Social Ecology of Supervised Communal Facilities for Mentally Disabled Adults: IV. Characteristics of Social Behavior

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Abstract
Behavior categories for observations of 304 mentally disabled adults were analyzed in relation to settings (sheltered workshops and residential facility), personal characteristics (age, sex, IQ, diagnosis, and desire for affiliation) and characteristics of partners. Both settings and personal characteristics predicted individual behavior rates for the 10 most frequently observed behavior categories. As many as 14 dimensions were extracted from behavior observed in more intense dyadic relationships; these dimensions were strongly related to characteristics of the individuals in the relationships. Although more intelligent individuals exhibited higher rates of verbal behavior, they were not more verbal in their intense social relationships. Furthermore, individuals at all levels of intelligence were sensitive to the intellectual characteristics of their partners. The results suggest that the social behavior of mentally disabled people is complex and sensitive to the presence and characteristics of others; peer-group composition seems to be critical to social adaptation in communal settings for this population.

Disciplines
Communication | Social and Behavioral Sciences

Comments
At the time of publication, author Daniel Romer was affiliated with the University of Illinois - Chicago Circle. Currently, he is the Research Director at the Institute for Adolescent Risk Communication at the Annenberg Public Policy Center, University of Pennsylvania.
Social Ecology of Supervised Communal Facilities for Mentally Disabled Adults: IV. Characteristics of Social Behavior

Daniel Romer and Gershon Berkson
University of Illinois–Chicago Circle

Behavior categories for observations of 384 mentally disabled adults were analyzed in relation to settings (sheltered workshops and residential facilities), personal characteristics (age, sex, IQ, diagnosis, and desire for affiliation) and characteristics of partners. Both settings and personal characteristics predicted individual behavior rates for the 10 most frequently observed behavior categories. As many as 14 dimensions were extracted from behavior observed in more intense dyadic relationships; these dimensions were strongly related to characteristics of the individuals in the relationships. Although more intelligent individuals exhibited higher rates of verbal behavior, they were not more verbal in their intense social relationships. Furthermore, individuals at all levels of intelligence were sensitive to the intellectual characteristics of their partners. The results suggest that the social behavior of mentally disabled people is complex and sensitive to the presence and characteristics of others; peer-group composition seems to be critical to social adaptation in communal settings for this population.

In previous papers in this series we have discussed various aspects of social behavior of our sample of mentally disabled adults in community facilities. In these reports, we examined the reliability of observations (Berkson & Romer, 1980), correlates of general sociability (Romer & Berkson, 1980a), and predictors of social choice (Romer & Berkson, 1980b). For most of these analyses, we abstracted social behavior into general tendencies such as intensity and extensity. In the present paper our focus is more directly upon the specific types of social behavior that we observed and the factors that predict them.

Behavior observed in this study was examined in two ways. One involved an analysis of all kinds of behavior the individuals engaged in. This approach was focused upon the individual as the unit of analysis. The second approach involved the types of behavior that occurred within social relationships. Here the unit of analysis was the dyad. Although our earlier analyses indicated that individuals differ considerably in the intensity and extensity of their social behavior, few of these differences were attributable to important personal characteristics such as age, sex, diagnosis, or intelligence. This result suggests that personal characteristics are unrelated to behavior. Since this result was not intuitively obvious, we were interested in determining the extent to which these characteristics are associated with different types of individual and dyadic behavior.

Intelligence was a dimension we especially thought would be related to behavior. Previous analyses indicated that staff members attributed greater sociability to more intelligent clients, even though no greater sociability was observed (Romer & Berkson, 1980a). One possible explanation for this finding is that more-intelligent clients behave in ways that are more consistent with what observers consider to be “normal” social behavior. Perhaps more-intelligent clients exhibit more varied or complex behavior patterns rather than stronger ones (cf. Mischel, 1977; Moos, 1968), or perhaps they engage in more conversation or other verbal behavior. “Look” like typical social behavior? Intelligent clients do not engage in typical social behavior, however, they may be more consistent with what observers consider to be “normal” social behavior. Perhaps more-intelligent clients exhibit more varied or complex behavior patterns rather than stronger ones (cf. Mischel, 1977; Moos, 1968).

