THE EFFECTS OF INTERPERSONAL CONTROL ON SELF-DISCLOSURE AND COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION

By

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This is my way of letting these very special people know just how special they are to me:

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CHAPTER ONE

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE PROBLEM

The name of the game is power. Nothing else. Who has power, how he gets it, how power is exercised — those are the questions that absorb us.

James Kilpatrick

Ruesch (1971) and Haley (1963) maintain that a basic assumption of communication theory is that every individual tries to control the definition of his or her relationship. Schutz (1958) supports this by identifying control, along with inclusion and affection, as one of our three basic interpersonal needs. He defines this need for control as "the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relationship with people with respect to control and power" (p. 18).

When people refer to power, it is usually in the context of a quality that someone possesses. Viewed this way it might be likened to intelligence or personality. However, as various researchers have noted, power is not an attribute of the person, but of
the social relationship (Frost and Wilmot, 1978; Rogers, 1974; Solomon, 1960; Deutsch, 1958).

When Person "A" sends a message to Person "B" it has at least two levels: the literal content, and a comment on the nature of the relationship (Satir, 1977). By sending the message, Person "A" seeks to define the relationship, and through that process define him/herself as well (Giffin and Heider, 1971; Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson, 1967).

The act of telling someone "who you are" was coined "self-disclosure" by Sidney Jourard (1958) almost three decades ago. Since that time, self-disclosure has been extensively researched by Jourard and others (Chelune, 1979; Sousa-Poza and Rohrberg, 1976), highlighting the impact of self-disclosure on our lives. Johnson (1972) tells us that without self-disclosure it would be impossible to form close personal relationships. Jourard (1958) claims that:

People's willingness or reluctance to disclose themselves reflects at once the culture of their society, their individual personality and some fundamental characteristics of human nature in general (p. 77).
Since Johnson (1972) states that relationships are built and maintained through self-disclosure, if self-disclosure does not occur, the relationship may deteriorate or end. However, the extent to which each individual self-discloses within each relationship may depend on the outcome of the struggle for control.

McCroskey (1977) suggests that another aspect of communication behavior, namely, communication apprehension (CA), needs to be considered when looking at the power structure of a relationship. If people are nervous or reluctant to acknowledge power as a component of interpersonal relationships, then perhaps the others' use of control over them, or even the perception of a power imbalance in their relationships, may cause nervousness or reluctance to talk—especially about themselves and their feelings. CA is defined as "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey, 1977, p. 78).

Given the possibility that a person's self-disclosure may be partly determined by his/her perception of how much control he/she has within an interpersonal relationship (Lindskold, 1982), and that
CA is also linked to the power structure of a relationship (McCroskey, 1977), the focus of this study follows: does a person's perception of how much control he/she has within an interpersonal relationship affect that person's self-disclosure and/or communication apprehension within the relationship?

DEFINITIONS

**Control.** Control, along with inclusion and affection, has been determined to be a basic interpersonal need. Johnson (1972) notes that one's need for control is realized as a desire for power leading to control over the self and others. Power, has been defined in many ways (Frost and Wilmot, 1978) including "potential influence" (Raven and Kruglanski, 1970); "the ability to influence another person to do what one wants" (Henley, 1977, p. 191); and "attributed power" (Schopler and Layton, 1974). Power, then, is the potential to do, while control is "the successful exercise of power" (Minton, 1972, p. 101).

**Self-Disclosure.** Sidney Jourard (1971b), the pioneer of self-disclosure research has defined it as making one's self evident to others so they can see the person's true self. This conceptualization is very
broad, and would likely be extremely difficult to operationalize. Implicit in this definition is that no verbal communication needs to take place for disclosure to occur; standing in front of someone "discloses" information such as height, sex, age, weight, and possibly even one's current mood (Chelune, 1979). Once interaction does begin, more information passes to the receiver via facial expression, body movement, eye contact, and, most importantly, how and what is said (Rosenfeld and Civikly, 1976). This last category, verbal disclosures, has become known as "self-disclosure" in the psychological and communication literature (Chelune, 1979).

One of these more recent definitions is "any information about himself which Person A communicates verbally to Person B" (Cozby, 1973, p. 73). This definition might include statements such as, "I really like the color blue," and "Yes, I attend the University of Delaware," as examples of self-disclosure. While this information may be useful or entertaining to the receiver, it probably does little for the relationship because the information is probably known by many people. For this study, then, self-disclosure is defined as, "that which occurs when A knowingly
communicates (verbally) to B information about A which is not generally known and is not otherwise available to B" (Worthy, Gary and Kahn, 1969, p. 59).

Communication Apprehension. Research about fear/anxiety associated with communication has been conducted under various labels, including speech anxiety, communication apprehension, audience sensitivity, and reticence (Daly, 1978; McCroskey, 1977). The term "communication apprehension" is used in this study because it can more readily encompass the fears and anxieties examined in previous studies, and the research done under the other labels can be easily integrated with CA theories (McCroskey, 1977). The definition of CA is "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey, 1977, p. 78).

The next chapter in this study reviews the literature relevant to interpersonal power/control/influence, self-disclosure, and communication apprehension. The following chapter describes the method of data collection, measurement and analysis. Next, the results of the data analysis,
discussion of the results, and implications of the results are presented. Finally, conclusions and recommendations for future research are discussed.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The three variables on which this study focuses are 1) interpersonal control/power, 2) self-disclosure, and 3) communication apprehension. What follows is not a review of all of the literature related to these variables, but of that literature which is essential to answering the research question presented in chapter one--does a person's perception of how much control he/she has within an interpersonal relationship affect that person's self-disclosure and/or communication apprehension?

POWER/CONTROL

Although power appears to be an important aspect of any interpersonal relationship, it is often not discussed because "we tend to suppress suggestions of inequality in our supposedly egalitarian society," (Henley, 1977, p. 21). Through the years, people in our society have been taught that power is a negative attribute, so sayings such as "Power corrupts..." arose (Frost and Wilmot, 1978). This negative connotation
causes people to sometimes develop ways to convince themselves and others that no control is being exerted. In fact, some people cannot talk about power with regard to interpersonal relationships at all (Frost and Wilmot, 1978).

A possible reason for the need of this denial system is that a paradox exists (Satir, 1977; Powell, 1969; Schutz, 1958). Satir (1977) sums this up by proposing that humans, "can never be loved enough, valued enough. Yet he (sic) can never be safe enough, powerful enough" (p. 30). People want to be loved, but love requires vulnerability - showing the "true self" through self-disclosure. This vulnerability makes it equally important, therefore, for people to know that they have power to retaliate in case the partner takes advantage of their lowered defenses to hurt them in any way.

Despite the reticence of some when it comes to discussing power, Kipnis (1974) says that:

(One) reason why people are motivated to use power arises from the fact that the induction of behaviors in others can be instrumental in obtaining rewards for oneself. This source of power needs is frequently associated with the view that power motivation is a universal attribute of man (e.g., Hobbes and, more recently, Mulder, 1963). When power motivation is viewed as a
universal drive, the emphasis is on the pursuit of resources which, in turn, enhance man's ability to influence others and to enjoy the 'good life' (p. 86-87).

