

Draft copy for D.J. Lee (Ed.) (1994) Life and story, autobiographies for a narrative psychology. Westport, CN: Praeger.

Let's Pretend: A Duography

Mary and Kenneth Gergen

"... Narrative and action exist in a state of mutual interdependence, as does the dialogue that splices and splices the disparate segments of 'self-understanding' together." KJG and MKG, "Toward reflexive methodology," In F. Steier (Ed.) Research and reflexivity. London: Sage, 1991.

..."U.S. troops authorized to fight in Vietnam"...*"Race Riots Rage in Watts"*... *Zorba the Greek*...First issue of *The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*...*Woman's Room*...*"The miniskirt and Twiggy: New Fashion from England"*...*The Graduate*... *Come on baby, Light my Fire*; *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*...

Genius: Who Is That Masked Man

It was the fall of 1965. Michael and I had just moved from Minneapolis to Watertown, Mass. where he was taking on postgraduate work in architecture. Architect friends invited to a Halloween costume party. We hustled up some last minute "campus rebel" costumes, and arrived to find the basement "rec room" crowded with bizarre figures. As we descended the stairs we were greeted by the hosts, who informed us that a contest was in progress to identify the psychological concepts that Kenneth and Eleanor portrayed

in their costumes. Since I was completing an MA in counseling psychology perhaps I could succeed where other guests were failing. The gentleman in question - scarcely a gentleman at that - was unshaved and half naked, barefoot, hairy chested, wearing ragged shorts, with a guitar over his shoulder. (This was not going to be easy!) But his wife, in trim white leotards and turtleneck, black boots and whip helped to suggest the solution: clearly the Id and the Super Ego. Later, Eleanor mentioned that Ken had a grant and was looking for a research assistant. Perhaps I might apply.

Like Michael and I, most of the couples were composed of grad school husbands at MIT and Harvard and full-time wife-mothers. At first I was skeptical to hear that Ken taught at Harvard, in part because of the status of the others, and in part, because it was unbelievable that at my first party in Boston, having just arrived from Minnesota, I should be conversing with a "real" Harvard professor. We sat on the basement stairs and talked at length about how people define things in a variety of ways. He made the extravagant claim (I thought) that even what we call "pain" could be called "pleasure" under the right circumstances. I was very excited about our encounter - both intellectually and sensually. Later he encouraged me to join him in a Greek dance lead by our hosts, Phyllis and George. His grace and attentive charm, plus the exotic (to a midwestern prairie girl with Swedish, German and Irish roots) nature of the dancing, whetted my desires for adventure. Perhaps Ken's invitation at evening's end, to call him the following week, was just such an invitation.

I thought a lot about this call: Was Monday too eager, would Thursday make it seem an afterthought? I settled on Tuesday. When he answered, I said, "Hello, this is Mary." There was a silence on the other end, and I realized with

embarrassment that he didn't have a clue as to who "Mary" was. At the time I did not realize that as head tutor of all Social Relation majors, he might have had dozens of "Mary's" in his charge, working and playing in William James Hall. I explained who I was, and the cordial and interested tone I was longing to hear thankfully returned to his voice. He asked me to come in on Friday afternoon at 1:30 to talk about the research position. I thought of little else as the week progressed.

I was prompt, and explained my presence to Joy, his secretary. She, in turn, seemed unsettled: Her boss was not there. He had rushed away to his home over the lunch hour and had not returned. Time passed slowly, and after half an hour she called Ken's home. She handed me the receiver after explaining my visit, and he told me there was an emergency but he would soon return. After a tortured hour and a half we had our appointment. We entered his spacious second floor office, impressive with its Oriental carpet of blue, a sofa, wooden university chairs, bookcases, and a lovely old liquor cabinet (a gift from Henry Murray), from which he offered me a sherry late in the afternoon. After long discussion he asked me if I knew French, and gave me some Merleau Ponty to translate. I don't think he was very impressed with my basic French ability. In fact, I doubt there was much to be impressed about, now that I was sitting opposite him in his academic setting. I don't know why he hired me. Perhaps he felt sorry for all the delays, or perhaps it was the enthusiasm I exuded - a blend of eagerness for the job or him. In any case, my life took on a new dimension -- every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Saturday Night Shuffle - A Second Sounding:

If one comes to a costume party "dressed" as the Id what is there to do but indulge the senses? And was I

not eminently deserving of such indulgences? To steep themselves against the untrammelled exuberancies of four young boys, my parents - a mathematician and a cultured New Englander - had enforced an array of demanding rules of household decorum. I later added to these suppressions by developing a deep idealism, expressed - to my parents dismay - in a youthful commitment to the Southern Baptist Church. Perhaps the culminating expression of self-bondage was a premature marriage to Eleanor - a very fine woman, but whose very virtues placed tight restrictions around all forms of deviance. Only the spontaneous energies of our children - Laura and Stan - provided a sanctioned form of impulsivity. And now the 60's were upon us, and I was beginning to respond to its rhythms.

And in that crowded, smoky basement of a Greek hairdresser - with the crisp and elemental sounds of the bazuki boiling the blood, what greater sensual pleasure than to observe this high cheek-boned olive skinned, broad-smiled lass?. And what greater pleasure to find that she indeed found me curious?. The evening was on! But what I was scarcely prepared for was the slow turn from glib phrases, elusive glances, cascading laughter, to matters of substance. Stanley Schachter had recently spoken at Harvard, and I was very impressed with the implications of his work for conceptions of the self. During graduate work at Duke with Ned Jones, I had become enthralled with what seemed a protean plasticity in self conception. Contrary to individual psychology, with its emphasis on mechanisms and structures, self conception seemed processual - ever-immersed in a changing sea of relationships. Schachter's work on emotion seemed to confirm this. And this lovely creature before me actually seemed enthralled by it all. It was late when I emerged from this ego excursion. God, did I also offer her a job...this person with the simple name of

Mary? Am I out of my mind? Eleanor arrived to remind me it was time to go home.

Life moves fast for a young man on his first job - eager to explore all his potentials, open all the doors, savor all the possibilities of this cultural capital. I was riding high - with enthusiastic classes, National Science Foundation money, a position as head tutor, a seat on the august Committee on Educational and Policy, and a place at the cutting edge of a new and bold adventure in a self-consciously experimental social psychology. There was also the prevailing ethos of sensual liberty: the psychedelic, flower power, rock n' roll evolution of cosmic energy - up up and away, dancin' in the streets, doin' it in the road - all this against the backdrop of a marriage straining itself to the bending point and two small children touching me to the core. So how can I be blamed that I was an hour late with for an appointment with a name that scarcely stood out from the over crowded calendar on my desk. There were fires aplenty to put out before I could attend to the new spark.

...“Martin Luther King Shot by Sniper”...“France Nearly Paralyzed By Protesters”...“Bobby Kennedy Shot in LA”... “Soviet Tanks Invade Defiant Prague”...“Israel smashes Arabs in Six Day War”...“Police Battle Mobs as Democrats Meet”...

“Vietnam Reds Launch Tet Offensive”... “Joan Baez arrested in anti-war protest”...“Make Love Not War: 10,000 hippies rally in New York Be-In”...*Soul on Ice*...

Exodus: A Road to Rome

It is late summer, 1968. Leaving New York on an Italian ocean liner with Ken and my two preschool children, Lisa and Michael, was a dramatic and wonderful turning

point in my life. Until that moment I was not sure that the fantasies and plans for a year in Rome would actually materialize. We had a joint bank account into which we had put extra monies we had made, and we had ordered tickets, but not until we actually saw the last rope cast away did I realize that we were truly committed to this fanciful plan. Had we listened to too many fairy tales in our childhood, listened to too much radio make-believe, or seen too many Hollywood spectacles? Was this life copying art, or as Woody Allen suggests, bad television? (Reflecting on our actions, I wonder now if our bold and ultimately wise decision did not give us the courage to travel a great many uphill grades.)

