man, so bound by duty and so afraid of losing control in intimacy, reconcile himself to regular sexual intercourse? These questions provide the focus for the second stage of this phenomenological inquiry.

A "deeper understanding" is possible by allowing experiences outside the critical event to shed light on the questions just posed. In other words, Paul's earlier experiences, especially his social history through high school, provide further information that is helpful in appreciating his attempted resolution of the crisis under study. The

connections between Paul's other experiences and his resolution of the crisis are associations that are "suggested by the data." In this sense the methodology of this chapter remains phenomenological, allowing the connections to become manifest as the various events are associated. The intent is to stay as close as possible to the data of his experience. Psychological terminology is, for the most part, avoided. Psychological theorizing about other possible meanings of the associated events is reserved for the discussion in the final chapter.

Why did Paul choose to remain a priest when this choice left such tension over the meeting of his affectional needs? Why did he not leave the priesthood to marry Sylvia? This question is best responded to by looking at why Paul chose to become a priest in the first place. His own understanding of this was simple and straightforward. Given the four necessary qualities, "sufficient intelligence, sufficient health, sufficient moral living, and acceptance by a bishop," Paul reasoned, "somebody has to do it. I can do it. So . . ." From his own point of view his decision was just this simple. He does not remember giving it any forethought. One day in class they were filling out forms as to which career they were interested in and he checked the space assigned to priesthood. The pastor of the parish where Paul frequented daily Mass was surprised to find out

about this through the school. Paul had not discussed the inclination with him, nor did he discuss the decision with his parents. He simply came home one day and announced that he was going to the seminary. This apparent lack of forethought on his own or discussion with significant others leads one to hypothesize that Paul was drawn to priesthood for reasons beyond his immediate awareness.

Pleasing His Father: "Do It For Daddy"

Paul's relationship with his father was a significant factor in his choice of priesthood. According to Paul his father was well-educated and intelligent. He liked to read to his children and all were able to read on their own long before going to school. He enjoyed playing sports like football with his sons and having them join him in working around the house. Paul delighted in going with the family to meet his father at the train station each day after work. Paul was between ten and twelve at the time. He would get to carry his father's attache case. These positive experiences with his father were tempered in Paul's memory by his father's harsh and angry side. Paul was very conscious of eluding this anger and only remembers it as it was taken out on his brothers. Paul always managed to avoid making his father angry, except one time when his father was beating a younger brother and Paul stepped in, grabbing his arm and said, "Patience." His father then hit him. Paul got up and

was about to hit him back (he was 15 and had learned to box), but stopped himself and went to his bedroom. His father came in and cried repentantly for hitting him. Paul says he can't recall his father losing his temper again after this incident. This sense of being special to his father is demonstrated in another memory. Paul went up to his mother, after a reading at church about Christ being the only Son and heir to God the Father, and said proudly, "I'm Daddy's son and heir!" Paul also felt always able to satisfy his father's expectations. His recollection of toilet training is that he was expected to learn quickly, to "Do it for Daddy," and that he received ample praise for so doing. Paul also managed to more than satisfy his father's standards by doing extremely well at school and in sports. As long as he could meet or surpass his father's expectations he felt special to him.

When Paul was eleven years old, his father took him to a Vocations Exhibition in a large auditorium. Booths were set up by a great variety of religious orders and dioceses. Paul's father, standing with him on the balcony, pointed to the exhibit of a particular missionary order and told Paul that he had tried to join this order. He had twice been to Africa with the order and twice had been refused ordination due to health problems. His father showed Paul pictures of him and his classmates in their robes.

Paul remembered his mother saying that she always knew she came second, after God, in her husband's life. He also remembers his uncle, who is a priest, saying that Paul's grandfather had forced all his sons to go to the seminary. Only one remained a priest. Paul says his father never directly pushed him to be a priest. In fact, Paul does not remember thinking much about this experience at the Vocations Exhibition, nor was it on his mind when he decided to enter the seminary. Nor does Paul remember his father reacting, except with surprise, when he told his parents that he was going to be a priest. But there can be little doubt that his dad was pleased. Paul would succeed at doing what his father had wanted, but had been unable, to do.

A Parental Model of Service

Paul's parents had taken on a life style that Paul describes as being "here for others." His father taught catechism. Their grocery store lost money because he would extend people's credit indefinitely. They took in numerous foster children, some for short periods of time while others were raised in their home from later childhood through adolescence. There was nothing they would not do for others who were in need. This generosity was Paul's model. No doubt it was the behavior and expectations of his parents that was behind Paul's saying,

If I see a hole that needs plugging, I wouldn't normally think twice about plugging it. Whatever it is. A

fellow walking down the road carrying a ladder and obviously having difficulty, I would assist him to carry the ladder. If a person's car is broken down, I would normally say, "Is there anything I can do?" What surprises me is that people would walk past and not do anything.

This fit Paul's initial image of the priest as the one who receives God's gifts, especially knowledge, and "brings them down to the people" in their need.

