ABSTRACT
        A study used a qualitative account analysis of
excessively intimate encounters to investigate behaviors commonly
described by male and female receivers, cognitive schemata invoked to
explain why the intimacy was excessive, and the effect of the
excessively intimate episode on the relationship. Subjects, 86 female
and 37 male students enrolled in communication classes at a large
public university in the southwestern United States, completed a
survey asking for demographic information and written descriptions of
excessively intimate encounters. Results indicated a huge variety of
verbal and nonverbal behaviors were perceived as excessively intimate
by both genders, and that no significant sex differences were found
in unwanted intimacy behaviors. Results also indicated that,
overwhelmingly, relational schemata were employed as explanations as
to why the episode was perceived as excessively intimate. Personal
traits and reward valence or attraction were also provided as common
explanations. Excess intimacy typically had negative effects on the
relationship with relational termination being the most likely
outcome. Findings suggest that, to avoid charges of sexual
harassment: interactants should be reasonable and cautious regarding
excessive touch in all forms, excessive physical closeness, verbal
behavior, and excessive eye contact; careful assessment of the
relationship state is essential to avoid perceptions of sexual
harassment; and unwanted intimacy in any relationship is resented,
labelled negatively, and rarely produces increased closeness.
Findings also provide support for cognitive valence theory. (Five
tables of data are included; 24 references and a diagram of the
cognitive valence theory are attached.) (RS)

Excessive Intimacy:
An Account Analysis of Behaviors, Cognitive Schemata, Affect, and Relational Outcomes

by

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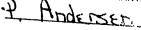
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ABSTRACT

In Andersen's (1985) arousal-valence theory and his (1989) cognitive valence theory, he proposes six cognitive schemata that drive receiver responses to intimacy or immediacy initiation including: a) cultural schemata, that determine whether or not a given intimacy behavior is culturally appropriate; b) personal schemata, that govern whether a given intimacy behavior violates a person's personality or psychological predispositions to intimate interaction; c) interpersonal schemata, that are employed to evaluate the reward valence or attractiveness of the intimacy initiator; d) relational schemata, that are used to assess if the intimacy increase is appropriate to the current state or projected trajectory of the relationship; e) situational schemata, that help determine if an intimacy increase is contextually or situationally appropriate, and f) state schemata, that determine an individual's transitory psychological or emotional readiness or receptivity to intimacy. While abundant empirical evidence exists that each of the six schemata are independently invoked by interactants to valence intimacy increases, little evidence exists on how they interact or how they are weighted to valence intimacy increases or what the affective and relational consequences are.

The current investigation employed a qualitative account analysis (Burnett, 1991; Harvey, Weber, & Orbuch, 1990) of excessively intimate encounters to investigate three sets of questions about unwanted intimacy: 1) What behaviors were commonly described by male and female receivers? 2) Which cognitive

schemata were invoked by interactants to explain why the intimacy was perceived as excessive? and 3) What was the effect on the relationships of an excessively intimate episode?

Results showed: 1) A huge variety of verbal and nonverbal behaviors were perceived as excessively intimate by both genders though females generated the most excessively intimate behaviors and these were performed primarily by males. 2) Overwhelmingly, relational schemata were employed as explanations (50% of the time) as to why the episode was perceived as excessively intimate. A prototype subject explained, "The behavior was inappropriate to our relationship." Personal traits (18%) and reward valance or attraction (17%) were also provided as common explanations for why intimacy was perceived excessive. Situations, culture, and psychological states were rarely employed as explanations. 3) Excess intimacy typically had negative effects on the relationship with relational termination being the most likely outcome. Implications for future research on such topics as date rape and sexual harassment are discussed.

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Excessive Intimacy:
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Cognitive Schemata, Affect, and Relational Outcomes

Accounts of relational demise, date rape, and sexual
harrassment in the media have propelled excessive intimacy into
the public consciousness. Similarly, a central question among
relationship researchers is the role of appropriate intimate or
immediate behavior in the development of interpersonal
relationships. Indeed, one of the most fertile areas of
relationships research and theory has been the development of
theories and models on the process of intimacy exchange both in
social psychology (Argyle & Dean, 1965; Patterson, 1976, 1982;
Reis & Shaver, 1988) and communication (Andersen, 1985, 1989;
Burgoon, 1983; Cappella & Greene, 1982). Each of these models
posits that excessive intimacy or closeness by one person results
in avoidance by the relational partner, but the cognitive factors
influencing avoidance have been absent from those explanations.

