The Relationship between Attachment Styles, Interpersonal Trust, and the Marital Attitudes of College Students

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTACHMENT STYLES, INTERPERSONAL TRUST, AND THE MARITAL ATTITUDES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

BY

DONALEE BROWN

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ABSTRACT

The Relationship Between Attachment Styles, Interpersonal Trust, and the Marital Attitudes of College Students

Divorce is not an uncommon phenomenon in our country today. The possibility of negative ramifications is not debatable. There is an acknowledged gap in the literature in the developmental period of young adulthood of which traditional college students are an element. A main task of this period is the construction of interpersonal relationships, a topic also lacking in the literature. This study investigated the relationship of attachment styles, interpersonal trust, and the marital attitudes of college students, each variable a documented component of interpersonal relationships. Data from 269 college students was analyzed. Students completed a Demographic Questionnaire, Marital Attitude Scale, Adult Attachment Scale, and Trust Scale. The relationship between attachment styles and trust were analyzed using a Pearson correlation matrix. Multiple regression analysis was performed to determine whether secure attachment and trust significantly contributed to the variance accounted for by marital attitudes. The relationship between attachment styles and trust yielded significant results. As hypothesized secure attachment was significantly correlated with trust. Also as hypothesized positive marital attitudes were predicted by secure attachment and trust. These findings are related to future directions in theory, research, and practice underscoring the importance of integrating these variables in the proactive construction of healthy interpersonal relationships.
Acknowledgments

My deepest gratitude goes to Zane and Brienne. Without their continued belief in me my entire doctoral program would have been only a dream. From taking over routine tasks to being my best cheering section, their devotion was unfailing. Each of them is a continual inspiration to me. I am blessed.

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Finally, I would like to thank those strong women in my past that have paved the way and shown me to quietly strive for what I believe, and never, ever give up. They are, Ging Gaw Mable, Nana, Ging, my Mom, Mom C., and my Aunts; Bess, Jo, Boots, Gail, Pauline, and Pat.
Dedication

To Brienne and My Little Mom:

Your unconditional love and inspiration through example is extraordinary.

Thank you.
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The intention of this research study is to investigate the relationship between attachment styles, interpersonal trust, and marital attitudes in college students.

The purpose of chapter one is to give an overview of the problem whose exploration is represented by this study. Background of the problem will be delineated as well as a statement of the problem. Attachment, attachment styles, interpersonal trust, and marital attitudes, particularly within the context of college students, will be explored and defined. The consequence of attitudes toward marriage and association in relationships will be identified and explored in relation to the resolution of the problem as outlined. The purpose and significance of this research, hypotheses, variables, and limitations are identified, defined, and explored.

Background of the Problem

As the century turned, it appears that in the United States the divorce rate has leveled off to one out of every two marriages, approximately 50 percent. This figure is no longer staggering to the American population. The idea of marriage returning to its success rate of 70% that was true in the 1950s has been all but abandoned. It appears that average Americans will marry at least twice (Spillane-Grieco, 2000).

There is consistent evidence that the debilitating effects of parental conflict on children persist well into adulthood. Most of the relevant research comes from the
divorce literature, which indicates that adolescent and adult children from divorced families suffer greater anxiety, higher levels of depression, lower self-esteem, and in general evidence substandard psychological and social adjustment in comparison with offspring from intact families (Tallman, Gray, Kullberg, & Henderson, 1999). Biblarz and Gottainer (2000) concur, stating that evidence over the past 30 years shows that children raised in single-parent households generally have lower average levels of psychological well-being and socioeconomic achievement than those raised by two biological parents. These psychological and behavioral difficulties are manifested in poor school performance and antisocial behavior. Consequently, children from divorced families tend to be less well educated, hold lower status occupations and earn less income than their counterparts from intact families (Tallman et al., 1999).

Amato and Booth (1991) concur that evidence suggests that the primary source of these debilitating outcomes is marital conflict whether or not a divorce actually occurs. They further state that marital conflict between parents affects offspring in ways that increase the chances that they too will have distressed and/or unstable marriages. Tallman and colleagues (1999) hypothesize that such findings have been interpreted by a number of investigators as indicating that the individual personality with its bundle of emotional vulnerabilities and dispositional traits is the conduit through which marital relationship patterns are transmitted to the next generation.

Certainly there is sufficient evidence to cause societal alarm regarding the current divorce rate and its subsequent outcomes. But, what relevance does this have to the college student population who fall within the young adult developmental period? The contributing factors regarding attitudes toward marriage is crucial to research in
facilitating a proactive means of navigation for young adult aged college students as they form healthy relationships.

The terms college student and young adult as defined in this study are used interchangeably. As adolescents approach adulthood, they begin to explore their feelings toward love, marriage, and expectations of a future mate. There are many salient factors which may influence a young adult’s attitudes toward marriage.

Recent research and theory suggests that some of these factors may include whether or not the person’s parents ever divorced (Jones & Nelson, 1996). Larson (1988) asserted that the current high divorce rate stems from marital dissatisfaction which is due to unrealistic expectations and attitudes toward marriage. Greenberg and Nay (1982) concur, stating that because a child’s earliest impressions of marriage come from his or her parents it is very possible that the impression formed from this relationship is closely tied to the individual’s personal attitudes toward marriage. It is possible that these unrealistic expectations are passed on to the children (Glen & Kraner, 1987).

Contemporary theories of relationship development (Collins & Read, 1990) suggest that the interpersonal behavior exhibited in the relationships of young adults have important implications for future adult relationships. Long term unresolved conflicts between young adults and late adolescents and peers are linked to later relationship instability. In addition, while peer relationships in young adulthood may lack permanence one cannot ignore the possibility that they have important implications for future adult relationships. The ability to form and maintain close relationships with a romantic partner is consistently associated with positive young adult mental health (Creasy, Kershaw, & Boston, 1999).
This paper is concerned with divorce as an eventual possibility, but more poignantly, it is concerned with the developmental process of young adults’ relationships and their concomitant attitudes toward marriage. Within the last two decades, researchers have turned the focus onto the late adolescent and young adult population and their attitudes and feelings about marriage and divorce (Jennings, Salts, & Smith, 1991; Kozuch & Cooney, 1995; Stone & Hutchinson, 1992). In particular, one premarital factor that has been emphasized is individuals’ beliefs and attitudes about marital relationships. Do young people want to marry? How do they feel about marriage? The high rate of marital distress and its consequences has obligated researchers to examine not only possible causes of unsuccessful marriages, but in particular the beliefs, or attitudes individuals hold regarding marital relationships. Research has indicated that unrealistic attitudes toward marriage based on distorted assumptions tend to diminish satisfaction in relationships (Sharp & Ganong, 2000).

Interpersonal relationships, which initially gain prominence during adolescence, become increasingly important in young adulthood (Duck, 1983). In particular, romantic relationships become salient concerns for individuals entering the young adult years. According to Erikson’s (1963) life span model of psychosocial development, the two important life tasks of adolescence are separation from the family and the establishment of heterosexual relationships – both of which are paramount concerns for college students. The formation of close, intimate relationships with members of the opposite sex may represent the missing link that connects these divergent developmental tasks (Seiffge-Krenke, 2000). Despite the recognized importance of competence in close relationships, very little is known about the developmental roots of the ability to
successfully initiate and sustain such unions (Christensen, 1984, Parke, 1998).
Attachment theorists have expressed the need for a bridge spanning a developmental
period in which young adult’s attachment concerns typically undergo a significant
transition (Collins & Read, 1990).

The above-cited empirical data overwhelmingly supports the premise that healthy,
stable relationships play a central role in human life. The consequences of unhealthy
relationships are documented to have devastating effects on multiple levels. Lewis
(1998) posits that life is lived in relationships, and the quality of those relationships has
much to do with how life turns out.

Understanding attachment styles, trust, and the attitudes that college students have
about marriage can provide professionals with data in order to better prepare young
adults to become successful marriage partners. It is the overall objective of this study to
investigate the extent to which the variables of attachment and trust are correlated with
attitudes about marriage.

Statement of the Problem

Each individual seeks a central relationship in which to find security, satisfaction,
and meaning. Each individual brings to the central relationship a greater or lesser
proclivity for both connection and separateness, the strengths of which are determined by
a complex interaction of biological, developmental, social, and cultural variables (Lewis,
1998). Young adult college students in particular find that one of their most significant
developmental tasks is the emergence of new patterns of friendships and, specifically, the
beginning of romantic relationships. Interpersonal problems are among the most
common complaints that patients report during clinical interviews (Horowitz, 1979). In fact, Creasey, Kershaw, and Boston (1999) state that professionals working in university counseling centers are well aware that difficulties with friends, roommates, and romantic partners are a chief reason this population often seeks services in the first place. Sheldon and Reiffer (1989) concur stating that difficult or impoverished interpersonal relationships are a frequent focus in brief psychotherapy around which the patient’s presentation of unhappiness is organized.

Interpersonal, or relational problems often reflect a conflict between the person’s desire to express a particular behavior and the person’s feared consequence of expressing that behavior. Such conflicts arise out of the person’s interpersonal learning history, which manifests itself in part in the person’s attachment history and attachment style (Horowitz, Rosenberg, & Bartholomew, 1993). For example, people whose early experiences with other people have been disappointing might come to distrust other people, avoid intimate contact with other people, and refuse to relinquish control to other people. As a result, they might report problems of dominance. On the other hand, people whose early experiences have underscored their own incompetence and dependence on others might report problems of interpersonal submissiveness. Thus, as illustrated by Horowitz and colleagues (1993), different attachment styles would seem to correspond to different types of relational problems.

Recent research has examined people’s attachment styles in young adulthood. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) proposed a model based on Bowlby’s (1977) suggestion that children, over time, internalize early attachment experiences and use these internal representations upon which to base subsequent relationships. Hazan and
Shaver (1987) originally theorized that adult romantic love could be viewed as an affective bond comparable to that seen between infants and their primary caregivers. They reported that secure young adults described their love relationships as happy, friendly, and trusting, emphasizing their ability to support and accept their partner despite their faults, and had relationships that tended to last longer than either avoidant or ambivalent respondents. The romantic relationships of avoidant respondents were characterized by a fear of intimacy and a discomfort with closeness, whereas the anxious-ambivalent respondents emphasized love as involving obsession, extreme sexual attraction, and jealousy. Since Hazan and Shaver's original findings numerous studies have continued to find strong empirical support for differences in relationship satisfaction, psychological well-being, and childhood experiences as a function of secure, avoidant, and ambivalent attachment styles in adulthood (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Collins & Read, 1990; Pistole, 1989).

The attachment drive provides one of the major motivations for the adult dyad (Berman, Marcus, & Berman, 1994). Broad relationship expectancies regarding emerging adult relationships are conceptualized as attachment styles (Creasey, Kershaw, & Boston, 1999). Berman and colleagues (1994) describe the activation process of adult attachment illustrated here to reinforce the relevance of attachment in young adult relationships. They propose that there are two distinct types of activators of attachment, one of which is called a primary activator, which are the unchanging components of similar interactions that associate a given individual with the attachment Inner Working Model (IWM). The IWM is theoretically based on the idea that patterns can be seen in the ways that adults relate to important others in their lives. As a child, one builds a "working model" of the
nature of relationships (Bowlby, 1973), which contains the seeds of its own reconfirmation. These inner working models are mental representations, which act as the mechanism by which early attachment experiences affect a person throughout life. The IWM contributes to the expectations, beliefs, and attributions each person has about himself or herself and their partner. The attachment IWM establishes the person’s belief in the availability and consistency of the attachment figure, and in the person’s own worthiness as the receiver of security and comfort (Bowlby, 1982). The attachment IWM is crucial to understanding many aspects of relational interaction. The IWM of the attachment relationship is an accumulation of the experiences within that relationship. Understanding the young adult’s attachment style and interpreting their specific IWM patterns of operation may have important implications for coping with or avoiding conflict in future adult relationships (Berman et al., 1994).

A large volume of theory suggests that the transition to adult roles can be greatly enhanced by close emotional relationships (Creasey, Kershaw, & Boston, 1999). Duvall and Miller (1985) suggest that a critical task for couples is to establish a functional system of operation comfortable for both partners. The choice to become a couple or invest in a committed relationship often requires understanding on the part of each individual within the relationship. The amount of trust one has in one’s partner is documented as an aid in helping to establish a healthy prototype for a relationship (Quinn & Odell, 1998). Hazen and Shaver (1987) posit that the need for security or trust is an integral and fundamental component of the attachment process. They further illustrate that attachment and trust are basic human needs and are most successfully fulfilled within successful relationships. Interpersonal trust is a dimension of an intimate relationship,
which holds great meaning (Quinn & Odell, 1998). Quinn and Odell also lament that one of the maladies of our time seems to be the doubts held regarding the feelings of support: being counted on, counting on another, being honest, and being open and truthful. They observe that the dissipation of interpersonal trust in the dyad is, like a hole in a ship’s hull, a tell-tale sign of trouble.

Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985) express surprise that given that trust is one of the most desired qualities in any close relationship, there is comparatively little focus on this concept in the research literature. Stinnett and Walters (1977) claim that although little empirical data on trust is available, trust promotes security and sharing in a relationship, and it has been asserted that interpersonal trust is essential to a couple’s capacity to achieve full potential and experience growth. The preceding cited validation of the importance of interpersonal trust within a healthy relationship supports its inclusion in this research study.

Young adulthood is a time when intimate relationships are prominent and a focal point in individuals’ lives (Amato & Rogers, 1999). In fact, the achievement of interpersonal intimacy is widely regarded as a central developmental task of young adults. Despite the recognized importance of competence in close relationships, very little is known about the developmental roots of the ability to successfully initiate such unions (Christensen, 1998; Parke, 1998). One pre-marital factor that has been emphasized as a possible cause of relational dysfunction is individuals’ beliefs and attitudes about marital relationships. Unrealistic relationship attitudes are predispositions that bias a person toward interpreting intimate relationship events in an irrational manner and are based on erroneous expectations. Individuals subscribing to such attitudes or
beliefs tend to later encounter disillusionment and disappointment in relationships (Sharp & Ganong, 2000).

Preconceived attitudes are a central construct in the study of relationships (Reich, 1977). Theoreticians have long deemed intimacy vital to mental health, psychosocial adjustment, and basic human needs (Erikson, 1963; Maslow, 1970). Agnew, Van Lange, Rusbult, and Langston (1998) state that involvement in a close relationship can change individuals in fundamental ways.

Regardless of the lack of empirical data illuminating the developmental processes of forming close, intimate relationships, there is an empirically acknowledged need for a bridge spanning the period between adolescence and adulthood (Collins & Read, 1990), which serves as confirmation for the inclusion of marital attitudes in college students in this study.

This study will expand upon the major findings of these previously cited investigations and will generate additional hypotheses to be tested regarding the correlates of attachment styles and interpersonal trust in college students. It is the purpose of this study to contribute to the literature the view that the association of high levels of trust and secure attachments are predicative of positive attitudes toward marriage in college students.

**Research Questions**

1. Among college students, is there a significant relationship between the secure attachment style and degree of interpersonal trust?
2. Among college students, can marital attitude scores be predicted by the secure attachment style and levels of interpersonal trust?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant positive relationship between secure attachment style and level of interpersonal trust.