The resource theory mentioned above is one of two theories of power most often discussed by sociologists (LaRossa, 1977). The resource theory states that power in an interpersonal relationship is based on the comparative resources which the members bring to the relationship (LaRossa, 1977). Authority based on the resource theory is more objective and subject to change when compared to the ideological theory which states that, "power is based on beliefs and values," (LaRossa, p. 41). In this second theory, authority is seen as formal power – power that is attached to a position, rather than to a person (Minton, 1972). This theory is based on the fact that cultures establish what is "supposed to be" with regard to power distribution in their societies. For example, in a patriarchal family, the father is always the ruler.

Both of the above theories imply that there are but two types of power. French and Raven (1960), however, identified five types of power – reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert. A person has reward power if he/she controls the rewards to be
gained by another person; coercive power if he/she controls the punishments. Parents usually have this type of power. Legitimate power is bestowed by one's position in the social system, as it is to our police officers. Many movie or sports stars possess referent power because people want to identify with them. The last type of power, expert, is held by people who possess some special knowledge or expertise, like doctors and college professors. These types are not mutually exclusive, though. Many parents, for example, in addition to having legitimate power over their children, may also have reward power and/or coercive power.

A study by Brief, Aldag, and Russell (1979) assessed the effects of superior power from the viewpoint of the subordinate. It was found that superiors who perceive themselves to be relatively powerful report a greater social distance from their subordinates than less powerful superiors. The subordinate's perceptions of the superior's power were unrelated to the subordinate's own attributions, reported social distance from the superior, and job satisfaction.
Justification for looking at perceived relational control as opposed to actual power usage can be found in previous studies. For example, the study cited above (Brief, Aldag, and Russell, 1979) measured "perceived superior power," and Minton (1972) argued that power/control can be measured from various perspectives, one of which is related to the perceived power structure.

Is one's perception an accurate measure of a situation? There is some evidence that the answer to this question may be no. For example, Olson (1969) found there was no relationship between the measurement of family power by self-report and behavioral methods. However, it is theorized by others that our perceptions do genuinely reflect our reality, or perhaps more clearly, that they are reality. For example, Haney (1967) suggests that this is one of the most interesting and frightening considerations of human experience—that we can never come into direct contact with reality because everything we live is a product of our nervous systems. Hadley Cantril (1957) tells a story about three baseball umpires discussing their profession that illustrates this point vividly:
The first umpire said, "Some's balls and some'sstrikes and I calls 'em as they is." The secondumpire said, "Some's balls and some's strikes and Icalls 'em as I sees 'em." While the third umpiresaid, "Some's balls and some's strikes but theyain't nothin' till I calls 'em."

In summary, while one's perception may not be anaccurate measure of a situation through someone else'seyes, there is evidence to support that the perceptionis accurate through the eyes of the perceiver. In otherwords, that what is perceived is, in fact, "real," oraccurate, to the perceiver.

In addition to a need for power/control it hasbeen suggested that people have a need for affiliation(Satir, 1977; Powell, 1969; Schutz, 1958), and that thisneed is fulfilled most often from human companionship(Tubbs and Moss, 1980). Given this need, and if, asJohnson (1972) claims, close personal relationshipscannot develop without self-disclosure, then thequestions as to why or when self-disclosure does or doesnot occur are important to study. Although many factorsmake up any relationship, Frost and Wilmot (1978) andLaRossa (1977) suggest that power is an important forcein all relationships; therefore, power may be animportant part of understanding self-disclosurebehavior. For example, in the above study, the greater
social distance from employees reported by superiors
most likely reflects low self-disclosure within each superior-subordinate relationship. A possible explanation for this would be that low-power persons would be less willing to disclose to the high-power person, who in the work place could have any power bases—legitimate, reward, coercive, and perhaps, expert and/or referent power.

SELF-DISCLOSURE

Aside from conceptualizing and operationalizing a definition of self-disclosure that meets the needs of a particular study, Chelune (1979) says that researchers should address two other important considerations. The first is to decide whether to take a "trait" or "state" view of self-disclosure. Trait self-disclosure looks at individual differences in self-disclosure across social-situational contexts; state self-disclosure examines conditions/situations that influence intimate disclosures across individuals. The second decision is whether to view self-disclosure as a unidimensional or multidimensional construct. According to Mischel (1977), "Different goals require different foci and measurement strategies, all of which may be legitimate routes for moving towards one's particular objectives" (p. 247).
Trait-based research (Chelune, 1978; Cozby, 1973; Dimond and Munz, 1967; Jourard, 1958) has waned in recent years; however, two important findings did emerge: the "reciprocity effect" and the "liking effect" (Chelune, 1979). The reciprocity effect refers to the likelihood that when one member of a dyad discloses intimate information about him/herself, the other member of the dyad will respond with similarly intimate disclosures. That a person will probably disclose larger amounts and more personal information to someone he/she likes explains the liking effect.

Those researchers who have recently studied either the reciprocity effect or the liking effect have used methods that are largely state-based rather than trait-based (Chelune, 1979). This approach supports a formula developed by Lewin (1951):

\[ B = f(P,E) \]

"Behavior (B) is a function of both the person (P) and the environment (E)" (Archer, 1979, p. 38). Two recent studies exemplify this. The first looks at the sex of both the discloser (A) and the target (B) (Brooks, 1974), because while the sex of A may have an effect on his/her disclosures, the sex of B might also have an
effect on those disclosures since B is a part of A's environment. The study revealed, among other things, dyads containing a female resulted in more disclosure than dyads with two males, and females disclosed more to males while males disclosed more to females (Brooks, 1974). The second study that supports Lewin's (1951) formula is one that looks at a person's need for approval and its effect on private and public disclosures. This study found that persons with a high need for approval from others were more likely to disclose in public than persons with a low or medium need for approval, and that high-need-for-approval persons were less intimate when disclosing in private than persons with a low or medium need for approval. Again, inherent in this study is that a person's environment, in this case other people and the need for their approval, may in part explain that person's behavior, or self-disclosures.

SELF-DISCLOSURE AND CONTROL

One consideration in studying self-disclosure, then, is the environment. One aspect of the environment is the control one person has over the other. Although literature suggests that disclosures at the beginning of an interpersonal relationship are generally subject to
the reciprocity effect (Jourard and Richman, 1963), Earle and Guiliano (1983) propose otherwise. "There is some evidence in the literature that personal communications are not reciprocated in situations where the parties have initially unequal status or power advantages" (Earle and Guiliano, 1983, p. 630).

Earle and Guiliano's (1983) study paired people with unequal power advantages as members of an interpersonal relationship. The study showed that low-power persons were more willing to disclose than the high-power persons, and that the low-power persons were generally unsuccessful at attempts to elicit disclosures from high-power persons.