Presicting Relational Growth

One theory (Andersen, 1985, 1989) has argued that six sets of
cognitive valencers operate during interaction. These valencers
are cognitive expectancies or predispositions about interpersonal
behavior. During communication, interactants rapidly match their
expectations with observed behavior. Behavior that deviates
substantially from expectations is viewed negatively and produces
negative relational outcomes.

The basis of relational growth and increased relational

closeness is intimate communication. Without increases in intimate or immediate communication such as self-disclosure, tactile behavior, mutual gaze, or positive facial expressions, relationships would be stranded at an initial interaction phase, communication would be superficial, and intimacy would be impossible (Andersen, 1985). To produce a close relationship one relational partner must up the ante by producing increases in nonverbal and verbal immediacy or intimacy behaviors. Of course, increases in immediacy run the risk of violating the cognitive expectancies of your partner and sending the relationship into a negative spiral (Andersen, 1989). Successfully predicting the reactions of one's partner to such intimacy increases is critical to any chance of relational escalation.

As predicted by Cognitive Valence (CV) theory (see Figure 1; Andersen, 1985, 1989) much can go wrong with a relationship. At least six cognitive schemata or valencers have been identified in CV theory. Violations of any of these six schemata can send a relationship down a negative relational trajectory.

Cultural Schemata. The most basic force that shapes human behavior, other than genetic membership in the human race itself, is culture. Indeed, culture is such a powerful, invisible force, that it is often confused with nature itself. Culture exerts powerful influences on our relational interaction and prescribes certain types of verbal, kinesic, tactile and proxemic behavior and proscribes other behavior. The literature of intercultural communication is replete with antecdotes about misinterpretations of behavior across culture (Gudykunst & Kim, 1984; Hall, 1966).

Americans perceive Arabs stand too close.   Swedes think the
French use excess eye contact.   The Japanese think Americans are
too loud and talkative.   Such perceptions are the basis of
considerable intercultural misunderstanding.   Many intercultural
relationships are doomed from the start, because interactants use
immediacy levels too high or too low for the other culture.   The
other interactant attributes coldness and unfriendliness on the
one hand, or excessive intimacy on the other, leading to
negativity in and the termination of many intercultural
interactions.

Individual Schemata.   Each of us has certain individual
predispositions that also determine our reactions to intimacy
increases.   Obvioudly, introverts, touch avoiders, and the
socially anxious would have different reactions to intimate
behavior than extroverts, touch approachers, and affiliators.
Andersen (1987) has pointed out that over 20,000 traits and
predispositions can be articulated in the English lexicon and
dozens of these constructs such as shyness, dominance, dogmatism,
touch avoidance, locus of control, sensation-seeking, and
sociability, to name but a few, have a major impact on our
reactions to intimate behavior.   As Park and Waters (1988) have
pointed out, most trait descriptors refer to aspects of an
individual's interpersonal behavior.   Violating a person's
individual or self schemata with excessive intimacy is a second
force that can produce negative, relational assessments and
trajectories.

Interpersonal Schemata.   A huge body of empirical research

has shown that negative perceptions of another person's credibility (K. Andersen & Clevenger, 1963), attraction (McCroskey & McCain, 1974) or homophily (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) have a dramatic impact on intimate interaction. We are much more appreciative of close interpersonal distances or tactile communication, for example, from an attractive, rewarding individual rather than an unattractive unrewarding person. Researchers have labeled this construct reward value (Burgoon, Buller and Woodall, 1989) or interpersonal valence (Garrison, Sullivan, & Pate, 1976). Positive perceptions of immediacy or intimacy initiation, according to CV theory are dependent on positive perceptions of the interactor. It should be noted the interpersonal valence, one's evaluation of another, is not synonymous with relational valence, one's evaluation of the state of the relationship.

