

AGING AND SOCIAL INTERACTION
IN THE SMALL URBAN COMMUNITY

by

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CHAPTER I

THE AREA OF INVESTIGATION AND THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The present study examines the informal social participation of the elderly in a small urban community. Specifically, we are concerned with the extent to which older persons participate with family, kin, friends and neighbors, identifying determinants of such participation and examining the consequences of participation for age identification and expressed loneliness. We focus in this study only upon informal social participation since such more intimate interactions cut across a variety of institutional spheres, eg., work and voluntary associations, and are frequently viewed as more primary and enduring sources and means of maintaining social relationships. Moreover, maintaining relationships with family, kin, friends and neighbors appears to have a special significance for the aging. While perhaps an oversimplification, Rosow (1970) summarizes the literature on the social participation of older people as follows:

The aged live in a contracting social world in which their participation declines, notably sharply after age seventy-five. This has two aspects. First, their activity in formal organizations of all kinds is drastically reduced, they apparently lose friends, and their informal associations with them diminish. Second, they enter a life stage diminished by a severe loss of social roles. With their loss of social roles and group memberships their social participation is diverted from formal to informal arenas and reduced from more to fewer associates.

While there is considerable variation to be sure, it would appear that for many older people the social world narrows in response to changes in, and losses of, significant roles and statuses, losses of significant others through death, adjustment to retirement, loss of health and physical mobility, all of which affect opportunities for and access to interaction

with others, with subsequent effects upon the aging person's self-image and sense of isolation.

The decrease in social participation through the loss of social roles acts to sever the links which exist between the older person and society. These links, whether through jobs, school, family or neighborhood, have constituted for these persons what may be called their social world. At least three important consequences of such links have been identified. First, they assign a person a position or status in relation to others, which, on the one hand, determines what obligations and rights accrue to the person by virtue of occupying a position, and, on the other hand, define appropriate behavior. Thereby a person is able to assign meaning to his own behavior and to interpret the behavior of others around him. Second, the links always refer to a reasonably specific network of social relationships with a definable set of others. Social interaction within these relationships provide and define boundaries in terms of accessibility to others and the possibility of forming relationships outside those with whom one participates regularly. Thus, the extent and type of social participation with others is always to some extent determined by opportunities available to the person for participation, and individuals are differentially placed within such opportunity structures. Third, participation with others provides important sources for emotional security, a sense of psychological well being, and contexts in which identities are formed and maintained. To the extent that persons experience significant changes or transitions in status or roles which also affect their opportunities for participation with others, we would expect changes in self-image and a sense of personal worth. As Rosow (1963) argues, there is simply no role transition without the

emergence of new self-images. Thus, the contexts in which one participates, those with whom he interacts and particularly his opportunities for participation, have a significant influence on the person, his identity and his morale. Thus, with the loss of roles, social participation patterns are affected. The opportunity to maintain an acceptable level of social participation, in turn, has a significant influence on the social psychological variables of age identity and loneliness of the older person. Opportunities for social interaction, of course, do not necessarily mean that the opportunities available will be used. The accessibility of others is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for participation. Nonetheless, opportunities for participation are important for the establishment of one's social world in old age.

Perspectives on Social Participation in Old Age

Gerontological literature strongly suggests that for many older persons opportunities for participation with others becomes increasingly tied to local settings or the immediate social environment. The local setting of the older person becomes increasingly important in so far as the person loses roles, that is, job, spouse and health, with the consequence that the neighborhood becomes the world of increasing contact (Langford, 1962), and the world of social interaction (Rosenberg, 1968; Rosow, 1967; Bultena, 1968; Langford, 1962; Messer, 1967). Engaging in interaction with others is facilitated by status similarities such as class (Rosenberg, 1968; Rosow, 1967), marital status (Blau, 1961), ownership and length of residence in the neighborhood (Langford, 1962). Residential concentration of elderly persons has been identified as a critical variable in the patterns of social participation and satisfaction of older persons (Rosow, 1967; Rosenberg, 1968; Messer, 1967;

Langford, 1962). Residential concentration of age mates has been studied in the large urban areas (Rosow, 1967; Rosenberg, 1968; Messer, 1967), and in small rural towns (Langford, 1962). The importance of age homogeneity in the local social setting upon social interaction can be mitigated by the personality type of the individual (Langford, 1962; Rosow, 1967), by the presence of children (Rosow, 1967) and by social class (Rosenberg, 1968; Rosow, 1967). However, relatively immediate access to others remains a critical variable in understanding the social participation of older people.

Let us now examine in somewhat greater detail research which directly bears on the focus of the present study. Specifically, we will look at availability, status position and role loss as they relate to social participation.

Aging and social participation.---The availability of age mates was studied by Rosow (1967) as he examined the impact of age homogeneity in the neighborhood upon friendship patterns. Rosow studied residents of apartment complexes and residential hotels in Cleveland, and his conclusions must be understood in that light. He found that the number of local friends varied directly with the proportion of age peers. Indeed, irregardless of the sheer number of friends named, the aged selected overwhelmingly from older rather than younger neighbors. Thus, the proportion of aged in the immediate neighborhood environment governed the relative size of the potential friendship field, and actual friendships were concentrated among age peers disproportionately more as the sheer opportunity for such friendships increased.

Rosenberg (1968) proposed that the neighborhood was the major social context in which working class friendships were formed and maintained.

He argued that the likelihood of a given individual making friends depended upon the degree to which the neighborhood provided an environment rich in status-similars. To describe the influence of neighborhood homogeneity or heterogeneity, he developed the concepts of "contextual consonance" and "contextual dissonance." Consonance and dissonance were to be measured by similarities and dissimilarities among the residents of the neighborhood in variables such as age, sex, marital status, social class and job status. Neighborhood contextual dissonance was found to account for isolation from friends among males over age sixty-five, but not for those under sixty-five.

Langford (1962) also found that neighborhood homogeneity or heterogeneity markedly influenced the informal contacts of the aged person with friends and neighbors. However, she found that homogeneity of the neighborhood, as important for social relationships, was mitigated by neighborhood stability. She concluded that the situation of the aged individual living in a neighborhood in which he or she had lived for years is entirely different from that of the aged individual moving into a new community. In a familiar environment with the security and satisfactions of their home and neighbors who are known, the aged appear to be relatively indifferent to the age composition of the neighborhood. In contrast, when an aged person moves into a new community, the absence of people his or her own age may be a deterrent in making social contacts and may lead to a desire for some degree of insulation from younger members of the community.

Bultena (1968) reported that elderly male respondents had a substantially greater amount of face-to-face interaction with age mates than with younger persons. However advancing age was associated with

diminished rather than an increased degree of confinement of social interaction with age peers. Thus he confirms that age similarity is important in social interaction for the younger aging person, but for those over eighty years of age, vertical social ties seem to become more common.

All these studies suggest a relationship between the availability of age mates and social participation among older people. We are concerned whether or not this relationship of availability and social participation will hold true in the residential setting of the small urban community.

The extent and intensity of informal social participation has also been found to vary by the status and/or role that the older person occupies. Bott (1957), in studying the social and psychological organization of a sample of urban families in London, concluded that the personalities of the husband and wife were important in the selection of people included in the social network, but also that the selection was limited by factors over which the family had little control. It is in this context that the total social environment becomes important. She found that the formation of social networks varied by the homogeneity of the neighborhood by social class, including economic ties among the members of the neighborhood and the occupational status of the husband. Gans (1957) likewise found that social class was significant in the establishment of social networks. The peer group society of the Italian working class studied by Gans provided the opportunity for the person to grow up within a group and to use that group to be an individual. Thus, for the working class, the peer group was important in providing the framework for its members to display their individuality. Gans

argued that for the middle class people can exist outside the peer group, and they enter the group not simply for personal ends, but for shared ends. Thus the rationale for entering and maintaining membership in a social group may differ by social class. Babchuk & Bates (1963) reported that marital status was important in the establishment of social relationships for the general population of the middle class. They suggest that husbands and wives are perceived as a unit, that is, middle class couples considered themselves as a unit with respect to their friends and they seemed to be treated as a unit by most of their friends. Thus, the disruption or change of the marital status of a person could have profound effects on the network of social relationships.

In research bearing directly on the relationship between status variables and social participation among the aged, Rosow (1967) reported that social class had a significant impact upon the formation and maintenance of social relationships. He found that middle class persons had significantly more friends than the working class person. Also, there was a greater local dependency for friendships in the working class than in the middle class. Thus working class persons were far more dependent than those in the middle class on neighbors as a specific source of friendship and social life. And as we reported above, length of residence in the neighborhood and home ownership were reported by Langford (1962) as status variables having an important impact on social participation among older persons. Thus the status variables of social class, marital status, length of residence and home ownership, among others, appear to be significant in the social interaction levels of the older person. These status variables, plus age and retirement status, will be studied for their impact on social participation in our sample.

The cumulative loss of significant roles also has been found to affect social relationships. Rosow (1967) reported that as role loss, that is, retirement, widowhood and economic dependency, increases, opportunities for social participation decrease. Consequently, the local social setting becomes increasingly important for social interaction. Rosow found that the social class of the older person does make a difference in how much the local social setting is used for social interaction with the loss of roles. It is evident, therefore, that the cumulative loss of roles does appear to affect social participation, though mediated by social class. We shall look at this relationship in our small urban setting.

In summary, the literature tells us that as the world of the older person shrinks, the local setting becomes increasingly important as the locus for social interaction. Just how important that neighborhood is for the social world of the older person varies with the availability of age mates in the neighborhood, the status of the residents and the number of roles that the resident has lost. Moreover, it is important to know how these variables affect social participation both in a one-to-one relationship with another and in interaction with one another. As we study social participation among the aged persons in our sample, we are looking at availability, status and role loss as they affect social interaction patterns in our small urban community.

Perspectives for Age Identification in Old Age

The availability of others for interaction and actual interaction in social relationships has its impact on the self-perception of the aging person. This is particularly the case with respect to the phenomenon of age identification. Age identification is a self-orientation or self-perception in terms of age. It is how the person feels in regard to age,

his self-orientation within the limits of his physiological conditions (Peters, 1971). While the gerontological literature shows a strong tendency to deny the fact of old age, the tendency to identify oneself as old or to deny such self-identification has been shown to vary by such phenomenon as the relative concentration of age mates, that is, their availability (Rosenberg, 1968; Rosow, 1967), the curtailment of formal and informal participation (Bell, 1957; Rosow, 1967), the loss of critical roles and statuses (Phillips, 1957; Rosow, 1967), social class (Kuhlen, 1959; Liccione, 1952; Neugarten, 1968; Rosow, 1967), sex (Kogan & Wallach, 1961b; Kuhlen, 1959; Neugarten, 1968; Sarbin, 1954), and group membership (Blau, 1956). Again, while there is considerable variation among individuals, the conditions of widowhood, retirement, poverty, poor health, living alone, dependence and isolation become cumulatively more probably as the person grows older. And as these conditions become more and more real for the person, the acceptance or rejection of an older self-image may be tantamount to the acceptance or rejection of the fact of an old status.

We now look at the research which deals with the relationship between age identification and the aging person. We look specifically at availability and age identification, status and age identification, loss of roles and age identification and social participation and age identification.

Aging and age identification.--Generally, we know that self-perceptions of aged persons are responses to cultural or social definitions of age, changes in the social environment and physiological changes which occur with age. Rosow (1967) found that while residential density by age stimulates age identification within the working class, it has absolutely

no effect in the middle class. Rosenberg (1968) reported that the relative density or concentration of age mates had its impact on age identification for the older person. His study would indicate that dissimilarity of age in the neighborhood results in feelings of uselessness and being old. Thus availability of age mates does appear to have a bearing on age identification, though as Rosow found, the influence is mitigated by social class. We shall attempt to ascertain if this relationship holds true for the small urban setting.

Rosow (1967) reported that the status variable of social class, and collective role loss are the major determinates of age identification, though social class is the more powerful factor. The prospective or actual loss that old age poses is a greater discontinuity and threat to the middle class than to the working class individual. Therefore, the middle class person avoids such identification far more strenuously than those in the working class. Rosow found that middle class persons dissociated themselves from their peers in their self-images and particularly in their public affiliation. In the working class there is initially more acceptance of aging. They accept and associate with older persons as their peers. Thus the status variable of social class does appear to have an important bearing on age identity. Social class and the other status variables identified above will be reviewed in the present study for their impact on age identification.

Rosow (1967) reported that there were no meaningful replacements for significant social losses in old age. He states that there are no structural alternatives to adequately compensate for widowhood, retirement, physical decline or dependence. He found that the general loss of roles does independently increase older self-images, especially in

the middle class. In both the middle and working class, Rosow reported that the crucial breaking point is two lost roles,irregardless of which roles, which mark the sharpest incremental increase in older self-conceptions. We shall study the impact of role loss upon age identification in the small urban community.

Rose (1965) indicated that social participation in older groups would enhance the chances of older self-perceptions because of group pride. We can conclude from Rosow (1967) that social participation has an impact on age identification, though this would vary by social class. For the working class, social participation would appear to enhance the chances of identifying with older self-conceptions, but not so for the middle class. Thus social participation, its level and intensity following the role losses of old age, does appear to have an impact on the social psychological variable of age identification, though the literature indicates that the impact is not consistently positive.

In summary, it would appear that age identification among older persons comes as a response to social class and role loss. Availability of age mates and social participation have an effect on age identification, but the effect is dependent to a great extent on social class. We shall examine these variables as they relate to age identification in the residential setting of the small urban community.

Perspectives on Loneliness in Old Age

There is evidence that opportunities for maintaining ties with the local environment has a distinct bearing on the morale of the older person, and thus becomes a component of loneliness in the aging process. The concentration of age mates in the neighborhood setting, for example,

provides a normative system which mitigates some of the conflicts of the older person as he makes the transition from the working years (Messer, 1967), and thus provides a setting in which the older person is not challenged beyond his resources with the subsequent effects upon morale (Lawton, 1970). Similarly, the relationship between age identification and loneliness becomes apparent in that those who tend to maintain younger group identifications tend to have higher morale (Kutner et al., 1956). Loneliness results from the relative decline in the amount of social interaction from the person's previous level, and is not simply the result of fewer social contacts (Townsend, 1963). Thus, as the person loses roles and social contacts that had previously been part of his life, the impact is felt on morale. The negative stereotype of the aged reflects the expectation that old age is a time characterized by a decreasingly active role in life, economic insecurity, loneliness, resistance to change and failing mental and physical powers. Thus old age is not seen as conducive to feelings of adequacy, adjustment usefulness and security (Guptill, 1969; Hickey & Kalish, 1968; Tuckman & Lorge, 1952a; Youman, 1968).

In looking more in depth at the research that has been done on loneliness in older persons, we shall study the relationship of loneliness to availability, status, role loss, social participation and age identification.

Aging and loneliness.--Messer (1967) in looking at the impact of the neighborhood on the morale and loneliness of older persons, deduced from Rosow that age-homogeneous social settings were an important factor in the satisfactory adjustment to the conditions of aging. From Merton he learned that one of the mechanisms for alleviating role conflict is

that of insulation of the activities of the role incumbent from those members of the "role-set" who occupy different status positions. If we assume that age differences are important differences in status, then Merton's position would lead one to expect that an age-concentrated environment would be more conducive to an age appropriate normative system and higher morale. By "normative system" Merton means a set of standards according to which one is to act. Messer therefore asserts that inter-generational role conflict should be less likely in a situation where one generation is physically, and therefore socially concentrated. In his study of the tenants in public housing projects in Chicago, Messer reported on the relationship between social disengagement and morale in the elderly. The physical aggregation of age peers produces a normative system which can mitigate the role conflicts of people who are disengaging from middle-age levels of social interaction. Social disengagement as one grows older is facilitated by a physical environment which serves as a buffer to the conflicting role expectations of a younger generation. It thus appears that age concentration provides a normative system which allows an identity with leisure as a legitimate post-occupational activity, while a mixed environment might be conducive to maintaining a stigma against social disengagement. Messer reported that occasional feelings of uselessness are much more likely to be accompanied by low morale among elderly people living in proximity to other age groups. He concluded that there is some evidence that age-concentrated environments not only alter interactional opportunities, but provide a normative system which may facilitate adjustment to old age. Thus the relationship between availability and loneliness appear significant for our study.

Rosenberg (1968) reported that men over sixty-five, living in neighbor-

hoods where their wealth, occupation and/or race differed from that of other local residents tended to be isolated from friends. Isolation does not necessarily indicate loneliness, but it is one of the factors that can contribute to it. Lawton (1970) reported that homogeneous environments, in terms of the status variables, were important for those of low morale and involuntary isolation if they were to achieve an effective living situation. Thus, it would appear that while the effect of change of status is an open question on its particular effect on loneliness, once the status is changed, loneliness can result if one stands alone in that change in the local social setting. Therefore, while the effect of status change may indirectly result in loneliness, accessibility to those similar to oneself in status is an important factor in the morale and loneliness of the older person.

Messer (1967) worked under the proposition that as role losses occur, loneliness results. However, the impact of role loss is mitigated by a homogeneous environment, as such an environment appears to ease the prospects of loneliness. The homogeneous environment provides a normative setting giving positive values to the reduced level of activity of the older person. Role loss, we can conclude, does have a negative impact on loneliness, but that impact can be mitigated by a homogeneous environment. We will examine this conclusion in terms of our small urban community.

Townsend (1963) indicated that social participation and loneliness are not necessarily connected. He reported from a sample of families in London that loneliness and social participation are related if there is a relative decline from the previous level of social interaction. Rosow (1967) seemed to confirm this conclusion when he reported that certain personality types seem to prefer relative isolation, and therefore are

not lonely as a result of low levels of social participation. Nonetheless, for those desiring and having experienced high levels of social participation, a decline in this pattern leads to loneliness. For our purposes then, we shall study the relationship between loneliness and social participation to determine whether or not the adjustment in social participation as one grows older significantly affects the loneliness of the person.

Kutner & others (1956) reported that those who tend to keep younger age group identifications tend also to have higher morale. Kuhlen (1959) reported that those who maintain a younger age group identification tend to withstand the threats and stresses that are associated with growing old. Blau (1956) found that those who maintain younger age group identification also tend to be better adjusted. Butler (1968) reported that the denial of aging changes is a useful tool for the older person against depression. Thus there does appear to be evidence that there is a relationship between loneliness and the age identification of the older person, a relationship that we shall examine in our study.

In summary, the availability of age mates and status similars does appear to bear a significant relationship to the loneliness or not of the older person. Moreover, as one adjusts to the loss of roles in his or her level of social participation, an impact is felt on the loneliness of the older person.

As we have looked at this brief review of some of the literature dealing with the possible social factors surrounding the aging individual, it becomes very evident that these social qualities have a very real bearing on the social participation, age identification and morale of persons involved. Age grading is a fact that does occur in our society, and the social setting appears to act both as a cause and effect of that

process. The cumulative evidence seems to indicate that the availability of age mates and those similar in status in the social setting in which one lives during the change or loss of roles becomes very important in determining how the person ages, how he identifies himself in that aging process and the level of his morale.

Much of the work done thus far on the relationship of the local social setting to the aging person has taken place in large urban settings, with availability being defined in terms of the particular segment of the community being studied, as in Rosow's concentration on apartment complexes. We propose to study the relative impact of the availability of age mates and status position in the residential setting of the small urban community where age density or homogeneity is relatively low. Rosow recognized the need for such an investigation as he spoke about future research.

