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The Study of Loneliness

Loneliness is a condition that is widely distributed and severely distressing. Yet only a handful of psychiatrists, psychologists, and sociologists have studied the ordinary loneliness of ordinary people. Sullivan, the great American psychiatrist, is among the very few who have done so and among the very few in any of the social sciences who have attempted a description of the symptomatology of loneliness. His description is brief and sketchy, but nevertheless notably perceptive. In particular he commented on the “driving force” of loneliness—a force great enough, he pointed out, to cause people who were normally painfully shy to aggressively seek social activity. He concluded that “The fact that loneliness will lead to integrations in the face of severe anxiety automatically means that loneliness in itself is more terrible than anxiety.”¹ Others who have observed the pressures under which the lonely seem to act by and large have agreed with Sullivan’s appraisal.²

Why, then, has there been so little research on loneliness? Loneliness is much more often commented on by songwriters than by social scientists. One psychiatrist has suggested that we neglect loneliness because we have no theory with which to begin to cope with its manifestations.³ There may be some

merit in this position; scientific attention may be directed in part by the emphases of theory and the established preoccupations of the field. But Frieda Fromm-Reichmann noted that at least one reason that we have no very good theory about loneliness is that we have studied it so little. She suggested that the absence of attention to loneliness was to be explained not by the challenge loneliness presented to understanding but rather by the threat it presented to well-being. She said that loneliness is "such a painful, frightening experience that people will do practically everything to avoid it."⁴

Fromm-Reichmann's explanation is appealing but seems not to go far enough. There has for some time now been active research interest in the sometimes excruciatingly painful phenomena of grief and the intensely anxiety-provoking phenomena of dying,⁵ and loneliness would not seem to be more frightening than these conditions. There would seem to be some additional quality in loneliness that leads to its neglect.

Many of us severely underestimate our own past experience with loneliness and as a result underestimate the role it has played in the lives of others. The observation that times of loneliness are later difficult to recall has been made by both Sullivan and Fromm-Reichmann. Sullivan believed that loneliness was an experience so different from the ordinary that its intensity could later not be entirely credited. He said it was "an experience which has been so terrible that it practically baffles clear recall."⁶ Fromm-Reichmann believed that there was active rejection of the memory of loneliness, and not simply passive inability to recall. She believed that many of those who had once been lonely were aware that memory of that state would be threatening to their current well-being.

She said, "It is so frightening and uncanny in character that they [those who have once suffered loneliness] try to dissociate the memory of what it was like and even the fear of it." ⁷

I have occasionally asked individuals who were not at the moment lonely to recall for me times when they had been. If I knew that a year or so earlier they had moved into a new community where they had had no friends, or that until the last few months they had been without an intimate, I pressed them to remember how they had felt during these periods of relational insufficiency. More than once I have been told something like, "Yes, I suppose I was lonely. But I wasn't *myself* then." I think this is a most suggestive response. It implies that an individual when lonely maintains an organization of emotions, self-definitions, and definitions of his or her relations to others, which is quite different from the one he maintains when not lonely. Asked at a time when he is not lonely to remember back to when he was lonely, he may protest that the person he is at the moment has never been lonely and that in the lonely past "I wasn't myself." The self associated with the absence of loneliness is a different one from the self associated with loneliness: it is more engaged by a range of interests, more confident, more secure, more self-satisfied. To someone in this state the earlier lonely self—tense, restless, unable to concentrate, *driven*—must seem an aberration.

As an implication of the foregoing we might expect that those who are not at the moment lonely will have little empathy for those who are, even if in the recent past they had been lonely themselves. If they had earlier been lonely, they now have no access to the self that experienced the loneliness;

furthermore, they very likely prefer that things remain that way. In consequence they are likely to respond to those who are currently lonely with absence of understanding and perhaps irritation.