The ocean crossing was as exciting as any pulp romance. It was our first experience living together, although traveling on a ten day cruise scarcely qualifies as "ordinary life." Our only brush with "reality" came when Ken ran into his mother's next door neighbor, who was the first to inform his mother that he was traveling to Italy *en famille*. (She forgave us, I still think, because she also lived in novels!). The kids loved Ken, who was a doting father, and their presence helped erase the only dark cloud, which was the loss of contact with his own children.

In most respects, living together proved to be quite easy. Ken was a master of every aspect of life, I thought. He somehow managed to be aware of every contingency, able to communicate, juggle foreign currencies, find the best arrangements, the nicest views, the right train to Rome. I was his companion, his lover, his friend. Being cared for, protected, and cherished was a wonderful new role for me that took me back, in a sense, to a childhood time. The kids and I were secure in a way I had never felt before as a married woman. But there were little costs accumulating.

One day we were in Amalfi visiting the cathedral. (I was carrying the heavy blue Hatchett's guide, from which I had to read to Ken the most intimate dimensions of every edifice of Italy, while he carried the large 35mm camera and took all the pictures.) He had bought some mints, and I asked for one. He was considering a photo opportunity, and said, "Not now." The comment crystallized a sense of helplessness which had been bothering me, and I began to criticize our arrangement. The gist of my message was that I was not a child, to be told to wait patiently, and that I wanted more control over things. His position was that he had all the responsibilities and could not always satisfy my every whim instantaneously. It was not a pleasant interchange, In a state of pique, he shoved his wallet, passport, tickets, and car keys - along with the mints - into my handbag - "for me to control." To this day I carry all the official necessities, and now make almost all the travel arrangements. The colonial quality of the relationship was beginning to recede.

Yet, the suffering continued at another level. The problem - as I saw it - was that I was being sucked up by a personality greater than my own. In exchange for a totally compelling love affair, I as a distinctive individual was disappearing. I, who had taken my individuality for granted, who took a measure of pride in my competence, intelligence, independence, and good judgment, began to feel inferior and helpless. For example, sometimes in the evenings we did complicated art puzzles together. I began to notice that he could assemble the pieces faster than I could; he just seemed to know intuitively where they all went. I began to be nervous, and the more I thought about it, the less able I was to find any pieces. One morning I awoke early and tiptoed into the study where our puzzle lay, and sat for an hour working calmly and effectively. I

was up to speed. At the same time, Ken didn't seem to notice or be concerned with this deficit on my part. In fact, he was never critical of me in any way; nor did he ever seem to try to give me an impression of superiority. (It was just another superior trait he had. I was the one to complain, be irritated, angry, afraid, jealous -- emotionally inferior. Fortunately, my usual nature is upbeat, and so it was I who also saw the lighter side - laughed, teased, made jokes, seduced, and caught him off-guard with the obscure.)

In January, 1969, we gave our relationship a bit of an extra test by taking a month long research expedition around the Mediterranean. We circled the sea from Rome via Palermo on a ferry boat to Tunis, and then in our Fiat 124 through Tunisia, Algeria (where the U.S. had no diplomatic relations at the time) and Morocco, then by ferry to Spain, through France, and back home to Rome. Ken had a grant to do foreign aid research, and to pay me as his research assistant. During the year we interviewed some 40 foreign aid officials. On this trip I began to stretch my wings again in the outside world, and to feel more active and contributing to a partnership with Ken. Finding one's way through a medina to an appointment with a public official, without benefit street signs, language or maps daunted even Ken, and his dependence on me increased significantly.

And the playing field was becoming more level. On the trip a late night game of cards became our ritual. We had learned Scopa, a medieval game, in Rome from our language teacher and friend Franca Severati. The first night we played in the lobby of the St. George Hotel in Tunis. I recall the setting was worthy of a Humphrey Bogart movie, where spies lurk in every dark and mysterious corner. At first I lost the game each night. Now and again I was lucky, but Ken was the shrewder player. It was amusing

however, and kept us engaged after long and arduous days. However, as Ken became increasingly bored I was improving. By Monaco, after a short night at the casino, during which "lucky" Mary lost our limit of \$35 in half an hour, we returned to our dingy hotel. We were exhausted, tired of the hot drive, and eager to get back to Italy. As usual we finished the day with Scopa, but I was simultaneously watching Gone With the Wind on the lounge television. Ken was aware of my mixed concentration, and irritated that I wasn't paying attention to the game. Worse still, I seemed to be effortlessly winning every hand. Ken finally terminated the game in disgust. That was our last game of Scopa.

Again in Rome our lives settled into a joyous routine. The trip seemed to have lingering effects on our lives - drawing us closer than ever. I no longer feared that I was disappearing; I could sense that I made an important difference to Ken. Somehow through me, he gained in himself. and I, through him, was growing as well. The partnership was establishing roots.

Another Ro(a)ming

A moment of epiphany - early afternoon in an olive grove, flat on my back, arms akimbo, regaled with fresh bread, cheeses, and grapes, sated with Frascati white wine and a tumble in the grass, with the spirits now drawn to the heavens by the towering pines of Hadrian's Villa. The previous months at Swarthmore - where I had taken the position as Chair - were agonizing... for me, my family, and friends. The grief of separation had at last given way to a glimpse of heaven. But what was this "run to Rome" with Mary? Cinematic fantasy, a leap into the absurd, the firm footing of a new beginning? I hadn't a clue, but was hell-bent on the exploration. It was all so clear that I

had a *mate* in that Australian sense - happy to hang with me atop a flea bag hotel in Athens (where one could also behold the Acropolis in the moonlight), bare up under the thunderous tone of a Tunisian cabinet minister as he lambasted American foreign policy (and us as its carriers), sleep in the crack between the only two single beds the four of us could find on the edge of the Sahara, stay cool as the hostile border guards at a renegade outpost in Algeria questioned our legitimacy, toughed it out as our Fiat in as a small collision was settled out by a yelling Arab crowd in Marrakesh, and swear in Italian at the landlords who cheated us out of our deposit.

So what if she didn't like to read to me from the guide books as I planned my snaps, stood solid against the most astute of reasoning, preferred that we take siestas instead of using those precious hours for work? As I was slowly learning, there were severe limitations to the responsible, goal-directed, rationally well defended manner to which growing up in an Anglo-Germanic home had so well prepared me, and for which Yale had been the finishing school. Here was a creature of different stripe, dedicated to my well-being, who continuously suggested deviations from the direct, who chided and tempted and tugged so that I might cease to be a tin man. I often balked - even with scorn. But this moment in the olive grove was not one of those. I wrote a small book that year, The Concept of Self, and dedicated it to "Maria at Hadriana."

One of the most compelling features of this relationship was its potential for collective insanity. Either of us could place an absurd idea, image or fantasy in motion. And, rather than examining its impracticality, its costs, or its nonsensical nature, the other would actually treat it seriously - as an entry into a possibly reasonable universe. The whimsy might be embellished,

embroidered, or extended in myriad directions. These reactions, in turn, were often treated as reasonable and virtuous, and precipitated still further twists and turns. Neither of us seemed willing to play the voice of the parent, the teacher, the authority. And thus, new realities were minted, and because of their palpability we would often press them into action - sometimes scary, sometimes disastrously, but always with rapped vitality. And so we found ourselves taking nude photos on the Bernini bridge in front of the Castello St. Angelo, squirting water from our second story apartment to wash our grimy Fiat on the street below, climbing the barricades of an occupied university building to search for our mail, or visiting Venice only to fall in love with a Hundertwasser print for which we sacrificed the remainder of our vacation.