First, among the specific issues is the replication of this study in neighborhoods or private homes, single and two-family dwellings, which simply have far fewer residents per unit of land than apartment buildings and apartment districts. The sheer ecology of settlement assures a lower concentration of people in a given space, regardless of their age. Even though the principles of association we have studied might still operate, the lower population concentration increases distances between persons, thins out and reduces the size of potential groups. Consequently, the sheer dispersal of older people might well nullify or seriously undermine the effective integrative power of their common status. While they might be a high proportion of a local population, sheer distance might prevent their customary interaction. This is significant because the big majority of aged live under these conditions. Roughly two-thirds of them own their homes and almost one-half of the renters, about one-sixth of the age group, rent houses. Accordingly, though our principles of integration may well be valid under conditions of high population density, they must be verified for areas of relatively thin concentrations of people.

Problem Statement

In the present study we propose to look first at several possible determinants of informal social participation. Specifically, we will

study the relationship between the availability of age mates and social participation. Availability is defined by the relative concentration of age mates around the older individual. The tendency for older people to affiliate with others similar in age to themselves has frequently been noted in the gerontological literature (eg., Rosow, 1967). We will also examine the relationship between the status variables, such as marital status, employment status, occupational status, length of residence in the neighborhood, home ownership, age and social participation. Such variables, we argue, may also be treated as indicators of relative accessibility to others. For example, Rosenberg (1968) found that living in neighborhoods where the statuses were dissimilar tended to isolate older people. In the analysis, the independent and the combined effects of these variables upon social participation will be studied. Finally, we shall study the effects of the loss of roles upon social participation by means of a role loss index.

Secondly, we shall examine the influence of several variables upon the age identification of older persons. Specifically, the relative effects of availability of age mates, the independent and combined effects of the status variables identified above and the impact of role loss on age identification will be studied. And since age identification does not stand alone, but is part of the total world of the older person, we shall study the interaction between social participation and age identification.

Thirdly, we shall look at the relative effects of availability of age mates, selected status variables and role loss upon expressed loneliness. And again, because loneliness does not stand alone, we shall study the interactions between social participation and expressed loneliness and age identification and expressed loneliness.

Statement of Hypotheses

In his work in Cleveland among apartment dwellers, Rosow (1967) hypothesized that the number of old people's local friends varied with the proportion of older neighbors. He found that friendships were formed among persons of similar status, notably that of age. The number of old peoples' local friends varied directly with the proportion of age peers. He established that even the most disadvantaged, in terms of role loss, could be integrated into friendship groups and interaction patterns by dense concentration of the elderly in an apartment complex. Rosow also found that regardless of the sheer number of friends, the aged selected overwhelmingly from older rather than younger neighbors. Thus, the proportion of aged in the immediate environment governed the relative size of the potential friendship field and actual friendships were concentrated among age peers disproportionately more as the sheer opportunity for such friendship increased. Bultena (1968) found that elderly male respondents had a substantially greater amount of face-to-face contact with age mates than with younger persons. Langford (1962) concluded from her study that visiting in a neighborhood takes place within an age framework as well as a spatial framework. There is a desire to have most of their friends from among other aged individuals. Therefore, it would appear that the more age homogeneous or dense the neighborhood, the greater the level of social interaction among the aged. Messer (1967) worked under the assumption that age concentration should be effective in providing greater interactional opportunities for those so inclined. He concludes that "...some evidence is presented that age-concentrated environments not only offer interactional opportunities but provide a normative system which may facilitate adjustment to old age." Using the null hypothesis, as a test of no relationship, we shall test the following statement:

1. There is no significant difference in the informal social participation of the aging individual by the availability of age mates in the residential neighborhood.

We find a series of factors that may account for the amount and type of social interaction engaged in by the aging person. Rosenberg (1968) found that occupational status had its impact on social participation. In the working class the role of the neighbor becomes more salient after retirement and patterns of friendship in the neighborhood become more closely linked to class related factors. Rosow (1967) found in Cleveland that there was a greater local dependency for friendships in the working class than in the middle class. For the working class, neighbors became a specific source of friendship and social life. He found the working class to be far more sensitive and vulnerable to variations in residential age composition in making and maintaining friendships than the middle class. However, Rosow found that even in the middle class, as roles are lost, residential age density becomes increasingly important for friendships.

Marital status was also found to have a bearing on social participation. Rosow (1967) found that the single and the widowed are significantly more responsive to density variation on participation patterns than are the married. Rosenberg (1968) found that "contextual dissonance," that is, status dissimilarities, which include marital status, accounted for isolation from friends among males over sixty-five in Philadelphia. Babchuk & Bates (1963) and Blau (1956) reported that in the social network of friends, married couples were looked upon as a unit. Therefore, the status of the marriage has a great impact on social relationships.

Rosow (1967) found that retirement had varying significance for the neighboring activity of the sexes. In the middle class, there was no

relationship between density by age and local social contacts of men regardless of their employment status. However, Rosow found that for self-supporting women whether they were working or retired did have a significant effect on their neighboring activities.

The sex of the person also has its bearing on social participation. Rosow (1967) found that with greater density, women's social activity increases more than men's. Increasingly, with greater concentration of old people, men deviate and women conform to the social composition of their neighbors.

Length of residence in the neighborhood was reported by Langford (1962) to have a bearing on social participation. Those who have lived in the neighborhood for a long time are familiar and stable. In those cases, the aged appear to be relatively indifferent to the age composition of the neighborhood. In contrast, when an aged person moves into a new community, the absence of people his or her own age may be a deterrent in making social contact and may lead to a desire for some degree of insulation from younger members of the community.

Therefore, in order to look at the relative effects of status variables upon social participation in our study, we shall test the following null hypothesis:

2. There is no significant difference in social participation by differences in one's social status.(1)

Rosow (1967) reported that as role loss grows, rising age density has a relatively greater impact in the middle than in the working class. In

(1) By "status" we shall have reference throughout this study to the following variables: sex, age, marital status, length of time lived in present residence, home ownership, retirement status and occupational status.

the working class, high role loss adds very little gain in high local contact produced by age density alone. In the middle class however, increased density by age has no effect whatever on the frequency of neighboring of those with low role loss. But those of the middle class who have lost many roles double their high local contact as age density rises. Therefore, to test the relationship between role loss and social participation in our sample, we shall test the following null hypothesis:

3. There is no significant difference in social participation by the loss of roles.

Rosow (1967) found in his Cleveland study that while residential density of age mates, that is, their immediate availability, stimulated age identification with their peers in the working class, it had absolutely no effect in the middle class. He found that role loss and residential concentration of age mates acted more like independent than interacting variables in age identification. He concluded that in terms of older self conceptions, residential density of the aged does not appear, in itself, to be a major determinate of age identification. Therefore, to relate these findings to our sample, we shall test the following null hypothesis:

4. There is no significant difference in the age identification of the aging person by the availability of age mates.

Rosow (1967) reported that the general loss of roles, other than health, does independently increase older self-images, especially in the middle class. In both classes, the crucial breaking point is two lost roles which marks the sharpest incremental increase in older self-

(2) Loss of roles in this study refers to an index of marital and retirement status.

conceptions. Rosow found that social class and role loss are the major determinates of age-identification. The prospective or actual losses of old age pose a greater discontinuity and threat to middle class than to working class people. The working class people identify themselves with their peers, while the middle class persons continue to separate themselves from their peers. With these findings in mind, we shall test the following null hypotheses:

5. There is no significant difference in age identification by differences in one's social status.
6. There is no significant difference in age identification by the loss of roles.

Rosow (1967), in the study of age identification as it relates to social participation, found that middle class persons are significantly less willing to associate with other aged people than simply to acknowledge that they feel old. This discrepancy between older self-perceptions and attitudes toward association with older persons is not pervasive among manual workers, but rather varies with their personal experience. The studies of Bell (1967) and Guptill (1969) have indicated that feeling old is inversely related to maintaining formal and informal social involvement. It is also known from Bell & Force (1956) that social participation is inversely related to class among the aged, as well as among the general population. We also know that with advancing age social participation generally declines, according to Blau (1961) and Rosow (1962). And finally, Rosow (1970) suggests that, with advancing age, group memberships are lost, social participation is diverted from formal to informal arenas, and social interaction is reduced from more to fewer associates. Therefore, we shall test the following null hypothesis:

7. There is no significant difference in age identification by the level of social participation of the aging person.

Turning to the area of the social determinants of loneliness among older people, let us first look at the relationship between availability of intimates and loneliness. Rosow (1967) reported that people's local dependency grows with the loss of roles as they age. Moreover, their reduced external participation is vital to their local involvement or alienation. Rosow also reported that there is no universal imperative for people to be embedded in local groups in order to be satisfied. He found that one has to be conscious of the life-history of the individual to determine the meaning and importance of friendship in his or her life. Townsend (1963) found in London that loneliness among the elderly was not necessarily the result of fewer social contacts, but the result of relative decline in the previous level of interaction. The desire for more friends is not simply a function of low interaction as such, but presumably of reduced contacts and the degree of change in an established pattern of life. To test the relationship between availability, social participation and loneliness in our sample, we shall examine the following null hypotheses:

8. There is no significant difference in the stated loneliness of the older person by the availability of age mates.
9. There is no significant difference in stated loneliness by the level of social participation of the aging person.

Rosow (1967) concluded from his study among large city apartment dwellers that there may be no effective substitute for the loss of any major social roles in old age. Strategies to relieve basic status loss in old age he sees as basically bankrupt. Thus status or role loss can

be very demoralizing. However, Rosow also found that the demoralizing effects of role loss depend on the personality type of the individual, that is, his or her desire for more friends or not. Therefore, in order to study this relationship between status variables and loneliness and role loss and loneliness in our sample, we shall test the following null hypothesis:

10. There is no significant difference in stated loneliness by differences in one's social status.

11. There is no significant difference in stated loneliness by the loss of roles.

Havighurst & Albrecht (1953) reported that subjective age is more closely related to adjustment than actual age. Those who maintain younger age group identification, Kutner & others (1956) reported, have higher morale. Kuhlén (1959) reported that younger age group identifications tend to withstand the threats and stresses of old age, thereby having a favorable impact on morale. Butler (1968) reported that denial of aging changes is a useful reparative measure against depression. In order to test these findings against our sample, we shall examine the following null hypothesis:

12. There is no significant difference in stated loneliness by the age identification of the aging person.

CHAPTER II
SETTING AND METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES
OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The data reported in this thesis was obtained by means of a partially structured interview schedule which was administered to a randomly selected sample of persons, fifty males and seventy-four females, sixty-five years of age and older. The respondents all lived within the city limits of Manhattan, Kansas, a community of approximately 27,000 population in north central Kansas. The sample provided an opportunity to study the social participation of older people in the context of the small urban community.

This chapter deals with the characteristics of the sample, the interview schedule, the concepts and indices employed and the methods of analysis that were used.

The Sample and the Population

There were 2194 people sixty-five years of age and older living in Manhattan according to the 1970 United States Census of Population. This number represents approximately 7.7 percent of the total population of Manhattan. Selection procedures were utilized to obtain a sample of 125 respondents whose characteristics would represent to a maximum extent the characteristics of the total population sixty-five and older. The most recent available edition of the Manhattan City Directory and information provided by the Riley County Assessors office were used to enumerate those persons sixty-five and older living in the Manhattan community.

The enumeration, while complete, did contain certain sources of error. Since the County Assessor records for 1972 were not available, the 1971 records were employed in completing the enumeration. This

meant that for reasons of death or changes in residence some of the respondents might not be available for interviewing. Moreover, in a number of cases persons indicated that they were twenty-one plus years of age. Information from the City Directory led us to believe that these were persons who were actually sixty-five years or older and were included in the enumeration. In some cases we were mistaken. Accordingly, we anticipated a possibly large degree of attrition in the sample. Finally, a sample pool of 175 persons was randomly selected from the lists. This represented considerably more older people than the 125 we desired to interview, but was done in an attempt to correct for the effects of attrition in the sample.

Of the 175 people randomly selected for the study 51 did not participate. The study population therefore consisted of 124 respondents. Table 1 gives the reasons why 51 respondents failed to participate. It

TABLE 1

REASONS FOR ATTRITION, 51 RESPONDENTS

Reasons for Attrition	Male	Female	Both Sexes
Too ill to be interviewed	2	5	7
Moved away or out of city	3	5	8
Could not be contacted	2	1	3
Died	3	3	6
Refused to be interviewed	<u>11</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>27</u>
Totals	21	30	51

will be noted that 27 respondents refused to be interviewed. The number of refusals is larger than we would have liked. To some degree the refusal rate may be attributed to early difficulties in the study, namely, determining exactly those over sixty-five years of age. Refusals declined markedly as the study progressed. Nonetheless, a degree of caution is

advised regarding the data since precisely if and how those who refused differ from those who consented to be interviewed is not known. It will also be noted that seven persons were too sick to participate in the study and that six respondents died prior to being contacted.

We shall now look to a comparison of the study population with the total population of Manhattan, sixty-five years of age and older, to determine the extent to which conclusions about the study population can be generalized to the total population.

A comparison by age and sex of the two populations is shown in Table 2. Age and sex composition of the study population closely resembles that of the total population sixty-five and older. It will be noted that small differences in the specific age categories combine to produce

TABLE 2

STUDY POPULATION COMPARED WITH TOTAL
POPULATION 65 AND OLDER BY AGE AND SEX
(Percent of Total 65 and Older)

Age Groups	Study Population			Total Population*		
	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes
65 - 69	22.0	31.3	27.5	32.1	28.1	29.5
70 - 74	30.0	23.0	25.7	25.9	26.8	26.5
75 - 79	26.0	21.7	23.3	20.0	20.2	20.1
80 - 84	12.0	17.7	15.2	12.5	14.2	13.5
85 & Over	10.0	7.0	8.0	9.5	10.8	10.3
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	50	74	125	795	1399	2194
Percent of Total	40.3	59.7	100.0	36.2	63.8	100.0

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1970 Census of Population: 1970/General Population Characteristics, Kansas, p. 92, Table 28, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

a somewhat larger proportion of men in the study population (40.3 percent) than was in the total population (36.2 percent). Moreover, the sample contained slightly too few men in the 65-69 age category and slightly too many men in the 70-79 age brackets. Women were somewhat overrepresented

in the 65-69 age category and underrepresented in the 70-74 age category.

The study population is compared with the total population of older people in Manhattan with respect to race, nativity, employment status, percent living at or below the poverty line, percent receiving social security benefits and percent receiving old age assistance in Table 3.

TABLE 3

STUDY POPULATION COMPARED WITH TOTAL POPULATION 65 AND OLDER BY RACE, NATIVITY, EMPLOYMENT STATUS, PERCENT LIVING AT OR BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL, RECEIPT OF SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS, RECEIPTS OF OLD AGE ASSISTANCE

Characteristic	Percent of the Total 65 and Over	
	Study Population (n = 124)	Total Population* (n = 2194)
Race		
White	98.4	98.2
Black	1.6	1.8
Nativity		
Native Born	96.8	97.8
Foreign Born	3.2	2.2
Employment Status		
Employed	31.7	27.2
Not Employed	68.3	72.8
Poverty Status	10.1	9.7
Receiving Social Security	89.6	80.0
Receiving Old Age Assistance	2.6	2.0**

*Source for race same as Table 2, see Table 28, p. 92, for nativity, employment status, poverty status and receipt of Social Security Benefits see U.S. Bureau of Census, 1970. General Social and Economic Characteristics, Kansas, Table 102, p. 314; Table 104, p. 320; Table 107, p. 329; respectively.

**Information received from the Riley County Social Welfare Office.

These comparisons like those presented in Table 2 show that the two populations resemble each other in some respects and that they differ to some extent in other respects. In general however, and for the purposes of this study, the differences do not appear large enough to render the comparisons of the study to the total population invalid.

The Interview Schedule

The interview schedule was developed jointly in a Methods of Social Research class by the instructor, the students and local consultants. The final form of the instrument represents an effort to simplify and shorten preliminary drafts. It reflects the examination of a number of similar interview schedules and questionnaires used in other studies as well as trial tests of the schedule conducted by members of the class with older people in the community.

The interview was designed to obtain information about ten area's affecting the lives of most older people.

Health and Physical Status	Social Relationships
Work	Family and Living Arrangements
Retirement	Leisure Time Activities
Financial Security	Religion
Living Quarters	The Community

Each of the ten sections of the schedule was designed to:

1. Define the older person's situation.

For example: Is he working or retired from work? How much leisure time does he have and what does he do with his leisure time? Does he have any friends? How much income does he have? What is his health status?

2. Explore the effect of the situation upon the older person's living:

What is the effect of poor health upon activity? How does income affect the older person's living? What kinds of situations are produced by different kinds of living arrangements?

3. Determine what the older person thinks his requirements to be:

What does he think he needs to improve his health (?) to use his

leisure time satisfactorily (?) to be financially secure? Does the older person want to work? Why? Does he want to change his living quarters?

The interview schedule contained questions of two types: (1) multiple choice and (2) open-ended. In the former, the respondent was presented with a number of alternative responses. He was asked to identify the response which best described his situation or attitude. The open-ended type allowed the individual to make whatever response he wished, and the interviewer recorded his reply verbatim.

At the conclusion the interviewer was asked to complete an "interviewer rating form" in which he assessed the attitude of the older person toward the interview, any difficulties the respondent had in answering or understanding the questions asked, and special problems associated with completing the interview. These statements were useful as indicators of the amount of confidence which could be placed in the data that had been obtained.

The interviews themselves were carried out by members of the Methods of Social Research class and several volunteers from the community. Before initiating interviews each of the field workers completed training sessions of two to three hours duration conducted by the principal investigator. Each interviewer was required to complete at least one trial interview with an older person as a means of familiarizing him or herself more fully with the instrument upon field conditions. Interviewers were provided with a letter of introduction and a copy of a newspaper article announcing the study to assist them in introducing themselves and enlisting the participation of the respondent. If the respondent could not be contacted on the first visit, the interviewer was asked to

make three contacts before the respondent would be placed in the "no contact" category.

Concepts and Indices

Social participation refers to informal social participation, which is operationalized as the interaction with family, relatives, friends and neighbors. A total social participation score was arrived at by using the social participation index of Rosencranz, Pihlblad and McNevin(1968).

Essentially, this procedure involved cumulating points for the amount and the kind of social contact each respondent experienced: 1) with children, 2) with relatives, and 3) with friends. Weighting of items was employed to differentiate between, and accord more importance to, face to face contacts than to telephone and letter communication with others. For each respondent this provided a numerical score which reflected total informal participation.

Secondly, as a way of cancelling out the fact that higher scores might accrue to those respondents having access to more children and relatives, an adjusted score was obtained by dividing by the total number of children, relatives, and friends. This measure was termed the Adjusted Informal Participation Score.

Neighbor social participation was determined separately from total social participation and its components of family, relatives and friends, as the only indices of participation we had for neighbors was face to face interaction. The neighbor social participation score was arrived at by multiplying the number of neighbors identified by the frequency of contact. Daily contact was assigned a score of five, weekly - four, two or three times a month - three, monthly - two, less than monthly - one. Those who indicated that they had no neighbors were treated as missing values.

Age density of the residential neighborhood designates the percentage of households within a census tract with a person or persons sixty-five years or older living in said household. There are thirty-two such census

tracts within the city limits of Manhattan. The determination of the percentage of households with someone sixty-five or older was obtained from the 1970 United States Census. These census tract areas were grouped into four categories: Low Density of aged population included the percentages between 4.4% and 10.4% (N = 8); Medium Low Density included the percentages between 12.3% and 18.7% (N = 8); Medium High Density of aged population included the census tracts with percentages between 19.3% and 23.2% (N = 8); High Density of aged population included the census tracts with the percentages ranging from 24.4% to 30.4% (N = 8). The breakdown of the proportion of households with older people into four groupings was based on the fourfold breakdown proposed by Rosow in his Cleveland study of apartment elderly. However, it must be noted that the comparison stops there as Rosow's percentages of density ranged from 1% to 50+%. We simply do not deal with the high density that Rosow found in the apartment complexes. Beyond keeping the four groups even in terms of the number of census tracts in each category, we used this breakdown to keep from lumping the highest and lowest density areas in with the more general medium high and medium low density areas, as we felt that there might be significant differences in the respondents in the far ends of the density scale.