Relational Schemata. A fourth valencing force is our beliefs and expectancies about the relationship. Reis and Shaver (1988) argued that partners create a meta-perspective that creates a sense of "we-ness" and defines the relationship. Planalp (1985) has argued that messages are adapted to relationships via knowledge of past interactions and anticipated future interactions that are stored in relational schemata. "Relational schemata, then, are coherent frameworks of relational knowledge that are used to derive the relational implications of messages" (p. 9). Violations of relational schemata can have major disruptive effects. Intimate touch or self-disclosure may enhance a relationship between best friends or fiancees, but be perceived negatively on

a first date or between strangers. Communication behavior
consistent with one's partner's relational schemata is essential
for the development of intimacy. Indeed, Andersen (1989) has
argued that targeting immediacy behaviors that are consistent
with one's partner's anticipated relational trajectory produces
optimal relational growth.

Situational Schemata. No human behavior can be accurately
interpreted outside of its context or situation. Among intimate
couples, sexual touch or close distancing would be highly
appropriate in one's bedroom but may be inappropriate at the
office. Chelune, Robison, and Kommer (1984) has shown that some
settings are more conducive to intimate communication than others.
Behaviors aren't evaluated in a situational vacuum. "The
mediating factor is the perspective taken on it by the
participants, particularly their judgments about the level of
intimacy appropriate for a given situation or occasion" (Acitelli
& Duck, 1987).

State Schemata. A final valencing factor according to CV
theory is state or transitional schemata (Andersen, 1987; 1989).
States and situations are both transitory but states are internal
and situations are external. In fact, state is to situation, as
personality is to culture. Numerous state factors including
fatigue, ill-health, intoxication, a headache, hunger or boredom
can influence interpersonal interactants. Adjusting intimacy
increases to one's partners mood is certainly an ingredient of
relational competence. Immediacy increases during negative states
will lead to negative cycles of the relationship. The cliche,
"not tonight dear, I have a headache," is an invocation of a

state schemata that precludes intimate interaction.

The present study is one in a series of studies using various methodological approaches to test and examine cognitive valence theory. The present study is a test of cognitive valence theory with an account analysis (Burnett, 1991; Harvey, Weber, & Orbach, 1990) of excess intimacy. One of the central premises of cognitive valence theory is that excessive intimacy that violates any of the aforementioned cognitive schemata will produce negative relational outcomes.

The first question examined in the present study is:

>   RQ1: What behaviors are perceived by
>
>   interactants as constituting
>
>   excess intimacy?

While numerous immediacy behaviors have been identified (see Andersen, 1985 for a detailed review) we do not know which of these have the potential to violate the expectancies of actual interactants. Thus, the first research question examines the behaviors that subjects consciously perceive as excessively intimate.

Cognitive valence theory predicts that violations of any of the six schemata will lead to negative relational outcomes inducing negative appraisals of one's partner, reductions in behavioral intimacy, and reductions in relational closeness (see Figure 1). Numerous studies have shown that the six schemata are used but no study has assessed the salience of the valences individually and no study has examined them in combination. The present study attempts to test CV theory by eliciting accounts of unwanted intimacy from subjects. If subjects can consciously

identify a schematic-based violation of intimacy expectations it will support the propositions of CV theory dealing with that particular schemata. Thus, the second research question.

> RQ2: Which cognitive schemata are
> invoked by subjects to explain
> why certain intimacy behaviors are
> perceived as excessive?

An intuitively appealing assumption is that unwanted intimacy leads to negative relational outcomes. Certainly such is the case in instances of sexual harassment and date rape. But little evidence has been gathered on whether excessive intimacy generally leads to negative relational outcomes. Thus research question three is posed:

> RQ3: What is the effect on a
> relationship of an excessively
> intimate episode?

Finally, considerable research has demonstrated that numerous sex differences exist in interpersonal and relational behavior and attitudes (see Giles and Street, 1985 for a review). Given that men and women may differ in their relational interactions, a fourth research question was posed:

> RQ4: Do sex differences exist in
> a) the behaviors perceived as
> excessively intimate, b) the
> cognitive schemata involved by
> people as the basis for their
> perceptions and c) the relational
> outcomes.