Professionals in research and treatment, if they have dealt with their own past experiences of loneliness in this way, might also prefer not to disturb their current emotional arrangements. To maintain their current feelings of well-being, they too might be impatient with the problem of loneliness. They might be willing to consider loneliness in an exotic form—the loneliness of the mentally ill or of the Arctic explorer or the alienation of marginal man. But they would be made uncomfortable by the loneliness that is potential in the everyday life of everyone.

The frequency and intensity of loneliness are not only underestimated but the lonely themselves tend to be disparaged. It seems easy to blame their loneliness on their frailties and to accept this fault-finding as explanation. Our image of the lonely often casts them as justifiably rejected: as people who are unattractive, shy, intentionally reclusive, undignified in their complaints, self-absorbed, self-pitying. We may go further and suppose that chronic loneliness must to some extent be chosen. Surely, we might argue, it is easy enough to be acceptable to others. All that is necessary is to be pleasant, outgoing, interested in the others rather than in oneself. Why can't the lonely change? They must find a perverse gratification in loneliness; perhaps loneliness, despite its pain, permits them to continue a self-protective isolation or provides them with an emotional handicap that forces handouts of pity from those with whom they interact. Thoughts like these may jus-

tify professional as well as lay impatience with the lonely.⁸

There may be some small merit in this characterological theory of loneliness, as we shall later note. But there is also implicit in it a rationalization for rejection of the lonely and of the problem of loneliness. Each is pictured as easy to understand: the lonely are people who move against others or away from others and of course they then feel bad because they are alone. Along these lines, advice for the lonely would seem obvious: be pleasant, outgoing, interested in others; meet people; become part of things. If the lonely cannot behave in these ways, then they ought to enter psychotherapy, change, learn to be more outgoing.

Yet for those who suffer from loneliness, advice of this sort often seems oddly beside the point. There may seem to them to be something in loneliness that is "uncanny," to use Fromm-Reichmann's word. It is peculiarly insistent; no matter how much those who are lonely would like to shake it off, no matter how much they may berate themselves for permitting it to overcome them, they find themselves possessed by it. No matter how devotedly they may count their other blessings, no matter how determined they may be to put their minds to other things, the loneliness remains, an almost eerie affliction of their spirits.

Loneliness is not simply a desire for company, any company; rather it yields only to very specific forms of relationship. Loneliness is often uninterrupted by social activity; the social activity may feel "out there," in no way engaging the individual's emotions. It can even make matters worse. However the responsiveness of loneliness to just the right sort of relationship with others is absolutely remarkable. Given the

establishment of these relationships, loneliness will vanish abruptly and without trace, as though it never had existed. There is no gradual recovery, no getting over it bit by bit. When it ends, it ends suddenly; one was lonely, one is not any more.

LONELINESS AND OTHER CONDITIONS

What do we mean by loneliness? The word has been used to describe a number of different conditions, even as other words, including *depression* and *grief*, have been used to describe conditions that would seem to have some affinity with loneliness.

Sometimes the term *loneliness* has been used to describe a not at all disagreeable condition in which a sense of one's separateness from others offers "a way back to oneself."⁹ This sort of loneliness refers to a time in which one is not only alone but also able to use one's aloneness to recognize with awesome clarity both one's ineradicable separateness from all else and one's fundamental connectedness. It is a time of almost excruciating awareness in which one sees clearly the fundamental facts of one's small but unique place in the ultimate scheme, after which one can recognize one's true self and begin to be that true self.

I do not doubt that this experience occurs: that there are times when being alone gives rise to this awesome awareness of oneself and one's world. Some individuals may be able to transmute the intense discomfort of ordinary loneliness into this exalted state. But the state, even if it begins in ordinary loneliness, is different from the experience described to my colleagues and me in our studies of loneliness in ordinary life.

The loneliness we have been told of is gnawing rather than ennobling, a chronic distress without redeeming features.

Another condition that may be described as loneliness is unwanted individuation: being separated off from parents and others to fend for oneself, not just in the sense of becoming responsible for oneself but also in the sense of being and developing as a separate self.¹⁰ Again, although this condition may be related to what most of us experience as loneliness, it does not appear to be quite the same thing. Nor is the existentialist notion of the ultimate loneliness of each of us in deciding and evaluating our course in life the same thing.