Socio-economic class was determined by the occupational status of the respondent. The NAM scale was employed to divide respondents into white and blue collar configurations. Included in white collar jobs were the following: 1) professional, technical and kindred workers; 2) managers, officials and proprietors; 3) clerical and sales workers. Blue collar workers included the following: 1) craftsmen, foremen and kindred workers; 2) service workers; 3) operative and kindred workers;

4) laborers; 5) farmers and farm managers; 6) farm laborers and foremen. Those who identified themselves as housewives, meaning that they had so spent the major portion of their lives in terms of time and energy, were identified in socio-economic class by the occupation of their spouse. The rationale for this interpretation was that occupational status of the husband describes family, as well as individual, status, as was indicated by Babchuk and Bates (1963).

Marital status is defined in terms of three categories; 1) presently married; 2) widowed; 3) single, meaning never married.

Work status refers to whether or not the person is presently employed. In our study we employed three categories of work status: 1) working presently; 2) retired; 3) housewife, meaning she has spent the major portion of her life as such. Again, if the respondent identified herself as a housewife, she was identified by the work status of her spouse. Retirement or not would again seem to be a household, as well as individual, phenomenon.

Loneliness was determined subjectively, that is, as perceived by the respondent. If the respondent perceived him or herself as frequently or occasionally lonely, he or she was identified as lonely. If the respondent perceived him or herself as never lonely, he or she was identified as not lonely. The subjective perception of the respondent was determined by a direct question to the respondent: "Are you ever lonely?"

Age identification was determined subjectively, that is, in response to the question, "In which age group would you place yourself?" The responses to this close-ended question were: 1) old; 2) middle-aged; 3) elderly; 4) other.

Length of residence in the neighborhood was determined by how long the respondent had lived in the residence that he presently occupied.

The median length of residency for the entire population was used to dichotomize the sample into long and short term residence. Long term residence was described as sixteen years or more of living in the respondent's present residence. Short term residence was described as zero to fifteen years in the present residence.

Role loss was determined by the combination of work (retirement) and marital status. Thus, role loss ranged from zero to two.

Statistical Analysis

The theoretical problem posed in this study concern the impact of availability and role change on the social participation, age identification and loneliness of older people. The sample frame involves older people in the small urban community of Manhattan. The sample attempts to be representative by the use of random sampling. The problem involved in the study is to determine if the respondents were affected in their relationships by availability of age mates and status roles, and how predictable this relationship was to the larger population.

In the measures employed, dichotomous variables were evaluated by the Chi-Square test of significance, as it was perceived as the most appropriate test in these cases. Continuous variables were evaluated by the use of the Least Squares Analysis of Variance. The analysis of variance was used to determine if there were any statistically significant differences in the mean scores of social participation as they related to availability and the status variables. Social participation was considered as essentially a continuous variate and any partitioning of its range could have resulted in some loss of information. Moreover, using the dichotomized approach to social participation in its interactions would have resulted in nine two-way tables and thirty-six three-way tables. While each is simple to analyze and interpret, the forty-

five results would be difficult to interpret in total. We chose therefore to do an analysis of variance to test whether each factor of availability and status would be used to account for variation in social participation. Limitations on the number of terms which can be included in the program used precluded simultaneously measuring all main effects and first order interactions.

The accepted level of significance was $p \leq .05$. Null hypotheses were explicitly stated and tested. This was done in that in the actual analysis each test of significance is considered as an evaluation of no association. Moreover, the null hypotheses were used for ease in relating to the literature from which the hypotheses were drawn.

CHAPTER III
PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION
OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, descriptive data on aging persons in Manhattan is presented. Specifically, we look at descriptive data which will be studied more in detail in this chapter. The second section analyzes the relationship of social participation to the availability of age mates, the status of the person, and role loss among older persons. The third section deals with the relationship between age identification and the availability of age mates, status of the person, role loss and social participation. The fourth section examines the effects of availability of age mates, status and role loss as they relate to loneliness. The impact of social participation on loneliness will also be discussed, as well as the interaction of age identification and loneliness.

Descriptive Information

In our sample of one hundred and twenty-four respondents, fifty were male and seventy-four were female. The median age of the sample population was seventy-three. Seventy-four of the respondents were married, forty-two widowed and eight had never married. The median educational level of our sample was the completion of high school. As seen in Table 4, nearly three fourths of the persons interviewed were born in Kansas. Table 5 shows that three-fourths of the respondents had lived in Manhattan for twenty or more years, indicating a very stable population. Ninety percent of the respondents lived in houses, including either single

TABLE 4
BIRTHPLACE OF RESPONDENTS

Where Born	Male	Female	Both Sexes
This Community	6.0	5.4	5.6
This County	16.0	10.8	12.9
In Kansas	54.0	54.1	54.0
In U.S.A.	20.0	27.0	24.2
Another Country	<u>4.0</u>	<u>2.7</u>	<u>3.2</u>
Total Percent	100.0 (50)	100.0 (74)	100.0 (124)

TABLE 5
LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN MANHATTAN

Years of Residence	Male	Female	Both Sexes
0 - 4	6.0	6.8	4.8
5 - 9	10.0	5.4	7.3
10 - 19	16.0	10.8	12.9
20 and more	68.0	71.6	70.2
All my life	<u>4.0</u>	<u>5.4</u>	<u>4.8</u>
Total Percent	100.0 (50)	100.0 (74)	100.0 (124)

dwelling units or with apartments as part of the house. As indicated in Table 6, fifty percent of the respondents had lived in their present

TABLE 6
LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN PRESENT RESIDENCE

Years Lived in Residence	Male	Female	Both Sexes
Less than 1 year	----	2.7	1.6
1 - 2	----	9.5	5.6
3 - 5	8.0	14.9	12.1
6 - 10	16.0	6.8	10.5
11 - 15	18.0	20.3	19.4
16 and more	<u>58.0</u>	<u>45.9</u>	<u>50.8</u>
Total Percent	100.0 (50)	100.0 (74)	100.0 (124)

residence for sixteen or more years. As in Table 7, approximately eighty percent of the respondents owned their own homes. Ninety per-

TABLE 7

HOME OWNERSHIP OF RESPONDENTS

Home Ownership	Married	Widowed	Single	All persons
Own	89.2	66.7	(4)	79.0
Rent	6.8	26.2	(3)	15.3
Live with relatives	2.7	4.8	---	3.2
Other	<u>1.4</u>	<u>2.4</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>2.4</u>
Total Percent	100.0 (74)	100.0 (42)	--- (8)	100.0 (124)

cent of the respondents preferred, if a choice were present, to continue to live in their present residence and neighborhood. This would be indicated by the stability attached to ownership and long term residence in a particular neighborhood. Approximately thirty percent of the respondents reported that they lived alone. Fifty-four percent had one person living with them, and eighty-five percent of the time that one person was identified as the spouse. Approximately fifty-two percent of the respondents would consider living in a nursing home, meaning that nearly one-half of the respondents would not consider such a living arrangement.

As seen in Table 8, thirty-four percent of our respondents held white collar lifetime occupations. Approximately thirty percent of the respondents were blue collar workers, with the remainder being housewives. As in Table 9, the majority of the respondents in our sample were retired. The median age for retirement was sixty-five. Twenty-nine percent of the retired did so because of age and thirty-six retired because they wanted to. Seventeen percent retired for reasons of health. Thirty-one percent of our respondents were still working at the time of the

TABLE 8
OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

Usual Occupation	Males	Females	Both Sexes
Professional	24.0	8.2	14.6
Managerial and Proprietor	22.0	1.4	9.8
Clerical and Sales	8.0	15.1	12.2
Craftsman - Foreman	16.0	5.5	9.8
Service	2.0	12.3	8.1
Operatives	6.0	2.7	4.1
Laborers	4.0	----	1.6
Agriculture	18.0	----	7.3
Armed Forces	----	1.4	0.8
Housewife	----	53.4	31.7
Total Percent	100.0 (50)	100.0 (73)	100.0 (123)

TABLE 9
RETIREMENT STATUS

Retirement status	Male	Female	Both Sexes
Retired	90.0	71.8	82.9
Not Retired	10.0	28.2	17.1
Total Percent	100.0 (50)	100.0 (32)*	100.0 (82)

*Does not include forty-two housewives who had never been gainfully employed.

interview, either because they had not yet retired or because they had taken on another job upon retirement from their major lifetime occupation. For those still working, the median amount of hours of work per week is thirty. Thirty-four percent of the retired would have kept working if they could have, while the remainder appear content in their retirement. Seventy-two percent of our respondents were satisfied enough with their major life employment that they would have chosen it again if they had had the chance.

The median number of close friends was reported by our respondents

to be slightly over three. Nine percent of the respondents, as in Table 10, reported that they had no close friends. The median length of time

TABLE 10

CLOSE FRIENDS OF RESPONDENTS

<u>Had Close Friends</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Both Sexes</u>
Yes	91.1	90.4	90.7
No	<u>8.9</u>	<u>9.6</u>	<u>9.3</u>
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(45)	(74)	(118)*

*Six persons did not respond to the question.

that the respondents had know their friends was between ten and twenty years. The median age of the friends was between sixty-one and sixty-five years of age, indicating that friends were close to the same age as the respondents. Approximately eighty percent of their friends lived in Manhattan and thirty-five percent lived in the neighborhood. Approximately thirty percent of the respondents who report to have friends, never talk to the persons they consider to be their three closest friends. However, many friends are reported to live at a distance, which would put limitations on interaction. Approximately sixty-seven percent of the respondents do not share confidences with their three closest friends.

The median number of living children reported by the respondents in our sample is approximately two. As seen in Table 11, most of the families are no larger than four children. Only eight percent of the respondents reported five or more children. In fifty-four percent of the cases the oldest child lived in another state, while sixteen percent of the oldest children lived in this community. Fifty-two percent of those with a second child reported that this child lived in another state, as did

TABLE 11

LIVING CHILDREN OF RESPONDENTS

No. of Living Children	Absolute Frequency	Percentage
0	30	24.2
1	23	18.5
2	26	21.0
3	20	16.1
4	14	11.3
5 or more	<u>11</u>	<u>8.8</u>
Total	124	100.0

fifty-three percent of the third children. However, the respondents reported that ordinarily at least one of their children lived close by. The median level of visits to children was between one and six or more times a year. The median level of visits from children was six or more times a year. Telephone contact with children was reported at a median level of two or three times a month. Other contact, mainly by letter, was reported at a median level of between weekly to two or three times a month.

The median number of living brothers and sisters was reported at 1.5. Twenty-six of the respondents reported having no living brothers or sisters. Over fifty percent of the brothers and sisters, for those who have such, live in Kansas, and between fifteen and nineteen percent live in the Manhattan community. Living brothers and sisters were visited with the same frequency as children, that is, between one to six times a year. Approximately twenty percent of those with living brothers and sisters report that they never visit nor are visited by their brothers or sisters.

Forty-two percent of the sample reported no other relatives, such

as in-laws or neices or nephews. Over one-half of those who do have other relatives, report that these relatives live within the state of Kansas. Contact in visiting ranges from six times a year to not having visited in the past year.

Thirty-three percent of the respondents report that they have no neighbors, meaning none that they consider themselves to be close to socially. The median number of neighbors was reported to be between one and two (1.5), as in Table 12. The median age of neighbors was re-

TABLE 12

NEIGHBORS OF RESPONDENT

<u>No. of Neighbors</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Both Sexes</u>
0	29.8	35.6	33.3
1	8.5	20.5	15.8
2	17.0	12.3	14.2
3	12.8	13.7	13.3
4	21.3	9.6	14.2
5 or more	<u>10.6</u>	<u>8.3</u>	<u>9.2</u>
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(47)	(73)	(120)*

*Four persons did not respond.

ported to be fifty-six to sixty year of age. For those who reported to have neighbors that they were close to, contact was reported to be high, ranging from seventy to ninety percent stating that they had weekly or more contact with their neighbors.

Regardless of whether they had any contact or not, eighty-nine percent of the respondents felt that their contact with friends was about right. Only ten percent felt that such contact was too infrequent. Twenty-two percent of the respondents said that they would prefer to have more friends. Twenty-eight percent of those with children report

that their contact with children was about right. Eighty-eight percent felt that their contact with neighbors was about right, despite the fact that many respondents report having no neighbors. Only eleven percent felt that their contact with neighbors was too infrequent.

Slightly over one-half of the respondents view themselves as old or elderly, as seen in Table 13. Forty-four percent of the group viewed

TABLE 13

AGE IDENTIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS

Age Identification	Male	Female	Both Sexes
Old	28.6	31.5	30.3
Middle-Aged	46.9	42.5	44.3
Elderly	20.4	20.5	20.5
Other	2.0	4.1	3.3
Don't Know	2.0	1.4	1.6
Total Percent	100.0 (49)	100.0 (73)	100.0 (122)*

*Two persons did not respond.

themselves as middle-aged. Those who responded in this way included persons in their eighties and nineties. Men (46.9%) were slightly more likely to view themselves as middle-aged than women (42.5%). Married persons (49.3%) were considerably more likely than widowed persons (34.1%) to respond in this manner. The data shows a trend toward decreasing frequency in identifying with middle-aged status as chronological age increases.

Approximately one-half of the sample reported feeling lonely frequently or occasionally, as reported in Table 14. Nearly one in ten of the older persons reported that they were frequently lonely. Women were more likely than men to report feelings of loneliness, as were widowed persons when compared to married persons. The loneliest persons in our sample were

those who had experienced the loss of a spouse.

TABLE 14

LONELINESS OF RESPONDENTS

<u>Do You Ever Feel Lonely</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Both Sexes</u>
Frequently	4.1	13.7	9.8
Occasionally	28.6	38.4	34.4
Never	<u>67.3</u>	<u>47.9</u>	<u>55.7</u>
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(49)	(73)	(122)*

*Two persons did not respond.

We can conclude that the respondents in our sample are a fairly well educated group. They appear to be quite stable, having deep roots in Kansas and Manhattan. The majority of the respondents are not living alone. The respondents were fairly evenly divided between white and blue collar workers. The majority of respondents were retired. Almost all the respondents report a number of friends, and these friends live close. The majority of the respondents have children, though many of these children live at a distance, thus limiting their interaction. For those who have neighbors that they are close to, there is a high amount of contact. Most seemed satisfied with the contact that they had with friends, neighbors and family. One-half of the respondents view themselves as old or elderly, but over one-half report that they are not lonely as they grow older.

Social Participation and Aging

In this section we examine the relationship between social participation and the availability of age mates in the neighborhood. After examining the total social participation of the respondent, we shall look separately at family, friend, kin and neighbor social participation

as they relate to the age availability of the neighborhood. Secondly, we shall examine the relationship between status variables and total social participation in their direct effects. The interactions of the status variables will also be reviewed in their relationship to social participation. Thirdly, we shall examine the relationship between role loss and social participation.

Availability and social participation.--Human beings interact with one another. This is a process that begins at birth and continues at various levels of intensity until death. As we have seen earlier, this process of interaction in its level and intensity is somewhat dependent on the personality of the individual involved. However, there are limitations placed on personal choice by the local social setting in which this interaction takes place. Our study examined some of the possible variables in the local social setting which might have an important bearing on social participation, especially for older people.

One of these variables, identified from previous research, that has an impact on the level of social participation of older persons is the availability of age mates in the local social setting. Rosow (1967) and Rosenberg (1968) both found that similarities in age in the social context of the neighborhood in which the older person lived enhanced the chances for a higher level of social participation by that older person. Friends are selected primarily from the same age group, and when they are available in the neighborhood, the chances for a greater amount of social participation is present as well. Therefore, we tested the following null hypothesis:

1. There is no significant difference in the informal social

participation of the aging individual by the availability of age mates in the residential neighborhood.

The availability of age mates in the neighborhood was determined by the percentage of households within a census tract having a person or persons over sixty-five living within them, as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau in the 1970 census. There are thirty-two of these census tracts within the city limits of Manhattan, with age density ranging from 4.4% to 30.4%. As seen in Table 15, using the statistical technique of least squares analysis of variance, we found no statistically significant differences in social participation between the density areas. The direct effects of availability of age mates upon social participation were slight. The highest mean level of social participation was found in the medium low age density area, but it did not differ significantly from social participation in any other density area.

We also examined the interaction effects of availability of age mates with the other status variables upon total social participation. As seen in Table 15, the impact of these interactions does not noticeably alter the effects of age density upon social participation. The lone exception appears to be the age density-home ownership interaction. In this particular instance, the mean level of social participation was noticeably higher among the non-home owners than among the home owners, regardless of age density, with the exception of the highest age dense areas. Also, among non-home owners we encountered a larger standard error than among the home owners, indicating that non-home owners tend to be a more heterogeneous group. The conclusion we draw is that home ownership to some degree, does interact with the age density of the neighborhood in determining the level of total social participation for the older person.

TABLE 15

AVAILABILITY & SOCIAL PARTICIPATION (1)

Availability & Total Social Participation (2)			Availability & Family Social Participation (2)		
Source	F-Ratio	Probability	Source	F-Ratio	Probability
Density	0.34	0.79	Density	3.79	0.01
Density by			Density by		
Sex of Respondent	0.14	0.93	Sex of Respondent	1.36	0.26
Density by			Density by		
Marital Status	0.02	0.99	Marital Status	3.40	0.02
Density by			Density by		
Length of Residence	0.03	0.99	Length of Residence	0.13	0.94
Density by			Density by		
Home Ownership	1.65	0.18	Home Ownership	1.98	0.12
Density by			Density by		
Retirement	0.53	0.65	Retirement	1.24	0.29
Density by			Density by		
Occupational Status	0.32	0.80	Occupational Status	1.48	0.22

(1) d.f. = 3 in all comparisons made in this table.

(2) F-Ratio and Probability scores are drawn from the analysis of variance tables in which we tested the statistical significance of a number of status variables, including availability of age mates with social participation. Due to the limitations of the least squares analysis of variance program, only a limited number of age density with status variable interactions could be studied at one time, rather than a total interaction. Therefore, with the choice of variables used in each analysis, the effects of age density on social participation may vary slightly.

TABLE 15 - Continued.

Availability & Kin Social Participation (2)			Availability & Friend Social Participation (2)		
Source	F-Ratio	Probability	Source	F-Ratio	Probability
Density	0.54	0.65	Density	0.35	0.78
Density by			Density by		
Sex of Respondent	1.25	0.29	Sex of Respondent	0.45	0.71
Density by			Density by		
Marital Status	0.44	0.72	Marital Status	1.05	0.37
Density by			Density by		
Length of Residence	0.87	0.45	Length of Residence	0.47	0.70
Density by			Density by		
Ownership	0.81	0.48	Ownership	1.08	0.36
Density by			Density by		
Retirement	0.28	0.83	Retirement	0.13	0.93
Density by			Density by		
Occupational Status	0.76	0.51	Occupational Status	0.93	0.42

Availability & Neighbor Social Participation (2)		
Source	F-Ratio	Probability
Density	1.15	0.33
Density by		
Sex of Respondent	0.78	0.50
Density by		
Marital Status	0.33	0.79
Density by		
Length of Residence	0.44	0.72
Density by		
Ownership	0.39	0.75
Density by		
Retirement	2.49	0.06
Density by		
Occupational Status	0.31	0.81

Breaking down the concept of total social participation, we shall examine it in its component elements, that is the relationship of family, relative, friend and neighbor social participation levels with the availability of age mates in the neighborhood.