This research was supported by Grant No. HD 10721 from the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. We extend thanks to Leland Wilkinson for assistance in the use of his computer program and in the analysis of the data.
IV. Characteristics of Clients

Method

Subjects

The sample was the same group of 304 adult clients studied in our earlier reports (cf. Berkson & Romer, 1980). Most of the clients (68 percent) had mental retardation as a primary diagnosis. The remaining clients were diagnosed as mentally ill (17 percent) or mentally retarded and mentally ill (15 percent). Their mean IQ (as measured with a Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test) was 58 (standard deviation \(SD = 23\)), and their mean age was 41 years \(SD = 13\). More men than women (66 and 34 percent, respectively), comprised the sample. These individuals attended one of four sheltered-workshop day programs (WA, WH, WI, and WE); 116 of them were also served in two workshops, bringing the total number of cases to 386).

Behavioral Observations

The present report is based on naturalistic observation of clients’ behavior in their typical living and work settings. Observers spent approximately one month in each setting becoming acquainted with the clients. During this period it was possible to
learn whether any of the clients felt uncomfortable with the observation procedure or did not want to be observed. A small proportion of clients (5 percent) fell into this category and were not included in the study. Formal observations began once it appeared that clients regarded the observers as regular staff members.

Observations were conducted when clients were free to socialize (during breaks and meals in the workshops and during leisure periods in the residence). A standard procedure was followed in obtaining observations. Observers randomly selected a code name from the client roster. Once this client was located, he or she was formally observed for up to 5 seconds to determine (a) major activities and (b) with whom (if anyone) these activities were carried out. A behavior checklist containing 100 distinct categories (cf. Berkson & Romer, 1980) was used to encode behavior. Once this information was recorded, the next person on the roster was located and an observation performed. The procedure continued until everyone had been observed. If time permitted, a second round of observations was conducted with a new randomly selected code name from the roster; however, no clients were observed twice within a 5-minute period. Interobserver reliabilities, which were checked at monthly intervals, ranged from 85 to 95 percent agreement for each type of recorded information.

Approximately 100 of these observations were obtained on each client, spanning a period of 3 to 5 months. In one setting (WA), approximately 50 observations were obtained in two phases. Since the setting and clients were nearly identical for both phases, only the first phase is reported in this paper.

There were 28 categories of behavior that involved direct interaction with others; all but 2 of these “interactive” categories (“observation” and “inactive communication”) were further subdivided into active and receptive categories. The active category referred to whether the subject was either actively engaged in the behavior or was directing the behavior toward another. The receptive category was used when the subject was the clear recipient of the behavior. Another 22 categories were used to encode noninteractive behavior. These categories were further subdivided to distinguish between solitary and aggregate behavior. Aggregate behavior defined noninteractive behavior that was conducted in the presence of others who engaged in the same behavior (e.g., eating in a group). Two final categories referred to cases in which the client was unavailable for observation.

Settings

The workshops were administered by a single nonprofit agency in Chicago. Although client composition differed across these settings, routines and schedules were similar. Clients spent their day engaged in supervised work and other training activities. As in most industrial settings, they had a morning and afternoon coffee break (15 minutes) and a lunch period (30 minutes). During these periods, clients congregated in the lunch rooms where vending machines and coffee were available. They also spent time in lounges or outdoors. These periods were unsupervised by staff members and provided the opportunity to observe clients' natural social behavior. Since staff members did not take part in these break activities, their interaction with clients is largely unrepresented in these observations.