But there was common reality aplenty. Oppression, suffering, and revolutionary impulses were everywhere apparent - and absorbing. Somehow the laboratory exploration of abstract theoretical issues no longer seemed so relevant - academic exercises for an ideologically insensitive elite. It was thus that research interests were cast outward. Drawing from earlier interests in exchange theory, and a professional literature that treated altruism as an unquestioned good, the hope was explore the effects - both good and ill - of foreign assistance. Too often, it seemed, such assistance lead not to the forming of positive bonds, but to resentment and resistance. Interviews with aid officials - from the U.S. and a dozen other nations - along with visits to sites where food was dispensed, orphans protected, and mountains reforested were to furnish insights. Fortunately the project had appealed to the Guggenheim Foundation. However, the silence was deafening when the results were later presented at the State Department.

And in the background there was the constant sense of sadness and self-censure. My children....their laughter and tears haunted me. We were torn from each other, and was I not responsible? The dozens of letters and carefully wrapped gifts could not assuage the despair.

"Over twenty-five nations are now engaged in bilateral international assistance programs....This aid is basically aimed at increasing the power or welfare of the donor State, and as such, the donor's motives are always suspect...The bilateral aid relationship also poses the greatest potential threat to the self-esteem of the recipient. The very act of giving in this way implies the inferiority of the recipient. ...In effect, bilateral aid may never be a fully effective mode of transferring resources or knowledge from the 'haves' to the 'have nots.'" KJG & MMG, "International assistance from a psychological perspective." Yearbook of World Affairs, Vol. 25.

...."Mankind makes its greatest leap: To the Moon"..
"Thousands Overwhelm Woodstock Festival"...
"250,000 war protesters march in Capital"...
"567 Massacred at My Lai"...
Hair...Easy Rider...Midnight Cowboy...Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance...
"Steinem, Millett, Friedan, & Abzug speak at Women's Movement Conference in New York City"....
"Millions march at First Earth Day"...
"Kent State Shootings Shock Nation"...
"Jimi Hendrix & Janis Joplin - Drug fatalities"...

Homesteading in Heaven, 1969

Coming home, to a place I'd never been. I recall the first moments of crossing the Walt Whitman bridge into Philadelphia. First the smell of the oil refinery, then the sight of rusted, damaged cars piled up in a gigantic nightmare of trash, then the flames of the gas tanks, the bleak dirty landscape of South Philadelphia, the constant aroma of filth. Then we passed the airport and the swamp (which today is a national treasure, one of the last remaining inland marshes) and then Chester - a town left behind by industrial sprawl. I secretly regretted every snide comment I had ever made about growing up on the Minnesota prairie. The bleak highway finally gave way to the oasis of Swarthmore "ville". The college, itself, was small, quaint, peaceful and almost lonely with its sparse buildings settled along grassy meadows and walled in by forest land. Our destination was nearby in Rose Valley. We were too alimony-poor to rent a furnished house in Swarthmore, so our friends from the college, Molly and David Rosenhan, found us a steal: for \$238 a month we could buy one third of an 18th century inn, where a stone wall and picket fence separated us from Possum Hollow Road. It was a crumbling affair with a Byzantine interior, but we adored it from the first moment we saw it. We were married here on October 4, 1969, with our children and few friends, Greek music accompanied, and a sociology professor/Unitarian minister presiding. It was a beautiful and joyous day, as we exchanged our golden rings we had designed in Rome. The night of our wedding we slept in our two person sleeping bag, which was to be our bed for the next three months. Our living room had no furniture for a year, but these were times when cushions on the floor were frequently preferred to chairs and couches. We had already had our honeymoon.

Insert wedding photo about here

Outside our house, the world was in turmoil. It had a monstrous impact on the college: faculty and students were torn in many parts. (The President who hired Ken, Courtney Smith, died of a heart attack during a sit-in in his office.) A Quaker school in origins, the campus was at the forefront of war resistance. Yet, many faculty believed that civil disobedience and suspended classes were not the proper response to the crisis. Meetings, strikes, anti-war demonstrations and protests combined with a feeling of revolutionary high, that had strong sensual overtones. Our major involvement was to develop a nationwide network of students and faculty to carry out a survey of college students, 10,000 strong - attempting to document the negative impact of the war on the American university life. We tried to show that the protest movement was spurred on by the best and brightest of the generation, not by marginal, fringe, "hippy" types who were trying to evade their civic responsibilities. I worked in the trenches on this one, and together with Ken the findings were taken to the public. We went to Washington to see the special advisor to the colleges, issued a press release that was picked up by Time, and in the summer of 1970, while living in Minneapolis, (where I had taken my new husband home to meet my folks), we tried to write a book about it. In the end we abandoned the project. Time was rapidly passing and world concerns moving on.

"...Thus the war gives rise to a tragic crossfire. On one side the students see the university as a tool of the immoral and militant Establishment. On the other, the Establishment punishes the university for acting as an incubator for anarchists. Meanwhile the faculty is losing

its capacity to educate its students and to extend the bound of knowledge through research. University administrators are becoming powerless, and many are fleeing a sinking ship." MMG & KJG "How the War Affects the Campuses," Change Magazine, 1971.

Beginning Again

The challenges were enormous - a new marriage, a "new" but empty house, the challenge of chairing a department in transition, new classes to organize, and a politically explosive ambience. But perhaps the most difficult challenge of all was attempting to blend children from the two families. Laura and Stan lived close by with their mother, and many hours were set aside each week for "family time." But in spite of our attempts to organize games, sports, museum trips, ice cream breaks, field trips, movies, and art projects, often we dealt with situations in which rivalries surfaced, tears flowed, or sullen silences crept in. Who loved whom, how much, for how long, how was this possible, why did it seem otherwise...The relational dynamics were so intense that "quality time" left me utterly exhausted.

Campus life had taken on a surreal dimension. The student-faculty distinction was giving way - all were politically engaged, wore denim and love beads, used phrases from black culture, from Marx, and the psychedelic movement. Marijuana was as common as cigarettes, a faculty-student party welcoming a philosopher featured a rock and roll band. (Campus police who were being coopted by the FBI came by to check us out.) I developed a course in group dynamics - a free-wheeling, experiential, self-reflective

pot-boiler rendition of a course I had taught with Freid Bales at Harvard; it became so popular that Mary was hired to teach an additional section. A national guide to campuses described the course as one of the major educational events at Swarthmore. Now as I think back on some of the exercises we engaged in I shiver with amazement and some trepidation. On one moonlight evening I recall, the class met in the arms of the blooming apple tree outside the psychology building, with each of us, shrouded in pink blossoms, occupying separate limbs. Psychology became one of the most popular majors at the school.

Our work in the field, and now on the anti-war movement, on drugs, and political activism also meant further changes in my views of psychological science. The field that had once excited me because of its promise of precise, empirically grounded principles of broad generality and enormous utility for society was becoming more suspect. Psychology's claims to political neutrality seemed dangerously naive, experimental methods seemed increasingly manipulative and intrusive, laboratory findings seemed increasingly artificial and irrelevant to common life, and the theoretical claims increasingly limited to particular historical and cultural circumstances. I presented some of my views at the meetings of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology. John Lanzetta, the editor of the central periodical of the field, The Journal Personality and Social Psychology, was worried about the creeping conventionality of the field and asked if he could publish the piece. Although he had difficulties locating anyone to review the manuscript, he reluctantly published "Social psychology as history" as the last paper in a 1972 issue. I was totally unprepared for the shock waves that were to follow. Some were enthralled with the fresh air of reflective critique, but more were

outraged - their professional lives now thrown into question. There were few who weren't moved to opine on the subject. Lanzetta was also having second thoughts on the monster he had helped to create, and decided that the journal would not be a forum for any further debate - save for a single retaliation by Barry Schlenker in a lead article the following year. What came to be known as "the crisis in social psychology" was on!