The condition discussed in this book is the one Sullivan described as "the exceedingly unpleasant and driving experience connected with inadequate discharge of the need for human intimacy."¹¹ This common, if perplexing, condition is the only one we have had reported to us in our studies of loneliness in ordinary life, excerpts from which are presented later in this book. The other forms of loneliness I have just noted would appear from our studies to be fairly rare states. They are not the loneliness experienced by those who are bereaved or divorced or uprooted.

Ordinary loneliness is uniformly distressing. It may be useful to distinguish it from other forms of distress. To begin with, it is different from what is usually described as depression. In loneliness there is a drive to rid oneself of one's distress by integrating a new relationship or regaining a lost one; in depression there is instead a surrender to it. The lonely are driven to find others, and if they find the right others, they change and are no longer lonely. The depressed are often unwilling to impose their unhappiness on others; in any event

their feelings cannot be reached by relationships, old or new.¹²

Loneliness is also distinct from grief. The term *grief* may be used in a number of ways but perhaps is best used to describe the syndrome of shock, protest, anger, and painful, searing sadness, which is produced by traumatic loss.¹³ Loneliness often is a component of this syndrome; however it is a reaction to the *absence* of the cherished figure rather than to the experience of its loss. We would expect every other aspect of grief to subside as time goes on: shock might be expected to disappear, protest to be muted, anger and sadness to diminish. But loneliness, so long as no new relationship is formed to replace what has been lost, might be expected to continue.

ORDINARY LONELINESS

Research on the nature of ordinary loneliness is as yet fragmentary. Surveys have generated useful statistics regarding the proportions of individuals in various demographic categories who declare themselves to be lonely, but to my knowledge none has investigated the reasons for loneliness, the conditions under which loneliness occurs, or the subjective experience of loneliness. We do have, however, case studies of individuals living in conditions likely to give rise to loneliness. These describe individuals who have been widowed, who have separated from or divorced a spouse, who have entered into a new community, or who have suffered the loss of intimates which is one of the afflictions of advanced age. On the basis of these studies we can develop some initial understandings of loneliness.

The dictionary definition of loneliness is not very useful. This is how Webster's defines the term: ". . . A state of de-

jection or grief caused by the condition of being alone . . .”¹⁴ To be sure, no one who is lonely would consider himself happy, and to this extent Webster’s is correct in associating loneliness with dejection and grief. But the definition is misleading in asserting that loneliness *is* dejection or grief; loneliness is quite different from these conditions, as has been noted earlier. More important, the definition is misleading in asserting that loneliness is “caused by the condition of being alone.” On this point the case study materials we have collected are unambiguous. Loneliness is caused not by being alone but by being without some definite needed relationship or set of relationships.

Only those who are not lonely suppose that loneliness can be cured merely by ending aloneness. Not only is random sociability no antidote to loneliness, but under some circumstances it can exacerbate it; someone who is not married and in consequence feels outside the society of settled family life may find that being with married couples only intensifies his or her feelings of marginality, of having no valid place. A widower, some of whose experiences are described in a later chapter, said about an evening with married friends, “It’s like being a fifth wheel.”

Loneliness appears always to be a response to the absence of some particular type of relationship or, more accurately, a response to the absence of some particular relational provision. In many instances it is a response to the absence of the provisions of a close, indeed intimate, attachment. It may also be a response to the absence of the provisions of meaningful friendships, collegial relationships, or other linkages to a coherent community. These seem to be the most common forms

of loneliness, but there may be others as well; conceivably, some parents whose children have left home may feel the absence of the distinctive provisions of the relationship one maintains with those one has nurtured. And at Christmas time, especially, many of those who are unable to join with kin feel distressed by the separation, for Christmas is a time of reaffirmation by kin of their fundamental commitment to one another.¹⁵