The residence was an intermediate-care facility within walking or commuting distance of the various workshops. It contained four floors of dormitory-style two- and three-person rooms and had a capacity of 135 residents. Clients were observed in the dining room, various television lounges located on each floor, the recreation room, and in their own rooms and the hallways when privacy was not at issue. Although all women resided on a single floor of the home, men and women could and did move freely throughout the building. Observations were conducted in the evenings and on weekends when residents were not engaged in activities under direct staff supervision. Further details regarding the settings are presented in Berkson and Romer (1980).

Analyses

More than one behavior category could be recorded for a single observation. The total number of behavior categories recorded per subject could exceed the number of observations. In one analysis, we calculated the rate of occurrence of behavior by dividing the frequencies of behavior by the total number of observations for the subject. Each subject had a profile of behavior rates spanning the entire set of 100 behavior categories. We analyzed behavioral differences between subjects and settings, and selected the 54 most frequent of these behaviors, each with an average occurrence greater than 1 percent. These categories included such forms of overt communication (verbalization and gesture), inactive communication (sitting in silence), stereotyped activity, and affection (hug) for which we had no specific code name.

Another way of analyzing client data was to examine the behavior that occurred in each client's social relationships. In this analysis, we selected all relationships where one or more subjects were observed with an intensity of over 1 percent of clients' observations. The selected relationships resulted in 538 dyadic relationships, each with a mean intensity of 10.4 percent (SD 8.9). Only the 54 interactive behavior categories were involved in these relationships. To transform the frequencies associated with these categories by dividing the total number of times categories were recorded for the relationship, Thurstone values were calculated.

Many of the behavior categories (24) rarely occurred and were deleted from subsequent analyses. In order to reduce the profiles further, we conducted a principal components analysis of the remaining categories. This analysis, described in Results, reduced the profiles to 14 dimensions of behavior. Each set of profiles was analyzed...
analyses

More than one behavior category could be recorded for a single observation, so the total number of behavior categories recorded per subject could exceed the number of observations. In one analysis, we calculated the rate of occurrence of each behavior by dividing the frequency of the behavior by the total number of observations for the subject. Each subject then had a profile of behavior rates spanning the entire set of 100 behavior categories. To analyze behavioral differences between subjects and settings, we selected the 12 most frequent of these behavior categories (with an average occurrence greater than 1 percent). These categories included various forms of overt communication (verbalization and gesture), inactive communication (when clients seemed to be in an interacting group but were not communicating at the moment of observation), and eating, watching television, sleeping, engaging in stereotyped activity, and affection. There was also considerable “nonsocial” behavior for which we had no specific code (e.g., standing around, looking into space).

Another way of analyzing client behavior was to examine the behavior that occurred in each client’s social relationships. In this analysis, we selected all relationships that were observed with an intensity of at least 5 percent of clients’ observations. This resulted in 538 dyadic relationships with a mean intensity of 10.4 percent (SD = 7.8). Only the 54 interactive behavior categories were involved in these relationships. We transformed the frequencies associated with these categories by dividing them by the total number of times categories were recorded for the relationship. Thus, these values correspond to proportions that add up to 100 percent within any relationship. Many of the behavior categories (23) were rarely observed and were deleted from subsequent analyses. In order to reduce these profiles further, we conducted a principal components analysis of the remaining 31 categories. This analysis, described in the Results, reduced the profiles to 14 dimensions of behavior.

Each set of profiles was analyzed with a multivariate regression procedure (Wilkinson, 1980) in which each client’s observations were treated as a profile. Predictors of the profiles could include subject and partner characteristics, setting differences, and interactions between any of these variables. The personal characteristics we considered were age, sex, IQ, diagnosis, and desire for affiliation. (Although physical attractiveness was also tested, it failed to predict behavior profiles and was not discussed in this report.) The issue was to determine whether behavior profiles differed as a function of client characteristics and settings and what the behavioral differences might be. This method is a generalization of canonical correlation and results in canonical variates that optimally weight the behavior so that discrimination among the predictors is maximized. If no behavioral differences exist across the predictors, canonical correlations are weak, and little prediction is possible. This method is particularly suited to the present data because all the information in clients’ behavior profiles could be treated in the same analysis while taking account of the obvious interdependencies between behavior categories and between predictors.