METHODS

Participants

Participants were 123 students enrolled in communication classes at a large public university in the southwestern United States. Eighty six or 70% were women while 37 or 30% were men. The mean age of the sample was 23.9 years.

Procedure and Analyses

A qualitative account analysis was the primary method employed in this study (Burnett, 1991; Harvey, Weber & Orbach, 1990). Volunteer participants were asked to complete a survey consisting of three demographic questions and five longer written descriptions (see Table 1). Subjects were asked to recall an interaction with a friend that was _too_ intimate and made you uncomfortable. This excessive intimacy could have consisted of verbal or nonverbal behaviors or some combination.

The first question asked subjects to "describe in detail what he/she did to create this excessive intimacy. List particular verbal and nonverbal behaviors they engaged in." Data from this question were sorted by relationship type and gender of the account writer and the person whose intimacy was perceived as excessive. Next, each behavior that was mentioned were put in content categories to create a taxonomy of unwanted intimacy behaviors (see Table 3).

Question 2 asked participants "_why_ you perceived this to be _too_ intimate." Again, responses were placed in content categories and used to ascertain the relative importance of

subjects reasons for the perceptions of excess intimacy (see Table 5).

Question 4 asked the subject to describe, "what happened to your relationship as a result of this excessively intimate encounter?" Responses were tabluated (see Table 6).

Data from questions 3 and 5 were not employed in the present study.

Statistical Analysis

Chi square statistics were used to test for associations between the four possible sex combinations and: a) what behaviors were perceived as excessively intimate, b) the reasons people gave for the perceptions of excess intimacy, and c) the relational outcomes. Alpha was set at .05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Excessive Intimacy Behaviors

Research question one asked, what behaviors are perceived as excessively intimate by interactants. Of 349 behaviors identified by the participants in 123 episodes, 83% of them fell into three categories, verbal behaviors, tactile behaviors and proxemic behaviors (see Table 3). However, as posed in research question 4a, no significant differences among any of the four possible sex combinations were observed (x^2=12.4, p$>$ .05, see Table 4).

Verbal Behaviors. By a slight margin over tactile, verbal behaviors were the most common type of excessive intimacy in the

participant's accounts. This should add to the evidence against Watzlawich, Beavin, and Jackson's (1967) assertion that virtually all relational communication is nonverbal. While the majority of relational communication is almost certainly nonverbal, these findings and others suggest that verbal communication also plays an important role.

The most frequently mentioned behavior was excessively intimate self-disclosure (see Table 3). One man said, "The incident I recall is when a girl I just met started to tell me her life story . . . she was telling me how her father raped her when she was 17." A woman recalled, "It was when this girl began telling me how she was posing nude for a friend's painting and that she had recently engaged in sexual relations with three other people of mixed sexes at the same time that I backed off from our friendship." A fairly typical case was recalled by a woman whose male friend, "talked extensively about our prior involvement and how much he missed me." Without a doubt many people perceive very intimate disclosure as excessively intimate.

The second most common category of excessively intimate verbal behavior was sexual comments, particularly by males to females (see Table 3). One woman objected to "continuous verbal sarcasm between the two of us with sexual undertones." One woman's aerobic instructor continued to make "specific references to parts of my body and how good they looked to him. He asked me to call him to make an appointment for a private training session."

Other categories of excessively intimate verbal behavior

included calling too frequently, which was mentioned by several males, excessive compliments, labelling a male a female's "boyfriend," excessive personal questions, and repeatedly asking a person out on dates.

