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FAMILY RELATIONS, LOVE RELATIONSHIPS,
ATTACHMENT, AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON
PEOPLE'S CONCEPTIONS OF LOVE

A Thesis Presented

by

KATHERINE B. FIALA

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree of

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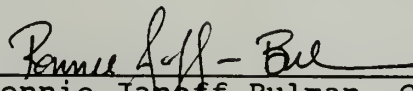
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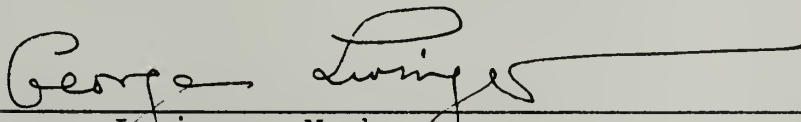
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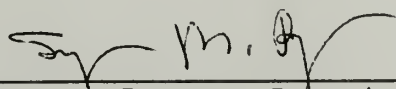
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ABSTRACT

FAMILY RELATIONS, LOVE RELATIONSHIPS,
ATTACHMENT, AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON
PEOPLE'S CONCEPTIONS OF LOVE

MAY, 1989

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Recently, people have become interested in the influence of attachment style on intimate relationships throughout the life span. Hazan and Shaver (1987) found that adult attachment style was related to the way people experience love. The present study explored the influence that one's family relationships, attachment style, and one's own love relationship experiences have on people's conceptions of love. Questions focused on three aspects of people's views of love relationships: foundations of love relationships, beliefs about issues related to love, and optimism in future love relationships. This study compared first-year and fourth-year undergraduates' views of love. Results indicated that the quality of parent/child relationships primarily determined a person's attachment style, and attachment style influenced the way people viewed love relationships. As predicted, first-year students' thoughts about love were more influenced by their parents' love experiences, and fourth-year students

more by their own love relationship experiences. Children of divorce were less optimistic about future marriage than children from intact families.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"All you need is love!" say Lennon and McCartney (1968), but "what is love anyway?" (Jones, 1984). Love means different things to different people. The present study is premised on the belief that a person's attachment history and past experiences in love relationships largely determine the way a person thinks about love. Other love researchers have looked at styles of loving and the factors that determine people's views of love (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Lee, 1973; Sternberg, 1986). Below is a brief summary of past research in the areas of love and attachment, followed by a description of the present study.

Theories of Love

There have been many theories of love, but two of the most important theories advanced by social scientists are Lee's (1973) Colors of Love and Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love (1986).

John Alan Lee is a British sociologist who decided that there is more than one type of love that can be considered "true" or "real" love. He visualized six "colors of love": Eros, Ludus, Storge, Mania, Pragma, and Agape. Eros is described as romantic, passionate love. Ludus is game-playing love. Storge is a love based on friendship. Mania is a possessive, dependent type of

love. Pragma is pragmatic, or what is called shopping list love. And Agape is an all-giving, or selfless love. Lee suggested that people's loving styles are influenced by the quality of their childhood and their relationship with their parents. He states that erotic lovers typically report having happy childhoods and warm relationships with their parents; ludic lovers tend to report having average childhoods; storgic and agapic lovers tend to report having secure family relationships; manic lovers typically report having unhappy childhoods; and pragmatic lovers did not reveal a common pattern of family relationships. The different colors of love were also found to be associated with a person's current satisfaction with life and career.

Robert Sternberg (1986) proposed a "triangular theory of love." He sees love as composed of three dimensions: passion, commitment and intimacy. The quality of a love relationship is determined by the balance or imbalance of these three dimensions. Sternberg suggests that there are eight kinds of love relationships: nonlove, liking, infatuated love, empty love, romantic love, companionate love, fatuous love, and consummate love. Each kind of love is characterized by having more or less passion, commitment and intimacy. Nonlove is the absence of all three dimensions. Liking is characterized by intimacy alone. Infatuated love is characterized by passion alone.

An empty shell relationship would be one that is primarily based on commitment, and would contain very little passion and intimacy. Romantic love is derived from passion and intimacy combined. Companionate love involves the combination of both intimacy and commitment. Fatuous love is a result of the combination of passion and commitment. And the ideal would be a balanced triangle composed of equal amounts of passion, intimacy and commitment which Sternberg calls consummate love.

Reconciling these and other theories of love is difficult. The theories overlap in some ways, but each describes some form of love that the other does not. The confusion in the literature makes it difficult to gain a comprehensive understanding of love. The purpose of the present study was to see how one's family relationships, attachment style, and one's own love relationship experiences influence one's conceptions of love.

When researchers measure different styles of love, they often confound the aspects of a love that a person feels are important in an intimate relationship (the "foundations" of love) and their opinions about various issues in love relationships (their "beliefs" about love). In the present study, an attempt was made to obtain a measure of people's conceptions of love that separated foundations of love and common beliefs about love. Specifically, a foundation of love is defined as an

important characteristic of love on which an intimate relationship can be based, for example, trust. Beliefs about love refer to the opinions one holds about various issues in intimate relationships; for example, monogamy, and jealousy. A distinction is made between foundations of love and beliefs about love relationships because they appear to be two important, but different aspects of people's views of love.

Attachment and Love

The second college edition of the Webster's New World Dictionary (1986) defines love as "a deep and tender feeling of affection for or attachment or devotion to a person or persons." If one views adult love as a type of attachment (Shaver, Hazan & Bradshaw, 1988; Weiss, 1976) then it would be important to look at the quality of a person's primary attachment when studying adult love relationships.

One of the basic postulates of attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) states that the relationship between an infant and his or her primary care-giver (usually mother) becomes a model for later personal relationships. During infancy and childhood, people develop internal representations of self and others which persist through the lifespan (Bowlby, 1973). The quality of people's relationships while young determines the character of these mental representations or mental models.

Recently Hazan and Shaver (1987) have looked at attachment and its influence on intimate relationships. They found that adults were able to classify themselves using one of the three attachment styles found by Ainsworth (1978) in her work on infant attachment: secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant. Hazan and Shaver's respondents read prototypical descriptions of each attachment style and chose which of the three descriptions best fit their own way of relating to others. They found that people's attachment styles related to their mental models of love (or how they viewed love). The seven mental model statements focused primarily on various beliefs people hold about love -- such as the course of love and how it changes with time, having one vs. many loves in a lifetime, and the ease of falling in love or finding a lover.

Hazan and Shaver's (1987) secure respondents believed that "romantic feelings wax and wane, but at times reach the intensity experienced at the beginning of a relationship" and that "in some intimate relationships love does not fade with time." Avoidant respondents agreed with the following statements: "the kind of head-over-heels romantic love depicted in novels and movies does not exist in real life," "it is rare to find a person one can really fall in love with," and romantic love rarely lasts. Finally, anxious/ambivalent respondents

said that it is easy to fall in love and they find themselves falling in love often, although they seldom can find 'true' love. Anxious/ambivalent respondents also believed that romantic feelings wax and wane in an intimate relationship.

Hazan and Shaver also focused on people's experience of love. Their measure of mental models of love confounded foundations of love and beliefs about love. They found that secure subjects experienced love as happy, friendly, and trusting; they were able to support and accept their partners. Avoidant subjects experienced love as involving emotional extremes, jealousy, and fear of intimacy. And anxious/ambivalent subjects experienced love as involving obsession, jealousy, emotional extremes, desire for union and reciprocation, and extreme sexual attraction.

Hazan and Shaver further explored the respondents' relationships with their parents, their parents' own mutual relationship, and the influence of each on attachment style. Hazan and Shaver's measure of the quality of family relationships consisted of a list of characteristics that described the respondents' relationship with each parent, and their parents' relationship with each other. Respondents checked the characteristics that described these relationships. They found that secure subjects, in comparison with insecure

ones (anxious/ambivalent, or avoidant), reported warmer relationships with both parents and between their parents. Avoidants reported having cold and rejecting mothers, while anxious/ambivalent subjects reported having unfair fathers.

