WOMEN'S LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

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Love is the foundation on which we
build the house of our dreams.
—bell hooks, *Communion*, 2002

Love and friendship—these are two discrete, yet inextricably intertwined concepts, each relying on the other for full expression. Interestingly, feminist theorists and psychologists view these two concepts and the relationship between them differently. The scholarly approaches and answers—including the questions asked and the contexts that frame the questions—vary accordingly. It seems timely now to take stock of where our disciplinary knowledge stands compared with feminist ideals, especially given that much of the research within the psychology of women was inspired by the feminist movement. In this chapter, we briefly review historical, feminist, and psychological views of the nature of love and friendship and explore related concepts such as self-love and feminist friendship. We conclude by discussing how feminist theory might further infuse future research on love and friendship.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF LOVE, FRIENDSHIP, AND FEMINISM

The expectation that love is a part of marriage did not begin to arise until the 1800s. The freedom today for women to enter into a love-based marriage without the consent of parents is a revolutionary idea that has only been a part of modern society in Western Europe and North America during the past 200 years. Furthermore, the modern independence of middle-class women to choose whom to marry, without having to bow to social pressure or economic need, has only existed for the past 100 years (Coontz, 2005). Traditionally, from the time there were written records, a worldwide patriarchal system defined men as head of households and women as subordinates. Marriage, particularly among the propertied classes, was based on financial arrangements that would expand power and influence through the joining of families.

In contrast, love and friendship have been linked for most of recorded history, but only for men's friendships with other men. Aristotle (1962/1994) viewed the ideal friendship as being an exclusively masculine one between aristocratic men of virtue. Friendship involved the act of loving rather than the act of being loved, and was an important component of what he referred to as "the good life." Friends love each other for themselves, not accidentally or for utilitarian purposes. As "lesser beings," women's friendships were of an inferior quality (Aristotle, 1962/1994). This view prevailed for centuries. For example, in the 1800s, women who regularly sought out other women socially were considered to be "abnormal," whereas women who preferred the company of men were labeled "normal" (W. R. Taylor & Lasch, 1963).

Societal views of love and friendship began to change dramatically in the United States in the 19th century with industrialization. The migration of young men to jobs in cities made them less dependent on parents' approval, particularly with regard to whom they married. Additionally, the availability of industrial, service, and clerical jobs for single

women enabled White women to work outside the home, and yet still be considered respectable, thus creating a new generation of single young people socializing on more equal terms (Coontz, 2005). As the influence of the extended family declined, the nuclear family gained primacy.

Marriage, particularly among the White middle class, began to be seen as a private agreement between a man and woman with an emphasis on companionship and love (Cherlin, 2004; Coontz, 2005). Subsequently, a doctrine of separate spheres for women and men began to arise, defining men as the breadwinners and women as the homemakers. Women were expected to be sexually pure and were to be protected from the male social spheres of economics and politics (Coontz, 2005). Married women became singularly responsible for childcare and the household. Combined with inequities in pay as well as labor laws that were passed under the guise of protecting women, it was difficult for most White women to continue to work after marriage (Goldin, 1991).

For Black women and men during the American slave era (1619–1865), love also was separated from marriage, but for a different reason. White slave owners denied Black women and men the right to marry (Omolade, 1994). The tradition of the single Black mother, which originally arose in response to slave owners' separation of families, continued in the postslavery era, when many Black women defied gender restrictions by living alone (Omolade, 1994). The discourse among Black women abolitionists and suffragists of the 1800s did not focus specifically on love or marriage. The ideology of separate spheres did not apply to Black women who were forced to perform physical and sexual labor, as Sojourner Truth (1851) famously argued in her "Ain't I a Woman?" speech, advocating for human rights for all women and all Black people.

Love and the First Wave of Feminism (1800–1950s)

One of the earliest feminist critiques of women's love and friendship was Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, published in 1792. Thereafter, four major themes emerged concerning the nature of love, the value of friendship,

the importance of self-love, and the potential of sisterhood as a catalyst for social change. According to feminists of the first wave era (1800–1950s), authentic, freely chosen love is not possible between women and men within patriarchy. Equality is necessary for love to flourish; it must be given freely and must be reciprocated as ardently. Therefore, within the gender inequalities enforced within patriarchy, love and marriage are regarded as being antithetical to each other.