Earle and Guiliano's (1983) results supported an earlier study conducted by Slobin, Miller, and Porter (1968). Participants from four organizational levels at a large San Francisco insurance firm were interviewed using a protocol modified from the Jourard Self-Disclosure Questionnaire. Participants reported greater willingness to disclose up the organizational hierarchy to their immediate superiors than down the ladder to their immediate subordinates. However, they reported greatest willingness to disclose to co-workers on the same level of the organizational hierarchy.
Ellison and Firestone's (1974) study had results similar to the above research. They found undergraduate students more willing to disclose to a well-established female counselor with a prestigious degree than to a trained female undergraduate.

Brooks (1974) found subjects more willing to disclose to a high-status male counselor (Ph.D) than to a low-status male counselor (trainee); however, unlike the Ellison and Firestone (1974) study, there were no significant effects of status for female counselors. Furthermore, male subjects disclosed more to high-status than low-status interviewers, while the opposite was true for female subjects.

Another study used the same variables as above — self-disclosure, power/control, and sex, but looked at their effect on each other from a different viewpoint. Instead of looking at how power and sex affect self-disclosure, Asher (1978) looked at how self-disclosure and sex affect one's perception of power. The results showed that high self-disclosing males were seen as more powerful than low self-disclosing males by males. Males saw no difference in power between high and low self-disclosing females. Females viewed high self-disclosing
as more powerful than low self-disclosing no matter what the sex of the discloser.

Although the above studies found that subjects were generally more willing to disclose to high-status/power persons than to low, Brooks also found that females disclosed more to low-status interviewers. This finding seems to complement the study conducted by Ryckman, Sherman, and Burgess (1973) which found support for the hypothesis that external locus of control was associated with less disclosure. The external locus of control was considered to reflect feelings of powerlessness.

What can account for these contradictory findings in studies that look at the same variables? One possible explanation is the different environments; another is the sex of subjects and targets (Jourard, 1971a; Jourard and Landsman, 1960). A number of self-disclosure tendencies for males and females were found including that 1) females are usually higher total disclosers than males, 2) females disclose more on the basis of liking than do males, 3) males disclose more on the basis of trust than do females, and 4) females are disclosed to more than males. To illustrate, Brooks'
(1974) study may have been influenced by these generalities. His findings showed that males disclosed more to a counselor with more training or higher credentials (a basis for trust) while females disclosed more to low-status interviewers.

One possible cause for low self-disclosure (the opposite of "high self-disclosure"/"more willing to disclose") is a loss of control over the situation (Steele, 1975). Another possibility is "a society-wide cultivation of the 'lie' as a way of life..." (Egan, 1970, p.199), because how we really see ourselves is often not the self we let others see. This masquerade is often necessary in our society in order to get or keep power and wealth (Goffman, 1959). Both of these explanations tie the concept of control to self-disclosure, as does the explanation Rosenfeld (1979) offers for the male-female differences noted above. He suggests that males seemingly avoid self-disclosure in order to maintain control over their relationships. Females, on the other hand, may refrain from self-disclosure to avoid being hurt or having problems with their interpersonal relationships.
Variations in self-disclosure may have their roots in many places. One of these places seems to be in the power distribution of interpersonal relationships. This power structure is an inevitable part of any interpersonal relationship, and thus, the measurement of self-disclosure must be from a state approach.

COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION

A distinction considered useful for the study of CA is also "state" vs. "trait" (Spielberger, 1966). Trait CA is characterized as a personality dimension (Daly, 1978), and refers to fear/anxiety with respect to many different types of communication encounters. Trait CA is not usually considered characteristic of normal, well-adjusted individuals (McCroskey, 1977). State CA, however, is specific to a given situation (McCroskey, 1977). For example, Bruskin Associates (1973) found that the most frequently reported fear is that of public speaking. The state approach views CA as a normal response to a threatening situation and is not considered pathological (McCroskey, 1977).

A study that looked at both CA and self-disclosure was conducted by Rosenfeld (1979). He looked
at self-disclosure avoidance as it related to sex differences. The results suggested that while males and females exhibit similar patterns of self-disclosure, similarity of self-disclosure avoidance was not apparent. He concluded that although the sexes might approach self-disclosure with the same degree of apprehension, the reasons for their apprehension might be different. This study viewed CA as a trait.

Another study that views CA as a trait looked at communication apprehension as a predictor of self-disclosure (McCroskey and Richmond, 1977). They found support for the hypothesis that CA is negatively related to the amount of self-disclosure.

Some trait-based research in this areas has focused on CA as it affects personal attraction. It was found that high communication apprehensives are perceived as less attractive, and it was suggested that as apprehension increases in a person, the less that person will be attractive to other people (McCroskey, Daly, Richmond, and Cox, 1975). Similarly, another study showed that increased verbal activity (up to moderately high) was accompanied by increased social attraction (Daly, McCroskey, and Richmond, 1974).
Consequently, decreased verbal activity (associated with CA) may be followed by decreased social attraction, in essence, a decrease in interpersonal power.

McCroskey (1984) notes that trait-CA has been extensively studied in the past, and that now newer approaches to this topic are making distinctions between trait- and state-CA. He also notes that there is probably no human behavior that has its explanation solely in one's personality (trait) or in the situation (state), but that the sources of CA need to be viewed on a continuum. The four points on this continuum are 1) Traitlike CA, 2) Generalized-Context CA, 3) Person-Group CA, and 4) Situational CA (McCroskey, 1984). It is important to consider that three of these four points on the continuum are, in fact, state-CA; therefore, while trait-CA may play a small part in the findings of this study, a state approach must be taken.

The studies reviewed earlier, although trait-based, suggest a correlation between power and CA, as well as between self-disclosure and CA. To summarize, CA is related to social attractiveness (McCroskey, et al., 1975) as is self-disclosure (Chelune, 1979), males and females exhibit dissimilar patterns of self-
disclosure avoidance (Rosenfeld, 1979), and CA is negatively related to self-disclosure (McCroskey and Richmond, 1977).

HYPOTHESES

The preceding theory and empirical research was intended to give the reader an overall view of the issues and concepts dealt with in this study. Those most applicable to the present research are as follows: Slobin, Miller, and Porter's (1968) workers reported the greatest willingness to disclose to co-workers on the same hierarchical level; others report that the discussion of power in interpersonal relationships makes people uneasy (Frost and Wilmot, 1978; Henley, 1977) perhaps due in part because we live in a society whose Constitution is based on equality; McCroskey (1977) suggests interpersonal power may affect CA; and McCroskey and Richmond (1977) found support for the idea that CA is negatively related to the amount of self-disclosure.

In an attempt to build upon the above findings, three hypotheses have been formulated. It is evident from the above research that there is a great deal of confusion over which variables affect self-disclosure.
However, we do see a clear affect of the environment, i.e., people and their relationship with the communicator. The clearest indication is that there is most self-disclosure with equals, and least self-disclosure with those who have more control. Therefore, we can hypothesize that

H1. In relationships, the self-disclosure of the communicator increases significantly as the perceived control that the communicatee exerts over the communicator changes from more to less to equal.

In the communication apprehension-self-disclosure studies it appears that communication apprehension correlates negatively with self-disclosure. Therefore, we will hypothesize that

H2. Communication apprehension is negatively related to self-disclosure.