results

The 12 most frequently observed behavior categories (more than 1 percent) in the five settings are shown in Table 1. Despite some variability across settings, there is considerable stability in the average profiles for facilities. Active conversation was the most frequent behavior in four of the five settings. Nonsocial aggregation consistently ranked high, as did eating in the company of others. Of course, watching television ranked low in those settings where no TV was present. Since the coefficient of concordance for the rank orders was only .43, it seemed reasonable to determine what the differences between settings were.

A profile analysis of each client’s behavior indicated significant prediction for both settings and individual characteristics. Four dimensions distinguished the settings. The
largest, which separated the residence from the other settings, relied on the greater occurrence of television viewing and solitary nonsocial activity in the home. The second dimension reflected the greater occurrence of active conversation and inactive interaction in Workshop WA. The third dimension relied upon the nonsocial activity in the home. The second and the fourth dimension correlated more highly with the affection dimension \((r = -0.18, p < 0.01)\), and two of the helping factors \((A = 0.41, 0.37)\), and \((A = 0.41, 0.37)\), and the fourth factors seemed to cluster into communication, aggression, helping, and observation themes. Individual social relationships correlated most highly with the affection dimension \((r = -0.18, p < 0.01)\), \((A = 0.41, 0.37)\), and \((A = 0.41, 0.37)\), and observation was slightly negatively correlated to intensity \((r = -0.18, p < 0.01)\).

Our first question concerning relationship factors was whether they behaved as a function of settings or personal characteristics. Table 4 shows the average factor scores for each setting. The degree of concordance for these profiles was generally zero, suggesting considerable spread across settings; however, set differences were much less evident than the major factors than in the behavior described earlier. Only three canonical correlations were significant \((.50, .41, .37)\), and the smaller than the ones that predicted behavior shown in Table 1. The largest canonical dimension used nonverbal giving (Factor A) and observation to distinguish Workshop WA from the other settings. The second dimension used the lower rates of communication (Factor A) and a proportion of affectionate play (Factor B) to separate the home from the others. Some setting differences appeared to exist, but they were small in magnitude.

The major predictors of relationship files appeared to be individual characteristics, i.e., age, intelligence, sex.
relationship. No client characteristic was related to this measure, however. The only predictor was intensity of relationship ($F = 23.21, 1/531 \text{ df}, p < .01$), suggesting that the spread of behavior categories within relationships was unsystematically related to individual characteristics.

To determine more about how relationships were structured, we performed a principal-components analysis upon the correlation matrix of the dyadic behavior categories. The 14 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were subjected to a varimax rotation and are shown in Table 3. The factors seem to cluster into communication, play, affection, aggression, helping, offering, and observation themes. Intensity of social relationships correlated most heavily with the affection dimension ($r = .57$); however, two of the helping factors were positively related to intensity ($A = .18, B = .22$), and observation was slightly negatively related to intensity ($r = -.18$).

Our first question concerning the relationship factors was whether they varied as a function of settings or personal characteristics. Table 4 shows the average factor scores for each setting. The coefficient of concordance for these profiles was virtually zero, suggesting considerable variation across settings; however, setting differences were much less evident in these factors than in the behavior discussed earlier. Only three canonical correlations were significant ($.50, .41, .37$), and they were smaller than the ones that predicted the behavior shown in Table 1. The largest canonical dimension used nonverbal helping (Factor A) and observation to distinguish Workshop WA from the other settings. The second dimension used the lower incidence of communication (Factor A) but greater proportion of affectionate play (Factor C) in the home to separate it from other settings. The third dimension relied upon differences in rough play (Factor A) and affectionate play (Factor C) to distinguish Workshop WI from the others. Some setting differences appeared to exist, but they were rather small in magnitude.