First wave feminists regarded romantic love to be an ideology that worked to subordinate women. Wollstonecraft (1792/2013) expressed contempt for the way women are taught to exist solely for love. In 1857, Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote to Susan B. Anthony,

> It is in vain to look for the elevation of woman so long as she is degraded in marriage . . . the laws and religion of our country . . . make woman the mere tool of man. He has made the laws. . . . A man in marrying gives up no right; but a woman, every right, even the most sacred of all—the right to her own person . . . our present false marriage relation . . . in most cases is nothing more nor less than legalized prostitution. (C. Jones, 1997, pp. 87–88)

Emma Goldman (1914, as cited in Schneir, 1994) concurred that love and marriage were antagonistic to each other because marriage subordinates women (see Volume 1, Chapter 1, this handbook).

The feminist ideal was for women to attain love's liberating potential, while rejecting its oppressive and patriarchal effects. Wollstonecraft declared love to be "the most evanescent of all passions" (Schneir, 1792/1994, p. 10), Likewise, Emma Goldman (1914, as cited in Schneir, 1994) described love as "the strongest and deepest element in all life; the harbinger of hope, of joy, of ecstasy . . . the defier of all laws, of all conventions . . . [and] the freest, the most powerful moulder of human destiny" (p. 323). Feminists also embraced self-love as being important to the ability to fully love another. Women must be aroused to have a sense of personal dignity and independence (Cady Stanton, 1857, as cited in

C. Jones, 1997). Friendships often provided a sense of dignity to women in this century; women's passionate romantic friendships were a widely accepted social institution and played a central emotional role in women's lives apart from marriage and family (Faderman, 1981).

The women's suffrage movements in England and the United States, coupled with the Victorian emphasis on romantic love, ultimately led to the undermining of the separate spheres doctrine. This was also due, in part, to a large upsurge among women in high school enrollment and graduation between 1910 and 1930 (Goldin, 2006). Furthermore, the first Great Migration of Blacks to the north from 1910 to 1930 opened more jobs and educational opportunities for Black women (Wilkerson, 2011). Black families often migrated together, and wives were expected to continue to contribute to the family income, at least temporarily (M. E. Jones, 1980). By the time women had achieved the right to vote in the United States in 1920, marriage rates had increased. However, a shift away from companionate marriage toward individualistic marriage had proliferated and divorce rates doubled (Coontz, 2005).

In the 1930s, a greater emphasis on sexual gratification in marriage also began to transform the role of married women. Laws restricting birth control were relaxed. The emotional and sexual satisfaction of husbands became an important criterion for marital success. Wives' roles shifted from subjugation and obedience to sexual partner, thus reinforcing the male-defined standards of beauty for women. However, through the 1950s, wives and husbands tended to base their gratification on fulfilling their prescribed gendered marital roles well: being good providers, good homemakers, and responsible parents (Cherlin, 2004).

The Second Wave of Feminism (1950s–1990)

Feminist critiques of love resurfaced beginning in the 1950s, and continued during the second wave of feminism. Love was described as being oppressive, a curse that confines women in the feminine universe (Beauvoir, 1949/2011). Friedan (1963/2013) identified the "problem with no name" as White, middle-class women's dissatisfaction with the constricting roles of wife, mother, and homemaker. Radical feminists such as Firestone (1970) described love as the "pivot of oppression for women" (p. 112)—a holocaust, a hell, or a sacrifice. Rich (1980) identified "compulsory heterosexuality" as a political institution that disempowered women. The emerging Black, Latina, and Asian feminist movements challenged gender and racial inequality (Garcia, 1997), but did not specifically address love. The oppressive nature of (heterosexual) love for women was attributed to patriarchy, the set of social relations among men that, supported by a material base, establishes or creates interdependence and solidarity among men enabling them to dominate women (Hartmann, 1981).

Second wave feminism encouraged, and was accompanied by a revolutionary shift in, women's involvement in the labor force in the 1970s (Goldin, 2006). Work began to reflect an aspect of women's identity, and they began to play a greater role in the decision making with their husbands about the type and nature of their work. Marriages became more individualized (Cancian, 1987); expectations for marriage began to include (a) self-development, or the idea that each person should develop an independent self instead of merely sacrificing oneself to one's partner; (b) the expectation that roles within marriage should be flexible and negotiable; and (c) that communication and openness in confronting problems were essential.

The most extensive treatise on women's friendship during this era was by Raymond (1986), who described hetero-reality as a system that confines women's affection to serving men, whereas men's affection is directed to man-to-man rapport, on which men's destiny depends. Raymond does not pretend that all women can be friends, but argues that all women have the potential to form vital friendships with other women. The importance of self-love was explored as well. Black feminists endorsed the idea that self-love was critical to the ability to transcend oppression (e.g., James Myers, 1986). Raymond (1986) identified self-love that is "intercourse with oneself," as critical to the idea of thinking and of friendship: "thinking is where I keep myself company, where I find my original friend, if you will . . . until the Self is another friend, it is often difficult for women to have confidence in their power of making and sustaining friends" (p. 222).