Joint Actions: "Correlates of marijuana use among college students". Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 1972, 3, 1-16 (with S.J. Morse). "Individual orientations to pro-social behavior". Journal of Social Issues . 1972, 28, 105-130 (with K. Meter), "Deviance in the dark". Psychology Today, October, 1973, 7, 129-130, (with W. Barton). Reprinted in Psychologie Heute , and in Readings in social psychology: Contemporary perspectives (D.Krebs, Ed.) New York: Harper & Row, 1976.

...*"One-third of U.S. Students Tried Pot"..."5 Burglars Caught in Watergate Offices"..."Nixon Quits, First President to do so"..."Carter Elected President".." The Norman Conquests..."Saturday Night Fever..."Elvis Presley is dead"..."Last Tango in Paris..."The Structure of Scientific Revolution...*

Tales of Genji

In 1972 we left for another sabbatical, this time to Japan. We chose Kyoto in order to be more attached to the indigenous culture, and Ken established a working relationship with Professor Takao Umemoto. Ken received an NSF award to do cross-cultural work on reactions to help, and I served as a part time research assistant. En route we

stopped at the APA meetings in Hawaii - Ken's home while a naval officer. Because Ken was terrified of flying - a holdover from a navy experience in which his ship searched for the bodies of a downed plane on which he had been traveling weeks before - we waited in Hawaii for six weeks for a ship to take us to Japan. Lisa and Michael went to school each day, and during the afternoons we often went down to the beach to learn surfboarding - a tranquil interlude before the more vigorous challenge of living in Japan. The entry to Japan was the most traumatic experience. Approaching Yokohama we sailed through the eye of a typhoon, a hair-raising experience which also introduced us to cultural differences. The Japanese passengers headed for the first class lounge where they huddled together on the expanse of beige carpet; after the bar closed (due to dangerous flying glass) Westerners sought solace in their private cabins.

Upon arriving in Yokohama we made the wrong choice of trains, boarding a commuter sardine can with 9 suitcases and two small children. The Japanese were very gracious and quiet as we shoved on. But the train was so crowded that our assemblage of bodies and objects was suspended in midair, with only Ken's feet actually touching the floor for the bulk of the trip. The people were very still, although the quiet was sometimes briefly suspended when a baby would see Ken's beard, and burst into tears. Others marveled at Lisa's long blond hair. Throughout the year the family stuck rather closely together; we engaged the culture as a cooperative team. With help from various people, including our maid, Hatanaka-san, who "came with" the apartment, and a former Swarthmore student, Jean Kristeller, who worked for Ken, we began cultural entry in earnest. We began to feel we had made it when we contracted for bit parts in a Japanese gangster film. By the time we

left Japan in the summer of 1973 we felt an intense sense of separation from the joys of the culture we had only begun to perceive behind the rice paper walls. Later when we moved to a larger home, our first project was to construct a Japanese tea room, where we could "live" Japanese style from time to time, wearing Japanese robes, sleeping on tatami, drinking green tea, and even playing a koto we had brought back with us.

In the summer of 1974 Ken was invited to Ottawa for a meeting on the future of social psychology arranged by Lloyd Strickland. Faculty and graduate students from Canada, the U.S.. and Europe were invited. Among the Europeans were Henri Tajfel, Hilda Himmelweit, Erika Apfelbaum, Jos Jaspers and Ragnar Rommetveit. The meeting broke down rather quickly with Ken rapidly propelled into a position of leadership among the "radicals" - which also included most of the graduate students. I was somewhat embarrassed by the turn of events because it seemed to me that Ken was becoming aligned with the marginal people, and in conflict with the others who were more senior. At the same time, he seemed very self-righteous about his deviance. I recall distancing myself from him in certain situations, trying to keep some sense of connection to everyone. I sensed the danger to Ken's reputation in the field, and tried to prevent him from going over the edge. It has taken me years to become a relaxed deviant.

Over time, I also began to feel that I couldn't keep pace with the action in my role as "wife-research assistant". I had access to the top of the social psychology pyramid as Ken's wife, but I could feel the sense of being second-class. The worst times were during psychological conventions, and once I went on a crying binge in the car somewhere in Canada before an APA because I didn't have a Ph.D., and I feared that no one would talk

to me. Ken was very comforting, but it was also clear that there were increasing numbers of women with Ph.D's, and a limited future for the old model of dedicated wife, who makes her husband's career success her only measure of achievement. I did fear that by entering graduate school I would upset the delicate balance of intimacy that we had come to share. Perhaps if I were not available I would lose something more precious than a silly epigram behind my name. In August, on a beach in Sardinia, I decided the die must be cast. I sent letters to two doctoral programs in Philadelphia: Penn and Temple. As fate would have it, my letter to Temple arrived the day a new doctoral student withdrew from the program. As the faculty there knew me in my quasi-professional role at Swarthmore, they agreed to accept me provisionally. By the following year I began to teach courses as a part-time instructor. I had found a new niche.

As for the feared alienation, this was not the major outcome. I did grow more independent and less available, and we could not spend as much time together. At the same time I began to be a "source" for our intellectual life. Instead of the perpetual "assistant," I became a walking compendium of the latest issues in the field. We spent dinners speaking of Pepper's metaphors, Nelson's models, and Wittgenstein's metamorphosis. Joseph Margolis' ideas on the philosophy of the behavioral sciences, and the growing impact of feminism on psychology also inspired my enthusiasms. A happy relationship developed between my graduate work and my home seminars with Ken and the many friends and colleagues who visited. At the same time, these clandestine discussions were at great variance with most of the mainstream positivism featured in my courses. Trouble loomed in contemplating a thesis. The topic of attributions was definitely mainstream in those days, but researchers

(including, not irrelevantly, E.E. Jones, Ken's mentor) tended to treat attributions as true or false. We developed the idea that people's attributions were stock from the cultural trade, and were neither true nor false. I worked out a means of applying this view to lifespan development, and particularly to the aging population. It seemed to me that people got taken in by their attributional styles, and that their wellbeing (and perhaps their longevity) depended on the explanatory dispositions they adopted. With Ken's strong hand behind me, I pushed through a thesis that combined the theoretical position with some fancy statistical footwork that supported my case. In 1980 - with the additional support of Ken's mother (who had sacrificed her career to the achievements of her husband and four sons), and a close friend (who rewarded me with his doctor's greens as a graduation gift), I received my Ph.D.

Tales of Genghi

Swarthmore had a generous leave policy: three years teaching and the fourth free with half salary. These occasions were excitations to our collective madness. Where in the world would we wish to be; how are we to make a living there; how can this be integrated into the remainder of our lives? The first choice in this case was Kyoto, Japan - in a tiny apartment with a two-matted bedroom overlooking a rice field. Even if sometimes arduous, it was a superb choice in terms of growth - both personal and collective. We spent innumerable hours immersing ourselves in "otherness" - the dislocating patterns of eating, talking, working, and socializing, and an equal number in making it all intelligible. After all, how was it sensible that I was required to make an official apology - with appropriate bows - to the rector of the university for

leaving a library book in a taxi-cab, that a sweet potato could cost \$3.50, or that we would be swarmed by hundreds of Japanese autograph seekers as made our way to a temple garden.