The major predictors of relationship profiles appeared to be individual characteristics, i.e., age, intelligence, sex, and desire for affiliation. Diagnosis, however, was not related to the factors. Older clients tended to engage in less affection and rough play (canonical $r = .36$), suggesting that their relationships were less physically active than younger people's relationships.

More sociable clients seemed to engage
in more conversation and affectionate play but less sign language (canonical $r = .30$). With the exception of sign language, this pattern is consistent with the meaning of the desire for affiliation dimension.

A major interest in studying dyadic behavior was to determine what individuals who differed in intelligence did with each other. To study this more carefully, we trichotomized our sample of subjects and their associates as in earlier analyses (low IQ < 51, medium IQ < 72). This breakdown corresponds approximately to what is normally referred to as moderate and severe retardation (low), mild retardation (medium), and borderline and normal intellect (high). We could then examine relationships in a $3 \times 3$ matrix corresponding to three levels of client and partner intelligence with other client characteristics held constant.

Figure 1 contains the significant behavioral differences for clients and partners. Variation in four of these dimensions was predicted by a statistical interaction between client and partner IQ. As is evident, client characteristics interacted in predicting communication (Factor A). It is interesting that less-intelligent clients were most active but only when they were with partners of similar intelligence. Medium-level clients tended to be more active with higher level partners. More-intelligent clients tended to be relatively active with all partners.

A statistical interaction was also evident for affection. Low-IQ clients tended to be more affectionate with partners of medium- and higher level intelligence. Medium-level clients did not seem to favor any IQ group and were moderately affectionate with each one.

Helping behavior (Factors A and C) not only depended upon the IQ characteristics of associates but also upon settings. Less-intelligent clients tended to help each other, and this pattern was even stronger in Workshop WA. Medium-IQ clients tended to help each other, whereas high-IQ clients did not seem to help anyone very much. In some settings, especially the home, medium-IQ clients tended to help less-intelligent clients more than they helped each other. Collapsed over settings, the pattern of receiving help (Factor C) did not seem to differ as a function of client IQ; however, in some settings less-intelligent clients received help from clients of similar intelligence, whereas in others they received help from medium-IQ partners. In the residence, medium-IQ clients received more help from their lower IQ partners.

The results for aggression given and annoyance received (Factor A) are simple to describe. Less-intelligent clients tended to annoy and aggress against their partners more than did other clients. Medium-IQ clients were least likely to engage in this interaction with each other or with lower IQ partners. A similar pattern was observed for the dimension of annoy and aggress (Factor C). Apparently, less-intelligent clients had more of these taunting agonistic relationships than did other clients.

Sex

Figure 2 contains the behavioral dimensions that discriminated the sexes. All but one of these dimensions (Helping A) involved some form of statistical interaction between the sexes. Opposite-sex relationships tended to be more aggressive. In the case of affection and aggression (Factor C), however, the interaction did not depend upon the setting. In the residence, opposite-sex groups engaged in even less activity, whereas in one setting their affection play was greater than that of the same-sex groups.

The pattern for communication (Factor A) depended upon the setting. Across settings, it appears that women were less active on this dimension; however, two workshops male partners tended to be less active while in another workshop partners were more active. All women tended to help everyone (Factor A), offering was greater for opposite-sex relationships. Helplessness relationships (Factor B)
in each setting

<table>
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Summary of results:

1. The behavior (Factors A and C) not only depended upon the IQ characteristics but also upon settings. Less-intelligent clients tended to help each other, whereas high-IQ clients tended to help anyone very much. In settings, especially the home, medium-IQ clients tended to help less-intelligent clients more than they helped each other. Collapsed over settings, the clients receiving help (Factor C) did not differ as a function of client IQ; in some settings less-intelligent clients received help from clients of similar intelligence, whereas in others they received help from medium-IQ partners. In general, medium-IQ clients received help from their lower IQ partners.