Hypothesis 2: College students' attitudes toward marriage will be predicted by both a secure attachment style and a high level of trust.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, key variables will be both conceptually and operationally defined as followed:

1. **Anxious-ambivalent style of insecure attachment**: Patterns of behavior that include protest or anxious behaviors; crying, clinging, distress at separation; anger-ambivalence to the caregiver as a result of caregiving which is insensitive, intrusive, and inconsistent (Ainsworth, Bellar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). In adult relationships, anxious-ambivalent style (Hazen & Shaver, 1987) would be manifested in love relationships which emphasize love as involving obsession, extreme sexual attraction, and jealousy.

2. **Avoidant style of insecure attachment**: Patterns of behavior that include detachment behaviors, defensiveness and avoidance of close contact, avoidance of caregiver as a result of caregiving which is rejecting, hostile, and averse to contact (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Adult relational behaviors would be characterized by a fear of intimacy and a discomfort with closeness (Hazen & Shaver, 1987).
3. **Attachment**: The process by which bonds of affection are formed and broken, how one becomes attached to their primary caregiver or partner and the emotional distress experienced when separated from them.

4. **Attachment style**: Organized patterns of behavior used to identify styles of infant-caregiver or partner-partner attachment (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

5. **Interpersonal trust**: Deutsch (1973) has defined interpersonal trust as "confidence that one will find what is desired from another, rather than what is feared". Rotter (1980) considers trust as an individual personality variable. He defines it as "a generalized expectancy held by an individual that the word, promise, or statement of another individual can be relied on".

6. **Marital attitude**: Marital attitudes refer to a person’s subjective opinion of the institution of marriage (Braaten & Rosen, 1998).

7. **Secure attachment**: Patterns of behavior that include active exploration; are upset by separation; positive response to caregiver, sociable, and engaged in high levels of close contact (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Adult relational behaviors would be characterized by relationships that are happy, friendly, and trusting, emphasizing their ability to support and accept their partner despite their faults. Securely attached adults have relationships that tend to last longer than either avoidant or ambivalent partners (Hazen & Shaver, 1987).

8. **Young adult and late adolescent**: Can be used interchangeably. The young adulthood and late adolescent stage is marked by a transition from financial and emotional dependence on parents to a reliance on self and peers. For the purpose of this
study, an unmarried college student between the ages of 18-22 years, inclusive, is considered a young adult.

Significance of the Study

This study should contribute to the growing body of literature regarding attachment, interpersonal trust, and the marital attitudes of college students. It supports the conceptual framework that integrates attachment and young adult development. Specifically, this study focuses on the attachment styles of young adults and their interpersonal relationships. The additional variable of trust is integrated as supported in the literature as a principal component of the attachment process (Hazen & Shaver, 1987).

Additionally, this study purports to quantitatively investigate the relationship between personal attachment styles and interpersonal trust. Finally, this study will examine the predictive relationship between attachment style and interpersonal trust in the marital attitudes of college students.

The findings of this study may have pertinent implications across several levels. Because satisfying interpersonal relationships are one of the important sources of delight and purposes in life, theoreticians have long deemed intimacy vital to mental health, psychosocial adjustment, and basic human needs (Erikson, 1963; Maslow, 1970). In particular, interpersonal relationships become increasingly important in young adulthood (Duck, 1983). Attachment theorists have expressed the necessity for a much needed bridge spanning a developmental period in which young adult’s attachment concerns typically undergo a significant transition (Collins & Read, 1990). Psycho-education with
regard to constructing positive, satisfying interpersonal relationships presents the first area for inclusion in the significance of the outcome of this study. If students on the college level, senior year of high school, or even partners entering the commitment of marriage, could be instructed in the rudiments of attachment theory and be taught to evaluate their own attachment style, as well as the importance of trust in relationships and the significance of pre-ordained marital attitudes, they would be armed with information which could scaffold positive future relationships.

It is well documented that in the United States the divorce rate has leveled off to about one out of every two marriages, approximately 50 percent. According to Macoby and Mnookin (1992), at least one out of four divorces is considered high-conflict affecting not only the ex-spouses and their children, but extended family members as well. Many divorces continue to endure conflict well beyond two years (Spillane-Grieco, 2000). The second area of significance for inclusion in this study forecasts that the findings of this study may have clinical implications which could aid prevention and intervention efforts, as well as strategies to facilitate behavior change in noxious or disrupted partnerships.

The third area to be addressed by this research is that of the empirical level. Although there has been a burgeoning interest in the clinical implications of attachment in recent years, there is relatively little empirical work reported in the literature that examines how working models of attachment affect therapy process and outcome (Simpson & Rholes, 1988). Despite the recognized importance of competence in close relationships, very little is known about the developmental roots of the ability to successfully initiate and sustain such unions (Christensen, 1998; Parke, 1998).
Developmental theorists (Collins & Read, 1990) emphasize that the interpersonal behavior exhibited in the relationships of young adults have important implications for future adult relationships. Again, it would be beneficial, on a psycho-educational level to assure that clinicians were trained to understand the implications of attachment styles, ascertain their clients' varied styles, and assist those clients in relational expectations, interventions, and resolution. Volling, Notaro, and Larsen (1998) state that clients with different attachment styles most likely have different cognitive expectations about themselves and others. They suggest that evaluating these different components and making recommendations tailored to these differences is an important component of the therapeutic process.

Interpersonal problems are among the most common complaints that patients report during clinical interviews (Horowitz, 1979). Interpersonal problems often reflect a conflict between the person's desire to express a particular behavior and the person's feared consequence of expressing that behavior. Such conflicts arise out of the person's interpersonal learning history, which manifests itself in part in the person's attachment history and attachment style (Horowitz, Rosenberg, & Bartholomew, 1993). Horowitz and colleagues (1993) proffer that different attachment styles seem to correspond to different types of interpersonal problems. This study will add to the body of literature which examines adult attachment styles and interpersonal relationships.

Trust is described as one of the most desired qualities in any close relationship. Hendrick and Hendrick (1983) extol that it is often mentioned in conjunction with love and commitment as a cornerstone of the ideal relationship. Although trust is accorded such an esteemed position in interpersonal relationships, there is comparatively little
focus on this concept in the research literature (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). This study will augment the trust research literature.

Marital attitudes represent an important construct in the study of relationships of young adults. The high rate of marital distress and its ensuing negative consequences have obligated researchers to examine possible causes of unsuccessful relationships. As a result, predictors of marital distress have received increasing attention by researchers. In particular, one premarital factor that has been emphasized is individuals’ beliefs and attitudes about marital relationships. Research has indicated that unrealistic marital attitudes based on distorted assumptions tend to diminish interpersonal satisfaction in intimate relationships (Sharp & Ganong, 2000). In light of this research, it seems desirable to ascertain these beliefs in order to avoid a decline in relationship dysfunction. This study buttresses the existing literature exploring the relationship of college students and their attitudes toward marriage.

The achievement of interpersonal intimacy is widely regarded as a central developmental task of young adults (Conger, Cui, Bryant, & Elder, 2000). Despite the recognized importance of competence in close relationships, very little is known about the developmental roots of the ability to successfully initiate and sustain such unions (Christensen, 1998; Parke, 1998). Sometime in early adulthood, most people settle on a single romantic partner who will serve for years, if not for the remainder of life, as a primary attachment figure. Little is known about how attachment patterns are related to the emotional experiences, attempts at self-definition, and exploratory behaviors characteristic of this developmental period (Cooper, Shaver, & Collins, 1998). This study, therefore, will in its goal of determining the predictive relationship of attachment
styles and level of trust in marital attitudes of college students specifically addresses this
shortcoming and will be of significant contribution to this research.

**Delimitations of the Study**

The following represent delimitations of this study.

1. The type of sampling to be used for this study is non-probability sampling,
which poses potential threats to external validity (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991). The
sample consists of college undergraduates attending a private university in the New York
metropolitan area. Since these young adults are functioning academically, the results will
not reflect those young adults who have not chosen to pursue academics beyond high
school. Generalizations to populations should be made with caution, and is a limitation
of this study. This restricts the generalization of the findings to the young adult period of
development and the romantic, dating, or interpersonal relationships typical of this
population.

2. The correlational nature of this study prohibits strong conclusions regarding
causal associations among the study variables (Cronk, 1999). For example, while one
can theoretically make the assumption that secure attachment styles and high trust levels
should predict positive marital attitudes of college students, there may be additional
fundamental problems that might cause major problems in relationships, which in turn
influence relational outcomes.
CHAPTER II

Review of the Related Literature

The purpose of this chapter is twofold: to lay the theoretical foundation for this study and to review and discuss the empirical literature relevant to this study. This material falls into the following related areas around which this review is organized: A brief history of the study of attachment, an overview of attachment theory, the nature and function of attachment behavior, individual differences in attachment, stability of attachment patterns, attachment across the life span, adult internal attachment, internal working models of attachment, adult relationships conceptualized as an attachment process, an overview of trust, attachment theory and trust, interpersonal trust defined, empirical studies of trust in relationships, trust in close relationships, a definition of marital attitudes, relative importance of marital attitudes in relationships, and marital attitudes, attachment and trust. These topics all demonstrate support for their joint inclusion in this study. Relevance of the present study will also be addressed.

Attachment Theory: An Overview

Attachment theory is not so much a single theory as it is an overall framework for thinking about relationships, or more accurately, about those aspects of relationships that are shaped by threat and the need for security (Holmes, 1996). The evolution of contemporary attachment theory has its origins in the ideas and research of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth in the 1950s. Bowlby (1973) based his psychology on the opposing themes of attachment and separation/loss. He saw loss and separation as psychologically very similar, with loss being an irrevocable case of separation. First, he saw the
biological function of attachment as protection from predation. Thus, the principal role of the attachment bond is to provide security. Second, there is a reciprocal relationship between secure attachment and creative or playful exploration. Only when the attachment needs are assuaged (Heard and Lake, 1986) can the individual turn away from their attachment figure toward the world. Third, Bowlby believed that attachment is not a childish need that is outgrown, but persists throughout life. He states that adult relationships can be understood in attachment terms no less than those of children (Holmes, 1996). According to Bowlby (1988) attachment theory addresses the bonding and strong emotional reactions associated with connecting and disconnecting with others throughout the life span.

To date, attachment theory has been applied to a variety of core relationships, including child-parent (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and adult-adult love (Pistole, 1999) and others. Attachment theory has demonstrated the power to cut across various types of relationships in theoretically consistent ways and contribute to practical understanding about how relationships work (Pistole, 1999).

Bowlby (1979) proposed that there is a powerful relationship between attachments, their disruption, and the emotions. He describes that the psychology and psychopathology of emotion is in large part the psychology and pathology of affectional bonds. He postulates that affects are motivators and reinforcers in the psychology of attachment, with attachment theory providing a relational context in which disturbing feelings such as fear of separation; sadness about loss; anger, and jealousy of those whose attachment potential one imagines to be greater than one’s own, including envy of a
withholding attachment figure, and so on – can be located and understood (Holmes, 1996).

Separation and loss is the other great theme in Bowlby’s dualistic picture of relationships. Initially he was concerned with the traumatic impact of separation itself. Informed by Ainsworth’s research, he later determined that it is the response to separation and the way it is handled within the family that becomes central to the genesis of neurosis. He states that the capacity of the caregiver to recognize and accept protest is as much a foundation of psychological health as the absence of major separation. Bowlby sought to understand why infants forge such strong emotional bonds to their primary caregivers and why they often exhibit pronounced anxiety and distress when they are separated from them. Adopting an evolutionary-ethological perspective, he argued that the specific sequence of behavioral and emotional reactions associated with separation, such as protest, despair, and detachment—might reflect the operation of an innate attachment system designed to promote close physical contact between vulnerable infants and their primary caregivers. By maintaining close proximity with their caregivers, infants would be more likely to survive, to reproduce, and ultimately to pass attachment and proximity-seeking propensities on to subsequent generations (Simpson, Rholes, & Nelligan, 1992).

Although Bowlby was primarily a theoretician, his ideas founded a new school of empirical research in developmental psychology. The co-founder of attachment theory was Mary Ainsworth lending her research to the more empirical contributions (Myron-Wilson, 1998). Apart from her role as a teacher and inspiration of subsequent
generations of attachment researchers, she made two major contributions to the field of attachment (Holmes, 1996).

The first was her invention of the strange situation as a measure of attachment status in one year olds (Ainsworth, 1982). This simple but replicable test enables one to classify infants as securely or insecurely attached to a caregiver. Strange situation status is based on the response of the infant to the mild stress of being brought to a strange room in a clinic and then separated from their caregiver for a series of three minute periods. Children who protest on separation and can be pacified on reunion, after which they return to exploratory play are deemed to be secure. About two-thirds of children behave in this way in normal populations. Those who do not show this pattern are classified as insecure, in whom there is inhibition of exploration (Ainsworth, 1982). Three patterns of insecure attachment are now recognized. Insecure-avoidant children protest little on separation, and on reunion with the caregiver hover nervously nearby. Insecure-ambivalent children protest, but cannot be pacified when their caregiver returns, burying themselves in their lap or clinging furiously to the caregiver. The insecure-disorganized pattern was established after reexamination of videotapes of children who could not easily be classified as avoidant or ambivalent. The children show no coherent pattern of response; they “freeze” of collapse to the ground, or lean vacantly against a wall on reunion. In average populations about one-fifth of children are avoidant, one-sixth ambivalent, and one in twenty disorganized (Crittenden, 1988).

Several recent studies have suggested that three attachment styles phenotypic ally similar to those discovered by Ainsworth also may characterize adults (Ainsworth, 1982; Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). People who
possess a secure attachment style tend to develop mental models of themselves as being valued and worthy of others' concern, support, and affection, and of significant others as being accessible, reliable, trustworthy, and well-intentioned. Secure individuals report that they develop closeness with others easily, feel comfortable depending on others and having others depend on them, and rarely are concerned about being abandoned or others becoming extremely close to them (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Those who manifest an anxious and ambivalent style tend to harbor mental models of themselves as being misunderstood, unconfident, and under appreciated (Simpson, Rholes, & Nelligan, 1992). Those who have an avoidant style perceive themselves as being aloof, emotionally distant, and skeptical (Simpson, Rholes, & Nelligan, 1992).

Ainsworth's second great contribution was to study the links between the parent-infant relationship in the first year of life and subsequent classification in the strange situation. The outcome of her findings was that parental responsiveness to infant affect is a key determinant of secure attachment. In summary, environments may be consistently responsive, consistently unresponsive, or inconsistently responsive (Holmes, 1996).

**The Nature and Function of Attachment Behavior**

It is pertinent to this research project to understand the function of attachment behavior in order to enhance perception of the relevance of attachment behaviors. Bowlby (1973) defines attachment behavior as any form of behavior that results in a person attaining or retaining proximity to some other differentiated and preferred individual, usually conceived as stronger and wiser. Infant behaviors such as sucking,
clinging, following, smiling, and crying tend to elicit protective responses from adult caregivers and bind the infant and caregiver to each other.