As a result of the above two hypotheses, we can hypothesize that
H3. In a relationship, the communication apprehension of the communicator decreases significantly as the perceived control that the communicatee exerts over the communicator changes from more to less to equal.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Key terms found in the hypotheses are defined and operationalized as follows:

perceived control - the amount of control each member of a dyad has as perceived by one member of the dyad (the subject). Perceived control is illustrated by what each subject thinks of him/herself in the three relationships outlined below. If the target is perceived to have more control than the subject, this will be referred to as condition A; if the target has less control, this will be condition B; and if the subject perceives control to be equal, this will be condition C.

relationship - while completing self-report instruments on self-disclosure and communication apprehension, each subject will keep in mind a particular dyadic relationship. The questionnaires will be completed based on three dyads in which the participants are currently involved. Each dyad will consist of the
subject and one other person chosen according to the following instructions:

Person A - Choose someone who influences your decisions/action more than you influence his/hers.

Person B - Choose someone who you influence more than he/she influences you.

Person C - Choose someone who has approximately the same degree of influence in your life as you have in his/her life.

**self-disclosure** - information about the communicator that is verbally shared with the communicatee as determined by answers on a self-report instrument. This instrument measures the subject's self-disclosing behavior with respect to the other person within the three dyads outlined above, and separates the items into quality and quantity of self-disclosure. Quality incorporates intent, positiveness, depth and honesty/accuracy. Quantity addresses how much. This definition indicates a state approach to self-disclosure.
**communicator** - the person whose communication behavior is measured by the self-report instruments used in this study; a subject in this study.

**communicatee** - the person in each dyad who is the receiver of the self-disclosure or the object of the communication apprehension; the subject's referent while completing the self-report instruments.

**communication apprehension** - the subject's level of past or anticipated fear/anxiety with respect to communication with the other person within the three dyads outlined above. This is determined by subjects' answers to a self-report instrument, and corresponds with a state approach to communication apprehension.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODS

The three major variables in this study are interpersonal control, self-disclosure and communication apprehension (CA). To investigate their interdependence, we must design a study to control one of them while measuring the existence of the other two. In this investigation the independent variable will be relational control/power as perceived by one member of a dyad, and the two dependent variables will be self-disclosure and communication apprehension, both measured from a state approach.

SUBJECTS

Participants for this research project were undergraduate college students enrolled in either of two communication courses at an Eastern university. Multiple sessions (10) for data-collection were used to guarantee a significant number of subjects (218). In addition, each student received five extra-credit points from his/her instructor for participation in this project.
PROCEDURES

At the beginning of the data-collection sessions each subject completed a participant consent form (see Appendix A). At that time the following explanation of the research project was given:

This study is designed to examine perceptions in interpersonal relationships with an emphasis on self-disclosure. Please keep this definition of self-disclosure in mind when you are completing the questionnaires - 'self-disclosure is that which occurs when A knowingly communicates (verbally) to B information about A which is not generally known and is not otherwise available to B' (Worthy, Gary and Kahn, 1969, p. 59).

In addition, this definition was written on the blackboard in the data-collection room.

The study asked participants to answer questionnaires based on interpersonal relationships in which they were involved at the time. This approach followed the suggestion from Derlega, Wilson and Chaikin (1976) that future studies of self-disclosure need to focus on already established relationships.

Subjects received their questionnaires in an envelope and they were collected in the same fashion to protect confidentiality. To assure anonymity, only
numbers and/or letters that could not be matched to names appeared on the questionnaires. These identifiers were to facilitate statistical analyses.

The first page of each questionnaire packet had an Introduction section and then asked for General Information (see Appendix B). Basically, the Introduction repeated the general purpose of the study, explained that the study looked only at the participants' perceptions of their relationships and not at the perceptions' of the other members of the dyads, and most importantly, explained the criteria they were to use for choosing the relationships on which their answers were based. This section of the Introduction is below:

Person A - Choose someone who influences your decisions/actions more than you influence his/hers.

Person B - Choose someone who you influence more than he/she influences you.

Person C - Choose someone who has approximately the same degree of influence in your life as you have in his/her life.
The General Information section collected demographic information on the subjects as well as the other members of the dyads they had chosen (relationship of each person to subjects, years subjects have known other persons, subjects' ages and sex). If no significance is found by the statistical analyses, these factors will be available to determine if they outweighed the control variable.

After completing the General Information section, participants answered two (2) questionnaires for each of the three interpersonal relationships chosen. One questionnaire gathered the subject's perceptions of his/her communication apprehension within each relationship (see Appendix C). The other looked at the subject's perceptions of his/her self-disclosure behavior within each of the dyads (see Appendix D).

It is important to note that subjects completed both the CA and the self-disclosure questionnaires in a different order with regard to the persons whose relational influence they were ranking. Some subjects completed questionnaires first on Person A, then B and, finally, C. Others completed first B, then C, and then A. Still other subjects completed questionnaires on
Person C, then A, and, finally, B. This was to insure that there would be no confounding effects with this aspect of the study.

After all data-collection sessions were completed, debriefing of the subjects took place. This was done by sending a summary of the project to each subject (see Appendix E).

DESIGN

Justification for looking at perceived relational control as opposed to the actual use of control as the independent measure can be found in previous studies. For example, Brief, Aldag, and Russell (1979) measured "perceived superior power" using a four-item instrument, and tested its effect on employee behaviors. It can be argued that power/control can be measured from various perspectives, one of which is related to the perceived power structure (Minton, 1972).

The questionnaire to determine CA consisted of twenty items, and can be found in Appendix C. This instrument has been modified from McCroskey's (1970) Personal Report of Communication Apprehension for
College Students (PRCA--College). The original PRCA--College checked for CA with regard to other people in general, across a variety of situations. Each item was altered to refer to a target person for this study.

The PRCA--College instrument was chosen for this study because of its reliability and indications of validity. The internal validity of the PRCA--College has been consistently reported to exceed .90 (McCroskey, 1970).

The questionnaire employed in this study for collecting data on perceived self-disclosure is a multidimensional assessment instrument (McCroskey and Richmond, 1977) developed by Wheeless (1976) and Wheeless and Grotz (1977). Chelune (1979) feels that in addition to deciding to take a "state" or "trait" view of self-disclosure, as was discussed above, researchers also need to decide whether to consider self-disclosure as a multidimensional or unidimensional construct. For this study, a person's perception of his/her self-disclosures is considered to be a multidimensional construct (Altman and Taylor, 1973), since Chelune (1979) advocates that research should use multidimensional assessment techniques or refrain from
generalizing results between subjects and/or situations.

The Revised Self-Disclosure (RSD) instrument, found in Appendix D, consists of thirty-one questions. The factors of self-disclosure that make it a multidimensional construct include intent, amount, positiveness, depth, and honesty/accuracy (Wheeless, 1976). For this study these factors were put into the broader categories of quality and quantity, with the approval of faculty members.