All these instances of conditions giving rise to loneliness support the presumption that loneliness is a response to relational deficit. Although each syndrome of response to specific relational deficit appears to be unique in some respects, each appears to include certain common symptoms, just as any infection may have both unique symptoms by which it can be distinguished from other infections and also shared symptoms such as fever. All loneliness syndromes would seem to give rise to yearning for the relationship—an intimacy, a friendship, a relationship with kin—that would provide whatever is at the moment insufficient. All may be able to produce the driving restlessness of which Sullivan spoke. And all may induce impatience or irritability with relationships that seem to impede access to the desired relationship. Insofar as those symptoms seem to be part of any experience of loneliness one may speak of “loneliness” as a single condition.

Different forms of loneliness are, however, responsive to different remedies. We have repeatedly found in our studies that a form of loneliness that appears in the absence of a close emotional attachment, which we characterize as “the loneliness of emotional isolation,” can only be remedied by the in-

tegration of another emotional attachment or the reintegration of the one that had been lost.¹⁶ Evidence that the loneliness of emotional isolation cannot be dissolved by entrance into other sorts of relationships, perhaps especially new friendships, is repeatedly rediscovered by new members of the Parents Without Partners organization. New members often are attracted to that organization because they are lonely and hope membership will allay the loneliness. Within the organization they may form new friendships or take on new responsibilities, but unless they also form a single intense relationship, one which in some ways makes the same provisions as the marriage they no longer have, they remain lonely.

Conversely, we have found that the form of loneliness associated with the absence of an engaging social network—the “loneliness of social isolation”—can be remedied only by access to such a network. This was demonstrated for us in a pilot study of couples who had moved to the Boston region from at least two states away.¹⁷ The wives in these couples tended for a time to have “newcomer blues”; they felt out of place and unwanted in their new community and were deeply homesick for their former one. Their husbands, no matter how close the marriage, were of little help. The husbands did not share their wives’ distress since they had entered a ready-made community at their workplace. Furthermore, the husbands’ attention and energies were absorbed by their efforts to become established in their new jobs. But even when the husbands did seem able in a limited way to understand and to sympathize, the wives continued to be lonely for friends and acquaintances who would share their interests as their husbands did not. They wanted access to a network of women

with whom they might establish and then discuss issues of common concern: shopping, home management, the developing lives of their children and, of course, one another. Though the newcomer wife might be content in her marriage, social isolation nevertheless made her painfully lonely, and her loneliness ended only when she found an accepting—and acceptable—community.

The complex of symptoms of the loneliness of emotional isolation are in the main different from those of the loneliness of social isolation, although there is in each the same driving restlessness and the same yearning for the missing relational provisions. The complex of symptoms associated with the loneliness of emotional isolation is strongly reminiscent of the distress of the small child who fears that he has been abandoned by his parents. On the other hand, the symptoms associated with the loneliness of social isolation are like the boredom, feelings of exclusion, and feelings of marginality of the small child whose friends are all away. We might reasonably suspect that the loneliness states of adults are developments of the earlier childhood states. They may have been modified by the new strengths and understandings of maturation, but still they seem like the childhood syndromes in fundamental ways.

Many of the symptoms of the loneliness of emotional isolation seem to stem from a re-experiencing of the anxiety produced by childhood abandonment. This is a central theme, and gives rise to a sense of pervasive apprehensiveness—one of our respondents called it “a nameless fear”¹⁸—that may prevent concentration on reading or television and almost

force the individual into some sort of motor activity as a channel for his or her jumpiness.

Associated with apprehensiveness is sometimes vigilance to threat, a readiness to hear sounds in the night, which keeps one tense, unable to relax enough to sleep. Often though, vigilance seems less to be directed to threat than to possible remedy; the individual is forever appraising others for their potential as providers of the needed relationship, and forever appraising situations in terms of their potential for making the needed relationships available. The lonely individual's perceptual and motivational energies are likely to become organized in the service of finding remedies for his or her loneliness.