Given strong parallels between human attachment behavior and similar attachment behavior shown by nonhuman primate species, Bowlby (1973) hypothesizes that attachment behavior is adaptive, having evolved through a process of natural selection. He further hypothesizes that attachment behavior forms an organized behavioral system. Bowlby sees the attachment system as one of several interlocking behavioral systems, including exploration, caregiving, and sexual mating designed to ensure survival and procreation. From the viewpoint of the outside, the goal of the attachment system is to regulate behaviors designed to establish or maintain contact with an attachment figure. From the viewpoint of the attached person, the goal of the system is “felt security”.

Bowlby (1973) describes behavioral systems as homeostatic control systems that maintain a relatively steady state between the individual and his or her environment. The attachment system maintains a balance between exploratory behavior and proximity-seeking behavior, taking into account the accessibility of the attachment figure as a threat to their well-being and try to remain within the protective range of this figure.

**Individual Differences in Attachment**

Bowlby (1973) regards the attachment system as having evolved through natural selection and considers the processes comprising this system to be universal in human nature.
The first detailed studies of individual differences in attachment were conducted by Ainsworth (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Ainsworth conducted naturalistic observations of mother-infant interactions in Uganda and in Baltimore, Maryland; each of these projects involved intensive longitudinal data collection obtained during a series of home visits.

On the basis of these observations, Ainsworth and her colleagues (Ainsworth, Belhar, Waters, & Wall, 1978) suggest that organized patterns of infant behavior can be used to identify styles of infant-caregiver attachment. Ainsworth and colleagues delineate three such styles as outlined in the previous section: securely attached, (Group A) insecurely attached – avoidant (Group B), and insecurely attached – resistant or anxious ambivalent (Group C). The patterns of behavior that define these three styles are systematically related to the amount of interaction between caregiver and infant, and to the caregiver’s sensitivity and responsiveness to the infant’s needs and signals. Group A children are sociable and engage in high levels of exploration; Group B children respond with defensiveness and avoidance of close contact; and Group C children respond with anxious behaviors such as crying and clinging.

It should be noted that revisions to the tripartite classifications have been proposed. Because considerable differences in attachment behavior have been observed within attachment groups as mentioned in the previous section, more fine-grained categories have been devised. In particular researchers have identified four subgroups within the secure classification based on differences in the quality of separation distress (Belsky & Rovie, 1987).
In addition, researchers have often been unable to classify all infants into the three attachment categories outlined by Aisworth and her colleagues (1978). For this reason, researches have proposed a fourth group, (the disorganized-disoriented category of insecure attachment (Main & Solomon, 1986). For the purpose of this research project, the tripartite classification as founded by Bowlby and Ainsworth will be used.

**Stability of Attachment Patterns**

According to attachment theory, the essence of the attachment bond is stable over time, despite variations in behavioral markers of attachment over time (e.g., assessment of infant attachment requires different methods from the assessment of adolescent or adult attachment, Rice, FitzGerald, Whaley, & Gibbs, 1995).

Attachment theorists propose that attachment patterns are relatively stable. (Feeney & Noller, 1990). According to Bowlby (1982), continuity of attachment style is due primarily to the persistence of mental models of the self and others, central components of personality. Working models tend to be stable because they develop and operate in the context of a fairly stable family setting. In addition, as the ways of thinking incorporated in the models become habitual and automatic over time, the models come to operate largely outside of conscious awareness, rendering them more resistant to change.

Bowlby (1982) raises several points relevant to the issue of change in attachment patterns. First, he suggests that attachment patterns vary in stability depending on the degree of satisfaction that each person derives from the pattern. Second, he acknowledges that attachment patterns (even those that show early signs of stability) may
be changed by subsequent events that alter the behavior of either of the individuals in the relationship. Finally, he notes that working models themselves are subject to change; when the lack of fit between actual social interchanges and corresponding working models becomes so great the models are no longer effective, the individual will begin the process of accommodating the models to reality.

Empirical evidence suggests that infant attachment classifications based on Farnsworth’s system are reasonably stable over time (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Specifically, most infants assessed at twelve months of age and reviewed at eighteen months obtain the same classification on both assessments (Goossens, Van Ijzendoorn, Tavecchio, & Kroonenberg, 1998). A growing number of longitudinal studies provide evidence of continuity of attachment style from infancy through the early school years.

Feeney and Noller (1990) caution that further research is required into the continuity of attachment behavior across the life span and the factors that promote change. They also note that attachment theory is not predicated on the assumption that attachment patterns are extremely stable; rather, the theory proposes a relationship between caregiving interaction and attachment quality, implying that the latter should be sensitive to circumstances that influence interaction.

Attachment Across the Lifespan: Adult Attachment

Adult attachment is a relatively new area of research (Myron-Wilson, 1998). Cozzarelli, Hoekstra, & Bylesma (2000) contend that in the past decade, attachment theory has become a major perspective on adult romantic relationships. Although attachment theory has been around for some time, it was only in the mid-eighties that attention began
to turn to the role attachment can play throughout the lifespan. Collins & Read, 1990) state that in attachment research, of particular interest is the extent to which a child’s early attachment relationships with caretakers shape important beliefs about the self and the social world, which then guide relationships into adulthood. The obvious importance of the issues addressed by attachment theory for creating and sustaining satisfactory intimate relationships has led to great interest in the study of attachment in adulthood (Morrison, Goodlin-Jones, & Urquiza, 1997). Bowlby’s (1979) theory of attachment deals primarily with the bonds formed between infants and their caregivers. As researchers of adult attachment have pointed out, however, Bowlby contends that the attachment system plays a vital role throughout the life cycle and that attachment behavior characterizes human beings “from the cradle to the grave.” In accordance with this contention, Morris (1982) argues that, because of the primacy and depth of the early attachment relationship between infant and caregiver, this bond is likely to serve as a prototype for later intimate relationships. Morris further suggests that striking parallels exist between anxious attachment and both unwise mate selection and dysfunctional marriage, illustrating the potency of the early attachment formation.

The extension of attachment principles beyond infancy and childhood is also supported by theoretical work focusing on the definition and description of attachment bonds (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Ainsworth (1982), for example, proposes criteria for attachment relationships throughout the life span. Specifically, she suggests that attachment relationships are a particular type of affectional bond that is a relatively long-lasting tie characterized by a desire to maintain closeness to a partner.
Cozzarelli, Hoekstra, and Bylsma (2000) contend that although attachment theory has become a major perspective on adult romantic relationships, the measurement of attachment styles has continually posed both empirical and conceptual challenges. What follows is a brief review of methods of adult attachment measurement currently being used in the literature.

Main has developed an Adult Attachment Interview (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1985) that explores adults' representations of childhood attachment relations. On the basis of these interviews, mothers have been classified into attachment groups that parallel the three childhood attachment patterns described earlier and are predictive of the quality of the mother's interaction with her own child and the security of the child's attachment. This procedure is used to examine young adults' self and other representations, providing some evidence of how they view others in relation to self (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

Hazan and Shaver (1987) in their exploration of adult attachment, conceptualize romantic love as an attachment process and have developed a self-report procedure to classify adults into three categories that correspond to the three attachment styles of childhood. The attachment theory approach to adult love relationships has been developed most fully by Hazan and Shaver (Feeney & Noller, 1990). They propose that not only do early relationships have an impact on adult relationships, but that romantic love and becoming attached share important similarities with child-caretaker attachment (Collins & Read, 1990). Hazan and Shaver (1987) began by translating the typology developed by Ainsworth and colleagues (1978) into terms appropriate for adult relationships, resulting in three attachment descriptions. Adult attachment was related to
reports of early parent-child relationships. Hazan and Shaver’s research is deemed an important step toward exploring the relation between early attachment and adult attachment experiences (Collins & Read, 1990).

The work by Hazan and Shaver was extended by Collins & Read (1990) by developing a multi-item scale to measure dimensions underlying adult attachment styles to replace Hazan and Shaver’s discrete categorical measure. They also explored the mechanisms that may underlie cross-age continuity by examining the relations between adult attachment and beliefs about the self, the nature of romantic love, and the social world in general. They found that dimensions of attachment style were strongly related to how each partner perceived the relationship.

Feeney and Noller (1990) also researched attachment in adults focusing on attachment style as a predictor of adult relationships. Their results suggest that attachment theory offers a useful perspective on adult love relationships.

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) proposed a new four group model of attachment styles in adulthood. They developed four prototypic attachment patterns which were shown to be applicable to representations of family relations; participant’s attachment styles with peers were correlated with family attachment ratings.

As described here, the application of attachment principles beyond infancy and childhood is supported by recent theoretical analyses of the defining criteria of attachment relationships.

It is important to note that revision does go on between the child’s working model of the nature of relationships between infancy and adulthood, though it is unclear how much (Collins & Read, 1990). The functions played by the three attachment styles
(secure, avoidance, and ambivalence) are as important in adulthood as they are in infancy. That is, feeling a quality of security in relationships provides the comforting sense of a secure base from which exploration can take place and a safe haven to which one can return. The ambivalent quality can energize efforts to reestablish a relationship that feels shaky or unreliable, by acting in ways that will elicit reunion with and comfort from the other. The avoidant quality provides a sense of distance that can provide a psychological protection against unresponsiveness for others (Carver, 1997).

**Internal Working Models of Attachment**

Research on adult attachment is based in part on the idea that patterns can be seen in the ways that adults relate to important others in their lives. Some believe the pattern established in infancy tends to be maintained throughout life (Carver, 1997). The child builds a “working model” of the nature of relationships (Bowlby, 1973), which contains the seeds of its own reconfirmation. As adults, then, people may tend to relate to others who are important to them in ways that resemble their earlier patterns. These inner working models or mental representations are the mechanism by which early attachment experiences affect a person throughout their life.

Bowlby postulates that, to be able to predict and manage their world, individuals need both a model of their environment and a model of their own skills and potentialities. Bowlby sees these inner working models as analogous to maps and plans being used to predict the behavior of others in social interaction, as well as to plan one’s own behavior to achieve relational goals. Adults whose attachments in childhood were secure will relate securely to others; those with avoidant attachments in childhood will be more
mistrustful and distant; and those with ambivalent attachments in childhood will display a mixture of clinging closeness and rejection.

It has been postulated that we carry our internal working models with us into new social situations helping to write the script by which we navigate the social world. Our internal working models of ourselves and our relationships create expectations of support and nurturance and become the architects of what we feel about our relationships. Adapted over time, internal working models of attachment come to function as affectively laden social schemas and guide expectations about future relationships. Internal working models of relationships are thought to contain information about issues, such as how emotionally available and reliable the other person and the self are likely to be, what sorts of emotional experience and expression feel comfortable and useful, how disappointment and emotional discomfort are to be handled, and communication and problem solving in the relationship (Morrison, Goodlin-Jones, & Urquiza, 1997).

Given that working models center around the regulation and fulfillment of attachment needs, they are most likely to be activated automatically when attachment-reliant events occur Collins & Read, (1990) in Rothbard & Shaver (1994) suggest that working models function partially (perhaps largely) outside of awareness, providing a person with the heuristics for anticipating and interpreting the behavior and intentions of others, especially attachment figures.

Incorporating Bowlby’s ideas, Bartholomew (1990) and Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) gave rise to four adult attachment patterns distinguishing three, instead of two insecure attachment styles, in an effort to differentiate the working models of individuals. Simpson and Rhodes (1998), in refining the working model prototypes,
found that the empirical results suggested do capture differences in the ways individuals with different attachment styles perceive and describe themselves.

**Adult Relationships Conceptualized as an Attachment Process**

The attachment theory approach to adult love relationships has been developed most fully by Hazan and Shaver (1987). Accepting this view, variations in early social experience produce relatively enduring differences in relationship styles, and the same three attachment styles described in the infant literature are manifested in adult romantic love. Continuity in attachment style is explained largely in terms of the persistence of inner working models of the self and of relationships based on early social interaction.

In their theoretical work, Hazan and Shaver (1987) have identified parallels between the dynamics, feelings, and behavior associated with attachment between infant and caregiver and those associated with the experience of romantic love in adulthood. These similarities include seeking and maintaining close physical proximity to one’s partner; relying on the partner’s continued availability; turning to the partner for comfort when threatened physically or emotionally; and being distressed by separations, threats to the relationship, and losses. Hazan and Shaver hypothesized that the three main attachment styles identified by Ainsworth and colleagues (1978) correspond to three distinct styles of love in adulthood (secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant). They state that adults with different attachment styles experience their most important love relationships differently. For example, secure adults are more likely than avoidant or anxious-ambivalent adults to view their lovers as trustworthy friends. Anxious-ambivalent adults are likely to fall in love at first sight and then long intensely for their
partners' reciprocation. Avoidant adults are least likely to accept their partners' faults. People with different attachment styles also hold different beliefs about romantic love, experience different characteristic levels of loneliness, and recall their childhood relationships with parents differently (Brennan & Shaver, 1995). Hazan and Shaver devised a simple single-item self-report measure to test their predictions. Resultant percentages for the three groups (56% secure, 25% avoidant, and 19% anxious/ambivalent) were roughly equal to those studied in infant-parent attachment.

Collins & Read (1990) state that although Hazan and Shaver's research is an important step toward exploring the relationship between early attachment and adult love experiences, there are many issues that require more extensive examination. First, as Hazan and Shaver acknowledged, further research in this area requires the development of a more sensitive instrument to measure adult attachment styles. Collins & Read (1990) developed The Adult Attachment Survey which is used in this research study. The Adult Attachment Survey was initially used in three studies by Collins & Read (1990) to examine the correlates of adult attachment, working models, and relationship quality in dating couples.

Bachman and Zakahi (2000) report that recently other scholars have focused on the link between adult attachment styles and factors of romantic relationships. They reported that Guerrero and her colleagues found that attachment styles were associated with expressions of anger, sadness, intimacy, and nonverbal involvement. Fitzpatrick, Fey, Gegrin and Schiff (1993) showed attachment styles linked to styles of marital communication.
This paper will be focusing on adult attachment styles and whether they contribute to the willingness to invest in a committed relationship. There is no available research to date on this specific topic, though as has been described, attachment theory is empirically linked to a variety of dimensions of intimate relationships.

Summary: Attachment

Attachment theory is not so much a single theory as an overall framework for thinking about relationships, or more accurately, about those aspects of relationships that are shaped by threat and the need for security (Holmes, 1996). The principal role of the attachment bond is to provide security (Bowlby, 1973). Bowlby believed that attachment is not a childish need that is outgrown, but persists throughout life stating that adult relationships can be understood in attachment terms. Although Bowlby, the pioneer of attachment theory, was primarily a theoretician, his ideas founded a new school of empirical research in developmental psychology. The co-founder of attachment theory was Mary Ainsworth lending her research to the more empirical contributions (Myron-Wilson, 1998). One of her major contributions to the field of attachment was her invention of the strange situation as a measure of attachment status in children (Ainsworth, 1982). This simple but replicable test enables one to classify infants as securely or insecurely attached to a caregiver. Two patterns of insecure attachment are not recognized: insecure-avoidant and insecure-ambivalent. According to attachment theory, the essence of the attachment bond is stable over time (Feeney & Noller, 1996). According to Bowlby (1979), continuity of attachment style is due primarily to the
persistence of mental models – internal working models – of the self and others, which are central components of the personality.