Although other assessment techniques are available (for example, observer ratings and physiological indexes), self-report measures were employed for this study because they have several advantages. Among these are that they are efficient; they are usually fairly easy to interpret, and subjects are able to complete them easily; it is a very quick way to obtain data (Bowers and Courtright, 1984); they are inexpensive to administer; and Likert-type self-report scales are usually highly reliable when developed properly (McCroskey, 1970).
CHAPTER FOUR
DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH

Does a person's perception of how much control he/she has in an interpersonal relationship affect that person's self-disclosure and communication apprehension within the relationship?

The three hypotheses generated from this research question were:

H1. In relationships, the self-disclosure of the communicator increases significantly as the perceived control that the communicatee (Person A, B, or C) exerts over the communicator changes from more (Condition A) to less (Condition B) to equal (Condition C). The null hypothesis is that there are no significant differences between these conditions.

H2. Communication apprehension is negatively correlated with self-disclosure, the null
hypothesis being that there is no correlation between them.

H3. In a relationship, the communication apprehension of the communicator decreases significantly as the perceived control that the communicatee (Person A, B, or C) exerts over the communicator changes from more (Condition A) to less (Condition B) to equal (Condition C). The null hypothesis is that there are no significant differences between these conditions.

SELF-DISCLOSURE

To test the first hypothesis, the questions on the self-disclosure instrument were separated into those addressing the quality of disclosures (22) and those dealing with the quantity of disclosures (8) normally shared with each communicatee. The mean of the respondents' answers for the self-disclosure quality questions for each communicatee was calculated and the differences between the means of the three conditions were measured using a one-tailed t-test.

As can be seen in Table 1, the mean for each quality of self-disclosure score supports the first
hypothesis of this thesis. Condition C has the highest mean (4.985), condition B is next (4.91), and condition A has the lowest (4.849). In other words, the communicatees who were perceived to be equal in control received the highest mean scores from subjects for quality of self-disclosure, those with less control were next, and those with greater control were lowest. The t-test for significant differences between these scores showed that the differences were, in fact, significant at $p<0.027$ between conditions C and B, $p<0.029$ between conditions B and A, and $p<0.0005$ between conditions C and A. Thus, the null hypothesis for hypothesis 1 must be rejected on the basis of quality scores.

Table 1. T-TEST RESULTS FOR QUALITY OF SELF-DISCLOSURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>One-Tailed Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>4.985</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$t=-1.94$</td>
<td>$p&lt;0.027$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>0.633</td>
<td>$t=-3.52$ $p&lt;0.0005$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.849</td>
<td>0.645</td>
<td>$t=-1.91$ $p&lt;0.029$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N=218
The results for subjects' quantity of self-disclosure are given in Table 2. Like the quality scores, the means for the quantity of self-disclosure decrease from Conditions C to B to A. One-tailed tests of differences are significant between conditions C and A (p<0.001), and C and B (p<0.001), but not between conditions B and A (p<0.071), although this shows a trend in the hypothesized direction. Thus, for the quantity of self-disclosure, the null hypothesis for hypothesis 1 cannot be rejected completely.

Table 2. T-TEST RESULTS FOR QUANTITY OF SELF-DISCLOSURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>One-Tailed Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>4.342</td>
<td>1.145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>t= -3.99</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4.019</td>
<td>1.136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>t= -4.66</td>
<td>p&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.870</td>
<td>1.251</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>t= -1.47</td>
<td>p&lt;0.071</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=218

In addition to comparing the quality and quantity aspects of self-disclosure across the three types of power relationships, the total self-disclosure
scores were also compared (see Table 3). Following the previous results, the means for conditions A, B, and C were again in descending order from C to B to A. One-tailed tests for differences were significant for all three relationships at $p<0.0005$ (conditions C and B), $p<0.001$ (conditions C and A), and $p<0.018$ (conditions B and A). Thus the null hypothesis for hypothesis 1 must be rejected on the basis of total scores.

Table 3. T-TEST RESULTS FOR TOTAL SELF-DISCLOSURE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>One-Tailed Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>4.813</td>
<td>0.624</td>
<td>$t=-3.53$, $p&lt;0.0005$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4.677</td>
<td>0.577</td>
<td>$t=-5.05$, $p&lt;0.001$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.588</td>
<td>0.641</td>
<td>$t=-2.12$, $p&lt;0.018$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N=218

The statistics reviewed above support Hypothesis 1 of this thesis - subjects' self-disclosure behavior was found to be significantly different depending on whether the communicatee was perceived to have equal power, lower power or higher power. Condition C (equal) received the highest scores, condition B (lower power)
the middle scores and condition A (higher power) the lowest scores.

COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION AND SELF-DISCLOSURE

The second hypothesis deals with the relationship between communication apprehension and self-disclosure. It was hypothesized that these two variables are negatively correlated. The null hypothesis, then, is that there is no correlation between these variables. To test this hypothesis, a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used (see Table 4). The correlations are all negative and significant (p<0.001). Thus, the null hypothesis for hypothesis 2 must be rejected.

Table 4. PEARSON CORRELATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION AND TOTAL SELF-DISCLOSURE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>One-Tailed Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Condition C</td>
<td>r = -.4472</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition B</td>
<td>r = -.2423</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition A</td>
<td>r = -.4993</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N=218*
COMMUNICATION APPrehension

The questionnaire employed to check subjects' communication apprehension (CA) was geared to each of the three relationships being studied - equal, higher, or lower power. It was hypothesized that the CA of the subject decreases as he/she engages in communication with persons in condition C, then B, and A. The null hypothesis is that there are no significant differences in CA between the three conditions.

Table 5. T-TEST RESULTS FOR COMMUNICATION APPrehension ACROSS CONDITIONS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>One-Tailed Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Condition C</td>
<td>2.038</td>
<td>0.595</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>t= 3.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition B</td>
<td>2.197</td>
<td>0.586</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>t= 8.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition A</td>
<td>2.599</td>
<td>0.939</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>t= 6.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of the t-tests (Table 5) show that the highest amount of CA occurred in condition A (2.599), then less in condition B (2.197), and least in condition C (2.038). The differences are significant between each
set of conditions at $p<0.001$. In addition, these differences are in the hypothesized direction, so the null hypothesis must be rejected.

**CHOICE OF RELATIONSHIPS BY SEX OF RESPONDENTS**

As there was some indication in the literature search that the sex of communicators and communicatees may affect self-disclosure, Table 6 provides a breakdown of the relationships chosen by subjects by conditions (A, B, C) and by sex of the respondents.

For condition A (more control), a majority of the subjects chose one or the other parent (160). Although 143 females and 74 males participated in this study, fathers were chosen only slightly more (84) for condition A than were mothers (76). Choices for condition B (less control) had a wider distribution, with a concentration of choices around friends (115 including boyfriends and girlfriends) and younger siblings (76). Female respondents most frequently chose female friends (43), younger sisters (32), and younger brothers (17), while male respondents chose male friends (21), younger brothers (14) and younger sisters (13).

For condition C (equal control), females chose female
Table 6. RELATIONSHIP/SEX BREAKDOWN*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Relationships</th>
<th>(A) Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>(B) Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>(C) Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyfriend</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girlfriend</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend (male)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend (female)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older sister</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger sister</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older brother</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger brother</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male professor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female professor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male employer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female employer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Total number of targets in each condition varies due to missing values.
friends (58) and boyfriends (55), and males chose male friends (34) and girlfriends (17).