Tactile Behaviors. The other leading form of excessive intimacy was tactile interaction. Indeed, the leading subcategory in the entire survey was excessive touch, mentioned in nearly half of all episodes. Excessive touch was a frequently mentioned category for all sex combinations. A male recalled an incident on a chairlift at a ski resort: "she was rubbing my legs and hands trying to turn me on. I couldn't get away. Fifty to one hundred feet in the air, what was I to do?" One woman recalled a friend who, "Began to get much more physical with her female friends, including me. Hugs goodbye, for example, escalated to kisses on the cheek, then to a kiss on the lips." One woman described her date: "We really enjoyed each other's company, then he turned into a maniac octopus with 80 arms." One woman complained that her male companion, "would always have his hand touching my body. It was seemingly in a respectful manner. By this I mean in the small of my back, on my arm or on my knee."

Other categories of excessively intimate touch included kissing, sexual touches of a variety of types, holding the other person and not letting them go, and self-touching behaviors. Certainly, tactile intimacy is highly salient to interactants judging by its inclusion in nearly half the episodes in this study. Certainly those who want to avoid being perceived as

excessively intimate should carefully circumscribe their tactile behavior.

Proxemic Behaviors. The third leading category of excess intimacy involved spacial or proxemic behavior. Over 2/3 of all excessively intimate, proxemic behaviors involved invasions of personal space. One male subject complained about his male Arabic friend who "got so close to me that I could smell his breath. I started to back up but he kept coming." One woman complained that her female manager would interact, "way too close for comfort. I found this distance excessively intimate." One male complained that a woman "sat much too close to where I was drinking my coffee." One woman recounted, "While sitting on the couch he kept getting closer. My uneasiness caused me to move farther down the couch, in fact, as far as possible. His arm was extended on the back of the couch behind me." Certainly maintaining an appropriate interaction distance is essential to avoiding the perception of excess intimacy.

Other excessively intimate proxemic behaviors included: very direct body angles, getting in bed with someone without their permission, cornering someone, and surprise visits (see Table 3).

Other Nonverbal Behaviors. Aside from excessive eye contact other nonverbal behaviors were mentioned seldomly. These include flirtation, seductive body positions, nudity, licking lips, not leaving a person alone, interruptions, always rushing everything, crying, whispers, and excessive gifts. While virtually every immediacy behavior (see Andersen 1985) appeared in these

accounts, verbal, oculesic, haptic, and proxemic variables were most consciously and excessively intimate to these participants.

Cognitive Schemata

The second and central question of the study was why do subjects perceive these aforementioned intimacy behaviors to be excessive? Certainly, all of these behaviors would be appropriate under certain circumstances. If subjects provided responses consistent with Andersen's (1985, 1989) cognitive schemata it would offer support for cognitive valence theory.

Results show that relational inappropriateness was overwhelmingly selected as the primary reason immediacy behaviors were labelled excessively intimate. Fully 58.8% of all of the reasons given by participants for why the behavior was perceived as excessively intimate involved relational inappropriateness (see Table 5). One male put it this way: "I had only just met this girl and she was expecting me to treat her like my girl friend." Another male stated, "This was too intimate because I don't really know the person and as a rule people keep their objective distance with people they don't really know."

A number of participants also indicated multiple relationship entanglements made the behavior inappropriate. A married man was courting and pursuing a female business associate who gave her reasons for this behavior being excessively intimate: "1) He was married. 2) He was a business associate. 3) We hadn't known each other that long on a personal level." Another woman stated, "He and I are strictly friends and my boyfriend is also a friend of his."

The results of this study support the cognitive valence theory position that relational schemata are crucial mediators of the immediacy-reaction relationship. However, the great propendence of people who invoked relational schemata as the reason for excess intimacy should prompt some re-evaluation of cognitive-valence theory. As presently constituted all six aforementioned cognitive schemata are weighted equally i· the CV model. These results should suggest that relational factors are a primary, salient schema that may be weighted more heavily than the other factors. These results suggest that interactants locate their relationships on a relational trajectory. Behaviors that are more intimate than the current point on that trajectory are viewed negatively, and as will be discussed below frequently lead to relational termination.

A second factor weighted heavily in the minds of subjects were their own personal traits (see Table 5). One woman discussed her personality as the basis for resisting her steady date's frequent sexual overtures: "My upbringing has taught me to control my intimate feelings. I was taught not to give myself up too easily because the male most likely will not respect me." Another woman stated: "This behavior is too intimate because it makes me uncomfortable. I feel that when someone is in my space they are trying to control and dominate my behavior." A male student who was being rushed into engagement by his girlfriend who he probably intended to marry, said "I wasn't ready for something like that. I still wanted to see my friends and be by myself. It got irritating and it made us get into more fights."