Finally, those experiencing the loneliness of emotional isolation are apt to experience a sense of utter aloneness, whether or not the companionship of others is in fact accessible to them. This sense of utter aloneness may be phrased in terms of the absence of anyone else in the environment, in which case the individual may describe the immediately available world as desolate, barren, or devoid of others; or the sense of utter aloneness may be phrased in terms of an empty inner world, in which case the individual may say that he or she feels empty, dead, or hollow.

Occasionally, the hyperalertness of the individual suffering from the loneliness of emotional isolation produces an oversensitivity to minimal cues and a tendency to misinterpret or to exaggerate the hostile or affectionate intent of others. This oversensitivity can make the individual seem to be awkward or foolish.

The dominant symptoms of the loneliness of social isolation are different from these. Feelings of boredom or aimlessness, together with feelings of marginality, seem to be central themes, rather than anxiety and emptiness. Boredom seems to come about as the tasks that make up one's daily routines, because they are inaccessible to the affirmation of others, lose their meaning and begin to be simply busy work. The day's duties then are a burdensome ritual which one can hardly persuade oneself to observe. Again there is restlessness and difficulty in concentration, preventing the individual from becoming engaged in a distraction such as a book or television. And again the individual may feel impelled to leave the home, to move among people, at least to come into the vicinity of sociable warmth. Yet here the individual seems driven not to find that one other person with whom he or she may feel at ease but rather to find the kinds of activities he or she can participate in, the network or group that will accept him or her as a member.

We know less about other loneliness syndromes than we do about the two just described. From the intensity of the desire for an adoptive child displayed by some childless couples (the wife, especially¹⁹), we might suspect that childlessness too is experienced by some as an uncomfortable driving force, with its own object and very likely its own symptomatology. As we have noted, there undoubtedly are other, although less frequently experienced, types of loneliness as well.

THE PREVALENCE OF LONELINESS

By the "prevalence" of a condition we mean the proportion of the population who experience the condition during a par-

ticular period.²⁰ One problem in estimating the prevalence of loneliness is that loneliness is not a condition like a broken leg, which one has or one doesn't have, but is nearer to fatigue, a condition that can vary from the barely perceptible to the overwhelming. How much loneliness must one feel for it to be counted?

Survey studies leave it to respondents to answer this question. At least two survey studies have been conducted to determine the prevalence of ordinary loneliness, each of which asked respondents whether during a particular time period they had felt "very lonely or remote from other people." Presumably including the phrase "remote from other people" amplified what had been intended by the word "lonely" but did not add to it some foreign syndrome. In any event it was in each case the responsibility of respondents to decide whether they had experienced loneliness or remoteness and, if so, whether the experience had been sufficiently severe to justify the adverb *very*. We might suspect that the more introspective, the more sensitive, and the more candid respondents may have over-reported in comparison with others. We might also suspect that those who considered that a certain amount of loneliness might be normal for their situation—the unmarried or the aged for example—might have under-reported. Nevertheless, these are the only statistics we have, and despite their limitations we must make the best of them.

In the first survey the full question was, "During the past few weeks, did you ever feel very lonely or remote from other people?" Twenty-six percent of a national sample responded that they had. The loneliness clearly had mattered to them: those reporting themselves to have been "very lonely or re-

more from other people" were likely also to have reported themselves to have been "depressed or very unhappy."²¹

In another survey, one in which a national sample was interviewed by telephone, respondents were asked whether *during the past week* they had ever felt very lonely or remote from other people. Because the time frame was narrower than that in the first survey, and perhaps because telephone interviewing leads to more limited rapport than face-to-face methods, the percentage of respondents answering that they had been very lonely or remote from others dropped to 11 percent²²—still an appreciable proportion of the population.

In this study women were more likely to report loneliness than men: 14 percent compared with 9 percent. Whether this was because women actually suffered greater loneliness or because it is easier for women to admit to loneliness cannot be known.

Marital status was of even greater importance than sex. Of those who were not married, 27 percent of the women and 23 percent of men reported severe loneliness in the preceding week, whereas among the married the percentages were 10 percent for women and 6 percent for men. Severe loneliness appears to be unusual among married men, somewhat more prevalent among married women, and quite prevalent among the unmarried of both sexes.