Table 7 presents a more detailed look at the choices made by respondents for condition A (more control) according to the sex of both subjects and targets. It illustrates that males were chosen for condition A by 122 subjects, while females were chosen by 92 subjects. Although a greater number of males were chosen for condition A than females, there were almost twice as many females who participated in the study than did males.

Table 7. SEX OF CONDITION "A" BY SEX OF RESPONDENTS
(CHI-SQUARE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th>&quot;A&quot; TARGETS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ROW PCT</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHI-SQUARE</th>
<th>D.F.</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.97890</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of missing observations = 4
In addition, Table 7 illustrates that male and female targets for condition A were almost equal in number for female respondents (73 females, 68 males), while male respondents chose a proportionately greater number of males (19 females, 54 males). The chi-square statistic indicates that the distribution of males and females as chosen by males is significantly different from the distribution of males and females chosen by females (p<0.0005).

Choices for condition B (less control) by sex of both respondent and target are illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8. SEX OF CONDITION "B" BY SEX OF RESPONDENTS (CHI-SQUARE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNT</th>
<th>&quot;B&quot; TARGETS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ROW PCT</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROW PCT</td>
<td>69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROW PCT</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROW PCT</td>
<td>60.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHI-SQUARE 13.00689 D.F. 1 SIGNIFICANCE 0.0003

Number of missing observations = 12
It is important to note that although male subjects chose males and females almost equally (40 males, 30 females), female subjects chose female targets more than two to one (95 females, 41 males) over males. The chi-square statistic indicate that the distribution of males and females chosen by females for condition B is significantly different from the distribution of males and females chosen by males (p<0.0003).

Condition C (equal control), which is illustrated in Table 9, shows a fairly even distribution between male and female targets overall (106 females,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9. SEX OF CONDITION &quot;C&quot; BY SEX OF RESPONDENTS (CHI-SQUARE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COUNT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROW PCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHI-SQUARE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIGNIFICANCE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of missing values = 4
108 males). However, while the choices of female subjects were 55% females and 45% males, males choices were 39% females and 61% males. The chi-square statistic indicates that the distribution of males and females chosen by males is significantly different (p<0.0382) from the distribution of males and females chosen by females, although the significance is not as great as with conditions A and B.

A summary of conditions A, B, and C by sex is found in Table 10. This is based on 217 subjects of which 143 were female, and 74 were male.

Table 10. SUMMARY OF SEX - TARGETS AND SUBJECTS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Chosen</th>
<th>Condition A</th>
<th>Condition B</th>
<th>Condition C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on 143 female subjects and 74 male subjects due to missing value.

Although there is no statistical evidence to support or disprove the choices by sex of conditions A, B, and C, it is interesting to note that condition A (more control) consists of more males than females, and condition B (less control) consists of more females than
males. Both of these observations are based on the fact that there were almost twice as many female subjects than male subjects. In addition, condition C (equal control) was almost evenly distributed between male and female targets, again despite the large number of female subjects.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Does the amount of control a person has within an interpersonal relationship affect his/her self-disclosure and communication apprehension within that relationship?

This study looks at perceived control, the manifestation of power, as an attribute of the relationship rather than of either individual. Viewing control as interpersonal and taking the position that interpersonal relationships are built and maintained via communication, this research analyzes the impact of control on two aspects of communication behavior within interpersonal relationships, namely, communication apprehension and self-disclosure.

The hypotheses upon which this study was built are

H1. In relationships, the self-disclosure of the communicator increases significantly as the perceived control that the communicatee exerts
over the communicator changes from more to less to equal.

H2. Communication apprehension is negatively related to self-disclosure.

H3. Therefore, in a relationship, the communication apprehension of the communicator decreases significantly as the perceived control that the communicatee exerts over the communicator changes from more to less to equal.

In order to collect information that would help to accept or reject each of these hypotheses, college students were asked to participate in a paper and pencil survey. Each participant was asked to think of three interpersonal relationships in which he/she was currently involved: one where the other person had more control over the subject than the subject had over the other person; one where the other person had less control over the subject than the subject had over the other person; and one where the subject perceived both he/she and the other person to have equal amounts of control over each other.
Subjects then completed two questionnaires about their own communication with each of these three people. One instrument checked for perceptions of communication apprehension behavior, and the other for perceptions of self-disclosure behavior.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

For the first hypothesis the null is that there are no significant differences between conditions A (more control), B (less control), and C (equal control) with regard to perceptions of self-disclosure behavior. T-tests were used to analyze differences of the quality of self-disclosure, the quantity of self-disclosure, and the total self-disclosure scores collected via the self-report instrument.

For quality of self-disclosure, scores decrease from conditions C to B to A, and differences are significant at $p<0.027$ between conditions C and B, $p<0.029$ between conditions B and A, and $p<0.0005$ between conditions C and A. Thus, for quality of self-disclosure the null hypothesis was rejected.

Quantity of self-disclosure, like quality, decreases from conditions C to B to A. Differences
between conditions C and A and conditions C and B are both significant at $p<0.001$. The difference between conditions B and A is not significant, but does show a trend at $p<0.071$. For quantity of self-disclosure, then, the null hypothesis was not rejected completely.

Total self-disclosure scores represent a combination of quality and quantity scores, and like the components, are in descending order from conditions C to B to A. These differences are significant at $p<0.0005$ for conditions C and B, $p<0.001$ for conditions C and A, and $p<0.018$ for conditions B and A. As a result, the null hypothesis for total scores was rejected.

The above findings support the hypothesis that the self-disclosure of the communicator increases significantly as the perceived control that the communicatee exerts over the communicator changes from more to less to equal. Why this may be so involves several factors.

Both more and less target control are perceived by subjects to elicit less disclosure than equal control. Steele (1975) outlines possible causes for low self-disclosure, a number of which may be at work here. One cause may be the fear that disclosure might lead to
a loss of esteem from the target. If the power structure of the relationship is already that the subject has less control, this may be enough to prevent him/her from disclosing to the target. If the subject's fear does materialize, and he/she loses esteem in the eyes of the target, this will validate, and in fact may increase, the uneven power structure.

Another possible cause for low self-disclosure is closely related to the first - the fear of projecting a negative image (Steele, 1975). Again, for example, a low-power subject may feel disclosure could discredit him/herself, and thus jeopardize any chance of balancing the power distribution.

The last two of Steele's (1975) possible causes for low self-disclosure to be discussed here are closely intertwined: 1) fear of loss of control over the situation and 2) the perception that a lie would benefit the communicator more than the truth. In the case where a subject has more control than the target, disclosure could change the power distribution to favor the target. Therefore, the subject chooses not to disclose, or to "disclose" a lie instead. Goffman (1959) supports this last possibility. He claims that people believe
that lying about the self is necessary in our society to gain or keep wealth and power.