It seems that Paul learned, though perhaps never consciously, that if he were dutifully and cheerfully living for others, he would insure the paternal approval that was so important to him. He did not expect this to be easy. Just as he remembers his father catching his vomit in his hands when Paul got sick one day, so he himself would stay with the service of others no matter how jarring or revolting. This stoic resolution carried him through great frustration in the seminary, especially in the early years with poor food and cramped lodging; it saw him through nauseating experiences in his first assignment to the inner city where he stayed for seven years; it carried him through three years with a notoriously neurotic pastor renowned for breaking curates. No one else had ever stayed more than a year. Paul speaks of this experience as growing in "patiens," learning to suffer. He always took pride in being able to endure what would have crushed or upset others. Indeed he enjoyed the difficult or challenging experience because of the thrill of overcoming obstacles. "I always

succeed," he said, in explanation for his apparent comfort with perplexity. His ordination card, quoting Cardinal Newman, read, "If I am in perplexity, my perplexity may serve him." Paul remembered the card as saying, "my perplexity shall serve him." This is central to his self-concept.

The Taboo of Sexual Expression

A final significant factor in Paul's decision for priesthood was his attitude towards sexuality. Paul's earliest memory is of lying on his stomach and bouncing up and down in his crib and saying out loud, "I've got a lovely feeling." His mother came in and gently stopped him without scolding him. Nonetheless Paul got the impression that what he was doing was wrong. Paul also could recall no physical closeness between his mother and father. Though he was sure his father was "devoted to" his mother, speaking of her, for example, as his "pearl of great price," still Paul experienced the physical expression of this as kept very secretive between them. Paul was one of three boys at an all girls private elementary school near their home. He experienced himself as special to the girls but had no male models as he approached puberty. During this time also, his father was away from home except for weekends, when Paul remembers him as being tired and not very available. Paul went from this female culture into an all

boys high school. After an initial experience where his naivete resulted in his being beaten up, he learned to box from his father and excelled in other sports. He also enjoyed being a creative initiator of many of the pranks he and his friends would pull. Thus, athletic hardiness and an adventuresome spirit were his ways of adapting to this male culture. However, Paul was never in a mixed-sex school, and though he believed he was attractive to girls (he says they would line up to watch him cycle by after he had left the elementary school), and was able to be friendly and enjoy being with them in a group experience, he remained afraid and unsure of what to do if he were alone with a girl and it was time to "kiss and hug." Granted this is a common adolescent feeling. But, though he even talked with his best friend about this fellow's escapades with his girl friends, and though he had many friends who were girls and with whom he enjoyed himself at parties and at the parish youth group, still he never actually dated a girl. He never had a "girlfriend." He just wouldn't have known what to do, or at least, so he felt.

A Priest Forever?

All of the above factors were significant in Paul's initially choosing priesthood. All of them, in some way, remained significant in his re-affirmation of this decision at the age of thirty. It is striking that Paul's first

intimacy with a female and the consequent identity crisis were sparked and enabled by his father's death. It would seem that, unconsciously free of his father's hold on him, he could begin to explore the emotional need and its conflict with his sense of duty, his being for others. For a while the choice seemed like either/or, but Paul never seriously entertained the thought of leaving the priesthood. He was terrified by the fact that the relationship with Sylvia seemed to have its own inevitable course towards marriage. His "declaration of silence" was a frantic reclaiming of control. On the Marriage Encounter this control was solidified through a theologized identification with Jesus as "here for others." He would pour out his whole life, with Jesus, for the sake of all people. However, his hope was that he would do this less out of the cold, driven sense of duty that had left him feeling his service was lifeless, and more out of a felt compassion for the need of others. The driven duty that seemed connected with his father was broken, at least in terms of his conscious awareness. However, at a deeper level, his heart had remained cold and aloof. It seemed a humanly responsive service would take more than a decision. Paul needed to experience and respond to more of this need for "warmth," expressed so clearly in his journal. Only then would his service be as fully human as he wanted it. This is pre-

cisely what he feels loving Sylvia and being loved by her has given him.

However, his decision to develop the relationship with Sylvia was contingent upon his restoration of control. It was not only the inevitability of marriage that scared him. In their times of physical closeness Paul was frightened by the strength of his own sexual feelings, "thirty years of bottled up sexuality," as he called it, ready to explode. Paul projected much of this fear, telling himself that Sylvia had taken control of his life. This is the way it actually seemed to him at the time but, in retrospect, he realized that it was really his own feelings that were so terrifying. He had never faced his sexual and emotional yearning and its strength seemed overwhelming. He had never learned to control his sexual expression and was afraid he could not. The explosiveness of these feelings seems to be the result of their early repression and the lack of role models. It would take slow experimentation, with control carefully maintained over a period of four years, for Paul to allow himself what he deeply craved.