Hazan and Shaver's research, connecting childhood attachment and adult intimate relationships, has had a large impact on other intimate relationship researchers. Davis, Latty-Mann, and Levy (1987) have looked at how the three attachment styles relate to Lee's six love styles. They have found that Lee's Agape (all-giving love) correlates positively with secure attachment and negatively with avoidant attachment, that Ludus (game-playing love) correlates positively with avoidant attachment and negatively with secure attachment, and that Mania (obsessive, possessive love) correlates positively with anxious/ambivalent attachment.

The Present Study

The purpose of this study was to look at the influence of family relationships and a person's past love relationship experiences on attachment style. Hoping to use a more reliable measure of the quality of the relationship between the respondents and their parents the study explored which aspects of their relationships were important. The questionnaire focused on how accepting versus rejecting the mother and father were towards the

respondent while he/she was growing up, and the extent to which the mother and father encouraged their child to be independent versus was overprotective with him/her.

The present study also concentrated on the association between people's attachment styles and their conceptions of love relationships. It focused on the elements that influence people's views of love, and how they change over time. The measure of conceptions of love separated foundations and beliefs of love. The present study took a developmental approach to the study of people's ideas about love by asking first- and fourth-year undergraduate college students about their conceptions of love relationships. This exploratory study concentrated on explaining people's views of love as it is assumed to exist between intimates, rather than other types of love, such as that between a parent and child.

Variables

The study focused on the following three variables: family relationships, attachment style, and one's own love relationship experiences and their influence on our dependent variable: conceptions of love. Conceptions of love were investigated with three measures, tapping important foundations of love relationships, beliefs about love, and optimism about future love relationships. Family relationships consisted of the quality of the respondent's relationship with his/her mother and father,

and his/her parents' relationship with each other. One's own love relationship experiences was a measure of the number of love relationships experienced, and the character of these experiences.

The study addressed the following questions:

1. How do family relationships (parent/child and parent/parent), and one's own love relationships influence attachment style?

2. How do attachment style, family relationships, and one's own love relationships influence conceptions of love?

3. How does age affect the impact of family and own relationships on attachment style and conceptions of love?

It was expected that the quality of a person's family relationship would influence the type of attachment style he or she develops, which would then affect that person's conceptions of love relationships. Further, it was assumed the quality of family relationships would have less influence on people's attachment styles and conceptions of love relationships, as they grow older. As people grow older, they have their own love relationship experiences which would have a greater influence on these two variables.

There is little question that the importance people tend to place on various foundations of love, and their endorsement of different beliefs about love, is heavily

influenced by their culture. Because of this, one might expect that of the three measures of people's conceptions of love, optimism might be influenced more by individual differences than foundations of love or beliefs about love.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Subjects

The respondents were 119 first-year college undergraduates (freshmen/women) and 107 fourth-year undergraduates (seniors). Approximately 68% of the sample was female, and the ratio of women to men was the same for both years in college. Students were recruited from various psychology courses and given experimental credit for participating in the study.

Measures

The questionnaire focused on eight areas: important foundations of love relationships, beliefs about issues regarding love relationships, optimism about future love relationships, own love relationship history, attachment style, the quality of one's relationships with one's parents, and the quality of parents' own relationship with each other. Demographic questions were also included. The Appendix contains the questionnaire, but the following is a detailed description of the various sections of the questionnaire.

Foundations of Love

In the literature on love, it appears that most theories confound foundations of love and beliefs about love. They often base typologies of love on the answers to questions regarding what is important in love

(foundations of love), and what people believe about certain issues of love. The "Foundations of Love" measure used in the present study attempted to assess respondents' beliefs about the important elements of a love relationship. The following 11 foundations of love were drawn from literature and past research on love: friendship, mutual concerns/similar interests or values, trust, meeting practical goals, intense deep feelings, preoccupation with the other person, sexual chemistry, physical attractiveness, playfulness, sacrificing, and magic/incomprehensibility (romance). Each respondent was asked to rate, on a 5-point scale ranging from "not at all" to "extremely," the importance of each item in a love relationship.

Beliefs about Love

The second measure of people's conceptions of love was their amount of agreement with different beliefs about love. Thirteen beliefs about love were chosen from past psychological literature on love and common lore, that addressed the following questions: Does love last? Is jealousy a natural part of love? Is there only one true love who is meant for each of us? How does love change with time? Two items were written to measure each of the 13 beliefs chosen. Respondents rated the extent of their agreement with these beliefs about love relationships on a

6-point scale, ranging from "disagree strongly" to "agree strongly".

Optimism about Future Relationships

The third section concerned one's own optimism about future love relationships. Four questions were asked: "How confident are you that you will have successful love relationships in the future?" "How likely is it that you will have a successful marriage?" "How likely is it that you will get divorced some time in your life?" "In general, how optimistic do you feel about the success of your love relationships in the future?" Responses were made on 5-point scales, with endpoints "not at all" and "extremely." In addition they were asked: "Do you want to get married in the future?" "How likely is it that you will get married?"

Attachment Style

The measure of attachment style used was derived from Hazan and Shaver's (1987) revision of their earlier measure. Hazan and Shaver separated the statements found within each of their prototype paragraph descriptions for each attachment style. They listed these statements to form a 13-item questionnaire. Eleven of Hazan and Shaver's thirteen items were used in the present study.¹ Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with each of the 11 statements, on a 6-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Examples of

secure statements were: "I find it easy to trust others."
"I find it easy to get close to others." Examples of
avoidant statements were: "I am uncomfortable being close
to others." "I am nervous when anyone gets too close."
And examples of anxious/ambivalent statements were: "I
find that other people don't want to get as close as I
would like." "I worry that a love partner might not
really love me."

These items were factor analyzed by Hazan and Shaver
(1987) and found to load on three dimensions which they
labeled: Comfort with Closeness, Concern about
Insufficient Closeness, and Discomfort with Closeness.
This suggests that this scale assesses three different
attachment styles, although, as of yet, there is no
reliability or validity information available for this
scale.

Parent/Child Relationship

These questions measured the quality of the subjects'
relationships with both their mother and father. The
Mother and Father Scale of the Mother, Father, Peer (MFP)
Scale developed by Seymour Epstein (see Ricks, 1985) was
used in the present study. The scale consists of 46 items
(23 for Mother, 23 for Father) that focus on the following
two dimensions for each parent: overprotective vs.
encouraging of independence, and accepting vs. rejecting.
Respondents were asked to rate, on a 6-point scale, the

extent to which each statement truly described their mother's and father's behavior toward them. Epstein (personal communication, December, 1988) found the following reliabilities for each of the subscales: mother encouraging independence (.88), mother accepting (.91), father encouraging independence (.82), and father accepting (.91).

Parents' Relationship with Each Other

The questionnaire contained questions regarding the quality of the respondents' parents' relationship with each other. This measure included many of the adjectives that Hazan and Shaver (1987) used to describe parental relationships. Nine adjectives were chosen from their list of twelve: argumentative, distant, troubled, comfortable, violent, unhappy, strained, supportive and caring. In their study, Hazan and Shaver had respondents check the adjectives that were characteristic of their parents' relationship. In the present study, respondents were asked to rate, on a 5-point scale ranging from "not at all" to "extremely", the extent to which each adjective described their parents' relationship. Other adjectives, considered to be important in intimate relationships, were drawn from past literature and included in this scale. These eight adjectives were: loving, compatible, magical, trusting, giving, close, playful and passionate.

Own Love Experiences

Several questions about the respondents' own love experiences were also included. Respondents were asked: "Are you currently involved in an intimate relationship?" "If so, how long have you been involved with this person?" "If so, how satisfied are you?" "How many times have you been in a serious love relationship?" "How many times have you been in love without the other person feeling the same way about you?" "If you have been involved in any love relationship(s) that has ended, how difficult did you find it was to get over?" The two questions regarding the existence of a current relationship and its length were also used by Hazan and Shaver (1987).

Other Items

The Background Information section included questions addressing basic demographics, such as parents' education, subjects' marital status and sexual preference. Questions in the Background Information section also addressed such family issues as parental divorce, remarriage and custody.

The questionnaire also contained a section that focused on various influences on the subjects' ideas about love. Respondents rated on a 5-point scale, ranging from "not at all" to "extremely", the extent to which they felt their ideas about love had been influenced by a) their parents' relationship with each other, b) their friends

and their own experiences in intimate relationships, and
c) their own experiences in intimate relationships.