Feminist consciousness-raising groups in the 1970s served to strengthen and redefine women's friendships. The concept of "sisterhood" encouraged women to develop friendships that provided support and intimacy and enhanced a sense of personal power (Strommen, 1977). Radicalesbians (1976) argued that these changes were more likely to occur within lesbian friendship because of lesbians' greater women-identification. Frye (1983) contended that a community of women which recognizes and authorizes women's initiatives is critical for women to initiate creative acts of courage, imagination, and memory. Black feminists and Black lesbian feminists presented a contrasting view as they began to articulate the ways that Black women are positioned within structures of power in fundamentally different ways from White women, challenging the idea of feminist sisterhood as being viable across race and sexual orientation (Crenshaw, 1989; Lorde, 1984).

By the 1990s, marriage gradually was becoming a choice rather than a necessity, particularly among middle-class adults in the United States. The "pure relationship" had become the norm for the individualized marriage: an intimate partnership that one enters for its own sake, and which lasts only as long as both partners are satisfied with the intimacy and love that they get from it (Giddens, 1991).

Models of this type of relationship of choice became more visible as the life experiences of same-sex couples began to be documented. For example, Peplau, Padesky, and Hamilton (1982) established that among a sample of lesbian couples, greater satisfaction was associated with equality of involvement and equality of power in the relationship. Kurdek and Schmitt (1986) began a series of studies comparing cohabitating, heterosexual and lesbian and gay couples that generally showed few differences among couple types. For instance, Kurdek and Schmitt found that the groups did not differ in psychological adjustment. For each type of couple, love for the partner was related to many barriers to leaving the relationship. Schneider (1986) compared lesbian couples and cohabiting heterosexual couples on three dimensions, including durability, interdependence, and equality. Lesbian relationships were somewhat less durable and interdependent but more equal. This research began to destigmatize lesbian and gay relationships.

Contemporary Feminism (1990–Present)

Recent trends suggest that the contemporary view of romantic love has progressed somewhat toward a feminist ideal of love as a freely chosen and equal relationship. Although marriage appears to be symbolically important to many people, its practical importance has declined (Cherlin, 2004). The notion that romantic love can fulfill all of a person's needs also may be declining, thereby increasing the importance of friendships (Yalom & Brown, 2015). Contemporary feminist theory (1990–present) has continued to deepen analyses about equality as a necessary precondition for love, the importance of women's friendships and self-love, and the potential for and limitations of civic friendship or sisterhood as a catalyst for social change.

The significance of equality as a precondition for love undergirds the new interdisciplinary field of feminist love studies (Jónasdóttir & Ferguson, 2014). Love studies scholars contend that asymmetries between women and men even today are legitimized by gendered patterns of love and care that define heterosexual relations and marriage (Gunnarsson, 2014; Jónasdóttir & Ferguson, 2014). Their central premise is that love hooks women into dependent relationships with men through an unfavorable contract, marriage, with women ultimately being responsible for the care of children (Smart, 2007). Feminist love studies theorists argue that it is critical to study how, under patriarchal conditions of inequality, love is subverted at the intrapsychic or microlevel to provide men with a greater capacity than women to determine how they are loved by others. For instance, in gendered caring, the woman recognizes and affirms in practice the man's needs and goals as valuable in their own right and as not directed by her needs and goals. In heterosexual relations, then, women tend to adapt more to men than men adapt to women (Gunnarsson, 2014). Furthermore, heteronormative inequalities even affect same-sex relations. The legalization of same-sex marriage squeezes lesbian and gay relations into traditional notions of what loving relationships "should" look like (i.e., heterosexual marriage; Schneebaum, 2014).