In summary, then, Paul remained a priest, despite the tension over his affectional needs, for several reasons. His sense of messianic duty, of being here for others, remained the dominant force in his self-concept. This identity had served him well throughout his life, assuring

paternal approval, not only directly, but at an introjected level that would outlive his father. Furthermore, other social and family contacts applauded this magnanimous personality style. This was important to his sense of being special. However, this priestly identity did not have to preclude human warmth. He could be the compassionate shepherd, thereby actually improving the quality of his service. Lastly, but by no means least significant, the role of priest provided formal and informal limits to emotional and sexual intimacy. He could experiment with the warmth that he and his service needed while relying on his clerical identity to maintain control.

A Lofty Self-Concept:
"Give Me What I Need"

How does a celibate man, so bound by duty and so afraid of losing control in intimacy, reconcile himself to regular sexual intercourse? The question has already been partially answered in what has been said above: ironically enough, it is the priestly role which made sexual expression taboo that provided a safe climate for gradual, controlled experimentation. Also, it is important to get a sense of the dynamism of Paul's personality as he struggled with his emotional and sexual repression. Early taboos can be broken, though seldom with "one fell swoop." Near the beginning of his experience in the inner city parish Paul was attracted to working with engaged and married couples. In

this context he experienced a broader range of emotional and sexual expression than he had seen in his parents. To better counsel these couples he got involved with workshops at the Catholic Marital Counseling Services and received supervision, all of which deepened his awareness of emotions and sexuality. To this point the major part of this self-expansion was intellectual and vicarious, but at least the range of possibilities presented a challenge that attracted him. Shortly after the declaration of silence Paul enrolled in an intensive counselor training program at a university. This furthered his growth in emotional awareness since much of the training was in groups. At the time of this writing Paul was completing his MA in counseling and returning to be Director of Training at CMCS. He says that none of his priest-friends would be surprised to see him doing this work since being "interested in women and sex was sort of my trademark." All of these experiences were important for the intellectual and vicarious growth in awareness that enabled Paul to respond, however gradually, to the emotional challenge of his love and need for Sylvia.

This explains some of the transition to emotional awareness and responsiveness, but does not answer the question of how a duty-bound Church leader allows himself to function so far outside official sanctions while remaining a proponent of standard Church teaching. Paul did struggle

constantly with the morality of their deepening sexual life. He and Sylvia had long, animated discussions about celibate morality. Paul was concerned about "sexclusivity": he believed that "there was something in being sexually related that was exclusive of others; and that my life and her life was about all-inclusivity, that we were to be related to all people in an inclusive, not an exclusive way." Sylvia challenged this concern that sexual expression bred exclusivity and thereby interfered with their all-inclusive service. She claimed they could separate their sexual lives from their commitments to service, that there was no inherent conflict. Paul was initially wary of this since it was opposed to what he had been taught, but he was also impressed by the logic of her argument. Indeed, eventually, they both were convinced that rather than hindering their service of others, their fully sexual intimacy improved the quality of their human responsiveness.

Paul also dialogued about this moral conflict with a part of himself that seemed to be an internalization of his father. Before coming to the interview to speak about his relationship with Sylvia, Paul had a dream. He had been apprehended by a policeman for taking a basic food item from a store without paying. He could not understand being apprehended since he was so clearly in need of the nourishment to sustain himself. Paul recalled his father telling him

that a poor man was morally justified in stealing food if it were necessary to his survival. This is a traditional Catholic moral teaching. Paul interpreted the dream with reference to his relationship with Sylvia. He needed it to sustain himself. He was justified in taking it. It was just that simple, at least to him. His father would have understood.

Actually, an inquiry into what lies behind this "simple choice" uncovers another important element of his complex personality. Not just anyone would presume, in good conscience, to accept one morality for himself and be the official guardian of another morality for everyone else. But Paul had never been "just anyone." His sense of being special goes back as far as he can remember. We have already seen some of his awareness of being special to his father. Always confident that he could surpass his expectations and avoid his anger, he felt assured of his approval. He spoke of his mother as always taking delight in him, in his quick wit, his "equable personality," his generous helpfulness. However, he felt his mother's love was not contingent on these things, but just always there. He could not recall her ever disapproving or being angry with him. He was the initiator and center of play in childhood. His resourcefulness enabled others to enjoy themselves. This continued to be his role on his yearly

vacation, which he still takes, with his high school friends. He felt he was always popular with the girls at the elementary school, a much sought after playmate. He won a scholarship to a private boys' school by getting what he remembered as the second highest IQ ever tested. He always did well in school with little effort. When initially bullied, he responded by eventually becoming captain of the boxing club. He was sure he would have been school president if he hadn't gone early to the seminary. He lasted longer than most in the trying inner city and longer than any with a notorious neurotic pastor. These are only some of the experiences that reflect the expansiveness of his ego. He sees his recent appointment at CMCS as a step towards becoming a bishop. Given this lofty self-concept, it is a small step to the acceptance of his simple reasoning that he can be an exception to Church law while at the same time being its guardian.