We learned to appreciate the glorious and often strange cultural treasures of Japan - the wild northland of Hokaido, sunny resorts of the inland sea, somber west of Hiroshima, neighborhood temples, sushi bars, Kabuki, Sumo, Ikebana, the ceremonies of Nara and Isea, prints of the Ukeyoye, shrines and ryokan "inns", practices of Zen Buddhism, Shinto, the language and the literature. Within this novel frame, we began to form a bounded unit. We were at once experiencing things alone as a couple, cut away from our friends, families, and supporting institutions. And the challenges were also generating an internal dialogue - an extension and elaboration of our "ontological space". As a result, we generated strategies that sometimes required the interdependence of trapeze performers. The singular unit of "us" was becoming effective in itself. This same sense of being parts of a single mechanism also carried over into Mary's later graduate school days. As we brought the fruits of differing associations into our common conversations, the resulting concoctions were mutually fortifying. A true catalytic motion was begun. And if the context failed to provide excuses for such mutuality, we would often seek out possibilities. For example, I had long been a tennis player and Mary had not. Over time she acquired real strength as a player, and we now take our racquets with us on most of our travels. Similarly, I picked up cooking skills from Mary, and began to enjoy preparing dishes for us and for company.

The major challenge to this interknitting was generated by our embeddedness in networks of other relationships. To create an autonomous unit of two is no

more possible than the quest for truly individual action. We exist in a sea of relationships - family, colleagues, friends - without which our existence as a couple would be impossible. But if one of us were to sign a book contract with a publisher, initiate a project with a colleague, spend special time with one of the children, or feel the energies of an outside attraction, there was a potential cost to the relationship. As we found, there are no overarching rules for dealing with such challenges; each day is a new day. However, we also learned ways of reducing jealousies and friction, and sometimes for turning tensions into treasures. Occasionally we could turn the outside relationship into a joint venture - for example, writing a text jointly instead of privately, finding a way of expanding the project to include the other, or bringing a special friend into our relationship. We developed ways of sharing an experience by taking an empathic perspective - the other is oneself - that is, feels the drama, sees the significance, hopes for a good outcome - in effect, creating the other as a joint party to the effect. At other times, the partner became an "object", and in a different sense the outside connections might make a strong contribution to our well-being. For the other to make a sacrifice for a good cause, succeed at an important task, be sought after, or present an interesting line of thought, for example, could generate positive feelings - feelings of admiration, gratitude, or attraction.

These same issues haunted the work in which I was engaged. By training I was an empiricist psychologist; I had developed a substantial reputation in this field, was committed to many friends, students and colleagues in this domain, and could see how, for certain purposes, its assumptions were reasonable. However, as I had questioned the tradition, had been roundly scolded for my queries, and

for purposes of defense had dug more deeply into emerging developments in philosophy, sociology, history, and anthropology, it became clear that my earlier misgivings were profoundly understated. How, then, were these various investments to be reconciled? Were joint ventures possible; on what grounds; could there be some form of mutual enrichment; by what standards? And what if there were no rapprochement possible? What course would professional life then take on? And what would the future be for new PhDs, like Mary, who were no longer willing to jump through the old positivist hoops? Intellectually these were exciting times, but we moved toward an uncertain future.

Joint Actions: "The women's liberation movement: Attitudes and action". Journal of Personality, 1974, 42, 601-617, (with J. Goldschmidt, and K. Quigley). "Perceiving others" In K. Gergen, D. Rosenhan, R. Nisbett, and G. Clapp (Eds.) Social Psychology, CRM Books, 1974 (with L. Bogyo). "What other nations hear when the eagle screams," Psychology Today, June, 1974. "Attribution in Kontext sozialer Erklarung." In D. Gorlitz, W.U. Meyer, and B. Weiner (Eds.) Bielefelder Symposium uber Attribution. Klett-Cotta, 1978.

...."Khomeini in Iran, Greeted by Millions" "3-Mile Island Atomic Leak"... "1980: "Reagan is 40th President"... "John Lennon Shot by Fanatic"... "Egyptian Soldiers Murder Sadat".....*Mille Neuf Cent...Philosophical Investigations...Against Method...*

Tales of Two Cities

Mary: Living in Paris in 1976-77 was the realization of youthful dreams for us - dreams born, we feared, of too

much Hollywood. We occupied a small apartment between the fashionable Place de Vosges and the rugged Bastille. With a sense of unfolding adventure, we adjusted to the noise, the cramped quarters and the difficulties of communicating with our local shopkeepers. We created little games out of life's privations, for example, trying to distract the other so that he/she would be the one to step into the liberal dollops of dog shit that lined our narrow sidewalk; lying that we had bought the day's meat in the horse market, not the beef market; pretending to understand more French at the Alliance Francaise than the other. Ken had won a Fulbright research fellowship, and spent his days shuffling between the Laboratoire de Psychologie Sociale at the Sorbonne and our apartment. The "shuffles" were as much fun as the intellectual exploration - long walks through historic quarters with interludes at well situated cafes. Because the Fulbright is more generous in honor than money, we also found ourselves woefully short of funds. I thus arranged to teach English 4 days a week to foreign students, many who had come that year from war torn Lebanon, in exchange for Lisa's tuition at the American School. Our apartment was above a bakery and Michael - now struggling through a French bilingual school in Sevres, an hour's metro ride away- became an expert at sniffing the moment the fresh baguettes and pain chocolat were placed in the bakery case.

Ken: Yes, these were very special times, and we could go on musing for pages about moments both glorious (at concerts, gardens, galleries, and restaurants) and inglorious (such as trying to turn the Isle St. Louis into an outdoor track, late night trash picking, and Lisa's shadowy attacker). But I think we should say something about the central place that the process of dialogue came to occupy that year. So

much of our life in Paris seemed to revolve around verbal interchange - animated conversation with colleagues and friends - in cafes, restaurants, on long walks. We were especially struck with the discussions of conceptual substance - not simply professional politics, methods, or polite exchanges of information that seemed so common in American professional life. Nor was so much emphasis placed on "being published," again a seeming American fetish that placed a premium on social isolation. Most important here was *carrying the argument forward* - whatever the topic - passionately, vigorously, and with whatever rhetorical tools could be brought to bear. What we took away from this - in addition to the challenging ideas of Erika Apfelbaum, Ian Lubeck, Serge Moscovici, Vreni Aebischer, Peter Burch, Denise Jodolet, Robert Pages, and many others - was the significance of dialogic process. It was not in the individual, sequestered mind that creative conceptual work took place but within a relational form.

Mary: Yes, these discussions were supercharged. At the same time, I think they gave us a greater consciousness of ourselves as a couple - "the Americans" - which I should add, was not always a pleasant realization. The French view of Americans and of our political involvements in other countries, especially their accusations of the clandestine CIA activities in countries such as Chile, had a reverberating impact on our sensibilities. Erika's accusations and assaults against the U.S. in general, and me, in particular, often had to be smoothed out by Ian. These were painful moments, and I don't think either of us could ever experience our culture again as confidently as before. At the same time, they reinforced some of the ideas we were developing about our relationship, and within it, our relationship to others. For we could now see that on

the intellectual level, our discussions with each other were interdependent with our conversations with others. It seemed all the more useful, then, to look at our relationship - in all its dimensions - as interdependent with our connections outside.

During the spring Ken was invited by Wolfgang Stroebe to teach courses in Marburg, Germany - a blessing, not only financially, but in terms of Marburg's distinct beauty, and the gracious charms of Maggie and Wolfgang. From the U.S. Marburg had looked quite convenient to Paris, and only when Ken began the overnight 9 hour commute did its isolation become painfully apparent. In Marburg our "European tutorial" on relational process was extended through our relations with Maggie and Wolfgang. During one of our weekend walks in the countryside together we passed through an old graveyard. As we read from the stones we began to locate a pattern in the death dates for husbands and wives: if one died, it seemed, the likelihood of the other's death was greatly enhanced. Over an evening dinner we became increasingly excited by the implications of this pattern. The next morning, in a driving downpour, we examined and recorded dates from the stones. This work became the basis for establishing "the loss effect," and a collaboration continuing until the present.