Can love, then, ever be a liberating force according to feminists today? At present, some feminist

love theorists argue that love can be a site of resistance or transformation, enabling women to rescript their lives and to act as agents of social change (Langhamer, 2013). They noted that gender equality has increased partly because of the current dominance of romantic love as the driver of personal relationships (Jónasdóttir & Ferguson, 2014). Those who had been denied the right to love or marry historically (e.g., Black couples, interracial couples, LGBT couples) often also view love as transformative. For instance, hooks (2002) embraced the transformative possibilities of love and its relationship to self-love:

> To seek love as a quest for the true self liberates. All females who dare to follow our hearts to find such love are entering a cultural revolution that restores our soul and allows us to see clearly the value and meaning of love in our lives. (p. xix)

Weeks, Heaphy, and Donovan (2001) highlighted the benefits and complexities of lesbians and gay men engaging in relationships and families of choice. They speculated that the growing trend of these nontraditional partnerships would have an impact on societal views of marriage as a whole by providing "new relational possibilities" that were much more egalitarian. Advocates of same-sex marriage have argued that the right to marry is based on the right to love; furthermore, the legalization of same-sex marriage may result in more public awareness of the possibility of gender equality within romantic relationships (Lakoff, 2002).

In terms of women's friendships, friendship within feminist scholarship today is referred to primarily within the context of feminist or political solidarity, but typically is not described as being a love relationship (e.g., Wilkinson, 2014). Friendship love is not imbued with the passion that was used to describe it in earlier eras. Love is regarded as pertaining almost exclusively to romantic love within sexual relationships. This hierarchy of loves prevents people from imagining new ways of loving. A feminist goal should be to destabilize the distinction between love and friendship (Wilkinson, 2014).

Similarly, self-love is seldom addressed by feminists today except anecdotally. hooks (2002)

regarded friendship love as a goal that is necessary to nurture and sustain collective female well-being. More recently, Pate (2014) in an online news site, *The Feminist Wire*, expressed the importance of self-love for Black women:

> Living in a society that constantly marginalizes you [as a Black woman], invalidates your experiences and emotions, and fosters insecurity . . . we are taught to hate ourselves. . . . To love yourself—amidst this daily onslaught of disparaging messages is not only political but also radical. . . . Love turned inward conjures a reservoir where you can tap into your own power and manifest the highest expression of yourself.

The feminist view of women's friendship as being socially transformative, however, has been included as part of the contemporary dialogue to some extent. For example, Wilkinson (2014) viewed friendship between women as a critical aspect of solidarity that can be a force for social change or a model for civic citizenship. Love studies theorist Ferguson (2014) contended that a feminist love politics needs to oppose the overemphasis on romantic love among couples as the Western ideal for a good life.

The critical importance of intersectionality to discussions of a feminist sisterhood also is a major consideration within contemporary feminist theory. *Intersectionality* is a term introduced by Crenshaw (1989) to explain that the experience of being a Black woman cannot be understood in terms of being black or of being a woman, but requires an analysis of the intertwined nature of these identities. Therefore, an intersectional or inclusive feminism must be developed such that feminist politics assumes that sexist oppression cannot be overcome without also overcoming racist, ethnic, religious, and heterosexist oppression (Ferguson, 2014; see also Volume 1, Chapters 27–30, this handbook, for more on intersectionality).

In summary, feminist theories provide an analytic strategy that emphasizes the importance of equality as the basis for love and friendship. The historically based feminist prototype or script for love represents what might be considered an ideal script

for heterosexual relations that has not yet been achieved, as well as an actual or attainable prototype for women's friendships. Furthermore, feminist theory links love to self-love, as well as to feminist friendships and sisterhood. We now turn to how psychology has approached these issues.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP WITHIN PSYCHOLOGY

Love, as approached and defined historically within psychology, originally gave little attention to the feminist issues of gender, equality, or friendship. Love began to be studied by social scientists in the 1940s with an emphasis on typologies and measurement (Hatfield, Bensman, & Rapson, 2012). Love and marital relationships were examined primarily at the dyadic level. This microstructural approach also progressed in a largely ahistorical manner; it appeared to assume that the conventional family lifecycle common in the 1940s to 1960s—being single to getting married to having children—was still normative in the 1980s, although major deviations from this path already had occurred, including increases in single parenthood, cohabitation, divorce, and the visibility of lesbian and gay relationships (Cherlin, 2004).

In *The Psychology of Love*, one of the first major books defining the "science of love," Sternberg and Barnes (1988) drew on global theories of love proposed by (mostly male) psychologists, including Zick Rubin, Bernard Murstein, John Alan Lee, Phillip Shaver, David Buss, George Levinger, and Stanton Peele. Many of these theorists identified taxonomies of love. One of the most widely referenced is Lee's (1977) six love styles: *eros* (physical attraction), *storge* (loving affection), *ludus* (a playful, noncommitted type of love), *mania* (an intensively preoccupied love), *pragma* (a practical love), and *agape* (a selfless, altruistic love).