Each of the above causes is a possibility for low self-disclosure scores for conditions A and B in this study as compared to condition C (equal control). Why, though, are self-disclosure scores lower for condition A (more control) than B (less control)? It may be that it seems worse to subjects to "lose ground" when their footing is shaky to start with--to give the higher power person any more control over them. Another explanation could be that in this study subjects overwhelmingly chose one or the other parent as the target person for condition A. Jourard and Richman (1963) found that targets were disclosed to in an order that had been consistently found for college-age subjects--for females it is same-sex friend, mother, opposite-sex friend, father; for males it is same-sex friend, opposite-sex friend, mother, father. Almost all subjects in this study chose a parent as the target with more control, and parents overall are disclosed to less than friends. This may, in part, be tied to a college student's "emancipation" from his/her parents (Jourard and Richman, 1963), that is, trying to sever some of the
control the parents have had over their child's life to this point.

Jourard and Richman's (1963) findings can also in part account for why condition C targets received the highest self-disclosure scores. For this study, most subjects chose friends (male, female, girlfriend or boyfriend) as their equal targets. This was the group ranked highest as most-likely self-disclosure targets in Jourard and Richman's (1963) study. Another reason why condition C targets may have received the highest self-disclosure scores is that reciprocity, or the dyadic effect, is most likely to be operative when the target and subject have equal control. In other words, interpersonal power may take precedence over the reciprocity effect in predicting an individual's self-disclosure (Earle and Guiliano, 1983).

The second hypothesis is that communication apprehension is negatively related to perceived self-disclosure. The null hypothesis, that there is no correlation between these two variables, was rejected by using a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. All correlations were negative and significant at p<0.001, supporting findings by McCroskey and Richmond (1977)
that high communication apprehensives are less likely to self-disclose than low apprehensives. In addition, that study also found that high apprehensives have lower self-esteem than do low apprehensives. This may have implications for the present study, which found that subjects experience higher apprehension in an interaction with someone who has more interpersonal control than they. This suggests that loss of control may be related to loss of self-esteem.

The final hypothesis of this study states that the communication apprehension of the communicator decreases significantly as the perceived control that the communicatee exerts over the communicator changes from more to less to equal. The null is that there are no significant differences in the communication apprehension of subjects between the three control conditions. T-tests showed that there are significant differences—p<0.001 between all three conditions—and that they are in the hypothesized direction (decrease from equal control to less control to more control). As a result the null hypothesis was rejected.

This type of CA is seen as a function of the "situational constraints" caused by the target rather than the personality of the subject (McCroskey, 1984).
Buss (1980) suggests there are major situational elements that can cause an increase in communication apprehension, among these being subordinate status and dissimilarity. When a subject interacts with a target who has a higher status/more control than he/she, the subject's behavior is normally prescribed by the target. CA is increased by these narrower limits on one's behavior (McCroskey, 1984), and may account for the highest CA scores for condition A. Parents, who usually have a lot of control over children's behavior, make up the majority of condition A targets.

A possible explanation for higher scores for condition B (less control) than condition C (equal) is the element of dissimilarity (Buss, 1980). For most of us, interacting with people who are similar to us is easier than interacting with those who are different (McCroskey, 1984). Therefore, subjects would have higher CA scores with targets with less control (dissimilar) than with targets with equal control (similar).

However, dissimilarity alone does not seem to be as problematic as when it is combined with another factor, namely, subordinate status (Buss, 1980).
Subjects in condition A were not only dissimilar to their targets (relational control was not equal), but they were also in a subordinate power position to the targets. Since targets with more control elicited higher CA scores in subjects than did the other control conditions, this suggests that the situational factors identified by Buss (1980) may have a compounding effect—the more factors present, the more likely that high CA will occur. This may account for why condition A (more control) received higher CA scores than did condition B (less control).

Still another possible cause for state, or situational, CA is unfamiliarity (McCroskey, 1984). While this may have been a contributing factor in the CA scores for conditions A and B, it also serves, in part, as an explanation for why condition C scores were the lowest of the three. As McCroskey (1984) notes, "In general, as the degree of familiarity increases, the degree of CA decreases," (p. 25-26). It is important to note that college students have been found to disclose most readily to same-sex friends (Jourard and Richman, 1963), and self-disclosure by its very definition enhances familiarity (Worthy, Gary and Kahn, 1969). Since the majority of condition C targets were friends,
and this condition had the highest self-disclosure scores, we can assume that familiarity was highest for condition C. Hence, this condition had the lowest communication apprehension scores. In addition, McCroskey (1984) notes that similarity has the same type of effect on CA as does familiarity. We can assume that since subjects were college students, most condition C targets were college students also, and therefore, very similar to the subjects. This, too, would have contributed to the low CA scores for condition C.

According to the literature reviewed, this study provides one of the first real findings correlating perceived control/power, self-disclosure, and communication apprehension. It was shown that the subject's self-disclosure increases and his/her communication apprehension decreases as targets are perceived as having more control, then less control, and finally, equal control. While previous research has found that self-disclosure increases and CA decreases as subjects gain interpersonal control, where equal control fit into all of this was still questionable. This study, on the other hand, shows that equal control produces even lower CA than does having greater control than the target. Therefore, the statement that CA
decreases as subjects gain interpersonal control is misleading, since that implies the subject's control going from less to equal to more. This study has shown that equal control is less anxiety-producing for the subject than is communicating with someone who has less control.

DISCUSSION OF SEX DIFFERENCES

Subjects for this study consisted of 143 females and 74 males. Choices of targets for each condition closely paralleled Jourard and Richman's (1963) findings for college students. As stated earlier, they found that males disclosed to same-sex friend, opposite-sex friend, mother, and father. Females disclosed to same-sex friend, mother, opposite-sex friend, and father. Both lists are in descending order of reported amounts of disclosure.

Parents were the major target group for condition A (more control). Fathers were chosen slightly more often than mothers (84 to 76), and targets for this condition received the lowest self-disclosure scores. This is consistent with the Jourard and Richman (1963) study which found that both male and female
subjects perceive they disclose less to parents (and particularly fathers) than they do to most friends.

Again consistent with the previous findings were subjects' choices for condition C (equal control) of this study. Targets with equal control received the highest self-disclosure scores. This group consisted largely of friends, with female subjects choosing female friends (58) and boyfriends (55), and males choosing male friends (34) and girlfriends (17). Thus, this verifies that college-age individuals are most likely to disclose to same-sex friends, and these same friends are perceived to share the relational control equally with the communicator.

For condition B (less control), it might be expected that males would choose female targets. In fact, 43% of them did, but 57% of male subjects chose male targets. Females on the other hand, chose almost twice as many females as males for their targets with less control. These findings may reflect the relational make-up of the group, since targets with less control consisted of a proportionately higher number of siblings (87) than did any other condition. Of these, 76 were younger than the subjects who chose them. Thus, age and
relationship may be factors in determining interpersonal control.

As a whole, condition A (more control) was comprised of 92 female targets and 122 male targets. Condition B (less control) consisted of 125 female targets and 81 male targets. Condition C was comprised of 106 female targets and 108 male targets. These numbers are consistent with our male-dominated society in which females are seen as the "weaker" sex.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study suggest that the perception of one's interpersonal control is a factor in determining the quality, quantity, and total self-disclosure of the communicator, that self-disclosure and communication apprehension are negatively correlated, and therefore, that communication apprehension may be induced in part by unequal power distribution.