Paul's Zest for Challenge:
"Aren't I Clever on This Tightrope!"

An outgrowth and a source of Paul's inflated self-esteem was his zest for challenge. He had never faced an obstacle he could not overcome. Throughout significant decision points in his life he persistently chose the difficult path. And as he said, he always succeeded. The fact that he made his choices fully expecting to succeed demonstrates that this was not a masochistic streak but a

conviction that he could and should stand out, rise above, be different, be special. This powerfully strong self-image carried him, despite his trembling, into the area of experience that he most deeply feared, namely heterosexual intimacy. Nor would his expansive ego allow him to stay away when his terror had urged him to flee. Finally, it is this same adventuresome defiance of obstacles that enables him to construct the delicate balance of emotional gratification and non-exclusive service that has endured over five years. He remains a priest with special abilities, rising the career ladder as he feels he deserves. At the same time, he has the satisfaction of receiving and creating the sexual and emotional intimacy that he needs. He has not resolved the conflict by moving to either pole as most might do. Indeed, he has adamantly refused to allow the choice to be either/or. No doubt the choice to have priesthood and Sylvia is the greatest challenge of his life. But he welcomes it with even more than his usual zest for challenge. To remain a priest is to remain valuable for others and to have external limits on the relationship. To love Sylvia is to experience the warmth he needs and to have his priestly service humanized. In refusing to let the choice be either/or, he believes he has managed to keep the best of both worlds.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

This final chapter attempts an integrated psychological picture of Paul. This hypothetical analysis is the final product of the discipline used in the phenomenological methodology. The investigator has immersed himself in the data of Paul's experience, allowing that experience to "present itself" as directly as possible. The organization of the material evolved from the patterns and questions that emerged after this prolonged immersion in the data. The integration presented in this chapter is essentially psychoanalytic, centering on the Oedipal conflict and its mode of resolution.

The Oedipal Situation

A dynamic understanding of Paul's central conflict is to be found in the psychoanalytic theory of the Oedipal situation. Psychoanalytic theorists postulate that the young boy has "sexual feelings" toward his mother. Not that he thinks, in adult fashion, of sexual activity with her, but he feels that he wants to have his mother to himself, to have her love only him. However, he is aware that his father also has a claim on his mother's love, and that to

make any effort to have his mother to himself would incur his father's wrath. The appropriate resolution of the conflict is to repress his feelings for his mother and to identify with his father. The boy thereby accepts his father as a role model by which he can learn eventually to find his own sexual partner who can serve as an appropriate object for his repressed sexual feelings. For the psychoanalytic theorist, neurosis is the result of a failure to resolve the Oedipal conflict:

Anxiety arises from conflict between ego and id, or ego and superego, or id and superego and, because of the neurotic ego's capability, is responded to as a signal for the employment of defenses. Compromise between the conflicting agencies is effected by symptom formation, which provides gratification in disguised form to each agency. . . . There are also neurotic structures in which symptom formation is not a prominent factor. These are the so called character neuroses; there the ego joins forces with the pathology, resulting in ego syntonicity with less suffering to the individual and therefore with less motivation to change (Blanck and Blanck, 1974, pp. 94, 95).

It is the hypothesis of this chapter that Paul's adaptation to the Oedipal situation is such that he remains anxiously torn between id and superego, even though his attempted resolution is highly ego syntonic with effective defenses against anxiety.

Ambivalence About the Mother-Figure

Paul's adaptation to the Oedipal situation is partly evidenced in the intensity of his ambivalence about both "warm love" and "dutiful service." The warm love about

which he has demonstrated such conflict is representative of ungratified id impulses. This is suggested by Paul's fear of the strength of his sexual feelings, that he felt afraid of losing control were he to give vent to his "thirty years of bottled-up sexuality." He repressed his sexual feelings from an early age: he enjoyed being friends with girls, but could never allow himself actually to date one. Paul also repressed his early memories of his mother. Though he had vivid recall of the concrete details of several early experiences with his father, he was unable to recall any early concrete experiences with his mother. His only recollection was the general impression that she was never angry with him and always approving, that he was always very special to her. Apparently Paul had an early need to repress all sexual feelings and the early memories of his mother which were associated with these. What remained in his mind was a wish-fulfillment which matches the Oedipal mode and may have also been fact: he was very special to his mother.

In his unconscious Paul responded to Sylvia as a mother-figure. For example, his fear that Sylvia was taking control of his life can be related to his Oedipal conflict. Early in the relationship she seemed to him like a powerful figure, steadily advancing, threatening to engulf him. He had to use drastic measures to re-establish his own feeling of control. These feelings of panic seem out of place in a

well-adjusted adult. However, they do make sense from the vantage point of a little boy, fearing that his fantasy of having his mother all to himself is coming true. This awareness of course, remained unconscious: it was only the anxiety that broke through the repression. The possibility that his relationship with Sylvia unconsciously represented his Oedipal fancy, is given further credence by the fact that his relationship developed in close temporal sequence with, and as a psychological reaction to his father's death. Again, in his unconscious, from the vantage point of the little boy whose father was gone, he could become involved with the mother-figure. Furthermore, his dream about taking what he needed to sustain himself was interpreted by Paul as justifying, to his father, his relationship with Sylvia. This important dream is further explored below.