Other psychological views of love included a focus on *limerance*, an obsessive and emotional dependence on another person (Tennov, 1979); love as an attachment process (Shaver, Hazan, & Bradshaw, 1988); or love as a product of biological and evolutionary forces that drive reproduction (Buss, 1988). Psychologists also attempted to describe the

stages of love. For example, Murstein (1988) identified three stages: passionate, romantic, and conjugal (companionate) love. *Passionate love* is associated with intense arousal. *Romantic love* also is intense, but is more focused on the idealization of the other, not primarily the sexual aspects. *Conjugal love* is the least intense love and often occurs among couples after a long marriage when they know each other well, at which point liking and trust replaces passion (Murstein, 1988).

These views provided many useful insights about the function and structure of love, as well as testable hypotheses. However, psychological and feminist perspectives on love seldom intersected. Psychological theories defined or "scripted" love as being heterosexual romantic/sexual love, a love that exists narrowly between a woman and a man that was shaped at the interpersonal level without reference to the social context. For example, Gershenfeld (1984), proposed that "there is no such thing as a 'typical' or 'traditional' marriage. Every marriage is unique. Every couple can, with the necessary understandings and skills, choose, design, and create a marriage uniquely their own" (p. 54). This individualistic approach assumes that successful relationships can be achieved by teaching couples specific skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving, fighting, loving; Gershenfeld, 1984). Issues pertaining to gender and power are absent from this approach.

Psychological theories also routinely imply that heterosexual romantic love is superior to friendship love in two ways: first, by omitting nonsexual, nonparental, and same-sex relations from theories of love and attachment; and second, by implicitly regarding heterosexual relations on the basis of romantic/sexual ties as being stronger or implicitly superior to ones on the basis of friendship love. The first point is illustrated by Zeifman and Hazan's (1997) process model of normative adult attachment formation. Building on Bowlby's theory of attachment, they posit that the caregiver–infant bond is the prototypical attachment bond that forms the basis for adult attachment. The prototypical adult attachment subsequently is formed with an opposite-sex peer (Zeifman & Hazan, 1997). Although attachment bonds are not essential for the survival of the individual procreative partners, Zeifman

and Hazan argued that without the pair-bond, an infant/child with only the mother as a parent will face greater risk of survival. This conventional (heteronormative) narrative overlooks reasonable alternative arguments: that infant–mother bonds would be a prototype for strong mother–daughter and female–female bonds, or that female–female bonds might contribute to the survival of offspring (Hrdy, 2009).

The valuing of romantic love over friendship love in heterosexual relations was exemplified by the segregation of love and friendship in theory and research. Rubin (1973), in his early study of love, presented love and friendship as being diametrically opposed. The lesser valuation of companionate love in heterosexual relations also is reflected in research concerned with the durability of romantic love in long term relationships. Acevedo and Aron (2009) asked if the intensity, engagement, and sexual interest of romantic love inevitably dies out or "at best turn[s] into companionate love—a warm, less intense love, devoid of attraction and sexual desire" (p. 59).

Friendship as a significant adult relationship began to be studied parallel to research on love (Duck, 1980; Winstead & Derlega, 1986; Wright, 1969). These findings provide insight into women's friendships but do not place friendship within the context of love research or address its potential role in social change movements. Early work defined friendship as platonic and thereby limited what questions were asked. Sexual or romantic partners were excluded in friendship studies, although an allowance was made that friendship could exist between spouses (Winstead & Derlega, 1986). Contrary to long-held views, research on gender and friendship quickly established that women's friendships were not inferior to men's (Wright, 1982). There now exists a large body of research on gender differences in friendship. For example, Hall's (2011) meta-analysis of 37 manuscripts indicated that women had somewhat higher friendship expectations for symmetrical reciprocity (e.g., loyalty, genuineness), communion (e.g., self-disclosure), and solidarity (e.g., mutual activities), but that men had higher expectations for agency (e.g., physical fitness, status).

The concept of self-love that is important within feminist thought as being related to one's ability to love appeared to be important within psychology in earlier eras. Theorists, such as Maslow (1968), regarded self-love as a critical aspect of one's ability to love. Maslow described self-actualized individuals as being able to express being-love, which is evidenced by a deep acceptance of themselves, others, and the world. Wright (1978) also explored the relationship between friendship and self-development. More recently, self-love within psychology is defined quite differently. For instance, Campbell and Baumeister (2001) conceptualized self-love as focusing on two constructs, self-esteem and narcissism. They concluded that there is little evidence that high self-esteem or high narcissism promotes loving others; however, self-acceptance does predict liking for and positive interactions with a spouse. A few others also have explored narcissism and self-esteem as representing self-love (e.g., Peterson & DeHart, 2014).