2. The results for aggression given and annoyance received (Factor A) are simple to interpret. Less-intelligent clients tended to give aggression against their partners but did not distribute it among other clients. Medium-IQ clients were least likely to engage in this behavior with each other or with partners. A similar pattern was present for the dimension of annoyance and offering (Factor C). Apparently, less-intelligent clients had more of these taunting relationships than did other groups.

3. One of these dimensions (Helping, Factor A) involved some form of statistical interaction between the sexes. Opposite-sex relationships tended to be more affectionate. In the case of affection and play (Factor C), however, the interaction depended upon the setting. In the residence, male groups engaged in even less affection, whereas in one setting their affection and play was greater than that of the other groups.

4. Figure 1: Interaction patterns for six types of dyadic behavior (factors) in terms of the IQ of the partner and the IQ of the subject of observation.

5. The pattern for communication (Factor A) depended upon the setting. Averaged over settings, it appears that women were less active on this dimension; however, in two workshops male partners tended to be less active while in another workshop male partners were more active. Although women tended to help everyone more (Factor A), offering was greater for opposite-sex relationships. Helpful-annoyance relationships (Factor B) tended to be more likely for men, but this depended upon setting. In the residence, same-sex partners were less likely to do this, but in one workshop they were more likely to do it.

6. Aggression (Factor A) appeared to be most likely for male partners, but in one setting even this pattern was not true. Furthermore, women seemed more likely to have aggressive relationships with men than with other women.

Discussion

The present analyses indicate significant prediction of individual behavior from knowledge of personal characteristics such as age, sex, intelligence, diagnosis, and desire for affiliation. These results stand in contrast to our earlier findings (Romer & Berkson, 1980a), which suggest that many of these characteristics are unrelated to so-
social behavior. In particular, both sex and intelligence, which were previously found to be independent of amount of social behavior, predicted the content of interpersonal behavior.

Our earlier analyses indicated that the present settings differed considerably in amount of social behavior (Romer & Berkson, 1980a, 1980b). The present analysis of behavior category rates showed, however, that types of behavior were quite stable across settings, with differences occurring in isolated categories. It appears, therefore, that the settings we have studied differ more in amount of social behavior than in the types of behavior that could occur. The analysis of behavior in intense dyadic relationships indicated considerable variability across settings. As a result, one might expect even greater prediction due to settings. Nevertheless, the major predictors of relationship profiles appeared to be the characteristics of partners. This result is consistent with our earlier findings that peer characteristics are an important correlate of setting differences in social behavior. When these peer characteristics are included in the prediction equation, the prediction for settings per se becomes less important.

It was noteworthy that as many as 14 patterns of interpersonal behavior were observed in social relationships. These patterns spanned a wide range of content, suggesting that there could be many types of relationships. Although social relationships were most likely to involve some conversation, affection and inaction were also common. It is interesting that only the frequency and sex strongly predicted the content of social relationships. Even though categories only accounted for an amount of 6.5 percent of behavior in relation to their presence was indicative of prediction.

That so many independent factors needed to describe the interrelationships between types of behavior is testimony to the complexity of social behavior. One might expect, for example, that a general trend would emerge, with affection and other forms of prosocial behavior describing positive and aggression and other forms of social behavior describing the other side. Since so many of these behavior categories were actually independent of each other, it appears that such general behavioral tendencies are far less evident than one might expect. Although it is tempting to attribute this lack of behavioral cohesion to a more isolated subject population, the same has also been observed in "normal" situations (Shweder, 1975). As expected, more-intelligent clients were more actively verbal; however, their intense social relationships, engaged in only slightly more active conversation than did less-intelligent clients. Low-IQ clients were most active of all, in their intense social relationships. Furthermore, there was no evidence that more-intelligent clients engaged in more behaviorally varied relationships. Spread and variety of dyadic behavior categories were unsystematically related to personal characteristics. These conclusions are limited, of course, to the behavior categories and sampling we employed. More sensitive behavioral measures may yet uncover differences related to intelligence.