One might expect loneliness to be especially prevalent among the widowed and divorced. Over half of the small number (16) of widowed men in the telephone survey reported severe loneliness in the preceding week. The proportion for widowed women was much smaller, though still very high: 29 percent. In another study, however, Lopata found

48 percent of a sample of widows reporting loneliness to be the leading problem in their lives and another 22 percent reporting that loneliness was an issue for them.²³ There were too few cases of presently divorced individuals in the telephone survey to provide reliable figures. But on the basis of a rather impressionistic study of those who had just separated from a spouse, Hunt writes: "Of all the negative feelings of the newly separated, none is more common or more important than loneliness. Only a minority fail to suffer from it, and even those who most keenly desired the end of the marriage often find the initial loneliness excruciating."²⁴

It is significant that among the unmarried the percentage of women who were severely lonely is not appreciably greater than the percentage of men. Women on their own sometimes suppose that loneliness is a woman's affliction. They envy what they perceive as the ability of men to get out of the house to theaters or bars or sporting events without having first to arrange for an escort or at least a protective friend. They sometimes wish it was socially permissible for them as well as for men to take the initiative in exploring new ties. But women may exaggerate the worth of the right to make the first move: courtship is a two-person game and the primary problem of courtship, which men share with women, is that of finding a partner with whom to play. Women also tend to overlook the lesser accessibility of same-sex friendships to men past early adulthood: it seems far easier for women in our society to establish close friendships with other women than for men to establish such friendships with other men. It also seems easier for women than for men to keep in touch by telephone or lunches or evening get-togethers with an extended

network of not-quite-so-close friends. Kin ties, too, are more often retained in good repair by women than by men.

The telephone survey study also showed that those who were poor were especially likely to be lonely.²⁵ Why this might be the case can only be surmised, but perhaps with low income there is a tendency to social withdrawal. In addition there may be different social patterns at different income levels, and the patterns maintained by the poor may be more vulnerable to failure. Furthermore, aging may be productive of both poverty and loneliness and so responsible for some of the apparent connection between the last two. In partial corroboration of this surmise, some correlation does exist between loneliness and age and we know from other data that a correlation exists between age and poverty. Ill health may also produce both poverty and loneliness. A fairly strong correlation exists between loneliness and ill health and again we know from other data that ill health and poverty are associated.²⁶

The telephone interview study found that if respondents were divided into three age groups, with ages thirty-five and fifty-five being the points of division, little difference in reported loneliness occurred among men in the various age groups, but some difference did occur among women.²⁷ Those women over age fifty-five were somewhat more likely than other women to report loneliness: more than 16 percent among the older women compared with less than 13 percent among the younger. This slight bulge in the category of older women may result not only from widowhood but also from children having left home, an event that may perhaps produce a form of loneliness distinct from those discussed here.

We might suspect that had the telephone survey interviewed an appreciable number of individuals of more than seventy years, much more loneliness would have been found. It seems probable that both men and women who are very old are especially vulnerable to the loss of critically important social ties and, therefore, to loneliness. However we cannot as yet demonstrate this with survey data.²⁸

NOTES

1. Harry Stack Sullivan, *The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1953), p. 262.
2. Sullivan saw loneliness as uniformly painful. Not all later writers agree. Among those who do are: Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, "Loneliness," *Psychiatry* 22, no. 1 (January 1959): 1; Henry D. Witzleben, "On loneliness," *Psychiatry* 21 (1968): 37-43; Klaus W. Berblinger, "A psychiatrist looks at loneliness," *Psychosomatics* 9, no. 2 (1968): 96-102. Among those who find redeeming features in loneliness, while, also recognizing that it carries potential for pain, are Clark E. Moustakas, *Loneliness* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1961) and *Loneliness and Love* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972).
3. P. Herbert Leiderman, "Loneliness: a psychodynamic interpretation," in *Aspects of Depression*, edited by Edwin S. Shneidman and Magno J. Ortega (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1969), p. 155.
4. Fromm-Reichmann, "Loneliness," p. 1.
5. For studies of both grief and dying, see the collection of papers, *Death and Identity* edited by Robert Fulton (New York: John Wiley, 1965). See also in regard to grief, Colin M. Parkes, *Bereavement* (New York: International Universities Press, 1972). And in regard to dying, see Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *Awareness of Dying* (Chicago: Aldine, 1965).
6. Sullivan, *The Interpersonal Theory*, p. 261.
7. Fromm-Reichmann, "Loneliness," p. 6.