Ken: It was also that semester that I gave a colloquium at Heidelberg. The house was packed, and I was all the more thrilled when two young assistants, Horst Gundlach and Alexandre Metraux, decided - as a result of the talk - to visit me in Marburg. We stayed up almost the entire night, wrapped in discussion over paradigm shifts in psychology. Two years later, when Mary was "on the road" consulting with AT&T, I went to Oxford to prepare an address on the state of social psychology to be delivered at the

centennial meetings of the APA. After the address Carl Graumann from Heidelberg invited us to spend a year in residence there. We were thrilled by the opportunity.

Mary : Our year in Heidelberg began in the fall of 1980, with Ken giving a seminar at the Alpach conference in Austria. It was there I began to appreciate the powerful implications of the constructionist ideas we had been working on, but simultaneously, the depth of the resistance which they evoked. In Heidelberg we settled into the university guesthouse overlooking the Neckar, and shared a spacious office at the history rich *Institut* on the Hauptstrasse. We felt very much part of the department; we had daily coffee and kucken at the cafes near the institute, enjoyed intense discussions with colleagues and helped entertain the enormous flux of colleagues and friends visiting the department - especially at the Wolfsbrunnen, a 17th century inn tucked away in the Heidelberg hills. The attractions of intense and liberated life styles drew us into dangerous games of exploration. Yet, the risks seemed only to sharpen our appreciations for each other, and our awareness of what we shared.

Ken: It was there along the Neckar that two significant pieces of work were beginning to take shape. I was finally completing the project begun in Paris three years earlier, namely an attempt to specify more clearly the problems of an empiricist psychology, and to struggle toward an alternative conceptualization - now emerging more clearly as social constructionism. The result was the volume Toward Transformation in Social Knowledge, published in 1982 by Springer-Verlag. The second was a joint project - to bring into focus the possibility of a specifically historical form of social psychology. As we later wrote in the preface

of our volume Historical social psychology (Erlbaum, 1984),
“‘Social psychology as history’ provoked broad
controversy in the field....As this dialogue
ensued, however, it also became apparent that
there was developing in various
research domains an increased sensitivity to
cross-time transformations in social pattern.
Theory and research were beginning to move
beyond the static vision to explore new horizons of
change. It was an awareness of this emerging
pattern that struck the two of us during the
winter of 1981 as we drove through a perilous
route in the Austrian Alps. Issues of permanence and
change were much on our minds. As we began to discuss
various names and works that focused on the
problem of change, it became apparent that
there was indeed a corpus of significant work at
hand”

This investment also sparked our interest in narrative
theory, an intellectual investment that later carried Mary
into her first tenure track position - at Penn State
University’s campus in Delaware County.

Joint Actions: “The psychological evaluation of
international aid.” in R. Eells (Ed.) Perspectives on
International aid. Columbia University Press, 1979.
“Behavior exchange in cross-cultural perspective. In H.
Triandis and R.W. Brislin (Eds.) Handbook of cross-cultural
psychology. Allyn Bacon, 1980 (with S.J. Morse). “Der
Kummer Effect: Psychologische Aspekte der Sterblichkeit von
Verwitweten,” Psychologische Beitrage, 1980 (with W.
Stroebe and M. Stroebe). “Causal attribution in the
context of social explanation. In M. Baltes and D. Gorlitz
(Eds.) Perspectives on attribution research and theory.

Ballinger, 1980. Social Psychology, Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich. 1981. Second edition, Springer-Verlag, 1986, Translated into Italian as Psicologia Sociale, and into French as Psychologie Sociale (Second edition, 1992, with S. Jutras). "The effects of bereavement on mortality: A social psychological analysis. In R. Eiser (Ed.) Social psychology and behavioral medicine. Wiley, 1982 (with W. Stroebe, and M. Stroebe). "Form and function in the explanation of human conduct. In P. Secord (Ed.) Explaining social behavior. Sage, 1982). "Narratives on the self. In K. Scheibe and T. Sarbin (Eds.) Studies in social identity. Praeger, 1983. "The social construction of helping relationships. In J. Fisher and A. Nadler, and B. DePaulo (Eds.) New directions in helping. V. 1, Academic Press, 12983. "Interpretive dimensions of international aid". In J. Fisher, A. Nadler & B. DePaulo (Eds.) Applied research in help-seeking and reactions to aid, Academic Press, 1984.

... "Gorbachev Chosen to Lead"... "World Rock Festival Held for Famine Relief"... "Rock Hudson Dies of Aids"... "Challenger explodes as horrified nation watches"... "Chernobyl accident releases deadly atom radiation"... *The Unbearable Lightness of Being... After Virtue... Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature...*

Dog Days

We had moved to a new house, a sprawling, three story stone structure nestled in the woods near the campus. While it had "wonderful potential", it exacted an enormous price in time and resources to peel back the layers of decrepitude and to locate the once elegant landscaping under choking vines. Soon after acquiring the house, we also acquired a foster daughter, Erika, whose parents had been tragically taken from her. We now had from zero to five

children between us - depending on the vantage point.

As the house was finished, and the children began to leave home, we seemed to be gaining on our challenges. In 1984 Mary began her tenure track job at a local campus of Penn State, an ideal job for combining her various interests. Difficulties began, however, when after a wonderful ski holiday in Wengen, Switzerland, Ken remained to give lectures at the Graduate School of Business in St. Gallen. Perhaps we should have seen the handwriting on the wall. It was the coldest winter in both Switzerland and Philadelphia in 100 years. Life was miserable apart. Ken was put up with an 85 year old landlady, Frau Fherlien, who proved to be the single oasis of warmth and comfort. In April, Mary, who had taken on the challenge of developing funds and speakers for a large conference at Penn State, produced the faculty colloquium on feminist thought and the structure of knowledge. It was a gratifying event, gathering together a wide variety of speakers, who lead off the conference with personal expressions of their development as feminists. At the conclusion of the conference, however, she felt drained, empty, and depressed, and she cried over nothing but the relief of nine months of stress. At home, Ken and John Shotter lifted her spirits with champagne.

Thirteen months later, the shattering news is made known: Mary is suffering from cancer, and requires immediate surgery. Moments from the "cancer ward": The terror is shared. It is happening to us. Who is suffering more? It is not clear. Do we have a chance; do we have a future? Again the grim ambiguity. We are together in hospital rooms; we join in a fog of anesthetic; we sit together watching Wimbledon on the hospital bed; we eat wonderful pates and white wine smuggled in to celebrate a completed operation. Our friends, especially Bobbie and

Gudumun Iversen, Maggie Skitarelic, and the Stroebe's are enormously supportive; many others join in to prevent the bastard from grinding us down. The operations are effective,- and six weeks later Ken arranges a week's trip to London. But the possibility of microscopic cells lingering is present, and she cannot evade chemotherapy. On the Wednesdays of her sessions, he arrives at the door of the purgatory room with a rose. On each session a new rose, and counting. Her hairless, scar torn body is now battered with the curing poisons. It tears at his insides to hear the wretching. At midnight, it ends, and she curls around him, making a connection so that her head and arm enclose him, and her leg touches his, making a circuit of healing energy that floods her body. On Fridays she returns to a day of teaching. The following summer - with a clean bill of health - we celebrate - with a summer of revenge in Europe.

Professional life also continued - but the terrain became ever more treacherous. Intellectual adventures were easier in the smaller enclaves of discontent; here one experienced keen appreciation for the various lurchings toward social constructionism, feminist standpoints, historical understanding, and reflexive critique. However, as this work began to surface - as its implications drew notice in the more established wings of the professions - the savagery began. Especially Ken was pilloried - In the Handbook of Social Psychology his mentor, E.E. Jones likened him to a dog barking in the night; as Ken addressed an Oxford conference, his undergraduate professor at Yale, Bob Abelson, took out his newspaper and began spitefully to read; at an Alpach seminar, Karl Popper publicly addressed him as "the enemy"; and at conference in Gerona, Spain, John Searle spontaneously leaped to the stage after Ken's address and loudly lashed out for a quarter of an hour. But

then again, perhaps the donkey kicks hardest when the thorns are most piercing. Fortunately, we were also blessed by the close and supportive friendship of colleagues: John Shotter, Jill Morawski, Anne Marie and John Rijsman, and many others.