As is indicated in Table 15, differences in the availability of age mates influences family social participation at the .01 level of significance. With the exception of the lowest age density areas, the level of participation with the family increases as the availability of age mates in the neighborhood decreases. Thus, it appears that the family becomes more important as a means of social interaction as there are less age mates available, except in the areas of lowest age density.

The interaction of age density and marital status is significant at the .02 level for family social participation. In the areas of lowest age density, that is, from 4 to 10 percent, widowed respondents had twice the mean level of family participation of married respondents. Not having a spouse to socialize with, and few fellow aged persons immediately available, the widowed person appears to turn to his or her family for social interaction. The interaction of age density and home ownership points clearly in the direction of a statistically significant relationship with family social participation. In this case, those who owned their own homes consistently reported a higher mean level of family social participation than did the non-home owners. Thus, while those who do not own their own homes report a higher mean level of total social participation, as we saw earlier, home ownership as it interacts with age density does contributed to a higher level of family social participation.

Kin social participation was not significantly influenced by the

availability of age mates, as reported in Table 15. The data indicated that the higher the level of age density of the neighborhood, the lower is the level of kin social participation. However, the differences were not statistically reliable. Likewise, none of the interactions between the status variables and age density showed significant differences in kin social participation. Only the interaction of sex and age density suggests a possible relationship. Males reported a higher mean level of kin social participation than did the females irregardless of the age density of the neighborhood. Thus, it appears that sex is a more important indicator of kin social participation than age density.

As reported in Table 15, no statistically reliable differences in friend social participation were observed either when examining the direct effects of age density or its interactions with the status variables. The areas of medium high and medium low age density report higher mean levels of friend social participation than either the highest or lowest areas of age density, but the differences were not large enough to be statistically significant. In studying the interaction of marital status and age density, as they relate to friend social participation, we find that married respondents had consistently higher mean levels of friend social participation than did the non-married, with the exception of the areas of medium low density where the married and the non-married were practically identical in friend social participation. Also, it appears that non-home ownership in areas of medium high and medium low age density does contribute to a higher level of friend social participation than that engaged in by home owners in those same areas. However, neither marital status nor home ownership in their interactions with age density bears a statistically significant relationship to friend social

participation.

As shown in Table 15, the direct effect of age density upon participation with neighbors was statistically unreliable. The highest mean level of neighbor social participation was reported in the areas of medium low age density, while the areas of medium high age density report the lowest mean level of social participation. There is variation in the mean levels of neighbor social participation by the age density of the areas, but there is no consistent order. This calls into question the importance of age density on neighbor social participation. The only interaction of a status variable with age density that has a statistically significant impact, at the .06 level, on neighbor social participation is that of retirement. No consistent pattern was observed however.

The conclusion we reach is that we cannot reject the null hypothesis as there appears to be no statistically significant differences in mean levels of total informal social participation of the aging individual and the availability of age mates in the residential neighborhood. The only statistically significant difference in mean scores of social participation was discovered between the availability of age mates and family social participation. And in this case, the relationship was generally inverse, meaning that as there were fewer age mates available, the respondents interacted increasingly with the family, with the exception of the areas of lowest age density. The interaction of home ownership and age density in its impact appeared to vary with the group the respondent was interacting with. In family social participation, home ownership was important for higher mean levels of social participation, regardless of age density. However, for total and friend social participation, non-home ownership contributed to greater amounts of social participation,

irregardless of age density. Thus, while availability of age mates appears to have a limited impact on social participation, with the important exception of family social participation, its interactions with the other status variables, such as home ownership, points to statuses and roles that may be very significant for the social participation patterns of older persons.

Status variables and social participation.--We turn now to the relationship between the status variables and social participation in the setting of the small urban community. As we saw earlier, the amount and type of social interaction engaged in by the aging person depends to a great extent of factors other than just the availability of age mates. Previous research has shown that occupational status, retirement status, marital status, sex, home ownership and length of residence in the neighborhood can all have a bearing on the social interaction patterns of older people. Therefore, in an effort to test these status or role variables in the small urban community, we stated and tested the following null hypothesis:

2. There is no significant difference in social participation by differences in one's social status.

The direct effects of each of the status variables upon total social participation is reported in Table 16. Only the status variable of length of residence in the neighborhood reported a statistically reliable difference in social participation ($p \leq .001$). Age of the respondent approaches significance ($p \leq .07$). In the instance of length of residence in the present dwelling, we found, contrary to expectations, that those who had lived in their present residences fifteen years or less had significantly higher mean levels of total social participation than did

TABLE 16

STATUS VARIABLES & SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
Direct Effects (1)

	Sex of Respondent		Marital Status		Length of Residence		Home Ownership	
	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.
Total S.P.	0.04	0.82	1.19	0.27	8.38	0.001	1.36	0.24
Residual = 100								
Total = 111								
Family S.P.	0.25	0.61	1.23	0.27	1.09	0.29	5.30	0.02
Residual = 79								
Total = 90								
Kin S.P.	0.62	0.43	2.85	0.09	0.56	0.45	0.04	0.84
Residual = 89								
Total = 100								
Friend S.P.	0.10	0.75	4.11	0.04	2.85	0.09	0.18	0.66
Residual = 85								
Total = 96								
Neighbor S.P.	0.98	0.32	0.12	0.72	1.22	0.27	0.25	0.61
Residual = 60								
Total = 71								

(1) d.f. = 1 in all comparisons made in this table.

TABLE 16 - Continued.

	Retirement Status		Occupational Status		Age of Respondent	
	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.
Total S.P.	0.42	0.51	0.46	0.49	3.27	0.07
Residual = 100						
Total = 111						
Family S.P.	0.52	0.47	3.78	0.05	0.001	0.98
Residual = 79						
Total = 90						
Kin S.P.	0.23	0.62	0.02	0.88	0.48	0.48
Residual = 89						
Total = 100						
Friend S.P.	0.42	0.51	0.12	0.72	4.17	0.04
Residual = 85						
Total = 96						
Neighbor S.P.	0.54	0.46	1.49	0.22	1.02	0.31
Residual = 60						
Total = 71						

those respondents who had lived in their present residences for sixteen or more years. This may be at least partially explained by the cumulative effects of age, widowhood and retirement. The long term residents would be more likely to be the older respondents who are experiencing the effects of these status changes with the resulting slowing down and isolation. The younger members of the age cohort, who would still be more socially active, would be more likely to be the short term residents, that is, fifteen years or less. Home ownership ($p \leq .24$) and marital status ($p \leq .27$) both appear to have some influence on social participation. Both those who are married and those who own their own homes report a higher mean level of total social participation than those who are widowed and are non-home owners.

We turn now to the interaction of the status variables with family social participation. As Table 16 shows, significant differences in family social participation were observed by home ownership ($p \leq .02$) and occupational status ($p \leq .05$). Those who owned their own homes had a significantly higher mean level of family social participation than the non-home owners. Blue collar workers had a significantly higher level of family social participation than did white collar workers. As Rosow noted, the social participation of blue collar workers seems to be more family and locally centered. Our data would seem to confirm that conclusion.

No statistically significant differences in kin social participation were observed under any of the variables examined. Marital status, however, appeared to have some influence upon participation with kin ($p \leq .09$), as married respondents reported a higher level of kin social participation

than did the widowed. Therefore, it would appear that the change in marital status does indeed disrupt the social relationship with kin.

The analysis revealed statistically reliable differences in friend social participation by marital status ($p \leq .04$) and age ($p \leq .04$). Those persons who were still married had a significantly higher level of friend social participation than did the widowed. We may be dealing with a number of interacting effects, including the fact that the widowed may be older. However, the fact remains that disruption of marriage does have its impact on social relationships with friends. The older the person, the more he appears to interact with friends. Length of residence of the respondent also seems to influence participation with friends ($p \leq .09$). As we saw earlier, the short term residents had a much higher mean level of friend social participation than did the long term residents.

In the study of the relationship between the status variables and neighbor social participation, we found no statistically reliable differences. Some differences in mean social participation levels by occupational status and length of residence were observed however. White collar workers reported a higher mean level of neighbor social participation than did their blue collar counterparts. And as has been our consistent pattern, respondents of short term residence reported a higher mean level of neighbor social participation than did the long term residents.

Having reviewed the direct effects of the status variables and social participation, it appears that the variables of length of residence, marital status and age are the most consistent variables in terms of impact on social participation. Marital status was shown to influence friend social participation and pointed in that direction for total, kin and family participation, as well. Length of residence was found

to differentiate among levels of social participation for total social participation and a similar tendency was observed for friend and neighbor social participation. Differences in friend social participation were observed by age and the data suggested a similar tendency for total social participation. Home ownership influenced participation with family and pointed in that direction for total social participation. And finally, the direct effect of occupational status upon family social participation was significant, with a similar tendency for total social participation. However, before drawing any final conclusions about the specific importance of the status variables on social participation, we shall examine more in detail the interactions of the status variables in their impact on social participation.

As shown in Table 17, no statistically reliable differences in total social participation were observed when examining the interaction effects of occupational status and each of the other status variables. Interactions between occupational status and the variables of sex ($p \leq .08$) and home ownership ($p \leq .17$) do suggest differences in participation however. Non-home owners with blue collar occupational status reported a relatively higher mean level of social participation than white collar non-home owners, though both were below the mean level of social participation for home owners, irregardless of occupational status. A high standard deviation score was found for both blue and white collar non-home owners, indicating a degree of heterogeneity present. In the interaction between the sex of the respondent and his or her occupational status, we found that the mean level of social participation for male white collar workers was fourteen points higher than for female white collar workers. However, a word of caution must be inserted here, as

TABLE 17

STATUS VARIABLES & TOTAL SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
Interaction Effects (1)

	Marital Status	Length of Residence	Home Ownership	Retirement Status	Occupational Status					
	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.				
Sex of Respondent	1.08	0.30	0.22	0.63	1.16	0.28	0.03	0.84	3.03	0.08
	Sig. (2)		N.S.		Sig.		N.S.		Sig.	
Marital Status			2.73	0.10	0.19	0.65	0.44	0.50	0.38	0.53
			Sig.		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.	
Length of Residence					2.18	0.14	0.71	0.40	0.20	0.64
			Sig.		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.	
Home Ownership							0.59	0.44	1.85	0.17
			N.S.		N.S.		N.S.		Sig.	
Retirement Status									0.79	0.37
			N.S.		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.	

(1) d.f. = 1 in all comparisons made in this table.

(2) Significance is indicated at .30 and below for purposes of detecting directions in differences in mean levels of social participation.

TABLE 18

STATUS VARIABLES & FAMILY SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
Interaction Effects (1)

	Marital Status	Length of Residence	Home Ownership	Retirement Status	Occupational Status					
	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.				
Sex of Respondent	5.08	0.02	1.65	0.20	7.25	0.001	0.34	0.56	0.41	0.52
	Sig. (2)		Sig.		Sig.		N.S.		N.S.	
Marital Status			1.33	0.25	2.80	0.09	1.98	0.16	0.03	0.85
			Sig.		Sig.		Sig.		N.S.	
Length of Residence					0.00	0.96	0.04	0.84	0.48	0.49
					N.S.		N.S.		N.S.	
Home Ownership							5.39	0.02	5.07	0.02
							Sig.		Sig.	
Retirement Status									3.14	0.08
									Sig.	

(1) d.f. = 1 in all comparisons made in this table.

(2) Significance is indicated at .30 and below for purposes of detecting directions in differences in mean levels of social participation.

TABLE 19

STATUS VARIABLES & KIN SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
Interaction Effects (1)

	Marital Status	Length of Residence	Home Ownership	Retirement Status	Occupational Status					
	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.				
Sex of Respondent	1.22	0.27	0.50	0.47	0.40	0.52	1.00	0.31	0.53	0.46
	Sig. (2)		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.	
Marital Status			0.36	0.54	0.00	0.97	0.06	0.79	1.17	0.28
			N.S.		N.S.		N.S.		Sig.	
Length of Residence					1.55	0.21	1.94	0.16	0.77	0.38
					Sig.		Sig.		N.S.	
Home Ownership							0.03	0.86	1.72	0.19
							N.S.		Sig.	
Retirement Status									0.10	0.75
										N.S.

(1) d.f. = 1 in all comparisons made in this table.

(2) Significance is indicated at .30 and below for purposes of detecting directions in differences in mean levels of social participation.

TABLE 20

STATUS VARIABLES AND FRIEND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
Interaction Effects (1)

	Marital Status		Length of Residence		Home Ownership		Retirement Status		Occupational Status	
	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.
Sex of Respondent	0.04	0.83	0.34	0.56	0.27	0.60	0.64	0.42	4.44	0.03
	N.S. (2)		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.		Sig.	
Marital Status			3.66	0.05	0.43	0.51	0.60	0.43	0.36	0.54
	Sig.		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.	
Length of Residence			0.01	0.91	0.01	0.91	0.00	0.95	0.76	0.38
	N.S.		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.	
Home Ownership					0.90	0.34			0.75	0.38
					N.S.				N.S.	
Retirement Status									0.41	0.52
									N.S.	

(1) d.f. = 1 in all comparisons made in this table.

(2) Significance is indicated at .30 and below for purposes of detecting directions in differences in mean levels of social participation.

TABLE 21

STATUS VARIABLES & NEIGHBOR SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
Interaction Effects (1)

	Marital Status	Length of Residence	Home Ownership	Retirement Status	Occupational Status					
	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.	F-Ratio	Prob.				
Sex of Respondent	1.08	0.30	0.82	0.36	0.25	0.61	0.22	0.63	0.00	0.98
	Sig. (2)		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.	
Marital Status			0.83	0.36	0.03	0.86	0.36	0.55	0.02	0.88
			N.S.		N.S.		N.S.		N.S.	
Length of Residence					2.40	0.12	3.71	0.06	0.40	0.52
					Sig.		Sig.		N.S.	
Home Ownership							0.37	0.54	1.23	0.27
							N.S.		Sig.	
Retirement Status									2.23	0.14
									Sig.	

(1) d.f. = 1 in all comparisons made in this table.

(2) Significance is indicated at .30 and below for purposes of detecting directions in differences in mean levels of social participation.

female white collar workers would include the widows of white collar workers. Sex did not appear to make any difference on the mean level of social participation for blue collar workers.

Overall, we can conclude that occupational status by itself did not differentiate among levels of total social participation. However, as it interacted with home ownership and sex, occupational status did take on added significance. Thus as a status variable, the occupation of the respondent in its interactions did make a contribution to the social participation level of the older person, though not statistically reliable.

Table 18 shows that the interaction effects of occupational status and home ownership upon family social participation was statistically significant ($p < .02$), while that of occupation and retirement approached significance ($p < .08$). Home ownership, irregardless of occupation, reported a higher mean level of family social participation than non-home owners. The lowest level of family social participation was reported by white collar non-home owners. Retired blue collar workers, and non-retired white collar workers reported a significantly higher level of family social participation than did the other categories of retirement-occupation. Thus the effects of retirement on family social participation appeared to hinge on occupational status.

Similarly, the interaction effects of occupational status with home ownership upon kin social participation, while not statistically reliable, was in the predicted direction (Table 19). White collar home owners reported a much higher level of kin social participation than did white collar non-home owners. Ownership appeared to make little difference in the kin participation of blue collar workers.

As seen in Table 20, the interaction effect of occupation and sex upon friend social participation was statistically significant below the .05 level. Male blue collar workers reported the lowest mean level of friend social participation, while female blue collar workers report the highest mean level of friend social participation. Among white collar workers, the mean level of social participation remains almost identical irregardless of the sex of the respondent.

The interaction effects of occupation and the status variables upon neighbor social participation are shown in Table 21. Although not statistically significant, retirement appeared to interact with occupational status in influencing neighbor social participation. Home owners, irregardless of occupation, indicated a much higher mean level of neighbor social participation than did non-home owners. And non-retired white collar workers reported almost twice the mean level of neighbor social participation of any of the other categories of retirement-occupation.

In conclusion, it appears that occupational status did not seem to have an important effect upon the total social participation levels in our sample, except in its interactions with home ownership and sex of the respondent. Occupational status did have a statistically significant relationship with family social participation both directly and as it interacted with home ownership, and points in that direction with retirement. Occupational status as it interacted with home ownership points toward statistical significance with kin social participation. The interaction of occupation and sex reported a statistically significant relationship with friend social participation. And home ownership and retirement, as they interacted with occupational status, point toward

a statistically significant relationship with neighbor social participation. We conclude that occupational status appeared to be most significant in its impact on family social participation.

In the examination of the direct effects of marital status upon total social participation, we found the general directions of statistically significant relationship ($p \leq .27$), as in Table 16, with married respondents reporting a higher mean level of social participation than did the widowed. The most important of the interactions of marital status and the other status variables for total social participation, appeared in the interaction of marital status and length of residence, as in Table 17. At .10 level of probability the interaction approaches significance. A much higher level of social interaction was present for those who had lived in a residence or neighborhood for a shorter period of time, irregardless of marital status, though the highest mean level of total social participation was reported by the married short term respondent. Thus, it appears that while marital status points in the direction of a statistically significant relationship with total social participation, in itself and in its interactions with the length of residence, it does not reach the level of significance.

Table 18 shows a statistically reliable interaction between sex and marital status and their combined effects upon family social participation ($p \leq .02$). The group of male widowers reported a mean family social participation score nearly a third higher than any of the other categories of sex-marital status. The interaction effects of marital status and home ownership approached significance for family social participation ($p \leq .09$). The widowed respondents, irregardless of home ownership, reported a much

higher level of family social participation than did the married. For the widowed person the family appeared to become a very important source of social interaction. This is borne out by the fact that in the interaction of marital status and retirement status ($p \leq .16$), irregardless of retirement status, the widowed reported a much higher mean level of family social participation than did the married.

We reported earlier that the direct relationship between kin social participation and marital status approached the level of significance ($p \leq .09$), as in Table 16. The interactions of the status variables with marital status, as they relate to kin social participation are shown in Table 19. No significant differences were observed.

Interactions between marital status and the remaining status variables and participation with friends are shown in Table 20. It will be recalled that differences in marital status and age were significantly related to participation with friends, that is, married persons reported more friend social participation than the widowed and old age contributed to a higher interaction with friends. Only the interaction of marital status and length of residence indicated statistically reliable differences in participation with friends ($p \leq .05$). Married respondents reported a higher level of friend social participation than did the widowed irregardless of length of residence. However, the short term residents who are married, in turn, report a much higher level of friend social participation than do the long term married residents.

We can conclude that marital status reported a statistically significant relationship with friend social participation directly, and in the interactions with length of residence. Family social participation had a statistically significant relationship in the interaction of sex and marital status, and approaches such in the interaction of marital

status and home ownership. Kin social participation approached the level of statistical significance as a direct effect of marital status, but not otherwise. Marital status did not appear to make any impact on the level of neighbor social participation. And total social participation approached statistical significance in the interaction of marital status and length of residence. Thus we conclude that marital status is most significant in its impact on friend social participation. It has an impact on family social participation and a limited effect on kin and total social participation.

The direct effect of sex of the respondent upon total social participation was earlier shown to be statistically unreliable. The interacting effects of sex with other status variables as they relate to total social participation are found in Table 17. Only the interaction of occupational status and sex approached an acceptable level of significance ($p \leq .08$). As reported earlier, the sex of the respondent appeared to become an important variable in the interaction of occupational status and total social participation. Male white collar workers reported a much higher level of total social participation than did their female counterparts. But among blue collar workers, sex did not make a difference in total social participation.