Adult attachment is a relatively new area of research (Myron-Wilson, 1998) which Cozzarelli, Hoekstra, & Bylsma (2000) contend has developed a major perspective on adult romantic relationships. The obvious importance of the issues addressed by attachment theory for creating and sustaining satisfactory intimate relationships has led to great interest in the study of attachment in adulthood (Morrison, Goodlin-Jones, & Urquiza, 1997). Collins & Read (1990) emphasize that the functions played by the three attachment styles are as important in adulthood as they are in infancy. They state specifically that feeling a quality of security in relationships provides the comforting sense of a secure base from which exploration can take place and a safe haven to which one can return.

Trust is a fundamental component of attachment. Hazen and Shaver (1987) state that the need for trust is a basic human need, one met most successfully within a relationship. The concept of trust will be explored in the following section.

Trust: An Overview

Approximately 21% of marriages end within the first two years (Vital Statistics of the United States, 1989), while nearly 40% of couples end their marriages before their fourth anniversary. Family Development Theory (Quinn & Odell, 1998) suggests that a critical task for couples is to establish a functional system comfortable for both partners. The choice to become a couple or invest in a committed relationship often requires requests for change or understanding on the part of each individual within the couple.
The amount of trust, or confidence, one has in one’s partner is an aid in helping to establish a healthy prototype for a relationship (Quinn & Odell, 1998).

**Attachment Theory and Trust**

Attachment theory posits that certain basic needs, of which the need for security or trust is the most fundamental, are best satisfied within relationships, offers an appropriate theoretical perspective for examining close relationships (Hazen & Shaver, 1987). For example, it has been asserted that attachment process, the biosocial characteristics by which affectional bonds are formed between adult lovers, is as relevant in adulthood as infancy (Hazen & Shaver, 1987).

**Interpersonal Trust Defined**

Interpersonal trust is a dimension of an intimate relationship, which holds great meaning to people (Quinn & Odell, 1998). One of the maladies of the time seems to be all the doubts held regarding the feelings of support, being counted on, counting on another, being honest, open and truthful, and being committed to a relationship (Quinn & Odell, 1998). Stinnett and Walters (1974) proposed that trust promotes security and sharing in a relationship, and it has been asserted that interpersonal trust is essential to a couple’s capacity to achieve full potential and experience growth.

The demands of personal life require an interdependence in an ongoing way. Quinn and Odell (1998) propose what they cite as the widely generalized clinical observation that the dissipation of interpersonal trust in the dyad is, like a hole in a ship’s hull, a tell-tale sign of trouble.
Deutsch (1973) defines interpersonal trust as confidence that one will find what is desired from another, rather than what is feared. Scanzoni (1979) visualizes trust as an actor’s willingness to arrange and repose his or her activities on another because of confidence that another will provide expected gratification. Rotter (1980) has considered trust as an individual personality variable. He proposes that trust is a generalized expectancy held by an individual that the word, promise, or statement of another individual can be relied on.

**Empirical Studies of Trust in Relationships**

Trust is certainly one of the most desired qualities in any close relationship. It is often mentioned in conjunction with love and commitment as a cornerstone of the ideal relationship (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1983). Given that trust is accorded such an esteemed position, it is surprising that there is comparatively little focus on this concept in the research literature (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985).

In a personal conversation with psychologist Nancy Collins (2000), co-author of The Adult Attachment Scale used in the present study, the imperative to continue the line of research investigating trust in committed relationships was acknowledged and underscored.

Although uncommon (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985), some empirical studies have explored the role of trust in close relationships. Driscoll, Davis, and Lipetz (1972) examined the link between love and trust. According to their thinking, trust evolves through mutually satisfying interactions and increasing confidence in the relationship. They crafted a five-item Trust Scale, consisting of items dealing with areas of trust, the
ability to count on one’s partner, and the partner’s considerateness. Larzelere and Huston (1980) found that trust between partners was associated with love and with intimacy of self-disclosure.

Yamagishi, Cook, and Watable (1998) have developed the “emancipation” theory of trust as a theoretical extensional view of culture proposed in their cross-societal experiments. According to this theory, general trust and commitment formation are considered alternative solutions to the problems caused by social uncertainty. “Social uncertainty” is defined as existing for an actor when (a) his or her interaction partner has an incentive to act in a way that imposes costs (or harm) on the actor and (b) the actor does not have enough information to predict if the partner will in fact act in such a way (Yamagishi, Cook, & Watabe, 1998).

Trust in Close Relationships

Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985) have distilled the previous theoretical and operational definitions of trust. They assert that first trust is seen to evolve out of past experience and prior interaction, thus it develops as the relationship matures. Second, dispositional attributions are made to the partner, such that he or she is regarded as reliable, dependable, and concerned with providing expected rewards. Third, as Deutsch’s (1973) use of the term fear implies, trust involves a willingness to put oneself at risk, be it through intimate disclosure, reliance on another’s promises, or sacrificing present rewards for future gains. Finally, Rempel and colleagues (1985) define trust by feelings of confidence and security in the caring responses of the partner and the strength of the relationship. These considerations are believed to point to a model of trust with
three components that reflect increasing levels of attributional abstraction. Rempel and colleagues (1985) label these three components of trust: predictability, dependability, and faith.

Rempel and others (1985) explain that as a basic foundation for each stage of their trust model, which is utilized for the present study, they regard trust as a generalized expectation related to the subjective probability an individual assigns to the occurrence of some set of future events. They term the most specific and concrete stage predictability. They assert that the predictability of a partner's behavior is influenced by a host of factors including such basic elements as the consistency of recurrent behavior and the stability of the social environment. Judgments of a partner's predictability originate from social learning experiences based on specific behavioral sequences according to this model. In addition, they suggest that beliefs about the partner's predictability would relate to the amount of past experience in the relationship and the degree to which this experience suggests consistency, stability, and control over the pattern of behavior exhibited.

However relevant the concept of predictability is to a relationship, Rempel and colleagues (1985) suggest that it is likely not the first thing that comes to mind when attempts are made to define trust between intimates, but rather dependability would appear more relevant to trust. They explain that as relationships progress, there is an inevitable shift in focus away from assessments involving specific behaviors, to an evaluation of the qualities and characteristics attributed to the partner. Thus, trust is placed in a person, not their specific actions.
Rempel and others (1985) posit that the first two elements of trust, predictability and dependability, require a consideration of the impact of past experience and the reliability of previous evidence. They state that in relationships, as in life, the future is filled with novel situations and circumstances where past or present experience is not necessarily an accurate barometer. They acknowledge that people mature, goals and values can change, and feelings do not always remain constant. In order to capture the essence of trust that is not securely rooted in past experience, they use the term faith. In religious contexts, faith describes the aspect of a belief that must go beyond the available evidence to accept a given supposition as truth. Rempel and colleagues (1985) propose that there are no guarantees that the hopes and desires invested in a close relationship will ever be realized. Given that a successful relationship is not a guaranteed proposition, belief in the relationship requires, to one extent or another, a “leap of faith”. In effect, individuals are called upon to exert closure on their feelings by setting their doubts aside. Thus, faith reflects an emotional security on the part of individuals which enables them to go beyond the available evidence and feel that their partner will be responsive and caring despite an uncertain future.

Each component in the model of trust, as outlined by Rempel and others (1985), reflects a different perspective or basis from which subjective judgments can be made about a partner’s future behavior. Predictability, dependability, and faith are seen as arising out of different levels of cognitive and emotional abstraction. The model is hierarchical, but only in the sense that they suspect that there is a developmental progression in terms of the time and emotional investment required to establish each
component. Rempel and others (1985) reveal research to support the conclusion that trust is related in important ways to the success of a close relationship.

**Summary: Trust**

Interpersonal trust is a dimension of an intimate relationship which holds great meaning to persons (Quinn & Odell, 1998). One of the maladies of the time seems to be all the doubts held regarding the feelings of support, being counted on, counting on another, being honest, open, and truthful, and being committed to a relationship (Quinn & Odell, 1998). Stinnett and Walters (1977) proposed that trust promotes security and sharing in a relationship, and it has been asserted that interpersonal trust is essential to a couple’s capacity to achieve full potential and experience growth. Quinn and Odell (1998) propose what they cite as the widely generalized clinical observation that the dissipation of interpersonal trust in the dyad is, like a hole in a ship’s hull, a tell-tale sign of trouble.

Rotter (1980) proposes that trust is a generalized expectancy held by an individual that the work, promise, or statement of another individual can be relied on.

Although trust is certainly one of the most desired qualities in any close relationship there is comparatively little focus on this concept in the research literature (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). In a personal conversation (2000) with psychologist Nancy Collins, Ph.D., co-author of the Adult Attachment Scale, she underscored the imperative to continue the line of research investigating trust and attachment styles in relationships.
Marital Attitudes: An Overview

Fletcher and Kininmonth (1992) contend that people do not enter into close relationships as cognitive tabula rasa. Rather, they come into such liaisons replete with knowledge structures concerned with close relationships including attitudes, expectations, causal attributions, and beliefs. Indeed, recent theoretical statements treat such stable knowledge structures as central factors in understanding the links between social cognition and close relationships. Views of marriage are an integral part of the consciousness of young adults, and analyzing them, like other elements of that consciousness, enables one to detect many things (Blagojevic, 1989). Recent years have seen an increase in research on attitudes toward marriage, perhaps due to the change in attitudes toward marriage roles and the institution of marriage that occurred in the last several decades (Braaten & Rosen, 1998). Braaten and Rosen contend that addressing these changes in marital attitudes is important because nearly all people marry in their lifetime.

What are marital attitudes? Marital attitudes refer to a person’s subjective opinion of the institution of heterosexual marriage (Braaten & Rosen, 1998).

Examination of the literature reveals a number of studies on young adults’ attitudes toward marriage. Chia et al. (1986) collected data on attitudes toward marriage from Chinese and American students in 1962 and 1984, and found that students in 1984 had more egalitarian views of marriage, with women holding more egalitarian views than men. Gibardi and Rosen (1992) examined differences between college students from divorced and intact families on a number of measures of intimate relationships and found that parental marital conflict was a significant predictor of negative attitudes toward
marriage. In a similar study, Gibardi and Rosen (1991) examined differences in marital attitudes in college students from intact and divorced families. Analyses revealed that students from divorced families had significantly more negative attitudes toward marriage than students from intact families.

The impact of parental conflict on marital attitudes was also examined by Jennings, Salts, and Smith (1991). Their results indicated that college students from homes with high parental conflict had lower scores on a measure of marital attitudes than students from homes without conflict. In addition, males had lower scores than females and participants from divorced homes had lower scores than those from intact homes.

Greenburg and Nay (1982), in opposition to other results, found that adolescents with divorced parents were not less willing to consider marriage. Although it appears that in the literature there are conflicting studies it remains that attitudes toward marriage play an important role in shaping expectations of future relationships and present the potential for a rich area of study.

The Importance of Marital Attitudes in Young Adults

As adolescents approach adulthood, they begin to explore their feelings toward love, marriage, and expectations of a future mate. There are many salient factors that may influence a young adult’s attitudes toward love and marriage. Today it is common knowledge that America experiences a high divorce rate. Larson (1988) asserts that this high divorce rate stems from marital dissatisfaction, which is due to unrealistic expectations about marriage. He states that many Americans expect a spouse to simultaneously be a friend, a confidant, a fulfilling sex partner a counselor and a parent.
It is possible that these unrealistic expectations are passed on to the children, because children from divorced homes are more likely to divorce themselves (Glen & Kramer, 1987). They state that there is an apparent pattern of family disruption in one generation carrying over to the next. Because a child’s earliest impressions of marriage come from his or her parents, it is very possible that the impression formed from this relationship is closely tied to the individual’s personal feelings and attitudes associated with marriage (Greenberg & Nay, 1982).

It is postulated that a high degree of conflict within the parental relationship forms negative impressions of the institution of marriage among the children who are exposed to this conflict. In other words, children who witness marital conflict integrate those models into their expectations, which form their own attitudes toward marriage. Such witnessing of conflict may cause young adults to feel failure in their relationships and therefore reject the institution of marriage or hold cynical views against it and against the possibility of finding an adequate partner (Gabardi & Rosen, 1991). Jones and Nelson (1996) underscore the belief that determining the marital attitudes of young adults acts as an aid in discovering the expectations they hold regarding their own marriages. They suggest that being able to identify a college student’s expectations of marriage could be very beneficial and state that this is one way to stop the pattern of unrealistic beliefs and inappropriate role modeling. In other words, students who themselves had poor marital role models can be encouraged to participate in family education courses, which will give them better ideas for role modeling for their own children. Research along these lines may help establish “premarital counseling” or pro-active intervention as a norm (Jones & Nelson, 1996).
This developing of attitudes toward marriage is particularly poignant in the young adult years. During adolescence, the hierarchy of attachment figures (Bowlby, 1973) is gradually reshuffled as young people increasingly direct their attachment behaviors and concerns toward peers rather than parents. By the end of this period, sometime in early adulthood, most people settle on a single romantic partner who will serve for years, if not for the remainder of life, as a primary attachment figure. While making this transition, young adults alter their conceptions of and feelings about themselves and experiment with a range of exploratory behaviors. Despite the co-occurrence of these phenomena during late adolescence, little is known about how attachment patterns are related to these attempts at self-definition (Cooper, Shaver, & Collins, 1998). This lack of information reinforces the need for the inclusion of the combination of the variables of attachment and marital attitudes in this study. Trust, as been previously noted, is an integral component of this trio of variables as noted in the literature.

**Summary: Marital Attitudes**

The achievement of interpersonal intimacy is widely regarded as the central developmental task of young adults (Conger, Cui, Bryant, & Elder, 2000). Close social ties promote personal well-being, and the failure to establish or maintain such relationships in general, and romantic relationships in particular, predicts both physical and emotional distress. For many reasons, competence in romantic relationships has special significance, both for the individual and for society. To begin with, approximately 90% of all adults eventually marry, and 50% or more of these marriages fail. Because of the important consequences of difficulties in marital and other romantic
relationships, greater understanding is needed of the developmental precursors of the constellation of beliefs, attitudes, and emotional dispositions that increase the likelihood of developing stable and satisfying romantic ties (Conger, et al. 2000).

Despite the recognized importance of competence in close relationships, very little is known about the ability to successfully initiate such unions (Christensen, 1998). One factor that has been emphasized as a possible cause of relational dysfunction is individuals' beliefs and attitudes about marital relationships. Unrealistic relationship attitudes are predispositions that bias a person toward interpreting intimate relationship events in an irrational manner and are based on inaccurate expectations. Reich (1977) postulates that preconceived attitudes are a central construct in the study of relationships.