Procedure

Questionnaires were distributed to willing students in large undergraduate classes in psychology. Respondents were asked to complete the 12-page questionnaire and to return it during the next class meeting.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Respondents

The sample was primarily single (98.2%) and heterosexual (98.7%). Approximately half (51.8%) of the students were currently involved in an intimate relationship. About one fourth (25.4%) of our subjects' parents had divorced and, of those from divorced parents, 84.2% had their mothers as the custodial parent. The first-year students' mean age was 18.5 years, and the fourth-year students' was 21.8 years.

New Scales

Attachment Style

A principal components factor analysis extracted four factors from the 11 items of the Attachment scale. Using varimax rotation, the following four attachment styles were found:

- Attachment Style 1 - Secure
- Attachment Style 2 - Anxious/Ambivalent
- Attachment Style 3 - Avoidant
- Attachment Style 4 - Comfortable with Interdependence

These four factors, after rotation, accounted for 28.7, 14.5, 10.2 and 9.6 percent of the total variance, respectively. The factor loadings of the individual items are shown in Table 1. Items which had loadings of .48 or above were included in that factor. One item, "I am nervous when anyone gets too close," loaded negatively on the Secure attachment style (.61) and positively on the

Avoidant attachment style (.53). This item was included in the Avoidant factor only because it seemed to be more descriptive of an avoidant attachment style. Responses to the items for each scale were summed to form the following scales: Secure attachment, Anxious/Ambivalent attachment, Avoidant attachment and Comfortable with Interdependence. These scales were found to be fairly reliable, with alpha coefficients of .56, .68, .59, and .49 respectively. Correlations among the different Attachment styles can be found in Table 2. The fourth factor, Comfortable with Interdependence, was not significantly related to other variables in the study and will not be discussed further.²

Optimism

Of the four questions that measured optimism, two items specifically measured optimism about the success of a future marital relationship. Responses to these two questions were summed and labelled "Optimism about Marriage". The Optimism about Marriage scale had an alpha reliability of .84. Two other items measured optimism about the success of future love relationships in general, not specifically the marital relationship; these two items were summed to form the index, "Optimism about Love Relationships," which had an alpha reliability of .68.

Parental Relations

Seventeen items measured the quality of the relationship between the respondent's two parents. Of

these 17 items, 11 were positive adjectives (e.g., loving, giving), and 6 were negative adjectives (e.g., distant, troubled). Responses to the 11 positive items were summed to create a Positive Parental Relationship scale, and responses to the 6 negative items were summed to create a Negative Parental Relationship scale. The alpha reliability coefficients for these scales were .97 for the Positive Parental Relationship scale, and .92 for the Negative Parental Relationship scale.

Foundations and Beliefs

A principal components factor analysis was performed on the Foundations of Love portion of the questionnaire. Using varimax rotation, four factors emerged from this analysis. The factor loadings for individual items are presented in Table 3. Items with factor loadings of .50 or above were included in that factor. The factors focused on the following foundations of love:

- Factor 1 - Romantic Love
- Factor 2 - Passionate Love/Compatibility
- Factor 3 - Friendship/Trust
- Factor 4 - Playful Love

After rotation, the percent of total variance accounted for by each of the factors was as follows: Romance (25.1), Passion/Compatibility (12.1), Friendship/Trust (10.1) and Fun (9.7). Responses to items comprising each factor were summed to form a scale score for each factor. Only one of the scales, Romantic Love, was fairly reliable. The following are the alpha reliability

coefficients found for each scale respectively: .64, .39, .43, and .07.

A principal components factor analysis was also performed on the Beliefs about Love section of the questionnaire. Nine factors emerged from a varimax rotation. Table 4 shows the items and factor loadings for each of the nine factors. Items with factor loadings of .45 or above were included in that factor. The factors focused on the following beliefs:

- Factor 1 - Love grows with time
- Factor 2 - One love at a time
- Factor 3 - Love happens quickly
- Factor 4 - Jealousy is natural in love
- Factor 5 - Love is precious and rare
- Factor 6 - Love is stifling
- Factor 7 - Love is scary
- Factor 8 - Love is relatively unimportant
- Factor 9 - Love is not accidental

These factors, after rotation, accounted for the following percent of total variance: Growth (12.7), One Love (11.3), Quick Love (8.4), Jealousy (6.1), Precious Love (5.9), Stifling Love (5.1), Scary Love (4.7), Relatively Unimportant Love (4.3), and Chosen Love (4.1). Responses to items comprising each factor were summed to form a scale score for each factor. Alpha reliabilities for the scales ranged from .54 to .73.

Attachment Style, Conceptions of Love,
and Family Background

Attachment Style

On a 6-point scale (with endpoints 0 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) respondents rated their agreement with each statement describing their attachment style. The following are the mean agreement scores for each attachment style: Secure ($\bar{M} = 3.16$), Anxious/Ambivalent ($\bar{M} = 2.28$), and Avoidant ($\bar{M} = 1.90$). The attachment styles were related to satisfaction with one's relationship and optimism. Feeling Securely attached was positively related to being Optimistic about marriage ($r = .18, p < .005$) and Optimistic about future love relationships ($r = .26, p < .001$). Feeling Anxious/Ambivalently attached was negatively related to Optimism about marriage ($r = -.18, p < .005$) and Optimism about future love relationships ($r = -.33, p < .001$). And feeling Avoidantly attached was also negatively related to Optimism about marriage ($r = -.17, p < .001$) and Optimism about future love relationships ($r = -.37, p < .001$). The attachment style Anxious/Ambivalent was negatively correlated ($r = -.44, p < .001$) with satisfaction with a current intimate relationship.

Of the nine love beliefs, four seemed more important than others in regard to attachment styles. These four were the Growth, Jealousy, Stifling and Scary Love

factors. Table 5 shows the Pearson correlations and significance values for these four belief factors and the three attachment styles. Secure respondents tended to believe that love grows with time ($r = .22$), and tended not to believe that love is stifling ($r = -.22$) or scary ($r = -.28$). Avoidant respondents, on the other hand, were less likely to believe that love grows with time ($r = -.15$), but more likely to find it both stifling ($r = .22$) and scary ($r = .23$). Similarly, Anxious/Ambivalent respondents were less likely to believe that love grows with time ($r = -.17$) and more likely to find love stifling ($r = .16$), scary ($r = .32$) and filled with jealousy ($r = .32$).

Stepwise multiple regressions were performed on the three attachment styles to find which background factors best predicted each. The following variables were entered as potential predictor variables: quality of parental relationship (positive vs. negative), quality of parent/child relationship (accepting vs. rejecting, and encouraging of independence vs. overprotective), whether or not parents were divorced, own relationship experiences (currently in relationship, times in love, difficulty breaking up, and unrequited love), gender, and year in college. The results for the multiple regression can be found in Table 6.

A Secure attachment style was best predicted by having an accepting mother and a father who encouraged independence. These variables collectively accounted for about 11% of the variance, $F(2,161) = 10.35, p < .0001$. An Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style was best predicted by having an overprotective mother, having experienced unrequited love, and having difficulty ending relationships. These variables collectively accounted for about 19% of the variance, $F(3,161) = 12.17, p < .0001$. Avoidant attachment style was best predicted by having a rejecting mother. This variable accounted for about 4% of the variance, $F(1,161) = 7.07, p < .01$.

It seems then that parental factors are fairly important in determining attachment styles, but that a person's own relationship experiences are also important for determining an Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style.

Optimism

Most respondents were optimistic about their future intimate relationships. The means for optimism about marriage and optimism about future love relationships were $M = 3.04$ and $M = 2.89$ respectively (with 4 being the highest possible score). A stepwise multiple regression was performed for each of the two optimism measures and satisfaction with current relationship. Results can be seen in Table 7. The following variables were entered as potential predictors: attachment style, quality of

parental relationship (positive vs. negative), quality of parent/child relationship (accepting vs. rejecting, and encouraging of independence vs. overprotective), divorced vs. intact parents, gender, year in college, and own relationship experiences (in current relationship, times in love, difficulty breaking up, and unrequited love).