The interaction effects of sex with the other status variables upon family social participation are shown in Table 18. As reported earlier, the interrelationship of sex and marital status does bear a statistically significant relationship to family social participation. Differences in family social participation by the interaction of sex and home ownership is highly significant ($p \leq .001$). Male non-home owners had nearly twice the mean level of family social participation of female non-home owners.

Males, irregardless of home ownership, reported the highest levels of family social participation. Length of residence approached significance as it interacted with sex. Males, again, irrespective of short or long term residence reported a much higher level of family social participation than did females.

None of the interactions of sex with any of the other status variables revealed significant differences in kin social participation, as in Table 19.

When friend social participation was examined, as reported in Table 20, only the interaction between sex and occupational status is statistically significant ($p \leq .03$). As reported earlier, female blue collar workers reported a much higher level of friend social participation than did their male counterparts. Among white collar workers friend social participation remained constant irregardless of sex. Finally, neighbor social participation did not appear to be affected by sex and its interactions with the other status variables, as in Table 21.

We conclude that a statistically significant difference in family participation was observed in the sex by marital status ($p \leq .02$) and in the sex by home ownership ($p \leq .001$) interactions, and approached significance with length of residence ($p \leq .20$). The interaction of sex and occupation revealed a statistically significant difference in participation with friends ($p \leq .03$). Similarly, the sex by occupation interaction approached significance in differentiating among total social participation scores ($p \leq .08$). We conclude that sex has some impact on family and friend social participation and a limited impact on total social participation.

The direct relationship between home ownership and total social participation was shown to be significant only at the .28 level. As

seen in Table 17, the interaction between home ownership and some other status variables likewise suggested differences in total social participation. The interaction of home ownership with length of residence does suggest such a relationship ($p \leq .14$). Irregardless of home ownership, short term residents reported a much higher mean level of total social participation than did the long term residents. Long term non-home owners reported a very low level of total social participation. Also as noted in Table 17, the interaction of home ownership and occupational status indicated differences in total social participation ($p \leq .17$). The mean social participation scores for this interaction were relatively consistent except for blue collar non-home owners who report a much higher level of social participation than the other categories of ownership-occupation. We can conclude that retirement status directly and in its interactions does bear a limited effect upon total social participation.

The interaction of home ownership and the other status variables, as reported in Table 18, has an important bearing on family social participation. As reported earlier, the interaction of sex and home ownership had a statistically significant relationship to family social participation below the .01 level. Males, irregardless of home ownership reported a significantly higher level of family social participation than did females, and female non-home owners reported a very low level of family social participation. In the interaction of home ownership and retirement status, we found statistically significant differences in the mean levels of family social participation ($p \leq .02$). The mean level of family social participation was less than one-half that of the other

combinations. As reported earlier, the interaction of occupational status and retirement reported a statistical significance for family social participation below the .05 level. Non-home owners who are white collar workers reported approximately one-half the family social participation of any of the other combinations of home ownership-occupation. And finally, the interaction of marital status with home ownership, pointed in the direction of significance. The widowed, irregardless of home ownership, reported a much higher mean level of family social participation than did the married respondents.

In the interaction of home ownership and the other status variables, we found no statistically significant differences in kin social participation, as in Table 19. Only the interaction of home ownership and length of residence suggested differences. Similar results were observed with respect to friend social participation. Neighbor social participation pointed also toward a statistically significant relationship in the interaction of home ownership and length of residence ($p \leq .12$), as reported in Table 21. Long term residents who were home owners reported the lowest level of neighbor social participation, while short term home owners reported the highest level of social participation.

We conclude that the status variable of home ownership had an important impact on family social participation both directly and in its interactions with sex, retirement, occupation and marital status. Ownership, as its interacted with length of residence, had a limited impact on kin and neighbor social participation.

As reported in Table 16, a statistically significant difference in the mean levels of total social participation was due to the length of time that the respondent had lived in the residence or neighborhood.

However, as shown in Table 17, the interactions of the status variables with length of residence did not report any statistical significance for total social participation. As reported earlier, the relationship of length of residence and home ownership pointed in the direction of statistical significance ($p \leq .14$). Short term residents reported a higher mean level of total social participation, irregardless of home ownership.

In the relationship of family social participation to length of residence, as shown in Table 18, only in its interaction with sex did we find directions toward statistical significance. Men reported a consistently higher level of family social participation than did women. In kin social participation, as reported in Table 19, the interaction of length of residence and retirement pointed toward significance. Short term respondents reported a higher level of kin social participation than did long term respondents, irregardless of retirement status. In friend social participation, as in Table 20, only the interaction of length of residence and marital status was statistically significant. Married respondents reported a higher mean level of social participation with friends than did their widowed counterparts. The highest level of friend social participation was reported by married short term respondents. Neighbor social participation and length of residence, as in Table 21, pointed towards statistical significance as they interacted with home ownership ($p \leq .12$) and retirement ($p \leq .06$). In both cases, short term length of residence, whether home owners or retired or not, indicated higher levels of neighbor social participation.

We conclude that the status variable of length of residence appeared to be a significant variable in its direct effect on total and friend

social participation. In its interactions, length of residence had limited effects on family, friend, kin and neighbor social participation.

Finally, looking at the relationship between retirement status and total social participation, as shown in Table 17, we reported no statistically significant differences in mean levels of social participation directly or in its interactions. Similarly, we found no directions toward statistical significance.

Turning to family social participation, as shown in Table 18, we reported earlier that the interaction of ownership and retirement was statistically significant ($p \leq .02$). Non-home owners who were not retired reported a mean level of family social participation that was one-half the mean level of other categories of retirement-home ownership. The interaction of retirement and occupation pointed in the direction of statistical significance ($p \leq .08$). Non-retired blue collar workers had the lowest level of family social participation, while retired blue collar workers had the highest level of family social participation. Also, the interaction of retirement and marital status approached statistical significance with family social participation ($p \leq .16$). Widowed respondents interacted much more with their families than their married counterparts, whether retired or not.

Kin social participation did not appear to be related to retirement status, except in the interaction with length of residence ($p \leq .16$), as in Table 19. Short term residents had a much higher level of kin social participation, whether retired or not. Neighbor social participation pointed, as shown in Table 21, toward statistical significance in its interactions with retirement and length of residence ($p \leq .14$).

In the former case, non-retired blue collar workers reported nearly double the amount of neighbor social participation as did any of the other categories of retirement-occupation. In the latter case, the short term non-retired had the highest mean level of neighbor social participation, while the retired long term residents had the lowest mean level.

We can conclude that though retirement in itself did not make a direct impact on social participation levels with family, kin, friends and neighbors, in its interactions it did take on greater influence. Through the interactions with occupation, home ownership and marital status, length of residence made an important impact on family social participation. And in its interactions with length of residence, retirement status had an influence on kin and neighbor social participation.

In summary, several observations and conclusions seem justified. First, only length of residence in itself, directly produced statistically reliable differences in total social participation. In regard to family social participation, only home ownership and occupational status were significant at or below the .05 level of significance. Marital status and age produced statistically significant differences in participation with friends. The data indicated that persons who had relatively short residence in their present abode consistently reported higher levels of social participation in each area of participation. Perhaps persons of short term residence were consciously seeking to meet new people as they settled into an area. Beyond that, the short term residents may be a younger portion of the aging population who have experienced only limited role loss, for we know that widowhood does lower social partici-

pation. The point is that length of residence was consistently important for its impact on social participation in our sample from the small urban community. Married respondents consistently interacted more in terms of total social participation and with friends and kin. Widowhood appeared to cause the respondent to turn to his or her family for social interaction, and thus enhanced family social participation. Retirement acted to bring a person closer to the family for social interaction, especially among blue collar workers. Blue collar workers in our sample had a slightly higher level of total social participation, and their social participation seemed to be more family centered. We also found that males tended to interact more with the family, and that their total social participation was generally higher than that of females. Thus, for total social participation the status variables of length of residence and marital status appeared to be consistently important. For family social participation, marital status, retirement status and occupational status were rather consistent in their impact. Friend social participation was consistently affected by marital status and length of residence. Thus as there are consistent differences in mean levels of social participation by the status variables, we conclude by rejecting the null hypothesis, stating that there are no significant differences between one's status and social participation.

Role loss and social participation.--We turn now to the area of loss or changes of roles and the effect of such upon social participation. We have seen from Rosow (1967) that increased role loss does make a difference in social participation. Specifically, in the loss of two roles, irregardless of which two, he reports a significant shift in social interaction. In our sample, we shall deal with the impact of

the change of roles or statuses of the two variables of marriage and retirement, as they relate to social participation. We stated and tested the following null hypothesis:

3. There is no significant difference in social participation by the loss of roles.

Examining the interactions between marital status, retirement and total social participation, as reported in Table 22, we found no relationship between the loss of roles and social participation ($p \leq .93$). Widowed workers appeared to have noticeably less social participation than any other group. However, this group also had the greatest standard error, indicating greater heterogeneity within the group. Respondents with no role loss had a high level of total social participation, but the level of social participation did not differ much from the participation level of those who are both widowed and retired. Looking at role loss and its effect upon family social participation, we cannot report statistically significant differences ($p \leq .41$). As shown in Table 22, those with no role loss appeared to interact least with the family. The relationship between kin social participation and role loss was not statistically significant ($p \leq .31$). As in Table 22, the state of widowhood tended to reduce interaction with relatives, while marriage, especially if retired, tended to enhance the chances of interaction with kin. The interaction of friend social participation and role loss pointed in the direction of statistical significance ($p \leq .29$). As in Table 22, the widowed consistently had the lowest friend social participation. Finally, the relationship between neighbor social participation and role loss was not statistically significant ($p \leq .63$). Therefore we cannot reject the null hypothesis, that is, that there is no statistical significance between the loss of

TABLE 22

ROLE LOSS & SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Role Loss & Total S.P. Role Loss & Family S.P. Role Loss & Kin S.P.					
	Mean Score of S.P.	S.E.	Mean Score of S.P.	S.E.	Mean Score of S.P.
Married & Retired	73.65	3.32	28.44	1.16	34.22
Married & Not Retired	75.69	8.37	23.52	2.82	32.47
Widowed & Retired	74.62	4.69	26.73	1.49	31.25
Widowed & Not Retired	68.03	9.46	26.86	3.25	28.54
					3.65

Role Loss & Friend S.P. Role Loss & Neighbor S.P.					
	Mean Score of S.P.	S.E.	Mean Score of S.P.	S.E.	
Married & Retired	28.01	1.16	13.27	1.28	
Married & Not Retired	27.52	3.20	12.65	3.74	
Widowed & Retired	25.08	1.56	10.57	1.99	
Widowed & Not Retired	22.60	3.45	10.05	3.74	

roles and social participation.

In this section, we examined the relationship between social participation and aging. Looking first at the impact of the availability of age mates on the social participation of the aging person, we found no direct relationship between availability of age mates and social participation. The only exception to this pattern was in the direct relationship between availability of age mates and family social participation. However, in this case the relationship was inverse, except for the lowest age density area. Therefore, we concluded that availability in our sample did not contribute to higher levels of social participation. Secondly, in examining the relationship of status variables and their interactions for the social participation levels of older persons, we found that short term length of residence and being married consistently pointed to higher levels of total social participation. Widowhood, blue collar occupational status and retirement were generally consistent in increasing the level of family social participation. Marriage and short term residency were consistently important for higher levels of friend social participation. Finally, studying the relationship between role loss and social participation, we found no statistically significant differences in levels of participation by the loss of roles. We can conclude that social participation among aging persons in our sample of the small urban community appeared to depend somewhat on the social environment in which he or she lived, especially in terms of the status variables we examined. But it also became apparent that there were factors beyond the social environment which had an input into the level and type of social participation in which the older person engaged. It is these factors, along with the social environment that we have examined,

which would give us a model from which we might predict the social participation patterns of older persons.

Age Identification and Aging

In this section we examine the relationship between the availability of age mates and age identification, or the self-perception of the older person. Second, we shall look at the relationship between the status variables and age identification. The interactions of the status variables will be examined regarding their impact on age identification. Third, we shall examine the effects of role loss on age identification. Finally, we shall look at the relationship of the level of social participation of the older person and its impact on the age identification of that person.

Availability of age mates and age identification.--Rosow (1967) and Rosenberg (1968) both indicated that there was a relationship between the availability of age mates in the immediate social environment and his or her age identification. However, Rosow saw this relationship mitigated by social class. On the basis of this research, we tested the following null hypothesis:

4. There is no significant difference in the age identification of the aging person by the availability of age mates.

We can report that we found no significant differences between the availability of age mates and age identification in our study. As shown in Table 23, the greatest variation in our sample was in the number of persons identifying themselves as old and elderly in the areas of medium high age density, that is, those areas with 19% to 23% of the households containing persons sixty-five and older. As is obvious, the other three age density areas reported an almost equal distribution between old-

elderly and middle aged self-identifications. It is possible that a higher number of older persons are actually living in the areas of medium high age density, which would, in turn, allow for ease of older age identification.

TABLE 23
AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & AGE IDENTIFICATION

		Age Group Place Oneself			
		Old	Middle-Aged	Elderly	Total
<u>Age Density</u> <u>of the</u> <u>Neighborhood</u>	High	27.5 (8)	55.2 (16)	17.2 (5)	25.0 (29)
	Med. High	29.5 (13)	38.6 (17)	31.8 (14)	37.9 (44)
	Med. Low	30.8 (8)	50.0 (13)	19.2 (5)	22.4 (26)
	Low	47.1 (8)	47.1 (8)	5.9 (1)	14.7 (17)
	Total Percent	31.9	46.6	21.6	100.0
Total N		(37)	(54)	(25)	(116)*

$$X^2 = 7.006$$

$$p < .50 > .25$$

$$d.f. = 6$$

*Eight persons did not respond to the question.

Examining the interactions of sex, age marital status, occupational status and retirement status with the availability of age mates and age identification, we did not find any significant differences at the .05 level, nor even a suggestion of differences. This would seem to indicate that availability of age mates simply was not found to be a determining factor in age identification among our respondents. Therefore, we cannot reject the null hypothesis, stating that there is no relationship between the availability of age mates and age identification.

Status variables and age identification.--Turning to the status variables, we know that at least on such variable, that is, socio-economic

class, has a significant relationship to age identification among older persons, according to Rosow (1967). The working class identified with their peers, thus accepting older age identifications, while the middle class dissociated themselves from their peers, except when suffering heavy role loss. Beginning with occupational status, we tested the status variables in our study by the following null hypothesis:

5. There is no significant difference in age identification by differences in one's social status.

As shown in Table 24, we found no significant differences between occupational status and age identification. However, an interesting trend was observed in the data (Appendix A). Among white collar workers, many more saw themselves as middle-aged, as opposed to old or elderly. Among blue collar workers and housewives, we found nearly the same amount of persons who considered themselves as old or elderly as those who perceived themselves as middle-aged. Thus the trend would be for older self-perceptions to prevail for blue collar workers and housewives.

As is seen in Table 24, marital status, as it relates to age identification, took on a significant relationship below the .05 level. It is interesting to note that twenty-five percent of the married respondents placed themselves in the elderly category and only twenty-two percent in the old category. Among the widowed, fifteen percent identified themselves as elderly and forty-five percent identified themselves as old. The difference may partially be accounted for by the age of the particular respondents. And perhaps without the loss of the marriage partner, one continues to identify with middle age until chronological age forces the person to accept chronological reality, thus bypassing old self-percep-

TABLE 24

SUMMARY OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STATUS VARIABLES
AND AGE IDENTIFICATION (1)

Occupation & Age I.D.	Sex of Resp. & Age I.D.	Marital Status & Age I.D.	Ret. Status & Age I.D.	Age of Resp. & Age I.D.	Length of Res. & Age I.D.	Home Ownership & Age I.D.
$\chi^2 = 4.59$ $p < .50 > .25$ d.f. = 4	$\chi^2 = 0.05$ $p < .90 > .75$ d.f. = 1	$\chi^2 = 6.84$ $p < .05 > .01$ d.f. = 2	$\chi^2 = 3.90$ $p < .50 > .25$ d.f. = 4	$\chi^2 = 22.27$ $p < .001$ d.f. = 2	$\chi^2 = 1.57$ $p < .50 > .25$ d.f. = 2	$\chi^2 = 3.65$ $p < .25 > .10$ d.f. = 2
N.S.	N.S.	Sig.	N.S.	Sig.	N.S.	N.S.

(1) Full tables in Appendix A.

tions while going directly to elderly self-perception. The point is that marital status appeared as an important status variable in the age identification process.

The relationship of retirement status to age identification is not significant, as reported in Table 24. Those who were retired identified themselves as old by a higher percentage than did those who were working at the time of the interview, but this may be accounted for simply by age. Among the housewives, there was no noticeable difference in age identification.

The relationship of sex of the respondent to age identification was not significant. However, the relationship between the age of the respondent and age identification turned out to be highly significant, as seen in Table 24. As would be expected, as the respondent grew older chronologically, there was a definite shift from middle to old age identifications.

In our sample, neither length of residence nor home ownership had a statistically significant bearing on the age identification of the respondent. However, a much higher percentage of the non-home owners identified themselves as old or elderly than middle-aged.

In our review of the status variables as they relate to age identification in our sample, age turned out to be highly significant below the .001 level and marital status below the .05 level. Therefore, we might argue that where we found directions of a relationship in our sample between a status variable and age identification, this relationship may well be attributable to the impact of age primarily, and secondarily to marital status. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, namely that

there is no relationship between the status variables and age identification.

Role loss and age identification.--Rosow (1967) found that the general loss of roles, other than health, did independently increase older self images. He found that in both the middle and working class the sharpest incremental increase in older self conceptions came with the loss of two roles. Therefore, we tested the following null hypothesis in our sample:

6. There is no significant difference in age identification by the loss of roles.

Our role loss index was composed of marital and retirement status the the combinations between these two statuses. As reported in Table 25, in which all the possible combinations of role loss are considered, role loss did not make a significant difference for age identification, though we found the directions of such a relationship. Where we have a

TABLE 25

ROLE LOSS & AGE IDENTIFICATION

	Age Group Place Self			
	Old	Middle-Aged	Elderly	Total
Married & Ret	25.9 (15)	48.3 (28)	25.9 (15)	56.3 (58)
<u>Role</u> Married & Not. Ret.	0.0 (0)	77.8 (7)	22.2 (2)	8.7 (9)
<u>Loss</u> Widowed & Ret.	44.8 (13)	34.5 (10)	20.7 (6)	28.2 (29)
Widowed & Not Ret.	42.9 (3)	57.1 (4)	0.0 (0)	6.8 (7)
Total Percent	30.1	47.6	22.3	100.0
Total N	(31)	(49)	(23)	(103)*

$$\chi^2 = 10.357$$

$$p < .25 > .10$$

$$d.f. = 6$$

*Twenty-one persons did not respond to the question.

double role loss, i.e., widowed and retired, we found sixty-five percent of the respondents identifying themselves as old or elderly. This was in contrast to the loss of no roles, in which only twenty-two percent identified themselves as old or elderly. As we saw above in our consideration of the status variables, marital status did make a significant impact on age identification, while retirement status did not appear to be important for age identification. The combination of these two lost roles did emphatically reverse the direction of age identification from the loss of no roles, though not at our accepted level of significance. Therefore, even though we accept the null hypothesis, role loss did point out trends in age identification.