In summary, the intensity of Paul's ambivalence about "warm human love" can be understood from the viewpoint of the Oedipal situation. Not having resolved the Oedipal conflict, Paul remained attracted to his mother, or a mother-figure (Sylvia), at an unconscious level. These feelings for his mother were mixed up with his sexual feelings; too powerful to contend with at a conscious level, they remained repressed. When Paul's father died, the symbolic barrier between him and his mother was removed. When Paul responded to the removal of this obstacle by moving

toward intimacy with Sylvia, his repressed "sexual feelings" for his mother were released. These long-repressed feelings were not only overwhelming in themselves, but were associated with a high degree of anxiety.

Ambivalence About Pleasing His Father

The extent of this anxiety is related to Paul's Oedipal competition with his father. He speaks of his father as having a violent temper. Paul says he was always careful not to make him angry. However, when asked, he was unable to say what it was that could have angered him. This blocking of memory points again to the use of repression. The Oedipal fear that Paul's competition for his mother would anger his father could not be allowed in conscious awareness. His anxiety about getting too close to Sylvia represented his superego's discomfort about angering his father. While young, Paul had defended against this Oedipal anxiety by going to the opposite extreme. He had tried to please his father in every way possible. He excelled in school and sports and was always helpful around home. He went to Mass daily during high school. Finally, he entered the seminary, to be what his father had wanted to be, and what he wanted Paul to be.

Paul himself wondered whether his father's repeated sickness, which prevented his ordination, was an unconscious rebellion against his own father's pressure to become a

priest. Paul's father had been forced to enter the seminary. It is possible that Paul unconsciously chose not to rebel against his father not only out of fear of incurring his displeasure; in the Oedipal competition with his father, Paul interpreted his achieving the priesthood as actually outdoing him. He would succeed where his father had failed.

In fact, this success would serve two purposes. At one level, he would feel secure in pleasing his father. At another level, he could interpret his priesthood as his remaining special to his mother, not letting another woman take her place. That he could feel that, in some way, he could outdo his father in the Oedipal situation, is suggested by two experiences. First is Paul's recollection of the time his father hit him and knocked him down and Paul chose not to strike back, though both knew he could have hurt his father. Then his father came to him, cried, and asked forgiveness. The strong impact this had on Paul is clear in his statement that his father never became angry again. In his experience, a boy whose Oedipal conflict was unresolved might well feel an unusual kind of power over his father. This is the first hint of Paul's unconscious grandiosity, to be discussed below. The second experience Paul interpreted as outdoing his father was taking his father's place in the home when his father was away. These prolonged absences occurred during puberty and early adolescence when

the formation of sexual identity is a primary developmental task. It is not unlikely that this boy who was "Daddy's son and heir" unconsciously interpreted his being the dominant male and having his mother to himself without his father around, as his having taken his father's place in the family.

In summary, the intensity of Paul's ambivalence about his "dutiful service" can be understood from the viewpoint of the Oedipal situation. Not having resolved the Oedipal conflict, Paul remained unconsciously afraid that his feelings for his mother would incur his father's wrath. He proceeded therefore continually to act in a way that would not only avoid his father's anger, but ensure his approval. His "dutiful service" held just such a promise: his father would be pleased. However, at this defensive level of pleasing his father, he felt no access to his unconscious mother-figure, the source of his human warmth. Therefore, his "dutiful service" not only remained dispassionate, but he was unsure of his motivation for this service. Nonetheless, on one level this defense against his anxiety by pleasing his father was necessary. At the same time, on another level, Paul remained in competition with him, and seemed to feel able to outdo him. This leads to the discussion of Paul's unconscious grandiosity.

Paul's Grandiosity: "Aren't I Clever . . ."

In the previous chapter, Paul's "expansive ego" has already been substantiated: his feelings of being special to his father and his mother, and a long list of success experiences were cited as the source of this "lofty self-concept." The deeper source of this inflated self-esteem may have been an unconscious grandiosity that developed through Paul's attempted resolution of the Oedipal conflict. He could believe he pleased his father by always managing to satisfy his expectations. This was the source of the dutiful service that his superego demanded. But he could frequently surpass what even his father would have expected. He could outdo him in stoic reserve: persevering through the seminary, enduring the inner city, outlasting anyone else with a notoriously neurotic pastor. In unconscious fantasy he could be the dominant male with his mother. But he could never act on this fantasy with conscious awareness because that would have displeased his father.