For Optimism about Future Love Relationships, the following variables emerged as the best predictors: being in an intimate relationship now, not being Anxious/Ambivalent in attachment style, not experiencing unrequited love, and not being Avoidant in attachment style. Together these variables accounted for about 31% of the variance, $F(4,153) = 17.32, p < .0001$. A non-anxious/ambivalently and non-avoidantly attached person who has not experienced unrequited love in the past, and is currently in an intimate relationship is likely to be most optimistic about future love relationships. The best predictors for optimism about a future marital relationship were not having a negative parental relationship, and not having an Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style. Together these variables accounted for about 12% of the variance, $F(2,158) = 10.92, p < .0001$.

A stepwise multiple regression revealed that the variables unrequited love, and Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style predicted one's satisfaction with a current intimate relationship. Those people who had not

experienced unrequited love and were not anxious/ambivalent in attachment style tended to be most satisfied with their intimate relationship. Together these two variables accounted for approximately 25% of the variance, $F(2,85) = 14.33, p < .0001$). (See Table 7).

Foundations and Beliefs

Foundations

The following are the mean importance scores for the four Foundations of Love factors across all respondents: Friendship/Trust ($\underline{M} = 3.84$), Passion ($\underline{M} = 2.77$), Romance ($\underline{M} = 2.62$), and Fun ($\underline{M} = 2.43$). Of the four factors, Friendship/Trust received the highest rating of importance. With the exception of the Friendship/Trust factor, the Foundations of Love were not related to attachment styles. There were significant, but low correlations between the importance of the Friendship/Trust factor and Secure Attachment ($\underline{r} = .17, p < .005$), Anxious/Ambivalent Attachment ($\underline{r} = -.15, p < .050$), and Avoidant Attachment ($\underline{r} = -.15, p < .05$).

For those people in relationships, the Foundations of Love were related to how satisfied they were with that relationship. The strongest correlation was between the importance of the Friendship/Trust factor and Satisfaction with relationship ($\underline{r} = .29, p < .001$). Satisfaction was also related to the importance of the Romance factor

($r = .21$, $p < .05$), and the Passion factor ($r = .18$, $p < .05$), but was unrelated to the Fun factor.

Beliefs

Table 4 shows the mean agreement scores for the nine Belief factors. A high agreement score indicates the belief was commonly held by the respondents. Gender differences were found for some of the beliefs about love. Men were more likely than women to view love as something that happened quickly and dramatically ($M = 1.72$ and $M = 1.32$ respectively, $F(1,219) = 16.82$, $p < .001$). Men agreed more than women that jealousy was a part of love ($M = 2.85$ and $M = 2.35$ respectively, $F(1,219) = 9.64$, $p < .005$). And, men more than women found love to be stifling ($M = 1.05$ and $M = 0.69$ respectively, $F(1,215) = 16.03$, $p < .001$).

Beliefs about Love were also related to one's satisfaction with a current relationship and optimism about future relationships. Satisfaction with one's current intimate relationship was positively correlated with the Growth with Time factor ($r = .42$, $p < .001$), but negatively correlated with the belief in Scary Love ($r = -.16$, $p < .05$), and the Relative Unimportance of Love ($r = -.21$, $p < .05$).

Being optimistic about future love relationships was positively correlated with believing that love Grows with

Time ($r = .34, p < .001$), and negatively with the belief in Stifling Love ($r = -.22, p < .001$), Scary Love ($r = -.18, p < .005$), and the Relative Unimportance of Love ($r = -.28, p < .001$). Optimism about a future marital relationship was also positively associated with the belief that love Grows with time ($r = .42, p < .001$), and negatively associated with the belief in Scary love ($r = -.18, p < .005$), and the Relative Unimportance of Love ($r = -.24, p < .001$).

In general, five love beliefs -- love Grows with time, Jealousy is natural in love, love is Stifling, love is Scary, and love is Relatively Unimportant -- emerged as most crucial for understanding attachment styles, optimism and satisfaction with current relationship. Stepwise multiple regressions were performed for each of these five beliefs to find their best predictors. Year in college, gender, attachment styles, whether parents were divorced or not, quality of parents' relationship, quality of parent/child relationship (i.e., encouraging of independence vs. overprotective, and accepting vs. rejecting), and own relationship experience variables (i.e., in current relationship, times in love, unrequited love, and difficulty breaking up) were entered as possible predictor variables. The results of the multiple regressions for these beliefs can be found in Table 8.

The best predictor for the belief that love Grows with Time was having an accepting mother, ($F(1,159) = 16.62, p < .0001$), accounting for about 10% of the variance. The best predictors for the belief that Jealousy is a natural part of love, were Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style, mother encouraging independence, times in love, and gender. An anxious\ambivalent male who has been in love frequently and has an overprotective mother would be likely to believe that jealousy is a natural part of love. These variables collectively accounted for about 20% of the variance, $F(4,157) = 9.87, p < .0001$.

The belief that love can be Stifling was best predicted by the following variables: mom encouraging of independence, secure attachment style and gender. Insecurely attached males with overprotective mothers were likely to believe that love does not promote individual growth. These variables together accounted for about 25% of the variance, $F(3,157) = 17.76, p < .0001$.

The best predictors for the belief in Scary Love were the attachment styles, Anxious/Ambivalent and Secure, and having an accepting mother. An anxious\ambivalent person with an accepting mother was likely to believe that love is frightening. Together these variables accounted for about 17% of the variance, $F(3,158) = 17.76, p < .0001$.

The belief that love is Relatively Unimportant was best predicted by having a Mother who encouraged Independence, Year in college (Seniors), and Divorce. Seniors whose parents were divorced and had overprotective mothers were likely to believe that love is relatively unimportant. Together these variables accounted for about 16% of the variance, $F(3,158) = 9.67, p < .0001$.

First-Year vs. Fourth-Year Students

A stepwise discriminant analysis was performed to see what best discriminated between the first- and fourth-year students. A set of the following four variables discriminated between the two classes: Belief in Jealous Love, Parents' influence on one's ideas about love, Accepting Father, and Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style, Wilks' Lambda = .9351, chi-square (4) = 10.60, $p < .05$. The first two variables mentioned also had individual contributions (F's) that were significant: Belief in Jealous Love, $F(1,209) = 4.80, p < .05$, and Parents' influence on one's ideas about love, $F(1,209) = 5.42, p < .05$. First-year students were more likely than fourth-year students to believe in Jealous Love ($M = 2.68, M = 2.35$, respectively). First-year students ($M = 2.70$) also felt their own ideas about love were more influenced by their parents' experiences than fourth year students ($M = 2.36$).

This greater influence of parents on first-year students more than fourth-year students was further revealed by the following correlational analysis. The correlation between parents' influence on one's ideas about love and the foundation Friendship/Trust was significantly higher for first-year than for fourth-year students, $r = .31$, $p < .001$ and $r = -.05$, $p < .30$, respectively. A Fisher r to z transformation test found that these correlations were significantly different, $t = 2.79$, $p < .01$.

Another difference between first-year and fourth-year students was found in the association between one's optimism about marriage and a negative parental relationship. Again, first-year students were more influenced by the quality of the parental relationships than were fourth-year students, ($r = -.37$, $p < .001$, $r = -.11$, $p < .15$, respectively.) A negative parental relationship was significantly more associated with decreased optimism about marriage for first-year- than fourth-year students, $t = -1.98$, $p < .05$. First-year students also showed a stronger association between optimism about marriage and a positive parental relationship than fourth-year students, $r = .40$, $p < .001$, $r = .15$, $p < .10$, respectively. These correlations were marginally significantly different from each other, $t = 1.95$, $p < .06$.

For the fourth-year students in our sample, optimism about marriage was associated more with one's love relationship experiences than parental relationship. The association between optimism about marriage and satisfaction with a present relationship was stronger for fourth-year- than for first-year students, $r = .51$, $p < .001$, $r = .18$, $p < .10$, respectively. These correlations differed significantly, $t = -2.01$, $p < .05$.

A one-way analysis of variance for length of relationship showed that fourth-year students' current relationship was on average 23 months long, whereas first-year students' current relationship was about 12 months long. This difference was statistically significant, $F(1,114) = 16.49$, $p < .0001$.