Social participation and age identification.--Blau (1956) and Rosow (1967) both reported that with advancing age social participation generally declined. Thus the decline would indicate that one is getting older with the subsequent recognition of such. Bell (1967) and Guptill (1969) reported that feeling old was inversely related to formal and informal involvement. Rosow reported that he found class differences in the attitudes toward and practices of social participation by persons who identified themselves as old or not. Therefore, we tested our sample by the following null hypothesis:

7. There is no significant difference in age identification by the level of social participation of the aging person.

Using the least squares analysis of variance, we found no statistically significant differences in the mean score of social participation as it related to age identification. Though the mean level of social participation for all three age identifications was very close, the highest mean level, as in Table 26, of social participation was reported

TABLE 26

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION & AGE IDENTIFICATION

Source	Mean Score of Social Participation	Standard Deviation
Old	74.883	4.517
Middle-Aged	73.579	3.600
Elderly	72.407	5.235

by those who identified themselves as old. The lowest mean score was reported by the elderly. Thus social participation did not differ significantly in our sample by the self-perception of age that the respondents had of themselves. We must conclude that self-perceptions in our sample would appear to be much more dependent on actual chronological age and marital status, than on how much one participated in social relationships. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis.

Having examined the relationship between age identification and the aging person, we found that there existed no significant relationship in our sample between the availability of age mates and age identification, that is, the availability of age mates was not found to be a determining factor in age identification. We found, however, that the status variables of age and marital status did bear a significant relationship to age identification. None of the other status variables appeared to be important determinants of age self-perception in the older population. Though role loss did not bear a significant relationship to age identification, it did appear to reverse the directions of age identification, that is, multiple role loss reflected definite older age identities. Finally, social participation did not appear to have an impact on age identification. Regardless of self-perception in terms of age, social participation levels were approximately the same. We conclude from our

sample that age identification among older persons is primarily dependent upon the status variables of actual age and marital status.

Loneliness and Aging

Beyond age identification, we are interested in the impact of the availability of age mates and the loss or changes of roles in the aging process as it affects the social psychological variable of loneliness and/or morale. In this section we examine the relationship of the availability of age mates on the loneliness of the older person. Second, we examine the impact of the status variables on loneliness and morale, both in their direct and interaction effects. Third, we examine the effect of multiple loss of roles on loneliness. Fourth, we look at the impact of the social participation levels of the older person as they affect morale and loneliness in that person. And finally, we examine the relationship between the social psychological variables of age identification and loneliness to determine if they independently have an effect on one another.

Availability of age mates and loneliness.--Messer (1967) found that living in proximity to a similar age group was conducive to a feeling of usefulness and higher morale. Rosow (1967) reported that age-homogeneous environments were an important factor in satisfactory adjustment to aging. On the basis of these findings, we tested the following null hypothesis:

8. There is no significant difference in the stated loneliness of the older person by the availability of age mates.

As seen in Table 27, no significant differences in reported loneliness were observed among the four levels of age density. However, we did discover the directions of significant differences. The highest level

TABLE 27
 AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES AND LONELINESS

		Loneliness Scale		
		Lonely	Never Lonely	Total
<u>Age Density</u> <u>of</u> <u>Neighborhood</u>	High	46.7 (14)	53.3 (16)	24.6 (30)
	Medium High	38.6 (17)	61.4 (27)	36.1 (44)
	Medium Low	34.5 (10)	65.5 (19)	23.8 (29)
	Low	68.4 (13)	31.6 (6)	15.6 (19)
	Total Percent	44.3	55.7	100.0
		Total N	(54)	(68)
				(122)*

$$\chi^2 = 6.253$$

$$p < .10 > .05$$

$$d.f. = 3$$

*Two persons did not respond to the question.

of loneliness was reported by respondents residing in the lowest age density area. However, the second highest level of loneliness was reported by respondents residing in the highest age density category. Looking at the interactions between availability and the other status variables, we found that the sex of the respondent did not contribute to a significant relationship. However, we did find that females appeared to be affected by low age density much more than men. And as the person grew older, he or she appeared to become lonelier in the areas of low age density. Widowhood appeared to compound the effects of low age density on loneliness. And blue collar workers reported loneliness at a higher rate than did white collar workers. And low age density compounded the effects of occupational status on loneliness.

We conclude that while age availability does not appear to be a

significant variable in our sample from the small urban community, it does point definitely in the direction of significance for loneliness for the older person. Therefore, while we accept the null hypothesis on the basis of our definition of significance, that is, at the .05 level, we also recognize that age density of the neighborhood is important for the loneliness or not of the older persons in our sample.

Status variables and loneliness.--The effect of the change of status on the loneliness and morale of the older person is a question that is apparently not settled. However, Lawton (1970) and Rosenberg (1968) both report that with changes in status, loneliness can result, especially if one stands alone in that change. In an effort to find more directly the effects of the status variables upon loneliness in the older person, we tested the following null hypothesis in our sample:

10. There is no significant difference in stated loneliness by differences in one's social status.

The status variable of occupation pointed to a highly significant relationship with loneliness, as shown in Table 28. Twenty-one percent of the white collar workers reported feelings of loneliness, while sixty-nine percent of the blue collar workers responded in that way. Thus, it appeared that there was definite occupational status effect on the loneliness of older persons. In attempting to account for this relationship, it is possible that blue collar workers were more isolated as they grow older, and this same group may have more readily admitted their isolation and loneliness. In the interaction of age and occupational status with loneliness, it was only in the middle age group, that is, seventy-one to seventy-five years of age, that we found a significant relation below the .05 level. Seventy-nine percent of the white collar

workers still perceived themselves as never lonely, whereas seventy-five percent of the blue collar workers and sixty-six percent of the housewives viewed themselves as lonely. Perhaps it is at this juncture that we picked up the effects of retirement, along with the loss of other roles.

The status variable of the sex of the respondent did not report a significant relationship with loneliness, though it does point very definitely in that direction, as seen in Table 28. Thirty-two percent of the male respondents reported to be lonely, whereas fifty-two percent of the female respondents were lonely. The most obvious conclusion that might be drawn is that the level of loneliness among the female respondents was directly related to widowhood.

As in Table 28, we reported a highly significant relationship between loneliness and the marital status of the respondent. Among the widowed, sixty-eight percent reported that they were lonely, while only twenty-seven percent of the married responded similarly. Therefore, it would appear that considered in itself, marital status was a highly important variable in determining loneliness. Marriage is a status or role that is extremely difficult to replace, or as Rosow stated, "...there are no structural alternatives." Marital status is simply a key variable in terms of the roles that one plays.

Retirement status did not prove to have a significant relationship to loneliness in our sample. Though retirement obviously represented a radical change in roles, in itself it did not appear to disrupt significantly the morale of individuals, even though many persons in our sample appeared reluctant to retire. Perhaps this is indicative of the fact that persons may be able to find viable substitutes for retirement, pro-

TABLE 28

SUMMARY OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STATUS VARIABLES
AND STATED LONELINESS (1)

Occupation & Loneliness	Sex of Resp. & Loneliness	Marital Status & Loneliness	Ret. Status & Loneliness	Age of Resp. & Loneliness	Length of Res. & Loneliness	Home Ownership & Loneliness
$\chi^2 = 18.23$ $p < .005$ d.f. = 4	$\chi^2 = 3.72$ $p < .10$ d.f. = 1	$\chi^2 = 17.75$ $p < .001$ d.f. = 1	$\chi^2 = 2.97$ $p < .25$ d.f. = 2	$\chi^2 = 1.33$ $p < .75$ d.f. = 2	$\chi^2 = 0.05$ $p < .90$ d.f. = 1	$\chi^2 = 7.06$ $p < .01$ d.f. = 1
Sig.	N.S.	Sig.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	Sig.

(1) Full tables in Appendix A.

vided that this is the only role deprivation.

The relationship between the age of the respondent and loneliness was not significant in our sample. Only in the seventy-one to seventy-five age group did we find more respondents reporting to be lonely than not lonely.

The relationship between the length of residence of the respondent in the neighborhood and loneliness was not significant. However, as reported in Table 28, home ownership was significant below the .01 level. A high percentage of those who did not own their own homes reported that they were lonely (seventy-seven percent), whereas among home owners only forty percent reported that they were lonely. Perhaps we were dealing here with the quality of stability and familiarity among home owners. Moving from one's home may be upsetting to that stability. Also, moving from one's home to a non-owned residence, such as an apartment, may be the consequence of other role losses, especially the loss of one's spouse.

In conclusion, we can report that occupational status, home ownership and especially marital status were significant variables in themselves as they related to the loneliness of the older person. The loss of particular statuses in our sample from the small urban community had a very real bearing on the loneliness of the aging person. Therefore, we cannot accept our null hypothesis, namely, that there is no relationship between the status of the person and his or her stated loneliness.

Role loss and loneliness.--Messer (1967) tells us that as role loss occurs, loneliness occurs as well. However, he sees this loneliness mitigated by homogeneous environments. Extending Messer's research to our sample, we tested the following null hypothesis:

11. There is no significant difference in stated loneliness by the loss of roles.

We can report, as seen in Table 29, that there was a very significant relationship between the loss of roles and the loneliness of the older person. With the loss of two roles, i.e., widowhood and retirement, eighty-two percent of the respondents reported to be lonely. Whereas, in the loss of no roles, only twenty-two percent of the respondents reported that they were lonely. As we saw earlier in our consideration

TABLE 29

ROLE LOSS & LONELINESS

		Loneliness Scale		
		Lonely	Never Lonely	Total
<u>Role</u> <u>Loss</u>	Married & Ret.	31.0 (18)	69.0 (40)	56.3 (58)
	Married & Not Ret.	22.2 (2)	77.8 (7)	8.7 (9)
	Widowed & Ret.	82.8 (24)	17.2 (5)	28.2 (29)
	Widowed & Not Ret.	57.1 (4)	42.9 (3)	6.8 (7)
	Total Percent	46.6	53.4	100.0
	Total N	(48)	(55)	(103)*

$$\chi^2 = 23.345$$

$$p < .001$$

$$d.f. = 3$$

*Twenty-one persons did not answer the question.

of the status variables, the advent of widowhood appeared to make much more of an impact on loneliness than did retirement. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis.

Social participation and loneliness.--Townsend (1963) found that reduced social participation affected loneliness if there was a relative decline in participation from the earlier years. Rosow (1967) found

that certain personality types preferred little social participation. Therefore, limited social participation does not appear, in itself, to have an impact on loneliness, but only in terms of the relatively reduced levels of social participation. On the basis of this research, which seems to indicate that there is some relationship between social participation and loneliness, though conditioned by prior levels of interaction, we tested our sample by the following null hypothesis:

9. There is no significant difference in stated loneliness by the level of social participation of the aging person.

We can report that we found no statistically significant differences in the mean levels of social participation by stated loneliness. As shown in Table 30, the mean levels of social participation were almost identical for those who reported to be lonely and those who were

TABLE 30

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION & LONELINESS

Source	Mean Score of Social Participation	Standard Error
Lonely	74.341	3.605
Never Lonely	73.152	3.371

not lonely. Therefore, on the basis of our sample, we accept the null hypothesis.

Age identification and loneliness.--Kutner & others (1956) found that those with younger age identifications tended to have higher morale, and were better adjusted. Butler (1968) found that denial of age changes, that is, to continue to perceive oneself as younger, was a useful tool against depression. On this basis we tested our sample for the relationship between the social psychological variables of age identification and loneliness by the following null hypothesis:

12. There is no significant difference in stated loneliness by the age identification of the aging person.

We can report from our sample that there was a significant relationship, as in Table 31, between age identification and loneliness. Between sixty-one and sixty-five percent of those who perceived themselves as old or elderly reported that they were lonely. In contrast, only twenty-eight percent of those who perceived themselves as middle-aged reported to be lonely. Thus, the two variables of age identification and lone-

TABLE 31

AGE IDENTIFICATION & LONELINESS

		Loneliness Scale		
		Lonely	Never Lonely	Total
<u>Age Group</u> <u>Place</u> <u>Self</u>	Old	61.3 (19)	38.7 (12)	30.1 (31)
	Middle-Aged	28.6 (14)	71.4 (35)	47.6 (49)
	Elderly	65.2 (15)	34.8 (8)	22.3 (23)
Total Percent		46.6	53.4	100.0
Total N		(48)	(55)	(103)*

$$\chi^2 = 12.292$$

$$p < .005 > .001$$

$$d.f. = 2$$

*Twenty-one persons did not answer the question.

liness appeared to have a real bearing on one another in the older person. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis.

In this section on the relationship between loneliness and aging, we found that the availability of age mates had a bearing on loneliness among older persons, though the relationship is limited. Low age density appeared to point toward increased loneliness. We found that the status variables of occupation, home ownership and particularly marital status

had a significant relationship to the loneliness of the older person. And when marital and retirement status were viewed as multiple role loss, we found a very significant relationship with loneliness, with widowhood making the greater impact. The level of social participation of the aging individual did not appear to have a significant relationship with loneliness. However, there did appear to be a very close relationship between the social psychological variables of age identification and loneliness. To perceive oneself as old or elderly tended to increase rather dramatically the levels of stated loneliness.

We conclude that the social environment of the older person did have an impact on his or her stated loneliness, and in a particular way, it appeared from our sample that the change of marital status had the major impact on whether or not the older person felt lonely. As reported earlier, and as appeared to be increasingly true from our study, in Rosow's words, "...there are no structural alternatives."

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Review of the Study

In this work we have examined the informal social participation patterns of older persons in the small urban community. Informal social participation patterns were viewed as being affected by the social environment in which the aging person lived. We assumed that as the aging person change roles, the impact of such would be felt on social participation patterns. Moreover, the combined effects of role changes and adjustments in social participation would appear to have an impact on the social psychological variables of age identification and loneliness. Therefore, in our study we gave particular attention to the following:

- a. the effects upon the social participation patterns of aging persons as determined by the availability of age mates, by status variables and by multiple role loss;
- b. the effects upon the self perceptions of older persons in terms of age as determined by the availability of age mates, by status variables, by multiple role loss and by patterns of social participation;
- c. the effects upon the stated loneliness of the older person as determined by the availability of age mates, by status variables, by multiple role loss, by patterns of social participation, and by the age perception of the person.

Cutting across all these considerations is the fact that our study took place in the context of the residential setting of the small urban community.

Our study involved a random sample of one hundred and twenty-four respondents, sixty-five years of age and older, who lived within the city limits of Manhattan, Kansas, a university town of approximately twenty-seven thousand persons. The sample was studied in the summer of 1972 by the use of a structured interview schedule. In the schedule, the respondents were asked to provide descriptive information about themselves, their situation at the time of the interview, and the effect of such upon their living. In particular, the respondents were asked to identify their social participation patterns with their family, relatives, friends and neighbors. Frequency and types of interaction were obtained for family, relative and friend social participation. From the responses an adjusted social participation score was obtained, which was the combined results of family, friend, and relative interaction, divided by the actual number of persons in each of these categories. Neighbor social participation was obtained by the respondents identifying how many neighbors they were close to socially, and how often they interacted with them.

Respondents' self-reports were used to obtain information about self-perception in terms of age, as they were asked whether they perceived themselves as middle-aged, old, elderly or other. Respondents were also asked to identify their own perceptions on their loneliness. They were asked to identify how often they felt lonely, ranging from never to frequently.

The availability of age mates was determined by identifying the census tract in which the respondent lived. The availability of age mates was determined in each census tract by the percentage of households within that tract having persons sixty-five years of age and older

living within them. These census tracts were in turn put into four groups ranging from the areas of highest density to those of the lowest age density. This information was used to test three hypotheses, namely, hypotheses dealing with social participation and availability of age mates, age identification and the availability of age mates, and stated loneliness and the availability of age mates.

Also through the interview schedule, respondents provided information concerning their status position in relation to marriage, occupation, retirement, age, sex, home ownership and length of time that they had lived at their present residence. These status positions were examined independently and in interaction with one another to examine hypotheses relative to status and social participation, status and age identification, and status and loneliness.

The status positions of marriage and retirement were used to establish an index of role loss, ranging from zero to two lost roles. This index of role loss was used in the stating and testing of three hypotheses relative to role loss and social participation, role loss and age identification, and role loss and stated loneliness.

The chi-square and analysis of variance tests of statistical significance were used to provide data on one to one relationships in our study, and to examine the relative effects of a series of variables on our selected dependent variables of social participation, age identification and stated loneliness.

Summary of the Findings

Of our one hundred and twenty-four respondents, the majority were females. Seventy-four of the respondents were still married, while

forty-two were widowed and eight never married. Fifty percent of the respondents had lived in their present residence for sixteen or more years. Approximately eighty percent of the respondents owned their own homes. Thirty percent of the respondents reported that they lived alone. Fifty-four percent of our study population reported to be retired.

The median number of close friends reported was between three and four (3.4). Nine percent of the respondents reported no close friends. The median age of the friends was between sixty-one and sixty-five years of age. Approximately eighty percent of the friends lived in the same community as the respondents.

The median number of living children reported by the respondents was approximately two (1.8). The majority of respondents reported that their children lived in another state, indicating limitations on the amount of face to face contact. The median level of visits to and from children was reported reported from one to six or more times a year.

The median number of living brother and sisters was between one and two (1.5). Living relatives were visited with the same frequency as children, namely, from one to six or more times a year. Twenty-one percent of the respondents reported no living brothers or sisters

Thirty-three percent of the respondents reported that they had no neighbors that they were close to socially. The median number of neighbors was reported to be between one and two (1.5). Seventy to ninety percent of the respondents who reported to be close to their neighbors, stated that they had weekly or more contact with their neighbors.

Eighty-nine percent of the respondents felt that their contact with friends was about right. Seventy-one percent of those with children felt that their contact with children was about right. And eighty-eight

percent, whether they reported being close to neighbors or not, felt that their contact with neighbors was about right.

Thirty-six percent of the respondents in our study reported to be white collar workers, and thirty-one percent reported to be blue collar workers. The remaining thirty-two percent were housewives. The husbands of those reporting to be housewives were exactly divided between white and blue collar occupations. Thus our sample reported slightly more white than blue collar workers.

One-half of our respondents identified themselves as old or elderly, while forty-four percent perceived themselves as middle-aged. The remaining respondents either saw themselves as other than these categories, or they did not know how they identified themselves in terms of age. Fifty-five percent of the respondents reported that they were never lonely, while the remainder reported to be lonely occasionally or frequently.

Hypothesis 1 was formulated in order to test the influence of the availability of age mates on the social participation patterns of older persons. It predicted that there would be no statistically significant differences in the mean levels of social participation by the availability of age mates. Specific data to test this hypothesis was obtained from the respondents themselves in the following areas: (1) the number of children and the amount of contact with them; (2) the number of kin and the amount of contact with them; (3) the number of friends and the amount of contact with them; and (4) the number of neighbors and the frequency of contact with them. Additional information on the availability of age mates was obtained by determining through the address of the person in which census tract he or she lived. And by using the results of the 1970 census we had already established the percentage of households

within each census tract that had persons sixty-five and older living within them.

Using the analysis of variance, we report that we found no statistically significant differences in the mean levels of total social participation by the percentage of older persons living in the neighborhood. However, there was reported a statistically significant difference in the mean level of family social participation by the availability of age mates. Here we found generally an inverse relationship, that is, as age density of the neighborhood decreased, family social participation increased, except in the areas of lowest age density. In the interaction of age density and marital status, we found that the widowed respondent in the areas of lowest age density had twice the level of family social participation as did their married counterparts. Thus, it would appear that widowed persons turned to their families increasingly for social interaction as age mates became scarce. We also found that in the interaction of home ownership and age density, home ownership was important for higher mean levels of social participation with the family, irregardless of age density. Thus the stability of home ownership appeared to bring the family close together, irregardless of the number of persons close by who were of the same age. Kin, friend and neighbor social participation did not appear to be affected in any consistent way by the availability of age mates. Therefore, our data did not appear to support the contention that availability of age mates is important for social participation patterns of older persons, except in the case of family social participation, where we noted a generally inverse relationship.