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN

Love and friendship began to be approached in ways that were more integrative of feminist and psychological theories with the rise of research on the psychology of women. Hatfield, Walster, and Berscheid (1978) were among the first to develop the idea of equity or fairness as being important within personal relationships such as marriage. This and other social exchange theories normally measured how equitable a relationship is by determining, for example, if each person in a couple believes she or he is underbenefitted, equally benefitted, or over-benefited in the relationship (Hatfield & Rapson, 2012). Berscheid and Hatfield (1978) also proposed that there are two types of love: *passionate love*, "a state of intense longing for union with another," and *companionate love*, "the affection we feel for those with whom our lives are deeply intertwined" (p. 9). Hatfield (1988) speculated that the difference between the two is one of emphasis. Passionate love involves intense feelings and sexual attraction. Companionate love involves mutual respect, trust, and affection, similar to love in friendship.

Feminist psychologists also identified issues of power and gender roles as being central to understanding love and commitment in describing the

"emerging science of close relationships" (Berscheid & Peplau, 1983). Gilligan (1984), in recognizing structural influences on love, noted that "heterosexual relationships are beset by problems of transference and social structures of dominance and subordination" (p. 28). By defining the two moral voices of justice and care, her theory resonates with those of feminists such as Wollstonecraft (1792/2013) and Jónasdóttir and Ferguson (2014). A large body of psychology of women research now exists that explores gender, status, and power in relationships.

The second-class status of friendship in psychological research, particularly women's friendship, also was challenged by feminist and lesbian psychologists. O'Connor's (1992) important review showed that women's friendships play an important role in creating and maintaining their social worlds and the moral discourses within them. Weinstock and Rothblum's (1996) book on lesbian friendships marked a departure from a traditional research focusing on causes and consequences of lesbianism to give greater attention to the strengths of lesbian communities such as friendships. In discussing the politics of lesbian friendship, Kitzinger (1996) further noted that the language used often serves to trivialize or dismiss friendship; for example, if a sexual partner is a "significant other," does that mean that a friend is an "insignificant other?" The profile of women's friendships was raised nationally by the attention given to S. E. Taylor et al.'s (2000) research showing that women's preference to tend-and-befriend in response to stressful situations was a vital ingredient of human social life. Although Taylor et al. attributed women's tend-and-befriend response to biological instinct, it could be explained by gender differences in social power as well. Diamond's (2008) research documenting passionate friendships between young adult women provided further proof of the importance of women's friendships, as well as for the independence of love and desire.

The relationship between friendship and feminism, or friendship as a potential force for social change, has not been part of the feminist psychology research agenda. A few early studies compared the friendships of feminist and nonfeminist women. Feminists reported feeling closer and more sympathetic to women (Cherniss, 1972). They also had more intergenerational friendships, received more emotional support for their work from friends, more often had friends as part of their chosen "kinship" system, and came to regard spending time with other women as valuable in itself (Seiden & Bart, 1975). Rose and Roades's (1987) study of heterosexual nonfeminists and heterosexual and lesbian feminists found little difference in the quality of same-sex friendship. However, the majority of heterosexual and lesbian feminists credited friendship with women as enabling them to safely share formerly private and personal experiences, increasing the value they placed on friendship and increasing their self-respect and personal growth, and as being intertwined with their political activism. Research on lesbians also indicates that there is a link between friendship and community involvement (e.g., Rose & Hospital, 2014).

Psychological theories appear to reflect an implicit ideological stance that continues to reinforce an individualist and heteronormative view of love and friendship. Friendship research also has been conducted assuming a platonic relationship script and represents a separate body of knowledge from research on love. Feminist psychologists have been challenging these limitations by studying undervalued relationships (e.g., friendships, lesbian relationships) and the impact of intersectional identities on love, friendship, and community.

(RE)INFUSING FEMINIST THEORY INTO FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Psychology as a discipline has been focused primarily on measuring and analyzing "what is" and is concerned with formulating predictive statements about what most likely "will occur." Additionally, psychological research is still mostly individualistic and heteronormative (Jackson, 2014; Rose, 2000; Werking, 1997). Research questions even within the domain of the psychology of women have been confined to fairly narrow and distinct aspects of love and friendship.