...“In the case of the romantic saga, the participants are created as byproducts of an extended context of events. They are creating memorable high-points, troughs, and dramas of change. As a result they are positioned to establish a new and more palpable definition of relatedness. This definition, which can be termed *deep communion*, will be of a specific kind: at its core it will define relatedness as a movement through highs and lows....It will be the result of goods and bads, thicks and thins, sickness and health, wins, and loses. However, this emerging definition of deep communion should engender a greater sense of reality than that resulting from the initial unification myth. (pp. 284, 285). KJG and MKG, “Narratives of relationship,” In R. Burnett, P. McGhee & D. Clarke (Eds.). Accounting for relationships.

Joint Actions: “The discourse of control and the maintenance of well-being”. In M. Baltes & P. Baltes (Eds.) Aging and control, Erlbaum, 1986. “Narrative form and the construction of psychological science. In T.R. Sarbin (Ed.) Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct. Praeger, 1986. “The self in temporal perspective. In R. Abeles (Ed.)

Recently Found Objects

- Mary's edited volume: Feminist Thought and the Structure of Knowledge (New York University Press, 1988). From the

preface: "I have imagined the impact on various institutions, especially academic ones, if the voices of feminism might be raised in unison....The chapters seem effervescent with enthusiasm for new ways of doing scholarly work, ways that rely less on power, domination, and right, and more on open dialogue, imbued with expressions of values and feelings, and with self-reflexivity. ...I wish to thank Kenneth Gergen for his involvement and support. His intellectual perspective has been a vital force in the development of our feminist views."

- An honorary degree from the University of Tilburg, The Netherlands, awarded to Ken. The laudatio praises Mary's contribution to his efforts.

- Erika's wedding in Santa Barbara to Joe Littera, a joyous step for our Antioch graduate.

- Air tickets for a round-the world trip - to press postmodernism and feminist theory at the International Congress in Australia, and then to work and play for a year at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study. This year is very important to Mary's sense of professional identity. She entered the institute full of trepidation over her ability to fit in, and left with confidence in her capacities and potentials. Ken spent much time in Heidelberg, as he had been awarded the prestigious Humboldt award. Although the only social scientist among 49 natural scientists, he was asked to give one of the plenary lectures at the ceremonial gathering of the prize-winners. We each drink deeply to the development of the other.

- A 50th birthday celebration for Mary at the Wolfsbrunnen in Heidelberg. Thirty guests from Europe attend. Ken reads a lengthy poem that brings tears to Mary's eyes. We dance until we are asked to leave at 3 a.m.

- A postmodern feminist performance at the Aarhus

conference presented by Mary in boa and beads. From "Mod Masculinity to Post-mod Macho: A Feminist Re-play": "My text is thus a lament couched in ironic teasing and an angry chastisement.... against all those who assume ontological freedom, transitivity, solipsistic solitude; who proclaim the immediacy and oneness of separation and dissolution, and who revel in the phallic superfluidity that denies connection, relationships, and the possibility of love."

- A marriage - Stan Gergen to Stephanie Goddard - and our 20th wedding anniversary.

- A \$10,000 plumbing bill for a new system of water pipes in our old house.

- A positive tenure decision for Mary, in spite of her free-wheeling record of "weird" publications, and a scarcity of empirical research. She is then elected to the University Senate and forms a women's caucus. One of her favorite publications: "Life stories: Pieces of a dream." In G. Rosenwald & R. Ochberg (Eds.). Telling Lives, New Haven: Yale University Press. 1992.

Insert of recent photo.

- The Saturated Self, Ken's first attempt to write for a general audience, is published by Basic Books. A front page glowing review in The Washington Post, but condemned in The New York Times. The book sells out in six months, and goes into paperback.

- A wanna-be Black Lab named Jacques, a new entry in our relationship network - helping to anchor us in rising storm of technology.

- A room with a view at the Rockefeller Study Center in Bellagio, Italy, for a month's repose in splendor and tranquility - highlights include an evening dialogue with

Sissela Bok and John Searle for the assembled crew.

- A joint-colloquium at Rutgers University - on the topic of psychological discourse - complete with interactive vignettes and audience participation. We are engaged in creating a new relational form of presentation.

- And another handful of collaborations: "Narrative and the self as relationship". In L. Berkowitz (Ed.) Advances in experimental social psychology Vol 21 . New York: Academic Press. "Toward reflexive methodologies". In F. Steier (Ed.) Method and reflexivity: Knowing as systemic social construction . London:Sage. 1991. "Broken hearts or broken bonds: Love and death in historical perspective". American Psychologist (In press,1992).(with M. Stroebe & W. Stroebe)

"The word: Revenge and revitalization". Proceedings of the Oldenberg Lecture Series. Tilburg, The Netherlands: Tilburg University Press. (In press, 1992). "Narratives of the gendered body in the popular autobiography". The Narrative Study of Lives. (In press, 1992). "Autobiography and the shaping of gendered lives". In Coupland, J. & Nussbaum, E. (Eds.) Discourse and Development Across the Lifespan". Newbury Park: Sage, (in press, 1992).

"Attributions, accounts, and close relationships". In J. Harvey, T. Orbuch, & A. Weber(eds.) Attributions, accounts, and close relationships.

"...the constructionist investigator faces the challenge of envisioning and making intelligible new forms of accounting, alternative means of relating....The investigator takes an active part in the construction of cultural life."

An almost perfect day: September 20, 1991

A diary entry written at its close

The weather is "San Francisco" -- sunny, cool and promising optimistic events. It is a godsend Saturday - no compelling deadlines, guests, appointments, dire needs or evening plans. We are at leisure. But this does not mean sleeping in. Ken never learned the pleasures. He is thus up at a reasonable 8:15, and makes his way with our companion, Jacques, to the kitchen. Later they return to the bed to rouse Mary with tray and newspapers. Because of Ken's Friday trip to the farmer's market, we are treated to fresh orange juice, green zucchini bread and a rosy pear. Ken adjourns to his study after breakfast to work on a book manuscript due in Chicago in several weeks. After a more thorough look at the papers, Mary clears the dishes and makes a soup. As she finally reaches her study, she is distracted by the sounds of Nana Mouskuri -- romantic, Greek/French music coming from Ken's study. The music is turned up for his morning shave. Mary can't resist the scene, and joins him for a hug and a snoutful of morning air flowing through his open window.

Dressing, we prepare to go out to buy pine trees at Frank's Nursery's half price sale. At the corner we spot some antiques sitting on a lawn, and after looking them over, negotiate for an 80 year old rocking chair - just the right addition for our late night drink in in Ken's study. Onward through the countryside to Frank's. The evergreens are to cover the area returned to us from the state, as the mudfields outside our grounds slowly take shape as an interstate highway. We brace against the new rape by technology.

It's growing late, and we return home for a quickly made picnic. We locate a spot in the dappled shade,

orienting ourselves towards the outlandish marigolds and impatiens, which never learned about fall's arrival. We joke about our menu of memories: an Appenzeller cheese - recalling Ken's stay in St. Gallen, a Cheddar-Stilton mix, introduced to us by Maggie Stroebe, and some Black forest ham, which Ken "smuggles" in on every trip home from Germany. Suddenly lawn mowers in the distance break our tranquility. But there is joy in our hearts to know that we are relieved of that unceasing burden. We joke that we may be cut to bits in minutes, as the outrageous lad with earphones whirls through our turf at 20 miles per hour.