Contemporary theories of relationship development (Collins & Read, 1990) suggest that the interpersonal behavior exhibited in the relationships of young adults have important implications for future adult relationships. Within the last two decades, researchers have turned the focus onto the young adult population and their attitudes and feelings about marriage and divorce (Jennings, Salts, & Smith, 1991). Research has indicated that unrealistic attitudes toward marriage, based on distorted assumptions, tend to diminish satisfaction in relationships (Sharp & Ganong, 2000). Blagojevic (1989) asserts that an examination of the young adult's attitudes toward marriage makes it possible to predict future marital behavior, an acknowledged need in light of a 50% or higher national divorce rate.
Overall Summary from the Literature: Attachment, Trust and Marital Attitudes

Attachment theory is not so much a single theory as an overall framework for thinking about relationships (Holmes, 1996). The principal role of the attachment bond is to provide security (Bowlby, 1973). Although Bowlby, the pioneer of attachment theory, was primarily a theoretician, his idea founded a new school of empirical research in developmental psychology. The co-founder of attachment theory was Mary Ainsworth, lending her research to the more empirical contributions (Myron-Wilson, 1998). One of her major contributions to the field of attachment was her invention of the strange situation as a measure of attachment status in children (Ainsworth, 1982). This simple but replicable test enables one to classify infants as securely or insecurely attached to a caregiver. Two patterns of insecure attachment are now also recognized: insecure-avoidant and insecure-ambivalent. According to attachment theory, the essence of the attachment bond is stable over time (Feeney & Noller, 1996). According to Bowlby (1979), continuity of attachment style is due primarily to the persistence of mental models – internal working models – of the self and others, which are central components of the personality.

Adult attachment is a relatively new area of research (Myron-Wilson, 1998) which Cozzaerlli, Hoekstra, & Blysma (2000) contend has constructed a major perspective on adult romantic relationships. Collins & Read (1990) emphasize that the functions played by the three attachment styles are as important in adulthood as they are in infancy.
Trust is a fundamental component of attachment. Hazen and Shaver (1987) state that the need for trust is a basic human need, one met most successfully within a relationship.

Interpersonal trust is a dimension of an intimate relationship which holds great meaning to people (Quinn & Odell, 1998). One of the maladies of the time seems to be all the doubts held regarding the feelings of being counted on, and counting on another to be honest, open and truthful, and being committed to a relationship (Quinn & Odell, 1998). Stinnett and Walters (1977) proposed that trust promotes security and sharing in a relationship, and it has been asserted that interpersonal trust is essential to a couple's capacity to achieve full potential and experience growth.

Rotter (1980) defines trust as a generalized expectancy held by an individual that the work, promise or statement of another individual can be relied on. Although trust is certainly one of the most desired qualities in any close relationship there is comparatively little focus on this concept in the research literature (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). In a personal conversation (2000) with psychologist Nancy Collins, Ph.D., co-author of the Adult Attachment Scale, she underscored the imperative to continue the line of research investigating trust, and attachment styles in committed relationships.

Satisfying committed relationships are one of the important sources of delight and purpose in life. Theoreticians have long deemed intimacy vital to mental health, psychosocial adjustment, and basic human needs (Erikson, 1963; Maslow, 1970). Thelen, Vanderwall, Thomas, and Harmon (2000) suggest that an impaired ability to form intimate bonds with others may have negative consequences on an individual.
Because of the importance of significant personal relationships in the lives of college students and young adults, and the alarming evidence regarding the effects of divorce, there is an established need in the literature (Hazen & Shaver, 1988), since it is crucial to research the contributing factors toward divorce and marriage. Contemporary theories of relationship development (Collins & Read, 1990) suggest that the interpersonal behavior exhibited in the relationships of young adults have important implications for future adult relationships. Larson (1988) asserted that the current high divorce rate stems from marital dissatisfaction, which is due to unrealistic expectations and attitudes toward marriage. Christensen (1998) concurs stating that a possible cause of relational dysfunction in individuals’ beliefs and attitudes about marital relationships. Reich (1997) postulates that preconceived attitudes are a central construct in the study of relationships. Blagojevic (1989) expands toward resolution asserting that an examination of young adults’ attitudes toward marriage makes it possible to predict future marital behavior, a proactive goal in light of current divorce statistics and consequences.

Quinn and Odell (1998) succinctly tie the three variables of this study together by stating that particularly salient at the stage of young adulthood is attachment. They go on to explain that attachment theory posits that certain basic needs, of which the need for trust is the most fundamental, and are best satisfied within social relationships. This theory offers an appropriate theoretical perspective for examining the expectations or attitudes held by individuals in forming close relationships.
CHAPTER III

Methodology

This chapter describes the participants, methods, and procedures that will be used for this study. It also includes a description of the instruments used. The validity and reliability data for the instruments are reviewed. Design and statistical analyses are presented in relationship to the stated hypotheses.

Design of Study

Demographic data were analyzed for this study. Scale reliability and descriptive statistics were computed to provide additional information about the data set. An exploratory analysis was conducted on the data to check for the assumptions of normality (Field, 2000). Cronbach alpha's were calculated to determine whether the scales were reliable. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was generated to test for interactions as well as main effects (George & Mallary, 2000) comparing male and female scores to determine whether there were significant differences among the groups. Finally, two statistical tests were performed on the data: (a) Pearson correlation coefficient determining the strength of the relationship between variables (George & Mallary, 2000), and (b) multiple linear regression which allows the prediction of one variable from several other variables (Cronk, 1999).
Population and Sampling Strategy

The site of sampling for this study was a liberal arts college in suburban Northeaster New Jersey, consisting of a diverse male and female undergraduate population of approximately 5,000 students. Approval was secured from the Chairman of the Psychology Department of the sample university. Professors in the department of Psychology were contacted in the Fall semester of 2000 and requested to consider allowing students in their classes for the Spring 2001 semester to act as participants in this study. Eight professors agreed. Approximately eleven undergraduate classes participated in this study. \( N = 268 \). Undergraduate classes to be represented consisted of general psychology classes, statistical/experimental methods classes, a forensic psychology class, and an abnormal psychology class. The professors agreed to allow the students class time in order to complete the instruments.

Participants

Participants in this study consisted of a cross section of undergraduate students enrolled in undergraduate psychology courses. Participants were at least 18 years of age. Informed consent accompanied the surveys given to students. Confidentiality of all participants was insured. There were no identifying names on the measures.

Participation in the study was voluntary.

Table 1 represents the demographic data analyzed for this study. Two hundred and sixty nine full time undergraduate students participated in this study. All of the students approached, agreed to volunteer for the study and completed the packet of instruments. Thus, the final sample collected was 268 undergraduate students. Eighty
three males (30.9%) and 185 women (68.8%) participated in the study. The mean age for both males and females was 19 years of age. At the time of data collection 111 (41.3%) respondents were freshman, 57 (21.2%) were seniors, 56 (20.8%) were sophomores, and 45 (16.7%) were juniors. One hundred twenty six (46.8%) respondents were psychology majors and 142 (52.8%) were non-psychology majors. With respect to ethnicity, 199 (74.3%) participants were Caucasian, 25 (9.3%) were African American, 9 (3.3%) were Asian, 25 (10.4%) were Hispanic, and 7 (2.6%) identified themselves as other. The country of origin was the United States for 237 (88.1%) of respondents and 29 (10.8%) were from somewhere other than the United States. Of the participants, 10 (3.7%) reported being an only child, 75 (21.9%) as the first child, 86 (32.8%) as the second child, 67 (24.9%), as the third child, and 28 (10.4%) as the fourth child in their family constellation. Two hundred twenty eight (88.4%) of the respondents reported that they currently live with biological parents, while 3 (1.1%) report living with adoptive parents, 19 (7.1%) with step-families, and 13 (4.8%) report living with other. When asked about current relationship status, equal numbers, 124 (46.1%) reported being single, in a non-committed relationship, or in a committed relationship, 11 (4.1%) had never been in a committed relationship, and 6 (2.2%) were married. Respondents were asked if they preferred being in a committed relationship as opposed to dating a variety of partners. Two hundred twenty three (82.9%) preferred a committed relationship while 38 (14.1%) disagreed.
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Table 1 (Continued)

Frequency Distribution of Demographic Variances

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### Table 1 (Continued)

**Frequency Distribution of Demographic Variances**

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**Frequency Distribution of Demographic Variances**

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<td>Do you prefer being in a committed rel. as opposed to dating a variety of partners?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
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</table>

Research Instruments

The instruments utilized included informed consent and the following instruments. The independent variables of attachment style and trust were measured by using: (a) Adult Attachment Scale (Collins & Read, 1990) and (b) the Trust Scale (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). The dependant variable, marital attitudes of college students was measured by The Marital Attitude Scale (Braaten & Rosen, 1998). They also completed a Demographic Information questionnaire.

**Adult Attachment Scale**

The Adult Attachment Scale (AAS; Collins & Read, 1990) was designed to measure the differences in attachment styles in adult relationships. It consists of 18-items which measure three dimensions of attachment: Close, which measures the extent to
which an individual is comfortable with closeness and intimacy; depend, which measures the extent to which an individual believes others can be depended on to be available when needed; and anxiety, which measures the extent to which an individual feels anxious about such things as being abandoned or unloved. On a five-point, Likert-type scale with $1 = \text{not at all characteristic of me}$ to $5 = \text{very characteristic of me}$, respondents indicate how characteristic each of the feelings indicated in the scale’s items is of themselves. The scale was used in this case to examine the similarities in adult attachment styles to those experienced in childhood relationships with parents, and to study the similarities between individuals’ romantic partners and their parents. It has been used to study the ways in which attachment styles influence individuals’ choices of dating partners and subsequent behaviors in dating relationships.

Respondents are asked to read each of the eighteen statements and rate the extent to which it describes their feelings about romantic relationships. If they have never been involved in a romantic relationship they are asked to answer in terms of how they think they would feel. The scale contains three subscales, each composed of six items. The three subscales are close, depend, and anxiety. The close scale measures the extent to which a person is comfortable with closeness and intimacy. The depend scale measures the extent to which a person feels that they can depend on others to be available when needed. The anxiety subscale measures the extent to which a person is worried about being abandoned or unloved. The three subscales are congruent with the attachment styles identified by Bowlby as secure, avoidant, and anxious.

**Reliability.** Internal consistency reliabilities (coefficient alpha) of .75, .69, and .72, respectively, have been reported for the depend, close, and anxiety subscales. Test-retest
reliabilities after a 2-month interval were .71, .68, and .52 respectively (Collins & Read, 1990). The alpha scores for this study, showing the consistency of the scales (Cronk, 1999) were .60, .61, and .53 respectively for close, depend and anxiety subscales of the AAS, slightly lower than those reported in the literature (Collins & Read, 1990).

Validity. Validity for the AAS was determined by examining scores on the attachment scale for people who chose each of Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) attachment descriptions. Discriminant function analysis on scale scores were performed using paragraph choice as the grouping variable. The AAS is based on Hazan & Shaver’s paragraph descriptions of attachment styles. Two discriminant functions were calculated. After removal of the first function, the second function still accounted for significant variance. Using discriminant weights and prior group membership probabilities, 73% of the total sample was correctly classified. Because using one scale to validate another can be problematic (Collins & Read, 1990), a clustering procedure was then used to determine whether the clusters differ in ways consistent with theoretical conceptions of the three attachment styles. A cluster analysis using Ward’s method was employed (Cronk, 1999). This is similar to a scree test in factor analysis. The cluster analysis resulted in clusters that seemed to correspond to the three attachment styles suggesting concurrent validity with Hazan & Shaver’s (1987) original attachment style measure (Collins & Read, 1990).

Norms. The means and standard deviations for the depend, anxiety, and close composites are 18.3 and 4.7, 16.2 and 5.1, and 21.2 and 4.8, respectively as reported in Collins & Read (1990). Male participants (M = 22.0) were more comfortable with getting close than were female participants (M = 20.6) [F (1, 387) = 8.15, p < .01]. No
other sex differences were found. There were no age differences, although the age range of the sample used in the Collins & Read study (1990) was somewhat limited. Participants were 406 undergraduates at the University of Southern California who participated for extra credit in their introductory psychology course. The sample included 206 women and 184 men (16 participants did not report their sex), ranging in age from 17 to 37 with 18.8 as a mean age.

**Attachment Level Dimensions Versus Discrete Types**

It is important to note that each factor in the AAS is composed of items from more than one of the original attachment style descriptions. Factors 1 (depend) and 3 (close) contain items from both the secure and avoidant descriptions, and Factor 2 (anxiety) has items from both the anxious and secure descriptions. Thus, the factor analysis does not provide three factors that directly correspond to the three discrete styles mentioned in Bowlby’s work (secure, avoidant, and anxious) but, instead, appear to have revealed three dimensions (close, depend, and anxiety) that underlie the styles. The authors (Collins & Read, 1990) state that in fact, obtaining three orthogonal factors that correspond to the three styles would have been highly unlikely. It would have suggested, for instance, that a person could be simultaneously secure and avoidant. As such, examining how the dimensions related to the discrete types provides a better understanding and a more precise definition of the attachment styles. It helps to clarify what is meant when one stated that someone has a secure or anxious style of attachment in adulthood. In addition, by translating the dimensions back into styles, work can be more clearly integrated with prior research and theory on attachment. The AAS allows
the assessment of dimensions that underlie attachment styles, without losing the important conceptual framework that ties them together.

**Trust Scale**

The Trust Scale (TS; Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985) is designed to measure levels of trust within close interpersonal relationships. The 26-items cover predictability, dependability, and faith. It uses a seven-point agree-disagree scale. Participants respond with 1 = not at all characteristic of me to 5 = very characteristic of me. The Trust Scale concentrates on consistency and stability of a partner's specific behaviors, dispositional qualities of the partner, and feelings of confidence in the relationship. A descriptive prototype of each of the three theoretical components was created, and individual items were composed of sample representative content areas within each domain. Thus, items designed to measure predictability emphasize the consistency and stability of a partner's specific behaviors, based on past experience. Dependability items concentrate on the dispositional qualities of the partner which warrant confidence in the face of risk and potential hurt (e.g., honesty, reliability, etc.). Finally, items constructed to measure faith are centered on feelings of confidence in the relationship and the responsiveness and caring expected from the partner in the face of an uncertain future.

It should be noted that the items used on the Trust Scale were constructed to conform to specific theoretical guidelines which formed the basis for the generation of items and initial classification into subscales. Because of the initial sample of 94 participants, Rempel and colleagues (1985) did not believe the sample was large enough to guarantee stable results with factor analysis. For this reason they focused primarily on
the results of item analyses which were used as guidelines to refine the scales, emphasizing that they employed very conservative criteria for deciding when an item would be reclassified to another subscale or dropped altogether.

**Reliability.** The overall reliability of the trust scale was represented with a Cronbach Alpha of .81, with subscale reliabilities of .80, .72, and .70 for the faith, dependability, and predictability subscales, respectively. Reliability scores for this study were .77, .44, and .44 respectively for the subscales of faith, dependability, and predictability, slightly lower than the subscale scores reported in the literature.

**Validity.** There was no validity data available for the Trust Scale at the time of this research project.

**Norms.** A heterogeneous sample of 47 dating and married couples was used to develop the Trust Scale. Forty-two couples volunteered as participants at the Ontario Science-Centre in Toronto, Ontario. Five further couples were contacted directly by the experimenters, creating a total sample of 47 couples. Of the total sample 30 couples were married, five were cohabitating, and twelve were dating. The mean ages were 31 years for males and 29 years for females. There was no data available on ethnic demographics.

**The Marital Attitude Scale (MAS).**

The Marital Attitude Scale (MAS; Braaten & Rosen, 1998), is a self-report measure in which participants endorse one of four choices for each of the 23-items. For
each item, the response format asks the participant to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with a number of statements regarding marriage. Items were written to sample the various ways that people can regard the institution of marriage. Six of the items ask the participant to rate their feelings regarding their own present, or possibly future, marriage, while the remaining items ask the participant to react to statements dealing with general concepts regarding marriage. The MAS is scored by summing the individual item scores (Strongly Agree = 0; Agree = 1; Disagree = 2; and Strongly Disagree = 3) after correcting for reverse keying nine items. The MAS score can range from a minimum of 23 to a maximum of 92. Higher scores indicate a more positive attitude toward marriage.