Our review of feminist theory points to some concerns that might now be (re)infused within research on the psychology of women. New insights

might be gained by more specifically exploring the relationship between love and equality, using concepts such as compassionate love to include measures of romantic and friendship love in research on relationships, studying how romantic relationships and friendships might facilitate or impede each other, and renewing an interest in the role of self-love in loving another. Research on the obstacles to women's friendships, particularly across identities of race, sexuality, and social class, would provide insights concerning the socially transformative potential of women's relationships with other women.

Love and Equality

A great deal of feminist psychological research has focused on equality and equity in relationships in terms of their effect on satisfaction or the division of labor, but less so on the relationship between equality and love. Chapter 6 of this volume provides an excellent review of the current research related to how couples negotiate interpersonal power, and the effect it has on relationship satisfaction. However, there still remains a need to focus on equality and love specifically. A recent example of work addressing love and equality as related concepts was conducted by Stanik, McHale, and Crouter (2013) in their examination of the gender dynamics and marital love among African American couples. Traditionality in husbands' gender attitudes was linked to lower levels of love and also declined over time, whereas those African American couples with egalitarian attitudes and division of labor showed higher and more stable levels of love.

Variables other than the division of labor might also yield insight into equality and love. For instance, research on attunement (i.e., understanding and responding to the partner's needs and interest; Siegel, 2007) suggests that gender socialization and gendered power differentials play a strong role in undermining equality in caring. Love studies feminists contend that women tend to see situations from the man's perspective, whereas men tend to take their own perspective as a neutral point of view from which the woman's standpoint is judged (Gunnarsson, 2014). Matta (2009) found support for this idea among U.S. couples, in which a majority

of the husbands in the study were classified as low to moderate in their attunement toward their wives' needs. In those families, the husband's job was highly valued and the mother's work was not. Men's typical responses to wives' requests for household help or appreciation ranged from statements such as "Constant nagging . . . shut the hell up" (p. 156) to "I guess there's time when she needs emotional support and I don't . . . pick it up . . . just a guy quality I guess" (p. 158).

As noted by Knudson-Martin and Mahoney (2009), the hidden power of gender ideology may suppress conflict about gender inequalities by creating resignation or fear of disturbing the relationship. Of the 12 heterosexual couples they interviewed, none was completely successful at achieving equality. Five mechanisms that allowed couples to avoid gender dilemmas included labeling a situation that could be described as unequal as something more positive ("It doesn't bother me to do the cleaning"); not examining the consequences of choices ("My business is here, so we live here"); settling for less ("A lot of the time he will clean the bathroom"); hiding the issues ("When difficult issues come up, one person will say something funny"); and placing the responsibility on the wife ("I need to be more available to him").

Compassionate Love

The theory and model of compassionate love might serve to bridge research between romantic and friendship love. Within psychology, compassionate love recently has been proposed as perhaps being the most fundamental type of love. *Compassionate love* is defined as "an attitude toward the other . . . containing feelings, cognitions, and behaviors that are focused on caring, concern, tenderness and an orientation toward supporting, helping, and understanding the other, particularly when the other is perceived to be suffering or in need" (Fehr & Sprecher, 2013).

Compassionate love includes two elements that also are part of the feminist concept of love; it requires free choice (the giver deliberately decides to extend this type of love) and a valuing of the other at a fundamental level. The concept of compassionate love regards friendship and romantic love as

compatible. For instance, Grote and Frieze (1994) explored friendship-based love among young adults and married middle-age adults. Friendship-based love was found to be strong in the relationships of both age groups. Similarly, when Fehr (1994) asked participants to rate a series of prototypes in terms of how well each represented their views of love, they ranked friendship, maternal, sisterly, and parental love as being closer to their ideal. Romantic love was ranked lower. More recently, Fehr, Harasymchuk, and Sprecher (2014) found that people's happiness in and commitment to a romantic relationship was strongly linked to how much compassionate love they experienced for their partner.

Friendship within romantic relationships also was found to be a strong positive predictor of the quality of romantic relationships such as love, sexual gratification, and romantic commitment (VanderDrift, Wilson, & Agnew, 2013). Compassionate love also has been linked to friendship satisfaction (Sprecher, Fehr, & Zimmerman, 2007). Therefore, mutuality of compassionate love in romantic and friendship relationships may be an important indicator of equality of caring, an important component of the feminist ideal of love. Furthermore, compassionate love can be experienced within many types of relationships, including those with the self, friends, and even strangers, suggesting that this kind of love may be a core or fundamental type of love (Fehr & Sprecher, 2013). This suggests that the theory of compassionate love may be applicable as well to feminist concerns with friendship, self-love, and love as a mobilizing force for political action and social change.