An analysis of variance showed a significant interaction of Year in College X Gender for Belief Factor 1, Growth with Time, $F(1,221) = 5.26$, $p < .05$. As women get older, they tend to believe more that love grows with time (1st yr: $M = 3.51$, 4th yr: $M = 3.71$); whereas as men get older, they tend to believe it less (1st yr: $M = 3.75$, 4th yr: $M = 3.45$). There was also a significant Year in College X Gender interaction for satisfaction with relationship, $F(1,113) = 6.14$, $p < .05$. As women get older, they become more satisfied with their relationships (1st yr: $M = 2.92$, 4th yr: $M = 3.08$),

whereas men tend to become less satisfied with their relationships (1st yr: $\bar{M} = 3.15$, 4th yr: $\bar{M} = 2.44$).

Family Background: Divorced vs. Intact

A stepwise discriminant analysis was performed to determine what best discriminated between respondents from divorced versus intact families. Ten variables were found to discriminate between the groups, Wilks' Lambda = .69, chi-square (10) = 57.35, $p < .0001$. Of these ten variables, there were three whose individual contributions (F's) were also significant. These three were: Optimism about Marriage ($F(1,210) = 13.77$, $p < .001$), the Romantic Love factor ($F(1,210) = 4.31$, $p < .05$), and one's own experiences influencing ideas about love ($F(1,210) = 4.20$, $p < .05$).

Children of divorced parents were significantly less optimistic about their future marital relationship ($\bar{M} = 2.76$) than were respondents from intact families ($\bar{M} = 3.14$). Children of divorce felt their ideas about love were more influenced by their own experiences ($\bar{M} = 3.38$) than children of intact families ($\bar{M} = 3.12$). Children of divorced parents found Romance less important ($\bar{M} = 2.47$) than did children of intact families ($\bar{M} = 2.67$).

Of the 57 respondents with divorced parents, 36 (63.2%) had custodial parents who had remarried. A one-way analysis of variance was performed on students'

beliefs about love and optimism about marriage using their custodial parents' remarriage as the independent variable. There was a significant main effect of parental remarriage for the belief in Jealousy, $F(1,54) = 6.20$. $p < .05$. Students whose custodial parent remarried were less likely to feel that Jealousy is part of love ($M = 2.02$) than those whose custodial parent had not remarried ($M = 2.79$). There was also a significant main effect of parental remarriage for optimism about marriage, $F(1,51) = 11.51$, $p < .001$. Those whose custodial parent remarried were more optimistic about their own future marriage ($M = 3.02$) than those whose custodial parent had not remarried ($M = 2.34$).

TABLE 1
Means and Factor Loadings
for the Attachment Style Items

Item	M	I	II	III	IV
I. Secure					
1. I find it easy to trust others.	2.99	.82	.07	-.05	-.02
2. I find it easy to get close to others.	3.21	.71	-.09	-.11	.21
3. I don't often worry about someone getting too close to me.	3.28	.48	-.27	-.19	.23
II. Anxious/Ambivalent					
1. I find that other people don't want to get as close as I would like.	2.21	.04	.79	.05	.01
2. I worry that a love partner might not really love me.	2.56	-.02	.79	.31	-.09
3. I don't often worry about being abandoned.	2.91	.38	-.70	.23	-.03
III. Avoidant					
1. I am uncomfortable being close to others.	1.72	-.08	.05	.77	.12
2. I am nervous when anyone gets too close.	1.95	-.61	.14	.53	-.13
3. I worry that love partners might want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.	2.04	-.18	.05	.68	-.30

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TABLE 1 (continued)

Item	M	I	II	III	IV
IV. Comfortable with Interdependence					
1. I feel comfortable depending on other people.	2.11	.22	-.16	-.20	.70
2. I feel comfortable having others depend on me.	3.30	.06	.11	.07	.85

TABLE 2

Intercorrelations for Attachment Styles

	I Secure	II Anxious/ Ambivalent	III Avoidant	IV Comfortable with Inter- dependence
I	—	-.27*	-.48*	.34*
II		---	.22*	-.10
III			—	-.26*
IV				—

* $p < .001$

TABLE 3
Means and Factor Loadings
for the Foundations of Love Items

Item	M	I	II	III	IV
I. Romance					
1. intense feelings	3.24	.60	.16	.20	-.14
2. preoccupation with other person	1.80	.73	.16	-.12	.01
3. sacrificing self for one's partner	2.58	.75	-.15	.09	.11
4. romance, magic, mysterious	2.85	.60	.21	.12	.07
II. Passion/Compatibility					
1. similar interests or values	2.79	-.02	.63	.30	-.01
2. sexual chemistry between partners	3.11	.13	.70	-.05	.00
3. physical attractiveness of partner	2.40	.35	.52	-.38	.21
III. Friendship/Trust					
1. friendship	3.79	.13	.06	.75	.23
2. trust	3.89	.08	.04	.69	-.11
IV. Fun					
1. playfulness, having fun, joking	3.45	.31	.32	.13	.73
2. meeting practical goals (e.g., marriage, having children)	2.60	.39	.38	.09	-.66

TABLE 4
Means and Factor Loadings
for Beliefs about Love

Item	Mean	Factor loadings
Growth		
1. Love between two people becomes deeper with time.	3.74	.80
2. Love between two people fades with time.	1.28*	-.68
3. With time, people in love tend to grow apart.	1.63*	-.66
Mean Factor Agreement Score	3.60	
One Love		
1. A person can only be truly in love with one person at a time.	2.76	.82
2. A person can be truly in love with several individuals at the same time.	2.09*	-.87
3. Most of us could love many different people equally well.	2.58*	-.53
Mean Factor Agreement Score	2.70	

* These items were reverse-scored to derive the overall mean agreement score for the factors.

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TABLE 4 (continued)

Item	Mean	Factor loadings
Quick Love		
1. If a person is in love, he/she will know it immediately.	1.72	.78
2. True love happens quickly and dramatically.	1.40	.72
3. Real love builds slowly as two people get to know each other.	3.82*	-.46
Mean Factor Agreement Score	1.44	
Jealousy		
1. Jealousy is a natural part of love.	2.91	.82
2. If two people are really in love, one will feel jealous if the other pays attention to someone else.	2.09	.79
Mean Factor Agreement Score	2.51	
Precious Love		
1. There is only one "true love" who is meant for each of us.	1.55	.54
2. Love is very precious; it happens rarely in a lifetime.	2.87	.75
3. Falling in love is easy; it can happen often in a lifetime.	1.79*	-.53
Mean Factor Agreement Score	2.53	

* These items were reverse-scored to derive the overall mean agreement score for the factors.

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TABLE 4 (continued)

Item	Mean	Factor loadings
Stifling Love		
1. People who get divorced probably were never truly in love.	1.00	.68
2. When a person is in love he/she has no freedom to grow as an individual.	0.81	.66
3. It is possible for a person to be in love and still maintain his/her own identity.	4.34*	-.66
Mean Factor Agreement Score	0.83	
Scary Love		
1. When people fall in love they are taking the risk of getting hurt.	3.90	.87
2. Falling in love can be frightening because people can get hurt so easily.	3.42	.78
Mean Factor Agreement Score	3.66	
Relative Unimportance of Love		
1. Being in love is no more important than working on a career or searching for knowledge.	1.27	.75
Mean Factor Agreement Score	1.27	

* These items were reverse-scored to derive the overall mean agreement score for the factors.

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TABLE 4 (continued)

Item	Mean	Factor loadings
Chosen Love		
1. Falling in love is not an accident; to love someone is to choose him/her.	2.17	.70
2. A person has no control over whom he/she falls in love with; it just happens.	2.42*	-.76
Mean Factor Agreement Score	2.40	

* These items were reverse-scored to derive the overall mean agreement score for the factors.