That is the unique "compromise between existing agencies" (Blanck and Blanck, 1974, p. 95) that Paul had struck. He could please his father (that is, satisfy his superego) and still feel he could win the competition to have his mother (that is, satisfy his id impulse). Of course, these contradictory beliefs, and the feelings attached to each, needed to be carefully isolated from each

other. This isolation was an intellectual exercise worthy of the intelligence demonstrated by Paul. It not only required walking the tightrope he was proud of walking, but this had to be done without awareness of the feared consequences of falling to either side. These consequences were grim. On the one hand, actually to succeed in winning his mother was to risk losing control to this all-powerful unconscious figure and, paradoxically, to risk his father's wrath. On the other hand, to accept his father's domination was to suffocate his drive for the warm human life that his mother could give. For Paul, either possibility was unthinkable. He had to accomplish the seemingly impossible challenge of achieving both without noticing the inherent contradiction between them. This he had done since boyhood with the apparent ease that stands out in his statement: "I knew it would not be easy . . . but I always succeed."

Maintaining His Balance Through the Crisis Period

At this point the intensity of the conflict in his relationship with Sylvia becomes more understandable. His repressed impulses for intimacy with the mother-figure (Sylvia) were freed by his father's death. But the more intimate he and Sylvia became the more his anxiety mounted. That this anxiety broke through his defenses is an indication that he had "slipped off the tightrope": his id impulses toward the mother-figure were unbridled; his father

would be angry. Drastic measures were necessary to restore his father's approval. He proceeded to re-enact the sacrifice of Abraham, demonstrating his willingness to appease his father. Physically and intellectually he isolated himself from the mother-figure. He burned all evidence of relationship with her. Paradoxically, however, as he says, he did this with hopes of bringing her back to him alive. However, the re-establishment of his sense of agency, his feeling that his own ego was in control and capable of managing his anxiety, had swung him off the tightrope on the other side. On the marriage encounter his forced choice of dutiful service not only left him feeling cold, unemotional and unsure of his motivation for this choice, but he was still anxious, with stomach problems and headaches. This abrupt move unconsciously to satisfy his father, threatened to cut him off from the warm human life that the mother-figure could give.

At this point his sophisticated intellectual maneuvering again enabled him to restore his balance. He would identify with Jesus as the "compassionate shepherd," thereby being able to please his father and remain connected to the life-energy of the mother-figure. He would please his father and God the Father by identifying with Jesus in looking after "his flock, his children." In the past this activity had been cold and dispassionate, but he would

change that now by making compassion his motivation for service. This compassion meant being emotionally responsive to the human needs of "his children," and he could only do this if he were in touch with warm human love in the mother-figure. From this intellectual groundwork it was, as Paul says, a "slow, inexorable process" that eventually led to sexual intercourse with Sylvia. The process was slow because Paul was careful to maintain control, not allowing himself to fall again into the anxiety on either side of his tightrope. The relationship was never allowed to interfere with the vocational commitments of either Paul or Sylvia. Not only that, but their service was greatly improved as a direct result of the relationship. Paul could feel secure that his internalized father remained pleased. Furthermore, Paul was convinced he was retaining control this time: his priestly role could prevent his sexual feelings, and Sylvia, from dominating him.

Ego Syntoncity: Still an
Incomplete Resolution

Near the end of the Marriage Encounter Paul had struck a bargain with his internalized and deified father-figure: "Give me what I need in order to be able to give to you." The bargain had been successful: he could become intimate with Sylvia, assured that this was improving his service. But the bargain did not seem to have included sexual intercourse. Paul denied the reality of their coitus for

months after it had happened. The bargain with his father was enough to hold back any severe release of anxiety as a result of intercourse, but it still left him restless and uneasy.

He began the interview about his relationship with Sylvia by spontaneously reporting a dream. The night before the interview he had dreamt of being confused that a policeman would apprehend him for taking, from a store, the food that he needed to sustain himself. In the interview he remembered that his father had told him that a poor man was justified in stealing what he needed for his survival. Paul understood the dream to have occurred because his hope, in exploring with the investigator, his relationship with Sylvia, was to justify the relationship to himself and to the investigator. He said he felt like he had put himself on trial by volunteering to explore his relationships. It is striking that this dream occurred after they had been sexually active for several years. At an unconscious level, Paul appeared still unsettled: in the dream he was apprehended. In the dream he was not justified. It was only through rationalized extrapolation from the dream that Paul consciously attempted to justify himself. His father would approve his taking what was necessary for his survival.

Paul reasoned that sexual intimacy with Sylvia was necessary for his emotional survival. The verdict was quite

logical. Paul pronounced himself not guilty. But it is doubtful that his logic reached the unconscious level of his conflict. At this level his anxiety endured.

Paul's energies continue to be drawn repeatedly to his Oedipal conflict. However, this recurrent expenditure of energy has not enabled a final resolution of the conflict. Rather, Paul expends himself continuously to maintain the tenuous balance that stays his anxiety, but keeps the conflict very much alive. Indeed, such "tightrope-walking" has become a focal element of his self-concept. His ego has "joined forces" with his incomplete resolution of the conflict. The struggle with his anxiety does not result in any prolonged symptom formation, nor does it interfere with his ability to function in daily tasks. In fact, Paul has turned a possible deficit into a kind of asset. His life revolves around struggle. He takes pride in being one who can welcome and master any challenge. This is the ego syntonicity referred to earlier. It is a kind of compromise that works well for the ego. Suffering is minimal. But the anxiety, though seldom in conscious awareness, still endures.