Reliability. Analyses were conducted using the total MAS scores. The mean score on the MAS was 55.69, with a range of 35 to 72, and a standard deviation of 7.07. A coefficient alpha was computed to assess the internal consistency of the MAS (Braaten & Rosen, 1998). The coefficient alpha was .82. The magnitude of this alpha indicates that the MAS has a moderately high degree of internal consistency. When tested for this study the Marital Attitude Scale showed an alpha of .82, indicating good internal consistency. This finding is in exact agreement with Braaten & Rosen (1998).

Validity. Concurrent validity was found between the MAS, Attitudes toward Marriage Scale, subscales of the Relationship Beliefs Inventory, and Marlow-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Braaten & Rosen, 1998). The MAS showed good concurrent
validity, in that it discriminated students from non-divorced homes with those from divorced homes.

**Norms.** The norming sample for the MAS included 499 undergraduate students (175 males and 324 females) who participated in exchange for extra credit in their Introductory Psychology course. The mean age was 19.10 (SD = 3.35). The MAS was completed in a classroom setting.

**Procedure**

Participants were recruited voluntarily from undergraduate psychology classes in the Spring 2001 semester. The students were invited to volunteer during their class. Prior to participation, participants were informed that the incentive for participating in the study was that their names would be added to a random drawing of all participants. Participants placed their names and phone numbers into a bowl upon handing in their packets. The winner of this lottery-type drawing was the recipient of a cash prize of $200.00. The experimenter read the informed consent to the class, answered any questions that participants had, and then asked for volunteers. Packets, including the demographics and measures, were handed out only to those who agree to participate, and were collected immediately upon completion by the researcher. To avoid instrumentation effects the procedure of counterbalancing was employed. Packets had measures randomly ordered for all participants. This adjustment was made in order to eliminate potential testing bias (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991). The packets were handed out either at the beginning or end of the class, depending on the professor's choice. Participation in the study took approximately 20 minutes.
Method of Data Analysis

A variety of statistics were undertaken in this research to gain an understanding of
the sample population, relationships, and the predictive strength among the variables.
Preliminary analyses were performed including the following descriptive statistics; mean,
median, mode, frequencies, ranges, and standard deviations. Each was used to sculpt a
profile of the population sample. Descriptive data was analyzed. Reliability analysis was
run on each of the scales in order to obtain the Cronbach's alpha on each of the scales.
An exploratory analysis was run to check the data for assumptions. A MANOVA was
utilized to compare variables in order to avoid the Type I error inflation that is possible
when conducting several univariate tests. A Pearson r correlation matrix was constructed
to determine the relationships between variables, and a multiple regression was calculated
to investigate the predictive value of the variables of the data presented (Cronk, 1999).

The data analysis was performed through SPSS version 10.0. The level of
significance was set at the conventional criteria of a minimum of .05 for all analyses. A
two tailed test was used for this investigation. Howell (1997) suggests that when the
investigator is not certain as to what the data will look like, they must be prepared for any
eventuality and utilize a two tailed test, which is a non-directional test.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant positive relationship between the secure
attachment style and level of interpersonal trust. To test this hypothesis a Pearson
correlation coefficient was calculated for the relationship between the participants'
attachment style and their level of interpersonal trust. To test this, a correlation matrix
was produced, testing all possible combinations of variables. The direction strength, value, degrees of freedom, and significance level of the correlation is reported (See Chapter IV). In addition, a statement of direction is included (e.g. secure is more trusting). Thus, participants who have secure attachments will also have high levels of trust.

**Hypothesis 2:** College students' attitudes toward marriage will be predicted by both a secure attachment style and a high level of trust. To test this hypothesis, a multiple regression was calculated to predict the participant's level of marital attitudes (more or less positive) based on their attachment style and level of interpersonal trust. A linear combination of independent variables of attachment styles and trust level scores was created to optimally predict the dependent variable of positive marital attitudes. Conclusions from the regression analysis indicated whether or not a significant prediction equation was obtained, the direction of the relationship, and the equation itself. The significance level of each independent variable is considered.
CHAPTER IV

Results

This chapter presents the statistical analysis of data evaluating the relationship of attachment and trust variables with marital attitudes. The first section describes the preliminary analyses; the second section describes the tests of hypotheses and the results of the data analysis. Finally, a summary of results is presented.

Preliminary Analyses

Descriptives. Means and standard deviations for the Marital Attitude Scale and all subscales of the Adult Attachment Scale and Trust Scale are shown in Table 2. The mean is a measure of central tendency, a value that represents a typical member of the sample or population (Cronk, 1999). The standard deviation is a measure of dispersion telling about the variability of the scores (Cronk, 1999). Together, a measure of central tendency and a measure of dispersion provide a great deal of information about the data set.

To examine whether male and female respondents differed significantly on their scores, on the three measures, mean scores were compared for men and women.
Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for the Marital Attitude Scale, Adult Attachment Scale Subscales, and Trust Scale Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Female M</th>
<th>Female SD</th>
<th>Male M</th>
<th>Male SD</th>
<th>Total M</th>
<th>Total SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 185)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 83)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 268)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAS Scale</td>
<td>.433</td>
<td>44.44</td>
<td>8.81</td>
<td>45.15</td>
<td>6.43</td>
<td>44.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>19.96</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>20.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depend</td>
<td>.744</td>
<td>15.85</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>16.49</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>16.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>15.20</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>15.04</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>15.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>37.90</td>
<td>6.89</td>
<td>37.81</td>
<td>6.42</td>
<td>37.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>28.76</td>
<td>7.01</td>
<td>28.79</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>20.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictability</td>
<td>.591</td>
<td>20.85</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>21.12</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>20.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.
Close, depend, and anxiety are subscales of the Adult Attachment Scale. Faith, dependability, and predictability are subscales of the Trust Scale. *p < .05, (two-tailed) **p < .01, (two-tailed).

Mean scores and standard deviations on the Marital Attitude Scale; the close, depend, and anxiety subscales of the Adult Attachment Scale; and faith, dependability, and predictability subscales of the Trust Scale for males and females are reported in Table 2. A MANOVA was used to compare male and female scores on the various measures to determine whether there were significant differences among the groups. The MANOVA
produces an $F$ statistic designed to test for interactions as well as main effects (George & Mallary, 2000). A MANOVA was chosen as opposed to $t$-tests to resolve the possibility of Type I error (Field, 2000). While it is possible to conduct several univariate tests, this causes Type I error inflation (Cronk, 1999). MANOVA assumptions include the expectation that there are multiple dependent variables, which are related to each other. Each dependent variable should be normally distributed and measured on an interval or ratio scale. An exploratory analysis was done on the data to check for the assumption of normality using both a histogram and analyzing the data output for kurtosis and skewness. The assumptions of MANOVA have been met for this study.

Wilks' Lambda was chosen to test the multivariate null hypothesis, since it characterizes within group and total variability. Wilks' Lambda is the ratio of the within-groups sum of squares to the total sum of the squares with small values indicating group means which appear to be different (Norusis, 1990). Wilks' Lambda is designed to indicate whether a particular variable contributes significantly to explaining additional variance in the dependent or criterion variable. There is an $F$ and $p$ value associated with Wilks' Lambda that indicate the level of significance (Nouris, 1997). The significance of each independent variable will be noted as to whether or not each is significant.

A one-way MANOVA was calculated examining the gender differences on results of the Marital Attitude Scale, Adult Attachment Scale, and Trust Scale. No significant effect was found Lambda $(6,177) = .268$, $p > .05$. 
Tests of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I states that there will be a statistically positive relationship between the secure (close, as termed by the Adult Attachment Scale) attachment style and level of interpersonal trust (faith, dependability, and predictability, as termed by the Trust Scale). Thus, participants who have secure attachments will also have high levels of trust.

Hypothesis II states that marital attitudes will be predicted by both a secure (close, as termed by the Adult Attachment Scale) attachment style as measured by the Adult Attachment Scale and a high level of trust (faith, dependability, and predictability, as termed by the Trust Scale) as measured by the Trust Scale.

Two statistical tests were performed on the data to test these two hypotheses. These tests were a Pearson correlation coefficient and a multiple linear regression. The Pearson correlation coefficient determines the strength of the linear relationship between two variables (George & Mallary, 2000). The assumption of the Pearson correlation coefficient, that both variables should be interval or ratio scale (George & Mallary, 2000) has been met in this study. Because the Pearson correlation coefficient is computed using z-scores, both variables should be normally distributed. All variables of this study are normally distributed. A Pearson correlation matrix was prepared to further explore relationships among variables (See Table 3). The correlations between variables were assessed as a test of this study's first hypothesis. A positive correlation was found for the following variables: close and marital attitude $r = .26, p < .1$, depend and marital attitude $r = .30, p < .01$, depend and close $r = .45, p < .01$, faith and close $r = .20, p < .01$, faith and anxiety $r = -.17, p < .01$, dependability and depend $r = .18, p < .01$, and dependability and faith $r = .32, p < .01$, dependability and marital attitude $r = .13, p < .05$,
Table 3

Intercorrelations Among the Marital Attitude Scale, Adult Attachment Scale, and Trust Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Marital Attitude Scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Close</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Depend</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Anxiety</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Faith</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>-.17**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Dependability</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Predictability</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.
Close, Depend, and Anxiety are subscales of the Adult Attachment Scale. Faith, Dependability, and Predictability are subscales of the Trust Scale [*p < .05 (two-tailed) ** p < .01, (two-tailed).

dependability and close r = .15, p < .05, depend and anxiety r = -.12, p < .05, and predictability and faith r = .14, p < .05. Results were consistent with Hypothesis I. In support of what was predicted, close (secure attachment style) was the variable most significantly correlated with the trust variables of faith, dependability, and predictability. Depend (avoidant attachment style) and faith (ambivalent attachment style) also showed positive correlation to one of the three trust variables. Close did not show positive
correlation to the trust variable of predictability. Therefore, Hypothesis I was partially supported by this analysis.

Bivariate analyses also indicated that several of the independent measures were correlated with marital attitude, close and marital attitude \( r = .26, p < .01 \), depend and marital attitude \( r = .30, p < .01 \), and dependability and marital attitude \( r = .13, p < .01 \).

To further explore the relationship among variables in this study, a multiple linear regression analysis was performed to determine whether positive scores in marital

Table 4

**Multiple Regression Analyses for the Marital Attitude Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R^2</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>2.10 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>2.84 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**
Predictors total subscale scores on Adult Attachment Scale – close, depend, and anxiety and total subscale scores on Trust Scale – faith, dependability, and predictability. Dependant Variable: Total score on Marital Attitude Scale.

\*p < .05  **p < .01.
attitude will be significantly accounted for by participants who have both a secure (close, as termed by the Adult Attachment Scale) attachment style and high levels of trust variables, faith, dependability, and predictability (See Table 4).

A multiple linear regression analysis allows the prediction of one variable from several other variables. Multiple linear regression assumes that all variables are interval or ratio scaled. In addition, the dependent variable should be normally distributed around the prediction line. This, of course, assumes that the variables are related to each other in a linear fashion (Cronk, 1999). An exploratory analysis showed that the assumptions for multiple linear regression have been met in this study. Conclusions from regression analyses indicate (a) whether or not a significant prediction equation was obtained, (b) the direction of the relationship, and (c) the equation itself (Cronk, 1999).

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict the dependent variable, participants' marital attitude based on their attachment type and the independent variables of trust (close, depend, and anxiety relate to attachment types; faith, dependability, and predictability relate in this case to trust). A significant regression equation was found \[ R^2 = .501, p < .001 \], with an \( R^2 \) of .15. Beta weight for depend is .24 and close .17. Both secure (close, as termed by the AAS) and avoidant (depend, as termed by the AAS) were significant predictors of positive marital attitude. Neither anxious, (anxiety, as termed by the AAS), the third component of attachment nor any of the three subscales of the trust scale, faith, dependability, and predictability, were found to be significant predictors of marital attitude.

This result partially supports Hypothesis 2 that positive marital attitudes will be predicted by a secure (close) attachment style. However, positive marital attitudes were
not predicted by or significantly accounted for by high levels of the trust variables faith, dependability, and predictability which was also part of Hypothesis 2. In addition, positive marital attitudes are significantly accounted for by the avoidant attachment style (depend as termed by the AAS). Data on these variables appear in Table 4. Shown in the table are correlations between each of the predictor variables and the dependant variable.

Summary

The results of the data analyses were examined in order to determine whether (and to what extent) marital attitude, the attachment styles of secure, avoidant, and anxious (close, depend, and anxiety as termed by the AAS), and levels of interpersonal trust (faith, dependability, and predictability as termed by the TS) are related. The scores of 268 full-time undergraduate students who participated in the study were used to complete the data analyses. In addition to a Demographic Information questionnaire, the instruments used in the study were the Marital Attitude Scale (Braaten & Rosen, 1998), The Adult Attachment Scale (Collins, & Read, 1990), and The Trust Scale (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985).

As a group, these participants can be described as predominantly female (68%), freshman (41.3%), non-psychology majors (52.8%), Caucasian (74.3%), who are originally from the United States (88.1%), first children in their family constellations (32.8%), living with their biological parents (88.4%), equally single, in a non-committed relationship (46.1%) and in a committed relationship, (46.1%), and preferring to be in a committed relationship as opposed to dating a variety of partners (82.9%).
Reliabilities were run for all instruments in order to determine an indication of the consistency of the scales. The Marital Attitude Scale showed an alpha of .82, indicating good internal consistency. Internal consistency reliabilities of .60, .53 and .61, respectively were reported for close, depend and anxiety subscales of the AAS. Results varied when compared with that of the literature (Collins & Read, 1990), which indicates that respondents are not endorsing the items in the same way. This translates to in inconsistency with other reported studies. Reliability scores for the Trust Scale subscales of faith, dependability, and predictability are .77, .44, and .44 respectively. As compared with other results reported in the literature (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985), again these results are somewhat lower.

Mean scores were compared across gender lines to determine if there were significant differences between males and females in any of the variables. A MANOVA was the statistic of choice in comparing gender in order to avoid Type I error. None of the $F$ scores revealed significant differences between males and females. Therefore, subsequent testing for mean differences between genders was not conducted.

Two statistical tests were performed on the data to test the two hypotheses proposed in this study. The first was a Pearson correlation matrix, which was prepared to explore relationships among all variables. The first hypothesis, that there would be a positive relationship between secure (close, as termed by the AAS) attachment style and level of interpersonal trust (the variables of faith, dependability, and predictability) was partially supported. It was not fully supported because there was not a significant correlation between close (secure attachment style) and the trust variable of predictability. A positive correlation was found between close and faith $r = .21$, $p < .01$. 
close and dependability $r = .15$, $p < .05$, anxiety and faith $r = -.17$, $p < .01$, and depend and dependability $r = .18$, $p < .01$. Correlations between same scale variables are not reported here, though they did exist. Although there are additional correlations between variables, the close (secure attachment style) variable is that with the most frequent and significant correlations.