One behavioral dimension that distinguished the IQ groups was annoyance and aggression. Low-IQ clients tended to engage in more of these types of behavior...
were most likely to involve some form of conversation, affection and inactive communication were also common. It was interesting that only the frequency of affection and sex strongly predicted the intensity of social relationships. Even though these categories only accounted for an average of 6.5 percent of behavior in relationships, their presence was indicative of attachment.

That so many independent factors were needed to describe the interrelations between types of behavior is testimony to the complexity of social behavior. One might expect, for example, that a general factor would emerge, with affection and other forms of prosocial behavior describing one pole and aggression and other forms of antisocial behavior describing the other pole. Since so many of these behavior categories were actually independent of each other, it appears that such general behavioral tendencies are far less evident than one might expect. Although it is tempting to attribute this lack of behavioral cohesion to the present subject population, the same pattern has also been observed in “normal” populations (Shweder, 1975).

As expected, more-intelligent clients were more actively verbal; however, in their intense social relationships, they engaged in only slightly more active conversation than did less-intelligent clients, and low-IQ clients were most active of all with fellow low-IQ clients. These findings indicate that although more-intelligent clients are generally more verbal, they are not necessarily so in their intense social relationships. Furthermore, there was no evidence that more-intelligent clients engaged in more behaviorally varied relationships. The spread and variety of dyadic behavior categories were unsystematically related to all personal characteristics. These conclusions are limited, of course, to the behavior categories and sampling we employed. More sensitive behavioral measurement may yet uncover differences related to intelligence.

One behavioral dimension that distinguished the IQ groups was annoyance and aggression. Low-IQ clients tended to engage in more of these types of behavior than other groups. One might argue that this finding reflects a lack of attachment in the relationships that low-IQ clients had. This interpretation is not necessarily correct, however, since the relationships of low-IQ clients were no less intense than those of other clients. Furthermore, their relationships may simply have more physical aggression than those of higher IQ clients, who may have used more subtle (i.e., verbal) but no less aggressive means of expression.

Although we can only conjecture, the findings regarding intelligence differences suggest that the greater sociability attributed to more-intelligent clients by staff members may result from their greater display of verbal behavior and their lower inclination to engage in aggression. Verbal communication is the typical form of interaction for normal adults, and aggression, of course, is associated with hostility. More research is clearly needed to determine the meaning of these behavioral differences in social relationships across levels of intelligence.

As noted in the introduction, medium-IQ clients seem to have the most intense relationships with clients who differ in intelligence (Romer & Berkson, 1980b). There was no simple behavioral pattern in the present results to suggest why this would happen. Medium-IQ clients tended to receive affection from less-intelligent peers but were not more actively affectionate with peers who differed in intelligence. Medium-IQ clients also had more inactive relationships with lower IQ partners and engaged in helping relationships with lower IQ clients in some settings. It is not clear, however, why their behavior patterns would be appealing to other clients who differed in intelligence. Future researchers should determine why medium-IQ clients have more intense relationships with others who differ in intelligence.

The predominant predictor of behavior in intense relationships was a statistical interaction between the characteristics of the partners in the relationships. For some kinds of behavior, however, this interaction also depended upon the setting. These findings are consistent with research on
more normal populations (Raush, 1965, 1977) and suggest that people over a wide range of intelligence are sensitive to the characteristics of others and the social setting in the social relationships they have. The results are also consistent with Landesman-Dwyer et al.'s (1979) conclusion that with the exception of profoundly retarded people, individuals at all levels of retardation modify their social behavior in the presence of others. In total, the results reinforce our earlier conclusion that peer-group composition variables are of critical importance for understanding and promoting social integration in community settings for mentally disabled persons.

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