The compromise remains tenuous and in need of constant attention. Energy must be continuously concentrated on keeping his balance. As long as Paul can maintain his balance he will probably remain intimately involved with

Sylvia and committed to his priestly service. However, both of these remain dominated by his unresolved Oedipal conflict and by his ongoing struggle to remain defended against his anxiety. The relationship with Sylvia and his priesthood remain bound up in his defense system. Paul must stay preoccupied with himself, incapable of the self-forgetfulness required for freely given love or for commitment to any cause greater than himself.

An Integrated Summary

It has been proposed that Paul failed to resolve the Oedipal conflict; that he remained unconsciously torn between attraction to his mother and fear of displeasing his father. This pattern remained a kind of ever present template against which his later experience could be understood. His ongoing struggle with the Oedipal conflict precipitated his crisis at the age of 30: sexual intimacy with a mother-figure released long repressed anxiety. Paul's defense against the anxiety was analyzed: he had recommitted himself to keeping his father pleased through his priestly service. The sophisticated intellectual maneuvering and the grandiosity of this defensive system was outlined: Paul's defenses seemed successful in enabling him to remain assured of pleasing his father while at the same time taking his place by having intimate sexual contact with the mother-figure. The delicate balance of this compromise was

noted: it required ongoing rationalizations to assure his father's approval; it also required his priestly role to put limits on the contact with the mother-figure. Finally, the ego syntonicity of his incomplete resolution was discussed: Paul's identity revolved around repeated reworkings of his tenuous mode of adaptation. As a result, his relationship with Sylvia and his priesthood appear to remain at the service of his defensive "tightrope-walking."

In summary, then, Paul's characteristic defenses are repression and intellectualization, which serve to keep his powerfully conflicting emotions and needs isolated from each other and from his awareness. Rationalization enables him to justify partial gratification of his conflicting needs. Reaction formation against dependency takes the form of his grandiosity and hardness ("I can manage perfectly well by myself, thank you!"). These defenses developed primarily in response to his anxiety over the Oedipal conflict.

Because these defenses did not resolve the conflict, Paul was unable satisfactorily to accomplish two important developmental tasks: identity formation and intimacy (see Erikson, 1950). In adolescence he was unable to separate himself from perceived parental expectations: his career choice was externally determined. In early adulthood he distanced himself from interpersonal contact, thus remaining isolated rather than achieving age-appropriate intimacy.

During his age 30 crisis, these unfinished developmental tasks were reactivated just as Levinson (1978) describes. Paul had to rework his vocational identity and his ability to be intimate. However, as has been shown, he did not and could not satisfactorily complete either task due to his lingering Oedipal conflict.

The crisis did result in some significant changes: his vocational identity was refined to include compassion and mutuality, and the intimacy with Sylvia was given room to develop. However, this newfound identity and intimacy remained at the service of the delicate balance of his resolution of the Oedipal conflict. One can predict that this unfinished developmental business will continue to disrupt each transitional period, especially the mid-life transition which Paul will soon enter (see Levinson, 1978). Furthermore, if Paul does not achieve a more satisfactory resolution of the Oedipal conflict he will, according to Levinson (1978), experience major difficulty with the developmental tasks that will confront him in later life. His development may be marked by a painful sense of fragmentation rather than integration.

One can also speculate that the death of Paul's mother will provide another period of crisis. Part of his reason for limiting the closeness with Sylvia is that deeper commitment to her would conflict with the special relation-

ship that he does enjoy with his mother. When his mother dies, Paul's unconscious need for this special relationship may focus wholeheartedly on Sylvia. This less restricted need for Sylvia will make the present balance of the relationship untenable. Paul will find himself in a conflict similar to his age 30 crisis. Whether his attempted resolution would be more satisfying than it has been to this point, depends greatly on his ability to work through the conflict more directly than he has managed until now. This would require intensive therapy.

The prognosis for Paul's achieving a more integrated resolution of his basic conflict is not good. As has been noted, Paul's adjustment to the Oedipal conflict has been so ego syntonic that his personality structure has been built around it. In such cases the likelihood of significant change is minimal due to the relative lack of conscious dissatisfaction with the self. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (third edition, 1980) of the American Psychiatric Association refers to such patterns as Personality Disorders. Paul can be classified as a Narcissistic Personality. The diagnostic criteria for such a personality are grandiose sense of self-importance, preoccupation with fantasies of success, a need for constant attention and admiration, and the following characteristic disturbances in interpersonal relationships: lack of empathy, entitlement

(expectation of special favors without reciprocal responsibilities), and exploitativeness. These characteristics are sufficiently attenuated in Paul and sufficiently backed by high intelligence and social skills so as not to impair Paul's functioning on his job nor in his more superficial social relationships. However, this personality pattern continues to block his reaching several developmental milestones. The need for constant attention and admiration obviates the formation of a secure identity. The disturbances in interpersonal relationships interfere with the attainment of intimacy. His self-absorption distorts his experience of generativity. In summary, while he is only minimally aware of dissatisfaction with himself, Paul's emotional development remains blocked at a childhood level. He functions apparently well in the adult world, but is unable to experience the satisfactions of accomplishing the major developmental tasks that challenge every adult.