TABLE 5
Correlations Between Attachment Styles
and Beliefs about Love

	Growth	Jealousy	Stifling	Scary
Secure	.22***	--	-.22***	-.28***
Anxious/ Ambivalent	-.17**	.32***	.16**	.32***
Avoidant	-.15*	--	.22***	.23***

*** p < .001
** p < .01
* p < .05

TABLE 6

Multiple Regressions for Attachment Styles

Predictor Variables Square	Standardized Beta	T	p of T	R
<u>SECURE</u>				
Accepting Mother	.24	3.20	.005	.08
Dad Encouraging of Independence	.18	2.34	.050	.03
<u>ANXIOUS/AMBIVALENT</u>				
Mom Encouraging of Independence	-.32	-4.49	.001	.12
Unrequited Love	.20	2.73	.010	.04
Difficulty Ending Relationship	.16	2.27	.050	.02
<u>AVOIDANT</u>				
Accepting Mother	-.21	-2.66	.010	.04

TABLE 7
Multiple Regressions for Optimism and Satisfaction

Predictor Variables Square	Standardized Beta	T	p of T	R
<u>OPTIMISM ABOUT LOVE RELATIONSHIPS</u>				
In a Current Relationship	.33	4.74	.000	.16
Anxious/Ambivalent	-.23	-3.22	.005	.09
Unrequited Love	-.20	-2.87	.005	.04
Avoidant	-.16	-2.25	.050	.02
<u>OPTIMISM ABOUT MARRIAGE</u>				
Negative Parent Relationship	-.28	-3.66	.001	.09
Anxious/Ambivalent	-.20	-2.40	.050	.03
<u>SATISFACTION WITH RELATIONSHIP</u>				
Unrequited Love	-.34	-3.50	.001	.17
Anxious/Ambivalent	-.29	-3.00	.005	.08

TABLE 8

Multiple Regressions for Beliefs about Love

Predictor Variables Square	Standardized Beta	T	p of T	R
<u>GROWTH WITH TIME</u>				
Accepting Mother	.31	4.08	.001	.09
<u>JEALOUSY</u>				
Anxious/Ambivalent	.22	2.95	.005	.10
Mother Encouraging of Independence	-.21	-2.70	.010	.04
Times in Love	.17	2.43	.050	.03
Gender	.17	2.33	.050	.03
<u>SCARY LOVE</u>				
Anxious/Ambivalent	.27	3.57	.001	.10
Secure	-.28	-3.54	.001	.05
Accepting Mother	.15	2.00	.050	.02
<u>RELATIVE UNIMPORTANCE OF LOVE</u>				
Mother Encouraging of Independence	-.30	-4.08	.001	.07
Grade	-.22	-2.95	.010	.05
Divorce	.20	2.71	.010	.04
<u>STIFLING LOVE</u>				
Mother Encouraging of Independence	-.33	-4.56	.001	.17
Secure	-.23	-3.25	.001	.04
Gender	.22	3.10	.005	.05

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The present study set out to explore the connection between family relationships, one's own love relationships, adult attachment styles and people's conceptions of love. In general, results suggested that the quality of the parent-child relationship was a major determinant of attachment style, and a person's attachment style influenced the way he or she experienced and conceived of love relationships.

Attachment Style

In this study, people's thoughts about love were related to their attachment styles. Securely attached respondents tended to be satisfied with their current intimate relationship and optimistic about both future love relationships and marriage. Secure respondents believed that love grows with time, and did not find love to be stifling or scary. And being securely attached was positively associated with believing in Friendship and Trust as foundations of love. This replicates Hazan and Shaver's (1987) finding that secure respondents experienced love as friendly and trusting.

The Anxious/Ambivalent and the Avoidant respondents' view of love were somewhat similar. Both groups were dissatisfied with their current intimate relationships and not optimistic about future love relationships or

marriage. They tended to not believe that love grows with time, and found love to be stifling and scary. In their study, Hazan and Shaver (1987) found that Avoidant respondents, but not Anxious/Ambivalent respondents feared intimacy. In the present study, Avoidant and Anxious/Ambivalent respondents differed on only one belief: the Anxious/Ambivalent respondents thought jealousy was a natural part of love, whereas the Avoidant did not. In contrast, Hazan and Shaver (1987) found both Avoidant and Anxious/Ambivalent subjects experienced jealousy in love.

As predicted, the quality of the relationship between respondents and their parents influenced their adult attachment style. The best predictors of Secure attachment were having an accepting mother and a father who encouraged independence. The single best predictor of Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style was having an overprotective mother, whereas Avoidant attachment was best predicted by having a rejecting mother. Relationship with mother appears to be most important in determining attachment style. This would be expected, given that mother is usually the primary caretaker and the first important attachment figure for a child (Bowlby, 1982).

These results are consistent with other attachment researchers' findings. Hazan and Shaver (1987) also found that secure respondents (when compared with insecure) were

more likely to describe their mothers as accepting, and avoidant respondents (when compared to anxious/ambivalent) were more likely to report having cold and rejecting mothers. Further, in their work with adult children of alcoholics, Davis and Latty-Mann (1988) also found that respondents from loving families were more likely to feel securely attached.

It seems that people (of different attachment styles) learn different lessons about closeness from the way they are treated by their parents. Secure respondents can feel comfortable with closeness because they have learned from their relationships with their mothers that they will be accepted; and they aren't frightened of losing themselves in a relationship because their fathers have encouraged them to be independent. Anxious/Ambivalent respondents have learned from their relationships with their mothers that being in love means being overprotected -- well meaning and loving, yet clingy and worrying. And Avoidant respondents have learned from their mothers that love involves rejection, which is what they mirror in their own intimate relationships.

A person's own love experiences also influence his or her attachment style. In this study, students' own love experiences (along with having an overprotective mother) predicted an Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style. Having experienced unrequited love, and having had difficulty

ending past love relationships predicted Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style. Such negative love relationship experiences seem linked to adult attachment styles. More research is needed to see how powerful negative and positive relationship experiences are in determining adult attachment style.

Foundations and Beliefs about Love

The present study did not replicate Hazan and Shaver's (1987) finding that Anxious/Ambivalent respondents found sexual attraction especially important in their relationships. Compared with Secure and Avoidant attachment styles, Anxious/Ambivalent attachment style was not more highly associated with the Passion foundation of love. As predicted, people's ideas about what love is based on -- i.e., the foundations of love -- were not highly associated with attachment styles or family relationships. These ideas about love are probably more influenced by culture and society.

Five beliefs emerged as important in the understanding of people's conceptions of love. These were love grows with time, jealousy is a natural part of love, love is stifling, love is scary, and love is relatively unimportant. In general, the best predictors of these beliefs were the quality of the relationship with the mother, (i.e., accepting vs. rejecting, and encouraging of independence vs. overprotective), and the attachment

styles. Again this illustrates how important a person's relationship with his/her primary caretaker is in determining later attitudes about love relationships.

Optimism and Satisfaction

The present study differentiated between two types of optimism: Optimism about future love relationships, and Optimism about marriage. Attachment styles and one's love relationship experiences influenced how optimistic people were about future love relationships. Not being Anxious/Ambivalent and not being Avoidant in attachment style predicted optimism about love relationships. Both Anxious/Ambivalent and Avoidant people have a problem with the amount of closeness they would like from a partner (high and low intimacy respectively), and may not feel optimistic about being in a comfortable relationship in the future. Perhaps because the Anxious/Ambivalent people have not had great success in relationships in the past, they don't see much reason to be optimistic about the future.

The love relationship experiences that predicted optimism about future relationships were currently having an intimate relationship, and not experiencing unrequited love in the past. If a person has an intimate relationship now, and has had love relationships in the past, that person has data that suggests that he/she can

have them in the future, and thus be optimistic about future love relationships.

Attachment style also influenced optimism about marriage. However, one's own love experiences did not influence optimism about marriage, as it did optimism about future love relationships. Instead, the best predictors for marriage optimism were not having a negative relationship between one's parents, and not being Anxious/Ambivalent in attachment style. In the case of optimism about marriage, the influence of parental role-models appears more important than one's own experiences. People draw on the most relevant experience they have with marriage, which is their parent's relationship with each other. The quality of this relationship, rather than the quality of their own love experiences, is what determines their attitude about a future marriage.

Satisfaction with a current relationship was influenced by one's own love experiences and attachment style. The best predictors of satisfaction with a present intimate relationship were not having experienced unrequited love, and not being Anxious/Ambivalent in attachment style. It is easy to see why anxiously/ambivalently attached people would not be satisfied, for they are worried that a partner might not really love them, or want to be as close as they would. They also worry that they might be abandoned by a partner,

which does not contribute to satisfaction in a relationship.