Hypotheses 2 was formulated to test the influence of the status

variables of sex, age, marital status, retirement status, occupational status, home ownership and length of residence on the social participation patterns of older people. Hypothesis 2 predicted that there would be no statistically significant differences in the mean levels of social participation by the status variables.

In the area of total social participation, we found that only the status variable of length of residence was statistically significant below the .05 level. Those who lived in their present residences for the shorter period of time reported significantly higher levels of social participation than did the long term residents. And though not statistically significant, we found that the actual age of the respondent did make a difference in the mean levels of social participation among the individuals in our sample. Participation levels tended to increase with age, except for participation with the family. Also, we found that the sex by occupation interaction did point to significant differences in social participation. The male white collar worker appeared to have a much higher level of total social participation than any of the other combinations of sex-occupation.

Family social participation was affected significantly by the status variables of home ownership and occupation. Those respondents who owned their own homes reported a significantly higher level of family social participation than did the non-home owners. Also, blue collar workers appeared to interact much more with the family than did white collar workers. We also found that widowhood, particularly among males, and retirement, especially for the blue collar workers, added significantly to family social participation.

Kin social participation appeared to be affected only by marital

status and only in a limited way. Widowhood seemed to retard social interaction with kin. Friend social participation was affected significantly by the status variables of marriage, length of residence and age. Married persons and short term residents both interacted more with friends than did their counterparts. The interaction of sex and occupational status was important for friend social participation, as male blue collar workers reported a very low level of friend social participation, while their female counterparts reported the highest level of social participation with friends of any of the categories of sex-occupation. Neighbor social participation appeared to be affected only by short term residence, and only in a limited way. Short term residents had a higher level of social participation than did the long term residents.

Therefore, our data did indicate that there were statistically significant differences in mean levels of social participation by the status variables especially for family, friend and total social participation.

Hypothesis 3 was formulated to test the relationship between multiple role loss and social participation in older persons. We predicted that there would be no statistically significant differences in social participation by role loss. Role loss was determined by an index of the status variables of marriage and retirement. We can report from our data that role loss did not appear to effect total social participation. Role loss appeared to have more of a bearing on family and kin social participation than on social participation with friends and neighbors.

Hypothesis 4 tested the relationship between the availability of

age mates and age identification. The hypothesis predicted that there would be no relationship present. Age identification was determined by the self-perception of the individual. From the analysis of our data we found that our prediction was confirmed, as we found no statistically significant relationship between the availability of age mates and how the person perceived him or herself in terms of age.

Hypothesis 5 was formulated to test the relationship between the status variables and age identification. We again predicted that there would be no significant relationship between status and age identification. We found that marital status and particularly actual age did have a significant impact on the age identification of the older person. Widowhood appeared to make a very definite impact on the identification of oneself as old or elderly, as opposed to middle-aged. And once past the actual age of seventy years, we found a definite shift in self-perception from middle-aged to old or elderly.

Hypothesis 6 was introduced to test the relationship between multiple role loss and age identification. We predicted that there would be no relationship between role loss and age identification. Role loss was again determined by an index of marital and retirement status. From the analysis of our data, we found no significant differences in age identification by multiple loss of roles. However, we did discover directions which pointed toward a possible relationship, for the loss of two roles did make a marked shift toward older age identifications from the loss of no roles or only one role.

Hypothesis 7 was formulated to test the impact of adjusting social participation patterns on age identification. We predicted that there

would be no statistically significant differences in the mean levels of social participation by age identification. Using the analysis of variance, we found our prediction to be confirmed. We concluded that self-perception in terms of age appeared to depend much more on actual chronological age than on the social participation levels of the older person.

Hypothesis 8 was formulated to test the relationship of availability of age mates and the stated loneliness of the older person. Stated loneliness was determined by a self report of the individual on how often he or she felt lonely. We predicted that there would be no significant relationship between availability of age mates and loneliness. Our prediction was confirmed by our analysis. However, a relationship was present at the .10 level of significance. In the areas of highest and lowest age density, the respondents reported a definite prejudice toward loneliness that was not present in the areas of medium high and medium low age density. Therefore, as availability interacted with loneliness, we did find definite directions in favor of a relationship.

Hypothesis 9 was formulated to test the relationship between the adjustment to social participation patterns in the aging process and stated loneliness. We predicted that there would be no statistically significant differences in mean levels of social participation by the loneliness of the older person. The analysis of our data proved this prediction to be true. The mean levels of social participation did not shift in any significant way for those who reported to be lonely from those who reported never to be lonely.

Hypothesis 10 was formulated to test the relationship between the

status variables and the stated loneliness of the older person. We predicted that there would be no statistically significant relationship present. We found that the hypothesis was to be rejected by the status variables of occupation, home ownership and especially marital status. All three of these status variables reported a statistically significant relationship to loneliness at or below the .05 level. Blue collar workers found themselves lonely much more often than white collar workers. Almost twice the percentage of non-home owners reported themselves to be lonely as did home owners. And among the widowed, sixty-eight percent reported themselves to be lonely, as opposed to twenty-seven percent of the married respondents reporting that they were lonely.

Hypothesis 11 was formulated to test the relationship between the multiple loss of roles and loneliness in the older person. We again predicted that there would be no statistically significant relationship present. We can report from our data that there was a significant relationship present below the .001 level. With the loss of two roles, marriage and active employment, eighty-two percent of the respondents reported to be lonely. In contrast, where no roles were lost, only twenty-two percent of the respondents reported that they were lonely.

Hypothesis 12 was formulated to test the relationship or interaction of the two social psychological variables of age identification and loneliness. We predicted that there would be no statistically significant relationship between the two variables. In the analysis of our data, we found between sixty-one and sixty-five percent of our sample who perceived themselves as old or elderly, reported to be lonely, whereas only twenty-eight percent of those who perceived themselves as middle-aged reported to be lonely. Thus we found a highly significant relation-

ship between age identification and loneliness.

Conclusions and Suggestions for Future Research

In this study we were concerned with examining some of the social determinants of behavior among older persons as conceptualized in informal social participation. The determinants of social participation among aging persons had been identified in prior research both in terms of personality variables and the social environment in which the aging person lived. The availability of persons similar in age and in the statuses and roles which the person occupied had been found to be significant for creating the social environment which, in turn, affected the participation patterns of the aging person. The adjustments in social participation patterns during the aging process affected, in turn, the social psychological variables of age identification and loneliness.

The present study suggested that the availability of age mates in the residential setting of the small urban community did not appear to make a significant impact on social participation patterns among the elderly. Though it appeared in this study that friends were chosen from the same general age group, they were not chosen simply on the basis of the neighborhood setting, but rather in terms of a broader geographical basis, namely, the total community. We found that while eighty percent of the friends of the respondents lived in the community of Manhattan, only thirty-five percent lived in the neighborhood. Thus, it appeared that the community, not the neighborhood, became the context of social participation in the small urban community. Moreover, we found that the residential setting would ordinarily be prohibitive of the high rates of concentration of elderly persons that Rosow encountered in the apartment complexes in Cleveland. This relative lack of age

density, which one would find in the typical residential setting, would surely mitigate the importance and/or the effects of establishing social relationships by the use of immediately available age mates.

The present study indicated, as well, that the availability of age mates in the neighborhood was not a significant determinant of age identification. Only in stated loneliness did we find some impact by age density, and even here the relationship was not consistent, as the respondents in the areas of highest and lowest age densities reported the highest levels of loneliness. As above, we concluded that because of the community basis of friendships and the relatively low concentrations of age mates in the residential setting, the age density of the neighborhood did not make a major impact on the social psychological variable of age identification, and only a limited and non-consistent impact on loneliness.

Thus, in the context of the residential setting of the small urban community of our study, the availability of age mates in the neighborhood was not shown to be a significant enough of a factor of the social environment to determine social participation patterns among older persons. The only exception to this statement was found in family social participation where we discovered a generally inverse relationship, that is, the lower the age density, the greater the level of family association. However, even this relationship was not totally consistent, as the areas lowest age density, did not report the highest family social participation. The generally inverse relationship between availability and family social participation was consistent with the pattern we found in status losses, that is, increasing status losses tended to turn the respondents to the family as a source of social interaction. Finally, the availability of

age mates in the neighborhood did not significantly determine age identification or loneliness among older persons in our study.

Our study suggested that the statuses or roles which one occupied were the major determinants from the social environment for the social participation patterns of older persons. Consistent with the research which we identified earlier, we found that the statuses of white collar male, marriage and age all contributed to higher levels of extra-familial social participation. Widowhood, retirement, home ownership and blue collar occupational status all enhanced family social participation patterns. We also found that among the status variables, short term length of residence was very significant for enhancing total social participation, and especially friend social participation. This finding of the importance of short term residence for friend social participation was not consistent with the literature. It would appear that in our residential setting of the small urban community, the "settled in" group, that is, the long term residents, whether due to age or loss of roles, did not desire or need to turn extensively beyond the family for social participation. However, the short term residents, whether by desire or need, did turn to friends for social interaction.

Among the social psychological variables, we found that widowhood and actual age were the prime contributors to older age identifications and stated loneliness. And in line with prior research, we found that the loss of two roles did have an impact on age identification, and a very significant impact on stated loneliness. Role loss turned the person increasingly toward his family as the locus for social interaction.

Our study indicated that the role of the status variables were very important in the social participation patterns of older persons.

As age density appeared to have little impact in the residential setting of the small urban community, the remaining status variables appeared to become increasingly important as determinants of social behavior.

We conclude that the data from our study confirms that in the residential setting of the small urban community, we must look to the role or status changes themselves as the social determinants of behavior among older persons rather than the age likeness of the immediate social environment. Moreover, the evidence of our data would seem to indicate that these same statuses or roles, rather than the age likeness of the neighborhood, are the determinants of how the older person views him or herself and his or her morale. Therefore, among the residential dwellers of the small urban community, the process of aging and its impact on social participation, age identification and loneliness, is a matter of adjustment to status or role changes, independently of the availability of fellow aging persons in the immediate social environment.

While our study led us to the above conclusion, namely, that the availability of age mates in the residential setting of the small urban community did not appear to be a major determinant of social behavior, the issue remains as to whether it is the setting within the community, or the community size itself which determines the importance of the immediate availability of age mates. Rosow studied apartment dwellers in the large city, and we looked at small urban dwellers in a residential setting. Further study could be done in the small urban community among residents of age concentrated dwellings, such as high rise apartments, in an effort to determine the impact of availability within such a setting.

In our study of the impact of the availability of age mates on social

participation we found, within the residential setting, that the areas of highest and lowest age densities reported consistently lower scores of social participation than did the intermediate areas of age density. Further research might determine why the areas of highest density did not contribute in any consistent way to higher levels of social participation in the residential setting.

This research found widowhood to be a prime contributor toward loneliness among older persons in the residential setting. The issue remains whether or not the immediate availability of status similars, that is, other widowed persons, might alleviate this loneliness. It would be apropos to study structural settings within the residential community which might act as compensatory opportunities to replace this most significant of role losses. To be able to find a satisfactory alternative to this seemingly most important role loss of old age would be a major contribution to adjustment in the aging process.

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APPENDIX A

DATA TABLES FOR FINDINGS SUMMARIZED IN CHAPTER THREE

AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & TOTAL SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

	Age Density of Neighborhood				Mean Score of S.P.	Standard Error
	High	M. High	M. Low	Low		
Direct Effects	X				68.77	3.60
		X			71.61	3.25
			X		73.16	3.75
				X	70.08	4.45
Sex Male	X				78.63	11.18
		X			76.56	7.82
			X		78.54	7.60
				X	75.76	7.43
Female	X				67.91	4.10
		X			71.57	4.17
			X		74.60	6.09
				X	67.33	7.19
Marital Status	X				73.05	5.48
Married		X			73.46	4.89
			X		77.00	5.73
				X	72.31	7.53
Widowed	X				73.49	9.89
		X			74.68	7.14
			X		76.14	8.15
				X	70.78	7.28
Length of Resid.	X				76.46	5.40
Short Term		X			79.12	5.58
			X		79.20	6.23
				X	76.89	5.15
Long Term	X				55.82	7.34
		X			56.78	6.91
			X		59.35	7.49
				X	54.08	13.42

AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & TOTAL SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
(Continued)

		Age Density of Neighborhood				Mean Score of S.P.	Standard Error
		High	M. High	M. Low	Low		
Home Ownership	X					72.00	5.06
Own Home			X			76.28	3.95
				X		73.06	5.49
					X	75.24	6.96
Not Own Home	X					65.90	10.14
			X			80.06	8.40
				X		97.22	15.86
					X	80.96	14.92
Retirement Status	X					67.44	3.96
Retired			X			70.27	3.89
				X		80.98	6.55
					X	70.46	5.06
Not Retired	X					70.46	10.10
			X			86.07	8.68
				X		89.30	14.99
					X	85.74	16.58
Occupat. Status	X					64.93	8.38
White Collar			X			73.83	6.36
				X		83.99	9.18
					X	77.05	12.84
Blue Collar	X					72.97	5.69
			X			82.51	5.91
				X		86.29	11.32
					X	79.15	7.95

AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & FAMILY SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

	Age Density of Neighborhood				Mean Score of S.P.	Standard Error
	High	M. High	M. Low	Low		
Direct Effects	X				26.26	1.51
		X			27.83	1.41
			X		31.78	1.72
				X	24.27	2.13
Sex Male	X				36.65	4.03
		X			34.86	3.02
			X		39.76	3.14
				X	23.37	3.46
	X				25.37	1.52
		X			26.33	1.47
			X		28.71	2.39
				X	22.01	2.52
Marital Status	X				22.14	2.34
		X			26.73	2.22
			X		31.48	3.19
				X	12.89	5.00
	X				21.16	2.68
		X			25.50	2.44
			X		30.21	4.06
				X	24.79	3.93
Length of Resid.	X				22.61	2.19
		X			26.22	2.19
			X		30.53	2.77
				X	18.71	2.55
	X				20.70	3.34
		X			26.01	3.32
			X		31.16	4.67
				X	18.97	7.18

AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & FAMILY SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
(Continued)

		Age Density of Neighborhood				Mean Score of S.P.	Standard Error
		High	M. High	M. Low	Low		
Home Ownership	X					28.76	1.91
Own Home			X			28.77	1.67
				X		31.71	2.03
					X	22.99	3.55
Not Own Home	X					14.54	3.88
			X			23.46	3.92
				X		29.99	5.96
					X	14.69	6.13
Retirement Status	X					26.41	1.45
Retired			X			27.90	1.38
				X		30.89	1.89
					X	23.22	2.07
Not Retired	X					26.33	3.39
			X			28.71	2.58
				X		21.56	4.55
					X	23.31	6.98
Occupat. Status	X					27.21	2.79
White Collar			X			27.89	1.94
				X		29.15	2.04
					X	21.22	5.22
Blue Collar	X					25.53	2.07
			X			28.72	2.05
				X		23.30	4.26
					X	25.32	3.41

AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & KIN SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

		Age Density of Neighborhood			Mean Score	Standard
		High	M. High	M. Low	of S.P.	Error
		High	M. High	M. Low	Low	
Direct Effects		X				32.53
			X			33.13
				X		33.65
					X	35.56
Sex Male		X				39.95
			X			37.70
				X		36.19
					X	41.71
Female		X				31.35
			X			32.02
				X		36.12
					X	33.24
Marital Status		X				30.93
	Married		X			31.23
				X		33.59
					X	33.47
Widowed		X				32.06
			X			27.95
				X		34.58
					X	32.46
Length of Resid.		X				36.13
	Short Term		X			34.98
				X		36.34
					X	39.78
Long Term		X				26.86
			X			24.20
				X		31.83
					X	26.15

AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & KIN SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
(Continued)

Age Density of Neighborhood					Mean Score	Standard
					of S.P.	Error
	High	M. High	M. Low	Low		
Home Ownership	X				34.24	2.43
Own Home		X			34.49	2.01
			X		33.50	1.99
				X	34.11	2.68
Not Own Home	X				28.75	4.95
		X			24.68	6.48
			X		34.67	8.18
				X	31.82	7.62
Retirement Status	X				32.86	1.77
Retired		X			32.97	1.58
			X		32.27	2.02
				X	35.08	2.15
Not Retired	X				30.80	4.62
		X			32.98	3.14
			X		35.95	4.07
				X	36.76	6.49
Occupat. Status	X				30.84	3.40
White Collar		X			33.49	2.35
			X		36.45	2.44
				X	35.30	5.19
Blue Collar	X				32.82	2.88
		X			32.46	2.34
			X		31.77	3.50
				X	36.33	3.13

AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & FRIEND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

	Age Density of Neighborhood				Mean Score of S.P.	Standard Error
	High	M. High	M. Low	Low		
Direct Effects	X				26.06	1.95
		X			27.72	1.85
			X		27.73	1.92
				X	26.02	2.28
Sex Male	X				24.58	4.49
		X			24.19	4.01
			X		25.43	3.28
				X	24.26	3.78
Female	X				25.19	2.05
		X			29.01	1.87
			X		31.23	2.72
				X	27.28	2.96
Marital Status	X				28.15	2.88
Married		X			31.22	2.90
			X		33.24	4.05
				X	33.25	5.22
Widowed	X				25.23	3.33
		X			28.95	2.98
			X		33.40	4.52
				X	23.86	4.10
Length of Resid.	X				28.35	2.85
Short Term		X			31.96	2.72
			X		33.82	3.39
				X	26.80	3.03
Long Term	X				25.03	4.14
		X			28.21	4.09
			X		32.83	5.67
				X	30.22	6.96

AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & FRIEND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
(Continued)

		Age Density of Neighborhood				Mean Score of S.P.	Standard Score
		High	M. High	M. Low	Low		
Home Ownership	X					27.17	2.50
Own Home			X			27.52	2.19
				X		27.82	2.00
					X	29.39	2.76
Not Own Home	X					26.21	4.73
			X			32.65	4.82
				X		38.83	7.60
					X	27.63	7.41
Retirement Status	X					25.72	1.85
Retired			X			27.18	1.64
				X		27.30	1.92
					X	26.15	2.19
Not Retired	X					24.97	5.83
			X			30.19	4.17
				X		27.98	4.17
					X	25.71	6.72
Occupat. Status	X					23.93	4.86
White Collar			X			26.37	3.42
				X		26.90	2.42
					X	27.47	5.54
Blue Collar	X					26.77	2.63
			X			31.00	2.46
				X		28.38	3.62
					X	24.39	3.14

AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & NEIGHBOR SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

		Age Density of Neighborhood				Mean Score	Standard
						of S.P.	Error
		High	M. High	M. Low	Low		
Direct Effects		X				13.73	2.45
			X			10.21	2.58
				X		15.13	2.48
					X	12.74	3.06
Sex Male		X				5.06	7.91
			X			3.61	7.61
				X		8.31	6.45
					X	11.11	8.51
	Female	X				12.72	2.66
			X			9.49	2.97
				X		11.30	4.47
					X	8.29	3.92
Marital Status		X				8.70	5.11
	Married		X			8.12	4.05
				X		7.58	5.79
					X	2.62	8.69
	Widowed	X				11.79	5.20
			X			5.13	5.90
				X		5.41	6.46
					X	0.40	7.13
Length of Resid.		X				16.51	4.70
	Short Term		X			12.80	4.15
				X		12.67	4.92
					X	12.25	5.76
	Long Term	X				3.99	5.97
			X			0.45	5.31
				X		0.33	7.86
					X	10.03	10.98