The Question of Generalization

Paul's adaptation to the Oedipal conflict is so complex that, at first glance, it may seem unique to him. But the question of generalization can be asked at several levels. Most broadly one can wonder: is an unresolved Oedipal conflict a frequent unconscious motivation for the choice of a celibate life-style? This question requires further specification. There are three possible sub-

questions. First, do some men choose to remain celibate as a way of remaining involved, though only in fantasy, with the mother-figure? Second, are some celibate men motivated to subservience in a paternalistic system of authority as a defense against their Oedipal fear of displeasing their father? Third, given that celibates are currently experiencing an increasing freedom for heterosexual intimacy, are some men simply reliving the Oedipal situation, or will their experience lead to a belated resolution of the conflict? Each of these questions needs to be explored to clarify the issue of generalization.

Fantasy Only. Before his father's death Paul did not permit himself sexual intimacy, initial or exploratory, with any particular female. However, he did retain his fantasy of being very special to his mother. His choice of celibacy maintained this status quo: no other woman would take her place. Does this partial motivation for celibacy reflect the experience of other celibate men? Do some men find celibacy a way of unconsciously keeping their special relationships with their mothers? It seems probable that Paul's experiences in this area are not unique. The fact that there is a folklore about Catholic priests being especially close to their mothers indicates that further investigation might well prove fruitful.

Paternalistic Authority. Paul's Oedipal anxiety revolved partly around angering his father. He defended against this anxiety by going to great lengths to ensure his father's continued approval. He dealt similarly with ecclesiastical authority, deferring always to the wishes of his pastor or bishop, assuring their approval. Does Paul's deference to authority, as a defense against Oedipal anxiety, reflect the experience of other men? Do some celibate men accept and promote a paternalistic system of authority as a means of defending against their own Oedipal anxiety? The persistence of paternalistic structures in ecclesiastical life indicates that some psychological factors are operative to conserve the celibate tradition. The investigation of the possibility of unresolved Oedipal conflicts in celibate men would be a valuable contribution to understanding this structure.

The Sexual Celibate. Paul's relationship with Sylvia has been a reliving of the Oedipal conflict. She unconsciously represented a mother-figure to him. He had to spend most of his energy keeping his father pleased, so as to be able to rationalize sexual intimacy with her. This was not a resolution of the conflict, but a precarious balancing act that required continual attention. Does this unstable reliving of the Oedipal situation in the guise of heterosexual intimacy reflect the experience of other

celibate men? Do some men who choose to be heterosexually intimate, at whatever level, while remaining "celibate," do this as a kind of reliving of the Oedipal situation without real resolution of the conflict? These questions lead to further speculation. If some celibates are drawn to heterosexual intimacy because they have not resolved the Oedipal conflict, what is the role of such intimacy in modifying or resolving the conflict? Would this resolution require breaking the internalized father's negative grip by positively identifying with him and breaking the celibate commitment to marry the "appropriate object for his repressed sexual feelings"? Of course it is theoretically possible to resolve the conflict by marrying the intimate partner and still continuing one's priestly service. However, such a resolution goes contrary to ecclesiastical law and tradition.

Sylvia's Experience

If financial and ethical considerations had permitted, it would have been valuable to contact Sylvia and interview her regarding her experience of the relationship. One wonders in what way the relationship satisfied her needs. Why would she settle for such a relationship? The information about her, filtered through Paul's perspective, allows us to hazard a guess about her choosing to stay in this relationship. Paul says that her father died when she

was five or six and that her mother abandoned her shortly thereafter to marry another man. She was raised by her grandmother. It seems likely, therefore, that her fear of abandonment would escalate as she drew closer to another person. At the same time, the desire for the closeness that she never had, or lost, would draw her towards intimacy. As a result, she would have an ambivalence about intimacy that would allow her to settle on a compromise, an attempted balance of closeness and distance. In this way her need could be partially satisfied and her fear partly assuaged.

Paul reported near the end of the interview process that he had just heard from Sylvia: in psychoanalysis she had reached another point of vocational uncertainty and she was aware of wanting more from Paul than she was getting. Should this development continue, the relationship would be thrown out of its careful balance from her side. Both she and Paul would then have to struggle towards a new resolution to their conflicts.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Allan Schnarr has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

March 15, 1981
Date

Gerard Egan
Director's Signature