Testing of the second hypothesis, that marital attitude scores will be predicted by a secure (close, as termed by the AAS) attachment style as measured by AAS and a high level of the trust variables as measured by the Trust Scale, was explored by performing a multiple linear regression analysis. A significant regression equation was found [$F (6, 178) = 5.01, p < .001$] with an $R^2$ of .15. Participants predicted marital attitude is equal to 29.08 close (secure attachment style) .27 depend (avoidant attachment style). Both close (secure attachment style) and depend (avoidant attachment style) were significant predictors of positive marital attitude. None of the trust variables emerged as significant in the regression equation. Therefore, according to this study’s results, neither the anxious attachment style (anxiety) nor any of the trust variables, faith, dependability, or predictability can be used to predict marital attitudes. This result partially supports Hypothesis 2. Results indicate that positive marital attitudes are significantly accounted for or predicted by both a secure and avoidant attachment style.
CHAPTER V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This final chapter discusses the results of the data analyses conducted in this study and provides directions for future research. The first section contains a summary of previous research that frames the background for the present study. The second section presents the findings of this investigation, determined as a result of the analysis of the data. The third section highlights the major contributions of this dissertation with our understanding of attachment styles, interpersonal trust, and marital attitudes. The fourth section describes the strengths and limitations of the present study, and the fifth section suggests areas for future empirical research. Finally, the last section discusses the implications of this research for counseling practice.

Summary of Previous Research

Today it is common knowledge that America experiences a high divorce rate. The children of divorce may continue to experience turmoil both post-divorce, and throughout their lives (Spillane-Grieco, 2000). There is evidence which indicates that adolescent and adult children from divorced families can suffer greater anxiety, higher levels of depression, lower self-esteem, and in general evidence substandard psychological and social adjustment in comparison with offspring from intact families (Tallman, Gray, Kullberg, & Henderson, 1999). Certainly, there is sufficient evidence to
cause societal alarm regarding the current divorce rate and its subsequent outcomes. This evidence presents a unique opportunity for research to aid in the construction of a proactive psychological approach, which will aid in the prevention of the fundamental problem of divorce.

This study focuses on three main variables as unique in helping to investigate the components of the foundation of divorce: attachment style, level of interpersonal trust, and attitudes toward marriage. It is concerned with factors that may influence the developmental process of young adults' relationships and their concomitant attitudes toward marriage.

One of the most significant developmental tasks for young adults is the emergence of new patterns of friendships, specifically, the beginning of romantic relationships (Erikson, 1963). Collins & Read (1990) suggest that the interpersonal behavior exhibited in the relationships of young adults has important implications for future adult relationships. Jennings, Salts, and Smith (1991) determined that the presence of conflict in parents' relationships was determined to influence young adults' attitudes toward marriage. Attitudes toward marriage are also linked to future expectations of marriage. There is an empirically acknowledged need for a bridge spanning the period of adolescence and adulthood (Collins & Read, 1990). This information serves as confirmation for the inclusion of marital attitudes of college students in this investigation in order to construct proactive measures of creating interpersonal relationships with a positive trajectory.

Often, relational problems reflect a conflict in the person's interpersonal learning history, which manifests itself in part in the person's attachment history and attachment
style (Horowitz, Rosenberry, & Bartholomew, 1993). Collins & Read (1990) suggest that since attachment styles have important implications for behavior in relationships, they should have a role in one’s choice of love partners and in the quality of one’s romantic relationships. Recent trends examining people’s attachment styles in young adulthood suggest that internalized early attachment experiences form internal representations upon which subsequent relationships are based. Hence, attachment style was viewed as an important area of study.

Interpersonal trust is another meaningful dimension of an intimate relationship, one which holds great meaning (Quinn & Odell, 1998). Hazen and Shaver (1987) posit that the need for security or trust is an integral and fundamental component of the attachment process, linking the variables of trust and attachment style, buttressing their validity for inclusion in this study.

**Study Hypotheses**

The dependent variable examined in this study was marital attitude. The independent variables examined in this study were the close, depend, and anxiety (subscales of the Adult Attachment Scale) and the subscales of the Trust Scale, used to determine level of interpersonal trust. A Pearson correlation matrix was prepared to further explore relationships among variables (Cronk, 1999). A multiple linear regression analysis was used to explore the prediction of one variable from several other variables (Cronk, 1999).

This study examined two hypotheses: Hypothesis I states that there will be a significant positive relationship between the secure (close, as termed by the Adult
Attachment Scale) attachment style and level of trust (faith, dependability, and predictability, as termed by the Trust Scale). Thus, participants who have secure attachments will also have high levels of trust.

Hypothesis II states that participants with high scores in marital attitudes will be significantly accounted for by participants who have both a secure (close, as termed by the Adult Attachment Scale) attachment style as measured by the Adult Attachment Scale and a high level of trust (faith, dependability, and predictability, as termed by the Trust Scale) as measured by the Trust Scale.

The next section discusses the findings in relation to the hypotheses tested.

**Summary and Discussion of Findings**

Results of the Pearson correlation matrix revealed that a statistically significant positive correlation was found for the following variables: Close and faith and close and dependability. These results partially support the first hypothesis that the secure attachment style (close, as termed by the Adult Attachment Scale) would be associated with high levels of interpersonal trust (faith, dependability, and predictability, as termed by the Trust Scale). A statistically significant positive correlation was not found between the variables of close and predictability.

The strong correlation between close and faith indicates that, as discussed by Collins & Read (1990), young adults that chose close (the secure attachment style) as the description that best distinguishes them predictably experience love relationships characterized by happiness, trust, and friendship. They have reported that they value emotional attachment, are comfortable relying on others for emotional support, and view
themselves as a viable attachment figure for others (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Each component in Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna's (1985) model of trust reflects a different perspective or basis from which subjective probability judgments for a partner's behavior can be made. The variable of faith, that which is most significantly correlated with secure attachment (close) in this study, is the one construct as defined by Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna, that is not strongly rooted in past experience. They describe faith as a belief that must go beyond the available evidence to accept a given supposition as truth. Faith reflects an emotional security on the part of the individual, which enables them to go beyond the available evidence and feel, with assurance, that their partner will be responsive and caring despite the vicissitudes of an uncertain future. Thus, it stands to reason that there would be a significant relationship between a secure individual, one who values emotional attachment to others, and predictably experiences love relationships characterized by happiness, trust, and friendship, and someone who is able to see the behavior of a partner beyond the evidence currently available, believing in the partner's ability to be responsive and caring despite an uncertain future.

The second correlation is between close (secure attachment) and the trust variable of dependability. Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985) describe this component of interpersonal trust as an inevitable shift in focus away from assessments involving specific behaviors, to an evaluation of the qualities and characteristics attributed to the partner. Thus, trust is placed in a person, not their specific actions. For example, is the partner a reliable person, someone who is honest and can be counted on? Again, it stands to reason that a securely attached individual, one comfortable with themselves and others, readily able to view themselves as a viable partner for others, would be able to see
beyond the day to day business of conducting a relationship and focus on more central concerns of the relationship.

The only trust variable which did not relate significantly to the secure (close) attachment style was predictability. Interestingly, Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985) view predictability as the most specific and concrete of the three components of their trust model. They describe predictability as referring to a partner’s behavior and being influenced by a host of factors including such basic elements as the consistency of recurrent behavior and the stability of the social environment. This is, in essence, predictability is a forecast of a partner’s future actions relying heavily on knowledge relating to the consistency of responses in the past. Because predictability and secure attachment (close) do not appear to have a linear relationship, it may be theorized that individuals with a secure attachment style are operating, cognitively, on a more abstract level and able to conjecture how a partner will act as opposed to dwelling on minutia.

Results of the multiple regression analysis revealed that attachment styles are predictive of marital attitudes. Both secure (close) and avoidant (depend) attachment styles were significant predictors of positive marital attitude. The regression coefficients were not significant for the anxious (anxiety) attachment style or any of the three Trust Scale components: faith, dependability, or predictability. This result partially supports Hypothesis II that marital attitudes will be significantly accounted for by participants who have a secure (close) attachment style and high levels of the Trust Scale variables.

However, unexpectedly, marital attitudes were significantly accounted for by the avoidant (depend) attachment style, in addition to the secure (close) attachment style, yet none of the trust variables. To re-iterate, individuals with a secure attachment (close)
predictably experience love relationships characterized by happiness, trust, and friendship (Collins & Read, 1990). They describe relationships with a generally positive affective tone and are appropriately differentiated, neither uncomfortably submissive nor distancing. Ideas about the self are generally positive (Morrison, Goodlin-Jones, & Urguiza, 1997). It is not surprising that the secure attachment style would be predictive of positive attitudes toward marriage. Those with an avoidant attachment (depend) are less comfortable with closeness and intimacy, not as confident in others’ availability, but are not particularly worried about being abandoned. They are known to find it difficult to allow themselves to depend on others, getting uncomfortable when anyone gets too close (Collins & Read, 1990). Avoidant participants (depend) would be thought to have a relatively deactivated attachment system, and report relationships that are relatively low in affection and are relatively disengaged (Morrison, Goodlin-Jones, & Urguiza, 1997). Avoidant individuals are predicted to show disruptions in affect regulation and attachment relationships and feel that they can do little to alter a negative mood state than did more secure individuals (Creasey, Kershaw, & Boston, 1999). Avoidant individuals also tend to accept unavailability from others and are more likely to emotionally deactivate during times of relationship stress. They tend to report more conflict withdrawal with romantic partners than anxious or secure respondents (Creasey, Kershaw, & Boston, 1999). Therefore, it is somewhat surprising that the variable of depend (avoidant attachment) was predictive of positive marital attitudes.
**Contributions of Present Research**

This dissertation makes several contributions to the literature on attachment styles, trust, and marital attitudes. Most strikingly, the results of the present study offer support for the correlation of the variables of secure attachment (close) and the trust variables of faith and dependability. Although trust is an acknowledged component of secure attachment (Collins & Read, 1990), there is a void in the literature. In fact, in personal conversations with both John Holmes and Nancy Collins (authors of the Trust Scale and Adult Attachment Scale used in this study, respectively), during the process of the construction of this study, each acknowledged the need for an inclusion of trust in the study of attachment styles. Although investigators have examined trust between partners in relationships (Zak, Gold, Ryckman, & Leeney, 1998), only Holmes (1996) has introduced a fully developed model that outlines the processes by which such trust evolves. This study contributes to the literature examining attachment styles and interpersonal trust.

Furthermore, the prediction of positive marital attitudes by the predictor variables of secure and avoidant (close and depend, as termed by the AAS) attachment styles presents a unique insight for the purpose of this study: the construction of a proactive psychological approach to aid young adults in sculpting healthy interpersonal relationships toward the ultimate end of lowering our spiraling divorce rate. Upon investigation of the interpersonal and relational traits associated with these two attachment styles, it appears that there are components that can be exposed and taught to those with anxious attachment styles. Studies by Lewis and Feiring (1991) suggest that therapy aimed at altering styles may be successful in bringing about changes in working
models of attachment and expectations of others. Bowlby (1988) concurs, stating that attachment patterns vary in stability depending on the degree of satisfaction that each person derives from the pattern. He goes on to explain that when the lack of fit between actual social interchanges and corresponding working models of attachment becomes so great that the models are no longer effective, the individual will begin the process of accommodating the models to reality.

In addition, although unrelated to either of this study's hypotheses, this study offers support for the correlation of the secure and avoidant attachment styles (close and depend) \( r = .45, p < .01 \). Collins & Read (1990) echo this finding having found through factor analysis in constructing the Adult Attachment Scale (Factor 1 [depend] and Factor 3 [close]) that the two variables were moderately correlated at .41. It is a phenomenon supported by the literature. This suggests that people who felt they could depend on others tended to be more comfortable getting close.

**Limitations of Study**

The research design for this study was fundamentally sound and balanced using previously established and reliable instruments to collect the data. However, in the current sample the internal consistency reliabilities of the Trust Scale subscales of dependability and predictability were relatively low. In addition, contrary to hypothesized relationships, neither of these scales was found to be significant either in the Pearson correlation matrix or the regression analysis. Because of the questionable reliability of the subscales, the correlations obtained in the Pearson correlation matrix may have been low, even though the underlying relationship between the variables is moderately strong. The
results could have looked completely different without the proportion of error variance in the total score (Barker, Pistrang, & Elliott, 1994).

This study used a quantitative, correlational approach to measure the relationship of attachment style and level of interpersonal trust. Therefore, results do not provide proof of the causal direction of this relationship (George & Mallery, 2000). For example, could secure attachment be caused by the amount of faith (one variable of the Trust Scale) one has in the behavior of one’s partner? Although the causal direction cannot be proven, trust is often regarded as being an integral component in attachment style (Collins & Reed, 1990).

Despite the success of attachment theory and research, certain aspects of the attachment-theoretical approach to personality need further work (Rothbard & Shaver, 1994). One problem, is measurement. It seems unlikely that simple self-report measures of adult attachment and complex interview measures of the attachment orientations of young adults will automatically converge (Rothbard & Shaver, 1994). The construction of Collins and Read’s (1990) Adult Attachment Scale and it’s subsequent choice for use in this study grew out of a documented need to refine the measurement of attachment styles. Collins and Read (1990) note that although Hazen and Shaver’s research (translating the attachment typology developed originally by Ainsworth and colleagues in 1978 into terms appropriate to adult relationships and resulting in the three attachment descriptions) is an important step toward exploring early attachment and adults, they recognize the need for the development of a more sensitive instrument to measure young adult attachment styles.
Further, despite the variety of outcomes and depth of study available on attachment, no empirical studies have adequately measured or ascertained the certainty of lifelong stable attachment styles. The number of attachment styles among adults remains unclear (Sperling & Berman, 1994). In general, most theorists maintain that there is only one secure style and numerous insecure styles. Sperling and Berman (1994) and Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) have proposed four category models. Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) model would, in particular, affect this study's outcome as their model identifies two subtypes of the avoidant style— one that is counterdependent (labeled "dismissing"), and one that conveys significant fear of closeness (labeled "fearful"). Main agrees, stating (1983), that in recent years, researchers have become increasingly aware of a fourth attachment style. The findings that were discussed in this study may have been clearer and stronger if a four-category typology had been employed. This suspicion remains to be tested in future research.

An additional limitation regarding attachment is the stability and instability of attachment styles particularly in adulthood. Are members of the insecure attachment groups in adult largely doomed to lives of negative expectations and unfulfilling relationships? Although research suggests that change toward attachment security is possible, a premise upon which the importance of this study's research is based, the factors underlying this change need to be further researched and specified (Rothbard & Shaver, 1994).

Finally, limitations of this study include utilizing college students. There are several strengths and weaknesses associated with using such a population. The use of a cohort rather than longitudinal design in the current study affects the conclusions
regarding the results reported. First of all, most people who attend college are at least in the middle-class income range. Limiting a study to such a select group of economically advantaged, homogeneous group of persons could affect the findings. There may be important differences in the lower socioeconomic status groups or a more multicultural group which cannot be obtained using a private east coast university (Jones & Nelson, 1996). One strength associated with utilizing college students supported by Greenberg and Nay (1982) is that it is advantageous to limit one’s sample to a select population to examine more closely the effects of the variable under study by controlling for extraneous influences.