AVAILABILITY OF AGE MATES & NEIGHBOR SOCIAL PARTICIPATION
(Continued)

		Age Density of Neighborhood				Mean Score	Standard
						of S.P.	Error
		High	M. High	M. Low	Low		
Home Ownership	X					14.85	3.06
Own Home			X			11.27	3.63
				X		15.73	2.64
					X	10.22	4.22
Not Own Home	X					5.64	8.96
			X			1.98	6.45
				X		2.72	11.00
					X	8.00	13.47
Retirement Status	X					13.46	2.33
Retired			X			9.39	2.65
				X		14.23	2.51
					X	10.43	2.97
Not Retired	X					12.46	5.41
			X			14.54	7.50
				X		11.85	5.20
					X	32.32	7.98
Occupat. Status	X					15.63	4.31
White Collar			X			15.91	5.93
				X		16.54	3.17
					X	27.09	6.89
Blue Collar	X					10.29	3.55
			X			8.02	3.60
				X		9.54	4.46
					X	15.65	3.81

STATUS VARIABLES & TOTAL SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

	Direct Effects		Marital Status				Length of Residence			
	Mean	S.E.	Married	S.E.	Widowed	S.E.	Short	S.E.	Long	S.E.
Sex										
Male	70.5	3.3	74.5	6.0	80.2	10.2	79.0	5.2	55.9	7.9
Female	71.2	2.8	73.4	5.4	67.2	7.0	76.7	4.1	57.1	7.3
Marital St.										
Married	72.8	3.0					79.2	3.5	57.8	8.1
Widowed	68.9	3.2					70.5	3.9	61.4	6.0
Length of Res.										
Short Term	75.9	2.8								
Long Term	65.8	3.3								
Home Ownership										
Own Home	73.4	2.3								
Not Own Home	68.3	4.1								
Retirement St.										
Retired	69.5	2.1								
Not Retired	72.2	4.1								
Occupat. St.										
White Collar	69.8	3.0								
Blue Collar	71.9	2.9								

	Home Ownership				Retirement Status				Occupational Status			
	Owned	Not Owned	Owned	Not Owned	Retired	N. Retired	Retired	N. Retired	White Col.	Blue Col.	White Col.	Blue Col.
	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.
Sex												
Male	76.9	5.9	77.7	9.3	77.1	5.6	77.6	9.5	81.7	8.2	73.0	6.4
Female	75.7	3.2	64.9	5.9	69.0	3.1	71.6	5.7	67.4	4.4	73.2	4.1
Marital St.												
Married	74.7	2.0	62.4	9.4	71.5	3.7	76.4	6.4	64.3	5.0	72.8	5.7
Widowed	70.1	3.6	61.8	6.1	74.6	5.2	72.8	8.6	63.8	4.5	68.2	4.7
Length of Res.												
Short Term	74.8	3.1	75.0	4.3	75.2	2.7	80.5	6.4	72.4	4.0	77.3	3.1
Long Term	70.1	2.3	49.2	12.7	57.7	6.4	55.3	9.1	55.7	5.9	63.6	8.1
Home Ownership												
Own Home					71.9	2.0	76.3	4.5	72.2	3.0	72.6	2.5
Not Own Home					72.6	4.9	89.4	16.5	55.9	6.8	68.3	8.8
Retirement St.												
Retired									67.1	3.4	77.4	3.6
Not Retired									82.7	11.9	83.0	8.8

STATUS VARIABLES & FAMILY SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

	Direct Effects		Marital Status				Length of Residence			
	Mean	S.E.	Married		Widowed		Short		Long	
			Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.
Sex										
Male	27.9	1.4	27.1	2.5	40.2	4.1	33.4	2.8	33.8	3.0
Female	27.1	1.2	23.8	1.8	27.3	1.4	27.5	1.3	23.6	1.7
Marital St.										
Married	26.6	1.3					25.4	1.5	25.5	2.0
Widowed	28.3	1.4					35.5	2.6	31.9	2.7
Length of Res.										
Short Term	28.3	1.2								
Long Term	26.7	1.4								
Home Ownership										
Own Home	29.5	1.0								
Not Own Home	25.4	1.7								
Retirement St.										
Retired	28.1	1.0								
Not Retired	26.8	1.8								
Occupat. St.										
White Collar	26.2	1.3								
Blue Collar	28.8	1.3								

	Home Ownership				Retirement Status				Occupational Status			
	Owned		Not Owned		Retired		N. Retired		White Col.		Blue Col.	
	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.
Sex												
Male	31.4	2.4	35.8	3.6	32.1	1.7	35.2	4.3	31.8	2.8	35.5	2.9
Female	28.9	1.1	22.2	2.0	25.3	1.1	25.8	1.9	24.7	1.5	26.4	1.4
Marital St.												
Married	27.6	1.3	23.3	2.5	26.0	1.3	24.9	2.4	19.9	2.5	26.6	2.4
Widowed	32.7	2.3	34.7	3.0	31.4	1.7	36.0	3.8	22.3	2.5	28.4	2.6
Length of Res.												
Short Term	28.2	1.7	20.7	2.5	28.4	1.0	20.6	2.9	21.8	2.0	27.1	1.7
Long Term	27.8	1.9	20.5	6.1	27.6	2.9	20.7	4.7	20.4	3.5	27.9	4.0
Home Ownership												
Own Home					28.1	1.1	28.0	2.1	27.4	1.6	28.6	1.5
Not Own Home					28.0	2.9	13.3	5.9	14.9	4.1	26.4	4.3
Retirement St.												
Retired									25.4	1.1	28.7	1.2
Not Retired									27.2	3.4	22.6	2.9

STATUS VARIABLES & KIN SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

	Direct Effects		Marital Status				Length of Residence			
	Mean	S.E.	Married		Widowed		Short		Long	
	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.
Sex										
Male	34.3	1.6	38.1	2.9	39.6	3.9	38.3	3.1	39.4	3.3
Female	33.0	1.4	34.9	2.3	31.4	2.0	34.1	1.6	32.2	2.2
Marital Status										
Married	35.1	1.5					37.4	1.9	35.7	2.5
Widowed	32.2	1.6					35.1	2.8	35.9	3.0
Length of Res.										
Short Term	34.3	1.4								
Long Term	33.0	1.7								
Home Ownership										
Own Home	33.5	1.2								
Not Own Home	33.9	2.0								
Retirement St.										
Retired	33.2	1.1								
Not Retired	34.2	2.0								
Occupational St.										
White Collar	33.8	1.5								
Blue Collar	33.6	1.4								

	Home Ownership				Retirement Status				Occupational Status			
	Owned		Not Owned		Retired		N. Retired		White Col.		Blue Col.	
	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.
Sex												
Male	37.2	2.4	40.5	4.2	36.7	2.2	41.0	4.2	39.8	3.0	37.9	3.0
Female	33.2	1.4	33.1	2.7	33.4	1.4	32.9	2.6	32.8	1.9	33.4	1.9
Marital St.												
Married	35.7	1.5	37.4	3.3	35.9	1.7	37.2	2.9	30.9	3.3	33.6	3.4
Widowed	34.7	2.4	36.2	3.5	34.2	2.0	36.7	3.8	32.3	3.1	31.1	3.4
Length of Res.												
Short Term	35.8	1.9	37.8	3.2	34.0	1.2	39.5	3.5	37.2	2.4	36.4	2.0
Long Term	32.3	1.8	22.1	9.9	27.8	4.8	26.6	6.2	26.1	4.9	28.3	5.7
Home Ownership												
Own Home					33.3	1.1	34.8	2.3	35.4	1.7	32.7	1.6
Not Own Home					28.5	5.0	31.3	7.6	27.9	5.7	32.0	6.2
Retirement St.												
Retired									33.2	1.3	33.3	1.4
Not Retired									34.8	3.8	33.4	2.7

STATUS VARIABLES & FRIEND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

	Direct Effects		Marital Status				Length of Residence			
	Mean	S.E.	Married		Widowed		Short		Long	
			Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.
Sex										
Male	26.6	1.8	27.5	3.3	21.7	4.2	24.9	3.4	24.2	3.6
Female	27.1	1.4	30.5	2.2	25.7	1.9	29.7	1.7	26.6	2.1
Marital Status										
Married	28.7	1.6					31.8	2.1	26.2	2.5
Widowed	25.0	1.7					22.8	2.9	24.7	3.0
Length of Res.										
Short Term	28.3	1.5								
Long Term	25.3	1.7								
Home Ownership										
Own Home	27.3	1.3								
Not Own Home	26.4	2.2								
Retirement St.										
Retired	26.1	1.1								
Not Retired	27.6	2.3								
Occupat. St.										
White Collar	26.6	1.7								
Blue Collar	27.1	1.5								

	Home Ownership				Retirement Status				Occupational Status			
	Owned		Not Owned		Retired		N. Retired		White Col.		Blue Col.	
	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.
Sex												
Male	25.8	2.4	23.4	5.0	26.1	2.5	23.1	4.7	26.4	3.4	22.7	3.3
Female	27.8	1.5	28.5	2.5	27.5	1.4	28.7	2.6	26.4	1.9	29.8	1.8
Marital St.												
Married	28.6	1.6	29.4	3.5	28.5	1.7	29.5	3.1	30.8	3.0	32.0	2.9
Widowed	25.0	2.3	22.4	3.8	25.1	2.2	22.3	3.8	26.0	3.0	29.6	3.2
Length of Res.												
Short Term	28.3	2.1	32.1	3.2	28.5	1.3	31.9	3.6	29.8	2.5	30.6	2.2
Long Term	27.5	1.9	30.5	7.6	27.2	3.5	30.9	5.7	27.0	4.1	31.0	4.7
Home Ownership												
Own Home					28.0	1.1	27.9	2.5	27.9	1.9	27.9	1.6
Not Own Home					27.7	3.7	34.9	7.3	28.9	5.1	33.7	5.4
Retirement St.												
Retired									26.8	1.3	26.2	1.4
Not Retired									25.4	5.5	28.9	2.7

STATUS VARIABLES & NEIGHBOR SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

	Direct Effects		Marital Status				Length of Residence			
	Mean	S.E.	Married		Widowed		Short		Long	
Sex			Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.
Male	14.2	2.5	13.3	5.8	0.6	11.6	7.0	7.2	7.0	7.5
Female	11.6	2.0	10.0	3.5	10.9	2.6	13.1	2.3	7.7	3.1
Marital St.										
Married	13.4	2.2					11.7	3.2	11.6	4.0
Widowed	12.4	2.4					8.5	6.5	3.0	6.2
Length of Res.										
Short Term	14.1	2.0								
Long Term	11.7	2.3								
Home Ownership										
Own Home	13.7	1.5								
Not Own Home	12.1	3.1								
Retirement St.										
Retired	11.8	1.6								
Not Retired	14.0	3.0								
Occupat. St.										
White Collar	14.2	2.2								
Blue Collar	11.6	2.1								

	Home Ownership				Retirement Status				Occupational Status			
	Owned		Not Owned		Retired		N. Retired		White Col.		Blue Col.	
	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.	Mean	S.E.
Sex												
Male	10.8	5.1	3.2	11.1	3.9	8.3	10.1	7.6	8.1	7.1	5.8	7.2
Female	11.4	1.9	9.5	3.7	9.3	2.2	11.5	3.6	11.6	2.7	9.2	2.9
Marital St.												
Married	13.7	2.3	9.6	5.7	10.3	3.0	12.6	4.7	10.0	4.7	3.4	4.7
Widowed	8.5	5.3	3.0	8.3	2.5	7.4	9.0	6.1	8.3	5.3	2.6	5.7
Length of Res.												
Short Term	17.0	2.6	10.0	6.1	10.9	2.4	16.2	6.9	15.8	4.2	11.2	4.0
Long Term	8.9	2.9	-11.6	11.2	2.7	5.0	-5.4	9.1	2.5	6.3	-5.1	6.9
Home Ownership												
Own Home					11.3	1.7	14.6	3.4	13.6	3.0	12.4	2.0
Not Own Home					2.3	6.1	-3.8	13.9	4.8	8.5	-6.3	9.2
Retirement St.												
Retired									12.8	1.7	10.9	2.2
Not Retired									24.7	6.8	10.8	3.4

OCCUPATION & AGE IDENTIFICATION

	Old	Middle-Aged	Elderly	Total
White Collar	20.0 (8)	57.5 (23)	22.5 (9)	35.1 (40)
Blue Collar	37.8 (14)	37.8 (14)	24.3 (9)	32.5 (37)
Housewives (Others)	37.8 (14)	43.2 (16)	18.9 (7)	32.5 (37)
	31.6 (36)	46.5 (53)	21.9 (25)	100.0 (114)*

*Ten missing observations.

SEX OF RESPONDENT & AGE IDENTIFICATION

	Old	Middle-Aged	Elderly	Total
Male	29.8 (14)	48.9 (23)	21.3 (10)	40.5 (47)
Female	33.3 (23)	44.9 (31)	21.7 (15)	59.5 (69)
	31.9 (37)	46.6 (54)	21.6 (25)	100.0 (116)*

*Eight missing observations.

MARITAL STATUS & AGE IDENTIFICATION

	Old	Middle-Aged	Elderly	Total
Married	22.9 (16)	51.4 (36)	25.7 (18)	60.3 (70)
Widowed	45.7 (21)	39.1 (18)	15.2 (7)	39.7 (46)
	31.9 (37)	46.6 (54)	21.6 (25)	100.0 (116)*

*Eight missing observations.

RETIREMENT STATUS & AGE IDENTIFICATION

	Old	Middle-Aged	Elderly	Total
Retired	30.6 (19)	48.4 (30)	21.0 (13)	54.4 (62)
Not Retired	28.6 (4)	64.3 (9)	7.1 (1)	12.1 (14)
Housewives	35.0 (14)	37.8 (15)	27.5 (11)	34.5 (40)
	31.9 (37)	46.6 (54)	21.6 (25)	100.0 (116)*

*Eight missing observations.

AGE OF RESPONDENT & AGE IDENTIFICATION

	Old	Middle-Aged	Total
64-69	21.6 (8)	78.4 (29)	31.9 (37)
70-75	65.6 (21)	34.4 (11)	27.6 (32)
76+	70.2 (33)	29.8 (14)	40.3 (47)
	53.4 (62)	46.6 (54)	100.0 (116)*

*Eight missing observations.

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE & AGE IDENTIFICATION

	Old	Middle-Aged	Elderly	Total
1 to 15 years	34.0 (16)	48.9 (23)	17.0 (8)	45.6 (47)
16+ years	26.8 (15)	46.4 (26)	26.8 (15)	54.4 (56)
	30.1 (31)	47.6 (49)	22.3 (23)	100.0 (103)*

*Twenty-one missing observations.

HOME OWNERSHIP & AGE IDENTIFICATION

	Old	Middle-Aged	Elderly	Total
Own Home	30.6 (26)	50.6 (43)	18.8 (16)	82.5 (85)
Not Own Home	27.8 (5)	33.3 (6)	38.9 (7)	17.5 (18)
	30.1 (31)	47.6 (49)	22.3 (23)	100.0 (103)*

*Twenty-one missing observations.

OCCUPATION & LONELINESS

	Lonely	Never Lonely	Total
White Collar	20.9 (9)	79.1 (34)	35.5 (43)
Blue Collar	69.0 (20)	31.0 (9)	24.0 (29)
Housewives (Other)	49.0 (24)	51.0 (25)	40.5 (49)
	44.8 (53)	56.2 (68)	100.0 (121)*

*Three missing observations.

SEX OF RESPONDENT & LONELINESS

	Lonely	Never Lonely	Total
Male	32.7 (16)	67.3 (33)	40.2 (49)
Female	52.1 (38)	47.9 (35)	59.8 (73)
	44.3 (54)	55.7 (68)	100.0 (122)*

*Two missing observations.

MARITAL STATUS & LONELINESS

	Lonely	Never Lonely	Total
Married	27.8 (20)	72.2 (52)	59.0 (72)
Widowed	68.0 (34)	32.0 (16)	41.0 (50)
	44.3 (54)	55.7 (68)	100.0 (122)*

*Two missing observations.

RETIREMENT STATUS & LONELINESS

	Lonely	Never Lonely	Total
Retired	37.9 (25)	62.1 (41)	54.1 (66)
Not Retired	42.9 (6)	57.1 (8)	11.5 (14)
Housewives	54.8 (23)	45.2 (19)	34.4 (42)
	44.3 (54)	55.7 (68)	100.0 (122)*

*Two missing observations.

AGE OF RESPONDENT & LONELINESS

	Lonely	Never Lonely	Total
64 thru 70	38.7 (12)	61.3 (19)	30.1 (31)
71 thru 75	53.3 (16)	46.7 (14)	29.1 (30)
76+	47.6 (20)	52.4 (22)	40.8 (42)
	46.6 (48)	53.4 (55)	100.0 (103)*

*Twenty-one missing observations.

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE & LONELINESS

	Lonely	Never Lonely	Total
1 to 15 years	48.9 (23)	51.1 (24)	45.6 (47)
16+ years	44.6 (25)	55.4 (31)	54.4 (56)
	46.6 (48)	53.4 (55)	100.0 (103)*

*Twenty-one missing observations.

HOME OWNERSHIP & LONELINESS

	Lonely	Never Lonely	Total
Own Home	40.0 (34)	60.0 (51)	82.5 (85)
Not Own Home	77.8 (14)	22.2 (4)	17.5 (18)
	46.6 (48)	53.4 (55)	100.0 (103)*

*Twenty-one missing observations.

AGING AND SOCIAL INTERACTION
IN THE SMALL URBAN COMMUNITY

by

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This study examined the informal social participation of the elderly in the small urban community. The setting for the study was the community of Manhattan, Kansas, population 27,000. Persons sixty-five and older living within the city limits of Manhattan represent approximately 7.9 percent of the total population. The study was limited to persons in non-institutional settings.

Attempting to identify the determinants for social interaction by aging persons, hypotheses were generated for testing from prior research which indicated that the age density of the immediate social environment and the statuses occupied by the older person did have an influence on his or her patterns of social participation. It was felt that in the residential setting of the small urban community the availability of age mates and the status of the older person would also effect significantly their levels of social interaction, and subsequently their self-perception in terms of age and their sense of loneliness.

The availability of age mates was determined by the number of households, as found by the 1970 census, within a census tract with a person or persons sixty-five and older living therein. The age density of these census tracts ranged from 4.4 percent to 30.4 percent. The data indicated that the levels of social participation in the small urban community were neither subject to, nor determined by, the age density of the neighborhood, i.e., the immediate availability of age mates. Nor did the age density of the neighborhood appear to have a consistent influence on the self-perception of the aging person in terms of his or her age, or on his or her loneliness.

The statuses occupied by the older person were determined as age, sex, marriage, retirement, occupation, length of residence in the neigh-

borhood and home ownership. The status of the older person does influence his or her levels of social participation, as well as age identification and loneliness, in the context of the small urban community. Singly and in combination with other statuses, the data showed that the marital status and the length of residence in the neighborhood were important determinants of the levels of social interaction and age identification and loneliness in the aging process.

The analysis led us to conclude that in the residential setting of the small urban community, we must look to the role or status the older person occupies as the social determinant of behavior rather than the age likeness of the immediate social environment. And therefore, these same statuses or roles, rather than the age likeness of the older person's immediate social context, are the determinants of how the older person views himself and the loneliness he feels.