Another male complained that the intimacy was excessive because, "I was expected to reveal issues about myself that I typically kept to myself." Thus, personality was the second most common schema provided. Participants felt that certain immediacy behaviors violated their sense of self.

A third factor that constituted just over 10% of the schemata was interpersonal valence (see Table 5). Some participants alluded to personal qualities of the other that made the individual unrewarding or unattractive. One man stated; "I only enjoy being intimate with someone when they arouse my intellect as well as other things. I was not attracted to her in the first place." A woman offered a similar account, "I prefer to be intimate with people that I am physically attracted to. I was not attracted to him in that way."

Twelve incidents were described as excessively intimate because the situation was wrong. A male who was taken to a gay bar said, "I felt totally uncomfortable. I kept thinking to myself that this is not a reasonable situation." One woman said, "I try not to become involved with the people at work because break-ups can be stressful." One man commented that his girlfriend "Always hung all over me even in public and in front of my parents." Although far less important than the three previous factors, context seems to play some role in the valency of intimacy behaviors.

Surprisingly, relational states and cultures were rarely invoked as reasons for labelling immediacy as excessive. Either these factors play little role in relational communication or

they are not consciously salient to interactants. It may be that interactants are unconscious of culture and state and make attributions errors assigning such intimacy violations to low interpersonal attraction or other trait factors.

Finally, no significant sex combination differences were obtained (x^2=20.4, p$>$ .05) see Table 5). Relational and personal factors dominated the responses across schema categories. The primary finding is that relational schema powerfully influence the interpersonal evaluations of relational partners. Violating the relationally trajectory with excessive intimacy is a major and salient relational error.

Relational Effects of Unwanted Intimacy

The third research question asked what effect episodes of unwanted intimacy had on interpersonal relationships. Among the 123 relationships a resounding 72.2% of the relationships moved in a negative direction (see Table 6). The most common outcome was relational termination (42.2%) followed by reductions in closeness (22.7%). Other negative outcomes included the stopping of escalation (4.9%) and relational strain (2.4%). Only 6.5% of the unwanted intimacy episodes resulted in increased closeness, while 21.2% relationships experienced no change. Based on these results, unwanted intimacy is a major threat to a relationship and a large percentage of the time may result in relational termination.

Sex Differences in Unwanted Intimacy

The results of three chi-square tests (see Tables 4, 5, and 6) revealed no significant sex differences in unwanted intimacy

behaviors. All four sex combinations were approximately the same
in what behaviors were perceived as excessively intimate, the
conscious rationale for why these behaviors were perceived as
excessively intimate, and the relational effects of unwanted
intimacy. The basic similarity among the four possible sex
combinations suggests that unwanted intimacy is a consistent
reaction to intrus... ,ns on the self primarily driven by our human
qualities and not differential sex role socialization or
biological sex.

Implications for Sexual Harassment

These results have some definite, pragmatic implications for
behaviors we should follow to avoid charges of sexual harassment.
Since perceptions of sexual harassment are a conscious experience,
these account-based data are particularly valuable. First,
interactants should be reasonable and cautious regarding
excessive touch in all forms, excessive physical closeness that
violates conventional norms of spacial and proxemic behavior,
verbal behavior, particularly excessively intimate self-disclosure
and sexual comments, and excessive eye contact.

Second, careful assessment of the relationship state is
essential to avoiding perceptions of sexual harassment. Behaviors
appropriate for close friends and lovers will rarely be perceived
negatively in those relationships. Whereas the same behaviors
will be perceived negatively in less intimate relationships.
The primary explanation subjects provided for the excessive
intimacy of certain behaviors was their relational

inappropriateness, not objective qualities of the behaviors themselves.