8. Even those who recognize the potential intensity of the distress of loneliness may be condescending to "ordinary loneliness." See for example, Witzleben, "On loneliness."
9. Moustakas, *Loneliness and Love*, p. 22.
10. See Arthur Burton, "On the nature of loneliness," *American Journal of Psychoanalysis* 21 (1961): 34-39.
11. Sullivan, *The Interpersonal Theory*, p. 290.
12. Magno J. Ortega, "Depression, loneliness, and unhappiness," in *Aspects of Depression* edited by Edwin S. Schneidman and Magno J. Ortega (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1969), pp. 143-153.
13. Parkes, *Bereavement*. See also James R. Averill, "Grief; its nature and significance," *Psychological Bulletin*, 70, no. 6 (1968): 721-748.
14. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam Company, 1968).
15. For a category system of relational provisions, see Robert S. Weiss, "Fund of sociability," *Transactions*, July/August, 1969. For the problems of those away from kin over the Christmas holiday, see Mark Benney, Robert S. Weiss, Rolf Meyersohn, and David Reisman, "Christmas in an apartment-hotel," *American Journal of Sociology* (November 1959): 233-240.
16. See the case studies of Mrs. Graham (section 4) and Mrs. Davis (section 6), this volume, for relevant cases and the last paper in section 6 for the experience of members of Parents Without Partners.
17. See Weiss, "Fund of sociability." Also see the case study of Mrs. Phillips (section 5), this volume.
18. See Mrs. Graham in section 4.
19. H. David Kirk, *Shared Fate: A Theory of Adoption and Mental Health* (New York: Free Press, 1964).
20. Gartly Jaco, *The Social Epidemiology of Mental Disorders* (New York: Russell Sage, 1960), p. 12. To be precise, the definition I offer is of prevalence *rate*, rather than prevalence.
21. Norman Bradburn, *The Structure of Psychological Well-Being* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), pp. 56-61. The correlation between "very lonely" and "depressed" was .71 for women and .72 for men. See page 60.

22. Based on data provided by Richard Maisel. For study design and other results see Richard Maisel, *Report of the Continuing Audit of Public Attitudes and Concerns* (Harvard Medical School: Laboratory of Community Psychiatry, 1969), mimeographed.
23. Helena Z. Lopata, "Loneliness: forms and components," reprinted in section 4 of this volume. The open style of interviewing used by the Lopata study seems more likely to elicit evidence of loneliness than the pre-categorized questionnaires used by the Bradburn or the Maisel studies. In addition, the time period under consideration in her study was not so limited. These differences in method may account for the greater apparent incidence of loneliness in the Lopata study.
24. Morton Hunt, "Alone, alone, all, all, alone," reprinted in section 4 of this volume.
25. Maisel, *Report*. Correlation of income with loneliness was .15. A correlation of .04 or greater was statistically significant at the .05 level.
26. The correlation between loneliness and health in the Maisel study was $-.13$.
27. The linear correlation between loneliness and age was small when the sexes were grouped together. There was more loneliness among the very young than among the middle-aged, undoubtedly because of the lesser frequency of marriage in the former category, and still more loneliness among the aged. The relationship of loneliness and age is in fact curvilinear.
28. Some evidence for this surmise that the very old are especially vulnerable to loneliness is offered by Peter Townsend's article, "Isolation and loneliness in the aged," in section 5 of this volume.