Gender Differences

Men more than women tended to believe that love is something that happens quickly and dramatically. This is consistent with the findings by Hill, Rubin, and Peplau (1976) that men tend to fall in love more readily than women. Also, men more than women tended to believe that jealousy was a natural part of love, and that love was stifling of personal growth. These beliefs may reflect a double standard which says it is okay for a man to be possessive of his woman, but if she is equally so he will feel smothered.

Men and women view their love relationships differently as they get older. As they go from their first- to fourth-year of college, women become more satisfied with their intimate relationships, whereas men become less satisfied. As they get older, women tend more to believe that love grows with time, whereas men tend to believe it less. These results may be related to the earlier finding that men, more than women, believe that love happens quickly, and that the fourth-year students' current relationships were typically in a later stage of development (i.e., their second year) than first-year students'.

If men fall in love quickly, their level of satisfaction may be extremely high during the initial stages of the relationship. And as they get older, this high level of satisfaction may fall as the relationship moves away from the exciting early stages. Women, in contrast, may be choosier and more cautious in the early stages of their relationship but become more satisfied later.

First-Year vs. Fourth-Year Students

The first-year and fourth-year students differed in the way they thought about love. First-year students were more likely than fourth-year students to believe that jealousy is natural in love.

As predicted, first-year students, compared with fourth-year students, were more influenced by their parents' experiences when thinking about love and optimism. For the first-year students, there was a stronger association between a negative parental relationship and optimism about marriage, and between a positive parental relationship and optimism about marriage. On the other hand, fourth-year students were influenced more by their own love relationship experiences than were first-year students. For the fourth-year students, there was a stronger association between one's satisfaction with a current love relationship and optimism about marriage. Overall, it seems that the influence of

parents is somewhat attenuated, though still present, as people get older and have their own love relationship experiences.

Family Background: Divorced vs. Intact

Respondents from divorced parent families viewed love differently than those from intact families. Children of divorced parents, compared to children of intact families considered romance to be less important in love relationships, felt their ideas about love were more influenced by their own love relationship experiences, and were less optimistic about marriage. The children of divorce may be more realistic than children of intact households when thinking about love and marriage. Their parents' unsuccessful relationship may suggest that it may not be reasonable to be too idealistic about marriage and romance. If the custodial parent had remarried, however, children of divorce seemed to be more optimistic, about marriage and less likely to believe in jealous love when compared to those whose parent did not remarry.

Limitations of the Study

One problem with retrospective data is the likelihood of memory distortion. When asked about their relationships with their parents while growing up, and about the quality of their parents' relationship with each other, respondents may have had difficulty remembering what they were like at that time. Their answers may have

been affected by the quality of those relationships at the time they were completing the questionnaire.

Nevertheless, the questions that addressed the quality of the respondent's relationship with his/her mother and father focused on the following two dimensions: accepting vs. rejecting, and encouraging of independence vs. overprotective. It seems unlikely that these dimensions change drastically over time. Therefore, if respondents answered these questions with the present quality of the relationships in mind, their answers would probably reflect the quality of the relationships when they were growing up.

Another potential problem is that the respondents may have described their relationships with their parents, and the relationship between their parents, in a socially desirable way. Respondents might find it socially desirable to describe their mothers and fathers as accepting (versus rejecting), and encouraging of independence (versus overprotective). However, Epstein (see Ricks, 1985) has found that college students are able to describe their relationship with their parents in both negative and positive terms when responding to his MFP Scale.

Respondents may also have felt that it was socially desirable to describe their parents' relationship with each other in a positive way. Yet, Hazan and Shaver

(1987) found that their respondents were able to describe their parental relationships both positively and negatively, although they found that younger (under 26 years old) avoidantly attached respondents were more defensive than older respondents. Younger avoidant respondents described their relationships with their parents, and between their parents, in more favorable terms than older avoidants.

Another weakness of the present study is the correlational nature of the findings. For example, although one would speculate that it is the quality of the parent/child relationship that determines one's attachment style, causality cannot be inferred from this data. Ideally, data should be collected longitudinally, rather than cross-sectionally, and statements about causality could be made with more confidence. This was an exploratory study, and suggests paths for future research.

Conclusions

This study differs from past work linking love relationships with attachment style because it attempts to improve measures of people's conceptions of love by separating important foundations of love relationships, common beliefs about love, and optimism about future love relationships and marriage. Previous measures have often confounded these different parts of people's views or conceptions of love relationships.

As many psychologists have suspected, parents, especially mothers, appear to have the potential to either "make or break" their kids. Parents have a powerful impact on the way their children view relationships with others, and these views are based on the quality of the parents' relationship with their children and to some extent with their spouse. Although it is true that people's own love relationship experiences may influence the way they feel about closeness to others, this study suggested that negative love experiences were the ones that were most influential. Taking an optimistic view, one would predict that an extremely positive adult love relationship could have a positive impact on a person's attachment style. However, it may be quite difficult to override the influence of an overprotective or rejecting mother. A person who has had these types of parent/child relationships may find it difficult to engage in positive adult love relationships because he/she is either smothering or rejecting potential partners. Further research is needed to discover what types of experiences lead to secure attachment and satisfaction with intimate relationships.

APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE

FOUNDATIONS OF LOVE

We are interested in your beliefs about love. This study focuses on the love between two intimate partners. Specifically, how much do you believe each of the following is important in a love relationship? Please indicate the importance of each dimension by circling the number that best corresponds to how important you believe each is.

	not at all important	slightly important	moderately important	very important	extremely important
1. friendship	0	1	2	3	4
2. similar interests or values	0	1	2	3	4
3. trust	0	1	2	3	4
4. meeting practical goals (e.g., marriage, having children)	0	1	2	3	4
5. intense deep feelings	0	1	2	3	4
6. preoccupation with the other person	0	1	2	3	4
7. sexual chemistry between partners	0	1	2	3	4
8. physical attractiveness of partner	0	1	2	3	4
9. playfulness, having fun, joking	0	1	2	3	4
10. sacrificing self for one's partner	0	1	2	3	4
11. romance, magic, mysterious	0	1	2	3	4

How do you think these foundations of love change over time in a long-term intimate relationship? Please go back and place an 'I' (increases) next to each dimension that you think gets stronger or more intense over time. Place a 'D' (decreases) next to each dimension that you think fades with time. And place an 'N' (no change) next to those dimensions you feel do not change over time. Place the appropriate letter in front of the number for each dimension.

BELIEFS ABOUT LOVE

Please read each statement and rate how much you agree or disagree with it on the following 6-point scale:

- DS - Disagree Strongly
- D - Disagree
- DL - Disagree a Little
- AL - Agree a Little
- A - Agree
- AS - Agree Strongly.

Please circle the appropriate letter(s) following each statement.

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 1. Jealousy is a natural part of love. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 2. If two people are really in love it will last forever. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 3. There is only one "true love" who is meant for each of us. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 4. Love between two people fades with time. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 5. Falling in love is not an accident; to love someone is to choose him/her. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 6. People in love usually grow together. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 7. A person can be truly in love with several individuals at the same time. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 8. People who get divorced probably were never truly in love. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 9. Love between two people becomes deeper with time. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 10. It is hard for people to know whether they are in love. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 11. A person can only be truly in love with one person at a time. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 12. Love is very precious; it happens rarely in a lifetime. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |

13. With time, people in love tend to grow apart.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
14. When people fall in love they are taking the risk of getting hurt.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
15. If a person is in love he/she will know it immediately.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
16. True love happens quickly and dramatically.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
17. When a person is in love he/she has no freedom to grow as an individual.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
18. Falling in love is easy; it can happen often in a lifetime.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
19. Falling in love can be frightening because people can get hurt so easily.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
20. Most of us could love many different people equally well.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
21. Being in love is no more important than working on a career or searching for knowledge.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
22. Real love builds slowly as two people get to know each other.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
23. A person has no control over whom he/she falls in love with; it just happens.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
24. It is possible for a person to be in love and still maintain his/her own identity.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
25. If two people are really in love, one will feel jealous if the other pays attention to someone else.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
26. A person hasn't lived until he/she has been in love.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS

OPTIMISM ABOUT YOUR OWN RELATIONSHIPS

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your response to each of the following questions:

1. How confident are you that you will have successful love relationships in the future?

not at all somewhat moderately very extremely
0 1 2 3 4

2. Do you want to get married in the future? Yes No

3. How likely is it that you will get married?

not at all somewhat moderately very extremely
0 1 2 3 4

4. How likely is it that you will have a successful marriage?

not at all somewhat moderately very extremely
0 1 2 3 4

5. How likely is it that you will get divorced sometime in your life?

not at all somewhat moderately very extremely
0 1 2 3 4

6. In general how optimistic do you feel about the success of your love relationships in the future?

not at all somewhat moderately very extremely
0 1 2 3 4

1. To what extent do you think your ideas about love have been influenced by your parents' relationship with each other?

0 1 2 3 4
not at all somewhat moderately very extremely

2. To what extent do you think your ideas about love have been influenced by your friends and their experiences in intimate relationships?