Interactions Between Love and Friend Relationships

To date, friendship, marriage, and family relations typically have been examined in isolation from one another. Few studies have studied the intersection of the beneficial and problematic components of networks of close relationships. One exception is Proulx, Helms, Milardo, and Payne's (2009) research exploring the role of husbands' interference in women's friendships. Their findings indicated that having a close friend may increase women's marital satisfaction in cases where husbands' have

a low level of interference, but does not improve marital quality if the husband has a high level of interference. Future research might address these complex links between spousal and nonmarital close ties using larger and more diverse samples to determine the extent to which women's friendships shore up inequitable marriages or, conversely, serve to empower women.

The Role of Self-Love in Loving

Feminist theory suggests that self-love (or self-acceptance), love, and friendships would benefit from being studied in relation to other women, not—as has been the case to date—almost entirely in a relationship with or in comparison with men. One of the most devastating effects of patriarchy is to make women not lovable to themselves or other women, causing women to identify with other women out of a shared pain and not out of a shared strength (Raymond, 1986). To explore Raymond's idea that "a woman's Self is her original and most enduring friend" (p. 5) would require new approaches and models. hooks (2001) suggested that a healthy model would include female agency and self-actualization rooted in the understanding that when we love ourselves well (not in a selfish or narcissistic way), we are best able to love others. At present, these concerns appear to be nearly exclusively the domain of self-help psychology. However, qualitative and clinical approaches could be used to bring them into the research domain.

Feminist Friendship, Intersectionality, and Sisterhood

The socially transformative capability of love is deserving of further study. Love's capacity for eliminating injustice and fostering community has been emphasized by feminist and antiracist theorists (e.g., Guy-Sheftall, 2014; James, 2013). Likewise, the potential of friendship as a social force is worthy of greater consideration. Hunt (1991) argued that for women, "friendship is the context within which the political imperatives of mutuality and equality are best experienced" (p. 128). Lesbian psychologists consistently have valued and explored women's friendships as a personal relationship and a political

act (e.g., Degges-White, 2012; Rothblum & Weinstock, 2014). Positive psychologists have begun to explore intercultural and cross-identity friendships that may have application for building social change communities (e.g., Gaines & Ketay, 2013; Hojjat & Moyer, 2016). Increasingly in academic writings, friendship has been invoked as a model that might clarify issues related to communication, citizenship, ethnic and cultural identity, and peace and conflict (Devere, 2013).

Friendship as a model for civic citizenship does have its limits, however, given that some friendships can be exclusionary and selfish rather than egalitarian and caring (Devere, 2013). Clearly, more research on friendship across differences is needed to determine the usefulness of civic friendship as a strategy to attain a citizenship on the basis of mutual respect, trust, and reciprocity. Recent efforts to explore friendship across differences of race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identities, and cultures have taken a step in this direction (e.g., Demir, 2015; Galupo et al., 2014; Rose & Hospital, 2016). Intersectionality theory and research plays an important role here as well. Intersectionality requires that researchers consider the role of power and the social context of the intersecting identities of those studied, meaning that relationships and outcomes may vary for individuals with different identities (Warner, Settles, & Shields, 2016). The feminist movement of the future will require a better understanding of these different perspectives to succeed at building a social movement across differences of race, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

CONCLUSION

Love, marriage, and friendship in the United States and Western nations today have moved closer to the feminist ideal, at least for middle-class women who are free to choose whom to marry. Women are marrying later, having fewer children, and working for most of their lives. For the first time in the United States, single women (including never married, widowed, divorced, or separated women) outnumber married women (Traister, 2016). Longer life expectancies, especially for women, also suggest that they

may be single for some or even many years in old age. These changes suggest that the major lines of psychological research on love and friendship that began in the 1940s are less applicable today. Contemporary research on the psychology of women questioned earlier heteronormative precepts, resulting in robust lines of research that explore many features of love and friendship. Intersectionality as a concept and theory also has challenged dominant views of friendship and sisterhood. However, an unacknowledged patriarchal ideology continues to limit what relationships, dimensions of interaction, contexts, and identities are studied. Although feminist theory also is ideological, it is transparently so. The advantage is that it offers a woman-centered frame of reference as well as a vision as to what "can be." As suggested in this chapter, an infusion of feminist theory and ideals can provide insight into the limitations of the traditional discourse so as to disrupt the status quo and direct us to new areas of inquiry with the ultimate goal of gaining a deeper, more integrated understanding of love and friendship.

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