After lunch, we make a date for later afternoon, and return to the Macintoshes and the Metropolitan Opera - a dynamic duo. Two hours pass and we slip away from our cerebral companions for an assignation. Jacques waits patiently, then he leaps onto the bed to share whatever tenderness he can. He can spot an orgasm at ten feet.

But the day still retains its beauty, so we locate another excuse to be outdoor - this time it's tennis. At the high school courts we drill, play tricks on each other, and indulge in point-free games - enjoying the movement without stress. (A totally different tennis from our miserable mixed doubles on Sundays.) Then Mary goes to purchase groceries for the family dinner of the next day, and Ken takes Jacques for a bike ride. We have decided to go to the college for a concert, and we are running late. Quickly we shower, cook, dress and feed Jacques and Lynx, our old tomcat. Finding ourselves left with only 8 minutes to eat, we tell ourselves, "Calm down, for eight minutes we can be completely relaxed." The bean soup is tasty with weisswursts and a half bottle of left-over red wine. But Ken complains that his stomach has been rebelling at the eating practices of the past three nights: We must stop this rushing at meals.

With the complaint duly acknowledged we race out the door to the Swarthmore campus five minutes away. Our destination is the Lang Performance Hall where excerpts from a new opera about the life of Malcolm X are being presented - a contribution to the multi-cultural emphasis that Al Bloom has brought with him to the college presidency. Embarrassingly informal in our dress, we exchange greetings with Al and Peggi and others collected there in their formal dress. The performance is very special - a postmodern pastiche of themes and rhythms from myriad cultural climes. It is too special to stay until the end. Afterwards we return to our studies for a short time while the jacuzzi heats up. The night air is crisply cool and adorned by a full moon. We cannot be indifferent - either to this or the fortunes of the day we have experienced. We remain with the sadness of the January death of Mary's sister, the last remaining member of her nuclear family to succumb to cancer. At least one important legacy is a vastly enriched appreciation of our remaining moments in nature.

It is time for bed, but like the irresponsible children we have always been, we dawdle. Let's stop in to graze late Saturday night television. Some of it is disappointing - teaming commercials, grade C movies, Saturday Night Live with Eddie Murphy standing around in an open black leather jacket, trading tired jokes with a hapless foil. But we are rescued by a wonderful Swedish company performing a barefoot modern dance; women in nightshirts react to the lovers who invade their dreams... mostly by ignoring them despite their romantic and sexual charms. After this we are content to wrap ourselves up in our little French bed with purple flowered sheets, with Jacques lying on his blanket - pretending to guard the house as we drift into slumber.

Me: It's really difficult to imagine who would appreciate reading all this stuff - especially this last

bit. That is surely the most superficial account in the whole chapter - a description of no substance at all.

You: But when you raise this question you seem to presume a stern and critical reader (perhaps a father?). Why do you think your reader isn't interested in who we are -

in those trivial details that make us persons instead of personae. And what is this about superficiality? Doesn't this presume that something profound lies behind, inside, somewhere out of sight - and that properly

formed words will reveal what is truly there? What kind of presumption is that for a constructionist?

Me: Now you are forcing me into a binary; if I use the word

"superficial," you want to charge me with the presumption that I am committed to some form of

oppositional term like "depth." As a feminist I can scarcely accept this move. Let's look at it in a poststructural way. I figure many of the readers will be viewing these texts with their scholarly hats on. This being so, they will only find the piece filling if it puts challenging concepts or arguments on the plate.

Mere chit-chat about life's ups and downs will just be a crashing bore.

You: I can appreciate what you are saying in a relational

sense. There isn't just one story, a fundamental reality that we could capture with a careful account. We could tell a lot of different stories, true enough, and in the present telling it would be collectively solipsistic to disregard the dispositions of those to whom we are relating - namely the reader (or is it our fantasy of a reader, or a fantasy of ourselves reading our own lives?). In any case, we don't want to put people to sleep, or god forbid, cause them to dislike us. But don't you think there is intellectual content in all this - not so fully in the content as in the form?

Me: Well, you know I have to agree. We had already talked about this privately. So I guess this question is a hortatory maneuver to get me to talk publicly about the significance of the form. So, stand by for my little lecture on the four underlying principles of form...

You: That little sarcasm isn't like you, it's more like me. So who are you trying to be in that display? You or me, or someone else? But I agree, some of it is pretty obvious, like moving from strong "I" positions at the beginning to a blending of identities as the tales unfold. And there is a slightly subtler narrative embedded here on the undoing of the empiricist commitment, the slow replacement with constructionism, and

the place of a dramaturgic constructionism in the
very formation of our relationship- a kind of "living
constructionism" that proceeded the
professional
articulation some twenty
years later. But I don't think
everyone would be so alert to see the themes that were
worked out in the KJG extravaganza, The
Saturated Self, for
example.

Me: I guess you are right here. That book tried to show
how concepts of the person have
changed from the romantic to the modernist era, and how
they are now being eclipsed by
the shift to postmodernism. Our treatment here
reflects a similar shift - from a romantic conception
of our relationship (two souls discovering each other),
to a modernist view (the well
formed machine), to a
postmodernist view in which we both disappear into an
ever shifting relational matrix - where the difference
between the actual and the
virtual is erased, and the very
idea of a narrative trajectory - a life story - is
subverted.

You: Whoa...hold on there. I'm still very much here.

Me: But then again, just who are you?

You: You nut, I'm just *me*.

Me. But wait, that's who *I* am...I think we've got a
problem. Maybe we should go somewhere to talk this
over in

private. But then again, if all we can do in our tete
a tete is exchange language from
the public coffers, how

could we ever be "private"?

EXEUNT

With An Additional Cast of Supportive Characters

Raymond Bauer...Judy and Larry Anastasi...Kurt Back...Claus
Bahnson...Ted Baker...Ellen Barry and Mike Florio...Michael
Basseches...Uschi and Peter Becker...Didi Beebe...Jeffrey
Bell... Ellen Berscheid...Jerry Bruner...Kate and Tom
Cottle...Pru Churchill and Larry Plummer...Win
Churchill...Tom Cottle...Esther & Robert Cohen ...Deborah
Curtiss...John Darley...Jane and David Denman...Patty and
Bob Dreher...Helen Drutt...Lothar Duda... Shel & Eve
Feldman ...Anne & David Gergen... John & Jackie Gergen...
Steve & Lorraine Gergen...Carol and Jim Gilligan...Gabi and
Rudi Gloger-Tippelt...Jeffrey Goldstein...Harry
Goolishian...Chad Gordon...Don and Donna Gorton... Ginnie
Greer...Judy Greisman...Janie and Al Grove...Justine
Gudenas... Linda Harris...T. George Harris... Elmer
Johnson... Sara Kiesler...Gunter Kroger... Hannah and Arie
Kruglanski... Lenelis Kruse...Lance Liebman...Cindy
Lisle...Sally and Steve Lisle...Sam & Lilian Maitin ...
David Marlowe...Gunter & Brigitta Mayer..."Riki" Mayer
..Sheila McNamee & Jack Lannamann ...Harvey S. Shipley
Miller...Jill Morawski...Stan Morse...Nancy
Nichols...Wojcieck Sadurski, Gigi Santow & Michael
Bracher,,,Walter Paynter...Jamie Pennebaker... Jerry
Platt...Adele Saul... Arthur & Mary Schneider... Anne
Shephardson...Paul Stanley... Sally and Norman
Smith...Sandy Strine...Sybe Terwee & Joan Meyer...Judith

Tipton...Robert Vartdal... Regine and Emile Walter-
Busch...Dagmar Westrick...Ladd Wheeler... Diana Whitney...
Rhoda and Peter Woytuk...Katherine Young...Bob Z...Jan &
Mei Lan Zielonka.

And Assorted Producers

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