Finally, in any relationship unwanted intimacy is resented, labelled negatively, and rarely produces increased closeness. In particular, strangers and new acquaintances are likely to have negative cognitive appraisals of such behavior, leading to possible actions against their perpetrator.

Implications for Cognitive Valence Theory

This account-analysis of interactants relational behavior provided basic support for cognitive valence theory. The six schemata used to interpret immediacy and intimacy behavior, that are at the core of cognitive-valence theory, were confirmed by this study. Indeed, only five of 165 explanations failed to fall within the six schematic categories posited by cognitive valence theory.

Two schemata that participants employed need to be incorporated as possible factors. Two participants discussed that certain intimacy behaviors were unwanted because they limited control of the relationship. This is also consistent with Patterson's (1982) sequential-functional model that suggests functions of communication such as intimacy and control and not independent. Three interactants pointed to the lack of reciprocity as the schema used to judge the inappropriateness of immediacy behaviors. Behaviors that are mutually employed by both interactants are less likely to be perceived as inappropriate.

The only revision these data may suggest for cognitive valence theory is that the six schemata that are used to evaluate the

appropriateness of immediacy behaviors are not equally weighted.
Cognitive-valence theory, as presently constituted, assumes no
differential weighting for the six schemata. These data suggest
that certain schemata are differentially weighted in interactants
minds. The most conscious, salient feature of relational
appraisals is clearly the relational appropriateness of such
behaviors. Other factors such as personality and attraction are
distinctly secondary to relational appraisals. This is
consistent with Guerrero and Andersen's (1991) finding that
personality factors are much less important than relational
factors in relational communication. Cognitive valence theory
needs to incorporate the relative salience of the relational
trajectory as a primary factor in the assessment of immediacy
behaviors and the initiation of intimacy.

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Behavior | **Perception** | **Arousal** | **Cognition** | **Relational Outcome**

Person A increases immediacy / intimacy behavior

Behavior Change not perceived by B

Intimacy behavior increase percieved by B

Low Arousal

Moderate Arousal or Activation

High Arousal, Fear, Stress

Cognitive Schemata
1. Cultural Appropriateness
2. Personal Predispositions
3. Interpersonal Valence / Reward
4. Relational Appropriateness
5. Situational Appropriateness
6. Psychological or Physical State

+ Positive Valence for all six schemata

− Negative Valence for any of the six schemata

No reciprocity or compensation

Positive Relational Outcomes
1. Positive cognitive and affective appraisals of partner
2. Reciprocity / Increase in Intimacy behaviors toward partner
3. Increase in relational growth and closeness

Negative Relational Outcomes
1. Negative cognitive and affective appraisals of partner
2. Compensation / Reduction in Intimacy behaviors toward partner
3. Reductions in relational closeness / disengagement

COGNITIVE-VALENCE THEORY

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TABLE 1

INTIMACY QUESTIONNAIRE

Sex: Male _____   Female _____

Age: _____

Ethnic background of your family: _____

Try to recall an interaction with a friend that was too intimate and made
you uncomfortable. This excessive intimacy could have consisted of verbal
or nonverbal behaviors or some combination.

1. Describe in detail what he/she did to create this excessive intimacy.
    List particular verbal and nonverbal behaviors they engaged in.

2. Describe why you perceived this to be too intimate.

3. How did you feel toward the person as a result of this excessive
    intimacy?

4. What happened to your relationship as a result of this excessively
    intimate interaction?

5. What did you do following this excessive intimacy? Please list
    particular verbal and nonverbal behaviors you engaged in.

TABLE 2

TYPES OF RELATIONAL ACCOUNTS

Relationship Type	Female Account of Male	Male Account of Female	Female Account of Female	Male Account of Male	Total
Friend	25	13	8	2	48
Dating Partner	16	9	1		26
Friend's Friend	7	0			7
Co-worker/Fellow Student	7	2	1		10
Boss/Professor/Counselor	6	0	1	1	8
Ex-Dating Partner	3	2			5
Roommate	2	0	1	1	4
Stranger/New Acquaintance	4	5	4	2	15
Total	70	31	16	6	123