Given that French and Raven (1960) identified five types of power--reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert power--and that the present study did not address which types of power bases were used in the selection of targets, some areas for future research
are indicated: valid measurement techniques of power/control and power differences need to be developed and validated. In addition, data must be collected and compared for similar groups of targets, i.e., separation of family, friends, co-workers and sex, to prevent confounding and to allow for the validation of these findings across situations.
REFERENCES


Rosenfeld, L.B. Self-disclosure avoidance: Why am I afraid to tell you who I am? Communication Monographs, 1979, 46, 63-74.


APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

This study is designed to analyze perceptions in interpersonal relationships. Complete anonymity will be afforded you; names will not be needed. Only numbers and/or letters will be used to identify survey forms and data, and these cannot be linked to your identity. The data compiled for this study will be destroyed no later than December, 1986.

Your signature on this document attests that you have read the above information, and that you are a participant in this study by choice.

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(Participant's signature)

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(Date)

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(Instructor)
APPENDIX B
INTRODUCTION

These surveys are designed to gather your perceptions about three interpersonal relationships in which you are presently involved. They can be relationships with parents, siblings, friends, boyfriends/girlfriends, spouses, etc. It is important to note that the other person in each of these relationships might not agree with how you will answer the questions you will be asked. While differences in perceptions are important aspects of a relationship, they are not the focus of these questionnaires. Please answer the questions on the basis of how you see the relationships.

You will complete three copies of the first questionnaire, one for each relationship. Then you will complete three copies of a second questionnaire using the same relationships as your referents.

How to choose the relationships on which you will base your answers:

Person A - Choose someone who influences your decisions/actions more than you influence his/hers.

Person B - Choose someone who you influence more than he/she influences you.

Person C - Choose someone who has approximately the same degree of influence in your life as you have in his/her life.

**Remember: It is important to keep each of these people in mind when completing the appropriate questionnaires.

GENERAL INFORMATION

While it is not necessary for me to know your identity or the identities of those persons you have chosen as your referents, it is essential that I gather some general information about all of you.
Please answer the following questions before completing the survey forms:

1. What is Person A's relationship to you?  
   1) mother  2) father  3) husband  4) wife  
   5) boyfriend  6) girlfriend  7) friend (male)  
   8) friend (female)  9) older sister  10) younger  
   sister  11) older brother  12) younger brother  
   13) professor (male)  14) professor (female)  
   15) male employer  16) female employer  17) other

2. Using those categories listed under the previous question, what is Person B's relationship to you?  

3. Person C's relationship?

4. Number of years you have known Person A?  
   1) 1-5  2) 6-10  3) 11-15  4) 16 or more

5. Using those categories listed under question 4, how many years have you known Person B?

6. Person C?

7. What is your age?  
   1) 15-20  2) 21-25  3) 26-30  4) 31 or above

8. What is your sex?  
   1) female  2) male

Please go on to the surveys at this point.

Thank you for your assistance in this endeavor!!
APPENDIX C

PERCEPTIONS OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

QUESTIONNAIRE #1

Instructions:

Please mark the following statements to reflect your feelings about communicating with Person _____. Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to this person (with exception to the last question) by marking whether you:

7) strongly agree
6) agree
5) moderately agree
4) am undecided
3) moderately disagree
2) disagree
1) strongly disagree

Record the number of your response in the space provided. Work quickly and just record your first impressions.

1. While participating in a conversation with this person, I feel very nervous. __________

2. I have no fear of facing this person. __________

3. I look forward to an opportunity to speak with this person. __________

4. I look forward to expressing my opinion to this person. __________

5. I find the prospect of speaking with this person pleasant. __________

6. When communicating with this person, my posture feels strained and unnatural. __________

7. I am tense and nervous while speaking with this person.
APPENDIX C
(CONTINUED)

8. Although I talk fluently with many other people, I am at a loss for words with this person.

9. My hands tremble when I try to speak with this person.

10. I always avoid speaking with this person if possible.

11. I feel that I am more fluent when speaking with this person than most other people are.

12. I am fearful and tense all the while I am speaking with this person.

13. My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I speak with this person.

14. Although I am nervous just before engaging in conversation with this person, I soon forget my fears and enjoy the conversation.

15. I feel relaxed and comfortable while speaking with this person.

16. I feel self-conscious when I speak with this person.

17. I face the prospect of speaking with this person with complete confidence.

18. I would enjoy speaking with this person.

19. I feel that I am more fluent when speaking with this person than when I speak with anyone else.

20. Conversing with people who hold positions of power causes me to be fearful and tense.
APPENDIX D

PERCEPTIONS OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

QUESTIONNAIRE #2

Instructions:

Please mark the following statements to reflect how you communicate with Person ___. Indicate the degree to which the following statements reflect how you communicate with this person by marking whether you:

7) strongly agree
6) agree
5) moderately agree
4) am undecided
3) moderately disagree
2) disagree
1) strongly disagree

Record the number of your response in the space provided. Work quickly and just record your first impressions.

1. When I with, my self-disclosures are accurate reflections of who I really am. ____

2. When I express my personal feelings, I am always aware of what I am doing and saying. ____

3. When I reveal my feelings about myself, I consciously intend to do so. ____

4. When I am self-disclosing, I am consciously aware of what I am revealing. ____

5. I do not often talk about myself. ____

6. My statements of my feelings are usually brief. ____

7. I usually talk about myself for fairly long periods of a time. ____

8. My conversation lasts the least time when I am discussing myself. ____
9. I often talk about myself.
10. I often discuss my feelings about myself.
11. Only infrequently do I express my personal beliefs and opinions.
12. I usually disclose positive things about myself.
13. On the whole, my disclosure about myself are more negative than positive.
14. I normally reveal "bad" feelings I have about myself.
15. I normally express my "good" feelings about myself.
16. I often reveal more undesirable things about myself than desirable things.
17. I usually disclose negative things about myself.
18. On the whole, my disclosures about myself are more positive than negative.
19. I intimately disclose who I really am, openly and fully in my conversation.
20. Once I get started, my self-disclosures last a long time.
21. I often disclose intimate, personal things about myself without hesitation.
22. I feel that I sometimes do not control my self-disclosure of personal or intimate things I tell about myself.
23. Once I get started, I intimately and fully reveal myself in my self-disclosures.
APPENDIX D
(CONTINUED)

24. I cannot reveal myself when I want to because I do not know myself thoroughly enough.

25. I am often not confident that my expressions of my own feelings, emotions, and experiences are true reflections of myself.

26. I always feel completely sincere when I reveal my own feelings and experiences.

27. My self-disclosures are completely accurate reflections of who I really am.

28. I am not always honest in my self-disclosure.

29. My statements about my own feelings, emotions, and experiences are always accurate self-perceptions.

30. I am always honest in my self-disclosure.

31. I do not always feel completely sincere when I reveal my own feelings, emotions, behaviors, or experiences.