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Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

Volume 16, Issue 6, November 1980, Pages 510-544

Toward the analysis of close relationships $\hat{\sim} \dagger$

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[https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031\(80\)90056-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-1031(80)90056-6)

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Abstract

Two central questions are addressed: (1) How does one distinguish among relationships differing in closeness at any single point in time? (2) How do relationships change over either a short or a long time span? The first question suggests looking inside the Person-Other $\hat{\sim}$ intersection. Findings from several empirical studies are described. The second question leads to discussions of short-term and long-term temporal processes. Regarding long-term pair processes, it is proposed that research can be stimulated by recognizing a five-phase sequence which extends from (a) initial attraction, to (b) building a relationship, (c) continuation, (d) deterioration, and (e) ending; transitions between adjacent phases are considered. The importance of theoretical models is emphasized throughout.



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† Revision of an invited address presented at a meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (APA Division 8) in Toronto, Ontario, on August 28, 1978.

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