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Title: The Steady Dating Relationship: A Model for the Intelligence Case Officer-Agent Dyad?

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Abstract. This article advocates that social psychological research on interpersonal relationships varying in intimacy may facilitate the prediction, evaluation, and influence of intelligence case officer-agent dyadic phenomena.

Writings on the nature of the intelligence case officer-agent dyad often emphasize issues such as trust, loyalty, motivation, and control. Certainly, there is much anecdotal data and lore about how these issues affect the initiation, maintenance, termination, and--most importantly--the value of the dyad. In fact, the dyad often is discussed as if it were more or different than merely a professional interaction or objective calculation of costs and benefits, but instead a liaison that is more significant than a tryst but less than a marriage. For example, the steady dating relationship may well be germane to the discussion and analysis of the intelligence case officer-agent dyad--as may the accompanying social psychological research on steady dating.

Through theoretical, experimental, and correlational approaches, this research has explicated phenomena such as intimacy, trust, interdependence, self-disclosure, emotional involvement, and dating relationship satisfaction. This satisfaction, in turn, is significantly associated with behavior that effectively maintains the dating relationship.

One might generalize from steady dating research to intelligence and note that motives of the participants are crucial to the nature of phenomena that might affect relationship satisfaction and maintenance. With the focus on the agent, if the main motive is intimacy itself, the very knowledge that the relationship exists can beget a greater desire to maintain it. But the main motive of the agent may be something psychosocial but quite different from intimacy. In this case, a number of recurring situational factors may be the most significant contributors to relationship maintenance. These may include (1) access to desired social events, e.g., drinking in a pub or walking in a park with the case officer; (2) opportunities to test and develop one's sense of self-identity, e.g., using the case officer as model or introject; (3) opportunities for self-exploration, e.g., through social comparison processes with the case officer; (4) private time alone with the case officer, e.g., to reinforce the "specialness" of the relationship; (5) giving and receiving social support; and (6) other opportunities for self-disclosure and seeming interdependence.

Even if intimacy is the significant motive, the agent's attachment style--secure, avoidant, anxious-ambivalent, or disorganized--may be crucial in suggesting how the case officer must manifest behavior to maintain, nurture, and, in time, terminate the relationship with the agent. Much as with the clinical analysis of a child's social development, creating variants of the so-called Strange Situation wherein the agent would be transiently left alone, engaged with a friendly stranger, and then united with the case officer would allow appraisal of the agent's attachment style. From the agent's attachment style, the case officer could hypothesize the agent's internal working model, i.e., the mental representation of the attachment relationship forming the basis of expectations in close relationships.

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As might be surmised from knowledge of psychodynamic phenomena such as countertransference, the above can be exploited by the agent against the case officer--perhaps more so when the agent is a double agent controlled by the "other side" with significant operational and analytic backup. This observation further supports the face validity of steady dating as an isomorphic parallel to the case officer-agent dyad. Both sorts of relationships comprise participant observers with continuously changing overt and covert agendas that may intersect at one moment and miss by a mile at another. That the best social deceivers and manipulators may not necessarily be the best protected from deception and manipulation only ensures that the "best and the brightest" as well as the converse may both reside within the same individual. (See Ainsworth, M.S., & Bowlby, J. (1991). An ethological approach to personality development. *American Psychologist*, 46, 333-341; Bull, G.G. (1995). The elicitation interview. In H. Bradford Westerfield (Ed.), *Inside CIA's private world* (pp. 63-69). New Haven: Yale University Press; Bretherton, I. (1990). Communication patterns, internal working models, and the intergenerational transmission of attachment relationships. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 11, 237-257; DePaulo, B.M. (1994). Spotting lies: Can humans learn to do it better? *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 3, 83-86; Main, M., & Solomon, J. (1986). Discovery of a new, insecure-disorganized/disoriented attachment pattern. In T. Brazelton, & M. Yogman (Eds.), *Affective development in infancy* (pp. 95-124). Norwood, NJ: Ablex; Marbes, W. (1995). Psychology of treason. In H. Bradford Westerfield (Ed.), *Inside CIA's private world* (pp. 70-82). New Haven: Yale University Press. (Original work published 1986); Sanderson, C.A., & Cantor, N. (1997). Creating satisfaction in steady dating relationships: The role of personal goals and situational affordances. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 1424-1433.) (Keywords: Counterintelligence, Espionage, Intelligence.)