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TABLE 3

UNWANTED INTIMACY BEHAVIORS

Behaviors	Female Accounts of Males	Male Accounts of Female	Female Accounts of Females	Male Accounts of Males	Total
PROXEMIC TOTALS	45	13	8	3	69
Excessive Closeness	30	8	6	3	47
Excessive Directness	3	0	0	0	3
Get in Bed	5	0	1	0	6
Cornered Me	4	0	0	0	4
Surprise Visits	0	3	0	0	3
Other	3	2	1	0	6
OCULESIC TOTALS	17	7	3	1	28
Excess Eye Contact	15	7	3	1	26
Other	2	0	0	0	2
TACTILE TOTALS	73	29	5	2	109
Excessive Touch	40	14	4	2	60
Kissing	12	6	1	0	19
Sexual Touch	9	5	0	0	14
Will Not Let Go	8	3	0	0	11
Self-Touch	4	1	0	0	5
KINESIC MOVEMENTS	6	4	0	0	10
OLFACTIC BEHAVIORS	2	0	0	0	2
CHRONEMIC BEHAVIORS	1	3	1	0	5
VOCALIC BEHAVIORS	1	2	0	1	3
VERBAL BEHAVIORS	62	30	16	5	113
Excessively Intimate Disclosure	21	12	7	1	41
Sexual Comments	20	3	1	1	25
Calling too Frequently	3	5	1	0	9
Compliments	7	1	0	0	8
Labeled Boyfriend	0	3	0	0	3
Personal Questions	4	3	4	0	12
Ask on Dates Repeatedly	3	0	1	1	5
Other	4	3	2	1	10
Totals	211	91	35	12	349

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TABLE 4

	Female Accounts of Males	Male Accounts of Females	Female Accounts of Female	Males Accounts of Male
PROXEMIC BEHAVIORS	45	13	8	3
TACTILE BEHAVIORS	73	29	5	2
VERBAL BEHAVIORS	62	30	16	5
OTHER BEHAVIORS	31	19	8	2

$$x^2=12.4 \quad p > .05$$

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TABLE 5

COGNITIVE VALENCERS:
REASONS WHY ACT WAS
PERCEIVED AS EXCESSIVELY
INTIMATE*

	Female Account of Male	Male Account of Female	Female Account of Female	Male Account of Male	Row Total
Relationally Inappropriate Column %	59 63.4%	24 58.5%	12 52.2%	2 25%	97 58.8%
Low Interpersonal Valence/Unrewarding Column %	6 6.5%	5 12.2%	5 21.7%	1 12.5%	17 10.3%
Personal Traits Column %	16 17.2%	6 14.6%	6 26%	2 25%	30 18.2%
Situation/Context Column %	6 6.5%	3 7.3%	0 0%	3 37.5%	12 7.2%
State Column %	3 3.2%	0 0%	0 0%	0	3 1.8%
Culture Column %	1 1.1%	0 0%	0 0%	0	1 .6%
Other Column %	2 2.2%	3 7.3%	0 0%	0	5 3%
Total	93	41	23	8	165

$x^2=20.4$ p $>$ .05 (The last 3 categories were collapsed for the statistical analysis)

*Subjects could have multiple reasons. Thus valencers were greater than sample size.

TABLE 6

RELATIONAL EFFECTS OF UNWANTED INTIMACY

	Female Account of Male	Male Account of Female	Female Account of Female	Male Account of Male	Row Total
Relationship Ended	28	13	9	2	52
Column %	40%	41.9%	56.2%	33%	42.2%
Relationship Unchanged	15	7	2	2	26
Column %	21.4%	22.5%	12.5%	33%	21.2%
Escalation Stopped	3	1	2	0	6
Column %	4.2%	3.2%	12.5%	0%	4.9%
Reduced Closeness	16	10	1	1	28
Column %	22.8%	32.2%	6.3%	18%	22.7%
Strained	3	0	0	0	3
Column %	4.2%	0%	0%	0%	2.4%
Increased Closeness	5	0	2	1	8
Column %	7.1%	0%	12.5%	18%	6.5%
Column Total	70	31	16	6	123

$x^2 = 14.17 \quad p > .05$