Direction for Future Research

The present research examined whether there was a relationship between attachment styles and interpersonal trust and if secure attachment styles and high levels of interpersonal trust were predictive of positive marital attitudes in college students. Attachment theory posits that certain basic needs, of which the need for security or trust is the most fundamental, are best satisfied within social relationships (Hazen & Shaver, 1987). This theory offers an appropriate perspective for examining close relationships (Quinn & Odell, 1998). As adolescents approach adulthood, they begin to explore their feelings toward love, marriage, and expectations of a future mate. There are many salient factors which may influence a young adult’s attitude toward marriage during the process of establishing intimacy outside the family (Erikson, 1963), yet there is scant data confirming or countering these factors (Jennings, Salts, & Smith, 1991).
A documented area for further research (Collins & Read, 1990) would be to develop techniques in measurement to examine in detail the contents and structure of individual attachment styles. Sperling and Berman (1994) concur stating that despite the success of attachment theory and research, one problem remains to be that of measurement. Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998) expand this idea by citing the continuing lack of convergence on a common, reliable method for assessing adult attachment orientations. They warn that a common method of measurement is necessary if researchers are to communicate clearly with each other about the same constructs. Future research could aid in the sculpting of measurement tools with commonality underlying different research procedures with the goal of constructing universally accepted measurement tools for attachment styles.

As was noted in the limitations section, three attachment groups may be too limiting to describe adult attachment. By specifying important underlying dimensions of attachment and exploring configurations of these dimensions an examination of additional or expanded styles could be undertaken. A promising area for future research will be developing techniques to examine in detail the contents and structure of individual models and explore how they relate to attachment styles. The addition of more longitudinal studies could also assist in the construction of more reliable prototypic forms of measurement of adult attachment. Simpson and Roles (1994) state that longitudinal findings are encouraging. The measurement of components of the internal working models of attachment over time, and how they mediate the effects of the attachment system, paints a more complete picture for understanding attachment.
Regarding the issue of interpersonal trust, the literature as well as the findings of this study point to the need for more investigation. As was postulated by Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985), empirical results and theoretical proposals are thought to reveal the intricate pattern of trust woven in the fabric of close relationships. They suggest that much research still remains to be done, but the practical and theoretical benefits of unraveling this puzzle promise to be considerable.

Future research could examine how marital attitudes are formed and influenced. The relationship between causal attributions in close relationships and close relationship beliefs and attitudes would be of particular importance.

In all three variables presented in this study, attachment, trust, and marital attitudes, it is important to recognize areas of integration among psychological theories while simultaneously considering the value and contribution of each theory. Therefore, more empirical data are needed to make comparisons of theory-based models of all three variables. This would allow for convergence of some theories while maintaining other theories for the variable outcomes that they expose. There is a distinct and dire need for more research in not only understanding how divorce is shaped, but pro-active strategies for preventing the escalation of divorce in general.

**Implications for Practice**

The premise of this study is that the knowledge of a person's attachment style, level of, and beliefs regarding interpersonal trust and attitudes toward marriage would be beneficial components of background knowledge for successfully working with a client
in therapy. This information would be integral either pro-actively both in building strong, healthy relationships, and in corrective therapy.

Intervention efforts need to be sensitive to the attachment styles of clients as these styles seem to determine relationship dynamics and emotional well-being (Volling, Notaro, & Larsen, 1998). Clients with different attachment styles most likely have different cognitive expectations about themselves and others, as well as different strategies for regulating affect and its expression (Volling, Notaro, & Larsen, 1998). Evaluating these different components and recommendations tailored to these differences is an important component of the therapeutic process. Armed with this information it shades the change process differently.

Adult attachment styles are theorized to reflect an individual’s affectively-based beliefs about social relationships and how one manages emotions in socially distressing situations. Practitioners working with a client in a toxic relational state, may want to focus intervention efforts on helping individuals to revise their working models of relationships, perhaps through the use of cognitive-behavioral or emotion-based therapy. Cognitive-behavioral strategies may provide useful tools in such endeavors. They can be used to address negative cognitions, to train the individual in effective communication, and to increase involvement with others with shared common interests (Dobson, 1988).

A client’s capacity to form a productive alliance appears fixed, to some degree, by childhood experiences (Mallinckrodt, Gantt, & Coble, in press). The foundations of trust are also evolving through life and experiences (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). An important part of the client’s capacity to form a working alliance may also be determined by social competencies fashioned by these components. Clinicians cannot rewrite a
client’s attachment history, level of trust, or current attitudes toward marriage, but they can help a client acquire new social competencies. The clinician can become a stable quasi-attachment figure in the client’s current life. It is possible for therapists to help reframe attachment styles, in the sense that a client’s memories of parental and relational bonds may change during therapy. The clinician can also address cognitions regarding currently held beliefs which buttress the attachment style, level of interpersonal trust, and attitudes toward marriage and work with the client to change those that are not functioning optimally in the client’s life.

Armed with the knowledge of the client’s individual stylistic profile in attachment, trust, and attitudes toward marriage, the team of clinician and client will be better able to respond to and treat the concerns bringing the client to the therapeutic forum.

Conclusions

This research highlights empirical evidence to cause societal alarm regarding current divorce rate and its subsequent outcomes. Three empirically validated factors which contribute to some component of interpersonal relationships, attachment style, interpersonal trust, and attitudes toward marriage were investigated. Quantitative measures were used to show relationships between these variables.

The findings of this study revealed that there are significant relationships among the variables in question. This information fosters the development of a therapeutic plan of treatment for the clinician in painting a portrait of the client prior to the client’s engaging in interpersonal relationships or in remediation of relational toxicity or discord.
It also serves to inform the scientist in continuing research on the positive formation of relationships and facilitates formulation of proactive psycho educational programs for young adults or college students engaged in the formation of healthy interpersonal relationships.
References


Appendix A

Letter to Participants and Debriefing Statements
Dear Participant:

Thank you for taking the time to read our invitation to participate in this research project. The present study is being conducted in fulfillment of the Ph.D. dissertation requirement in Counseling Psychology in the Education and Professional Psychology Department of Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey. The purpose of this study is to examine college students' attachment styles, level of interpersonal trust, and their relationship to the marital attitudes of college students.

The following pages consist of the Adult Attachment Scale, Trust Scale, Marital Attitude Scale, and a sheet requesting demographic information. Please read the directions for each scale carefully and then respond to each item in the spaces provided. Please note that only complete surveys can be used. Failure to respond to any portion of the survey (including the demographic information) will result in the survey being discarded. If you choose to participate, it should take approximately 20 minutes.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts, which would occur as a result of your participating in this study. In the unlikely event that any discomfort or injury occurs (e.g., psychological discomfort), we cannot offer you any compensation or treatment. If you believe completing the scales may trouble you, feel free not to do them. If you do answer them and experience some discomfort, we encourage you to speak with a trusted friend or professional. There may be no significant benefit to you, however studies such as this can generate data that can be useful in understanding college students' attitudes toward marriage, providing crucial educational and clinical implications in helping to prevent eventual marital or relational distress.

In gratitude for your participation in this survey you are being given the opportunity to enter a drawing for a $200.00 cash reward. In your packet is a blank 3X5 note card. When you have finished filling out the other information put your name on the 3X5 card. There will be a box on a desk by the door as you exit the class. Simply place the 3X5 card with your name on it in the box. There will also be a box labeled surveys. Drop your unmarked survey packet into this box. At the termination of data collection from all classes a non-related observer will draw a name. All other 3X5 cards will be discarded without checking names of participants. Participating professors will be notified of the winner. Your professor will be given the $200.00 cash to award the winner of the drawing.

All of your answers will remain confidential and anonymous. Please do not put your name or directly identifiable information of any of the forms other than the 3X5 notecard. The results will most likely be published, but only in a general, summary form.

Your careful participation in this study is greatly appreciated but is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study and withdraw from participation at any time without negative consequences. If you decide to participate, your completion and return of the scales implies your informed consent; thus, you do not have to put your name on any of the scales or demographic information.
If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to ask any of the following people:

* The person who handed you this material.

* The people conducting this research:

Donalee Brown   hdzbrown@msn.com
Dr. Byron Hargrove  hargroby@shu.edu or (973) 275-2855

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research. The IRB believes that the research procedures adequately safeguard the subject’s privacy, welfare, civil liberties, and rights. The Chairperson of the IRB may be reached through the Office of Grants and Research Services. The telephone number of the Office is (973) 378-9809.

I have read the material above, and any questions I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realizing that I may withdraw without prejudice at any time.

A summary of the results will be available in April 2001 from the authors of this study. Please contact us at the e-mail addresses or the telephone number listed above.

Thank you for considering taking part in our research.

Cordially,

Donalee Brown, M.A., M.Ed.
Doctoral Candidate

Byron K. Hargrove, Ph.D.
Dissertation Mentor
Appendix B

The Marital Attitude Scale
The Marital Attitude Scale (Braaten & Rosen, 1998)

Instructions: Please indicate by circling how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements regarding marriage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 (Strongly Agree)</th>
<th>1 (Agree)</th>
<th>2 (Disagree)</th>
<th>3 (Strongly Disagree)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>People should marry.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I have little confidence that my marriage will be a success.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>People should stay married to their spouses for the rest of their lives.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Most couples are either unhappy in their marriage or divorced.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I will be satisfied when I get married.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I am fearful of marriage.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I have doubts about marriage.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>People should only get married if they are sure that it will last forever.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>People should feel very cautious about entering into a marriage.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Most marriages are unhappy situations.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Marriage is a sacred act.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Most marriages aren't equal partnerships.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Most people have to sacrifice too much in a marriage.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Because half of all marriages end in divorce, marriage seems futile.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>If I divorce, I would probably remarry.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>When people don't get along, I believe they should divorce</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I believe a relationship can be just as strong without having to go through the marriage ceremony.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>My lifelong dream includes a happy marriage.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>There is not such a thing as a happy marriage.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Marriage restricts individuals from achieving their goals.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>People weren't meant to stay in one relationship for their entire lives.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Marriage provides companionship that is missing from other forms of relationships.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Used with the permission of the authors. (Braaten & Rosen, 1998)
Appendix C

Adult Attachment Scale
Adult Attachment Scale (Collins & Read, 1990)

Please read each of the following statements and rate the extent to which it describes your feelings about romantic relationships. Please think about all your relationships (past and present) and respond in terms of how you generally feel in these relationships. If you have never been involved in a romantic relationship, answer in terms of how you think you would feel.

Please use the scale below by CIRCLING a number between 1 and 5 in the space provided to the right of each statement.

1---------2---------3---------4---------5

Not at all Characteristic of me Very characteristic of me

1. I find it relatively easy to get close to others. 1 2 3 4 5
2. I do NOT worry about being abandoned. 1 2 3 4 5
3. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on others. 1 2 3 4 5
4. In relationships, I often worry that my partner does not really love me. 1 2 3 4 5
5. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. 1 2 3 4 5
6. I am comfortable depending on others. 1 2 3 4 5
7. I do NOT worry about someone getting too close to me. 1 2 3 4 5
8. I find that people are never there when you need them. 1 2 3 4 5
9. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others. 1 2 3 4 5
10. In relationships I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me. 1 2 3 4 5
11. I want to merge completely with another person. 1 2 3 4 5
12. My desire to merge sometimes scares people away. 1 2 3 4 5
13. I am comfortable having others depend on me. 1 2 3 4 5
14. I know that people will be there when I need them. 1 2 3 4 5
Adult Attachment Scale (Collins & Read, 1990) (Continued)

15. I am nervous when anyone gets too close.  1 2 3 4 5
16. I find it difficult to trust others completely.  1 2 3 4 5
17. Often partners want me closer than I feel comfortable being.  1 2 3 4 5
18. I am not sure that I can always depend on others when I need them.  1 2 3 4 5

Used with permission of the authors. (Collins & Read, 1990)
Appendix D

Trust Scale
Trust Scale (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985)

Please read each of the following statements carefully and decide if you agree that it is true for your relationship. If you currently are not in a relationship think back to your last relationship. Please use the scale below by circling a number between 1 and 5 in the space provided at the end of each question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very characteristic of me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. When we encounter difficult and unfamiliar new circumstances I would not feel worried or threatened by letting my partner do what he/she wanted.

2. I can count on my partner to be concerned about my welfare.

3. In general, my partner does things in a variety of different ways. He/she almost never sticks to one way of doing things.

4. My partner has proven to be trustworthy and I am willing to let him/her engage in activities which other partners find too threatening.

5. I am familiar with the patterns of behavior my partner has established and I can rely on him/her to behave in certain ways.

6. Even when I don’t know how my partner will react, I feel comfortable telling him/her anything about myself.

7. Though times may change and the future is uncertain; I know my partner will always be ready and willing to offer me strength and support.

8. I am never certain that my partner won’t do something that I dislike or will embarrass me.

9. My partner is very unpredictable. I never know how he/she is going to act from one day to the next.

10. I feel very uncomfortable when my partner has to make decisions that will affect me personally.

11. I have found that my partner is unusually dependable, especially when it comes to things that are important to me.

12. My partner behaves in a very consistent manner.

13. In my relationship with my partner, the future is an unknown that I worry about.

14. Whenever we have to make an important decision in a situation we have never encountered before, I know my partner will be concerned about my welfare.

15. Even if I have no reason to expect my partner to share things with me I still feel certain that he/she will.

16. I can rely on my partner to react in a positive way when I expose my weaknesses to him/her.
17. I usually know how my partner is going to act. He/she can be counted on.

18. When I share my problems with my partner, I know he/she will respond in a loving way even before I say anything.

19. In our relationship I have to keep alert or my partner might take advantage of me.

20. I am certain that my partner would not cheat on me even if the opportunity arose and there was no chance that he/she would get caught.

21. I sometimes avoid my partner because he/she is unpredictable and I fear saying or doing something which might create conflict.

22. I can rely on my partner to keep the promises he/she makes to me.

23. I would never guarantee that my partner and I will still be together and not have decided to end our relationship 10 years from now.

24. When I am with my partner I feel secure in facing unknown new situations.

25. Even when my partner makes excuses that sound rather unlikely, I am confident that he/she is telling the truth.

26. I am willing to let my partner make decisions for me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
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Used with the permission of the authors. (Rempel, Holmes & Zanna, 1985)
Appendix E

Demographic Information
Demographic Information

Directions: The following is a list of questions, which are important to the analysis of our study. We realize that these questions ask for personal information, and we appreciate your responses to these items. Please do not put your name or any directly identifiable information anywhere on this form.

1. Sex (circle one): Male Female

2. Age: __________

3. Class Rank (circle one): Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

4. Major (fill in or circle if undecided): ___________________________ undecided

5. State or country of origin: ___________________________

6. Ethnic background (circle one)

   White Black Asian Hispanic American Indian Pacific Islander

   Other ___________________

7. Familial configuration (circle one or fill in if not noted)

   Only child first child second child third child fourth child

   live with biological parents live with adoptive parents live with stepfamily

   other __________________________

8. Relationship status (circle one):

   Single, not in a committed relationship Currently in a committed relationship

   Never been in a committed relationship Married Divorced Widowed Separated

9. If you are in a committed relationship, how long has it lasted? ____________

10. Do you prefer being in committed relationships as opposed to dating a variety of partners? (circle one) Yes No