0 1 2 3 4
not at all somewhat moderately very extremely

3. To what extent do you think your ideas about love have been influenced by your own experiences in intimate relationships?

0 1 2 3 4
not at all somewhat moderately very extremely

RELATIONSHIP ATTITUDES

Please read the following items and rate your agreement with each. Circle one response on the following 6-point scale:

DS - Disagree Strongly
 D - Disagree
 DL - Disagree a Little
 AL - Agree a Little
 A - Agree
 AS - Agree Strongly.

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 1. I am uncomfortable being close to others. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 2. I find it easy to trust others. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 3. I am nervous when anyone gets too close. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 4. I worry that love partners might want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 5. I find that other people don't want to get as close as I would like. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 6. I worry that a love partner might not really love me. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 7. I find it easy to get close to others. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 8. I feel comfortable depending on other people. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 9. I feel comfortable having other people depend on me. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 10. I don't often worry about being abandoned. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 11. I don't often worry about someone getting too close to me. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. What is your age? _____ College graduation year? ('88-'91) _____
2. What is your gender? male _____ female _____
3. What is your father's occupation? _____
4. What is your mother's occupation? _____
5. Which of the following describes your father's education? (check one)

_____ some high school	_____ completed college
_____ completed high school	_____ some graduate school
_____ some college	_____ completed graduate school
6. Which of the following describes your mother's education? (check one)

_____ some high school	_____ completed college
_____ completed high school	_____ some graduate school
_____ some college	_____ completed graduate school
7. What is your marital status? (check one)

single (never married) _____
married _____
married, but separated _____
divorced _____
widowed _____
8. Would you consider yourself primarily: (choose one)

heterosexual _____
bisexual _____
gay/lesbian _____
9. Are you currently involved in an intimate relationship?

_____ Yes _____ No

If so, how satisfied are you with this relationship?

0	1	2	3	4
not at all	slightly	moderately	very	extremely
10. If so, how long have you been involved with this person? _____ months
11. How many times have you been in a serious love relationship (including any current relationship)? _____
12. How many times have you been in love without the other person feeling the same way about you? _____
13. If you have been involved in any love relationship(s) that has ended, how difficult did you find it was to get over?

0	1	2	3	4
not at all	slightly	moderately	very	extremely
difficult	difficult	difficult	difficult	difficult

(Leave blank if you have never been in a love relationship that has ended.)

14. Is your (biological) mother alive today?
 Yes No
 If not, how old were you at the time of her death? _____ years
15. Is your (biological) father alive today?
 Yes No
 If not, how old were you at the time of his death? _____ years
16. Have your parents ever been divorced? Yes No
 If you answered no, please skip to Question 23.
17. How old were you at the time of your parents' divorce? _____
18. Who obtained custody of you? Mother Father
 Joint Other (please explain)

19. How often did you see your non-custodial parent while you were growing up?
 never
 almost never
 a few times per year
 monthly
 weekly
 almost daily
20. How often were you in contact with (other than in person) your non-custodial parent while growing up?
 never
 almost never
 a few times per year
 monthly
 weekly
 almost daily
21. Did your custodial parent ever re-marry? Yes No
 If so, how old were you at the time? _____
22. To what extent do you consider your step-parent a substitute for your noncustodial biological parent?
- | | | | | |
|------------|----------|------------|------|-----------|
| Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Very | Extremely |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
23. Were you an adopted child? Yes No
 If so, how old were you at the time of your adoption? _____

Indicate the extent to which the following statements describe your childhood relationship with the people indicated by using the following scale:

DS - Disagree Strongly
 D - Disagree
 DL - Disagree a Little
 AL - Agree a Little
 A - Agree
 AS - Agree Strongly.

Please circle the appropriate letter(s) following each statement.

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, MY MOTHER (or mother substitute):

- | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 1. encouraged me to make my own decisions. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 2. helped me learn to be independent. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 3. felt she had to fight my battles for me when I had a disagreement with a teacher or a friend. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 4. was overprotective of me. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 5. encouraged me to do things for myself. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 6. encouraged me to try things my way. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 7. did not let me do things that other kids my age were allowed to do. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 8. sometimes disapproved of specific things I did, but never gave me the impression that she disliked me as a person. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 9. enjoyed being with me. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 10. was someone I found very difficult to please. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 11. usually supported me when I wanted to do new and exciting things. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 12. worried too much that I would hurt myself or get sick. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 13. was often rude to me. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |

14. rarely did things with me.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
15. didn't like to have me around the house.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
16. would often do things for me that I could do for myself.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
17. let me handle my own money.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
18. could always be depended upon when I really needed her help and trust.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
19. did not want me to grow up.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
20. tried to make me feel better when I was unhappy.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
21. encouraged me to express my own opinion.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
22. made me feel that I was a burden to her.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
23. gave me the feeling that she liked me as I was; she didn't feel she had to make me over in to someone else.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS

If you completed the above questions for a "mother substitute," please indicate her relationship to you (e.g., grandmother, stepmother):

Indicate the extent to which the following statements describe your childhood relationship with the people indicated by using the following scale:

DS - Disagree Strongly
 D - Disagree
 DL - Disagree a Little
 AL - Agree a Little
 A - Agree
 AS - Agree Strongly.

Please circle the appropriate letter(s) following each statement.

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, MY FATHER (or father substitute):

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|----|----|---|----|
| 1. encouraged me to make my own decisions. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 2. helped me learn to be independent. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 3. felt he had to fight my battles for me when I had a disagreement with a teacher or a friend. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 4. was overprotective of me. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 5. encouraged me to do things for myself. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 6. encouraged me to try things my way. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 7. did not let me do things that other kids my age were allowed to do. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 8. sometimes disapproved of specific things I did, but never gave me the impression that he disliked me as a person. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 9. enjoyed being with me. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 10. was someone I found very difficult to please. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 11. usually supported me when I wanted to do new and exciting things. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 12. worried too much that I would hurt myself or get sick. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |
| 13. was often rude to me. | DS | D | DL | AL | A | AS |

14. rarely did things with me.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
15. didn't like to have me around the house.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
16. would often do things for me that I could do for myself.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
17. let me handle my own money.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
18. could always be depended upon when I really needed his help and trust.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
19. did not want me to grow up.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
20. tried to make me feel better when I was unhappy.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
21. encouraged me to express my own opinion.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
22. made me feel that I was a burden to him.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS
23. gave me the feeling that he liked me as I was; he didn't feel he had to make me over in to someone else.	DS	D	DL	AL	A	AS

If you completed the above questions for a "father substitute," please indicate his relationship to you (e.g., grandfather, stepfather):

1. How much does each of the following describe your biological (or adoptive) parents' relationship with each other? Please rate each item by circling the appropriate number.

	not at all	slightly	moderately	very	extremely
loving	0	1	2	3	4
argumentative	0	1	2	3	4
distant	0	1	2	3	4
troubled	0	1	2	3	4
compatible	0	1	2	3	4
magical	0	1	2	3	4
comfortable	0	1	2	3	4
violent	0	1	2	3	4
unhappy	0	1	2	3	4
strained	0	1	2	3	4
trusting	0	1	2	3	4
giving	0	1	2	3	4
supportive	0	1	2	3	4
caring	0	1	2	3	4
close	0	1	2	3	4
playful	0	1	2	3	4
passionate	0	1	2	3	4

2. (Skip #2 if your parents were not divorced or if your custodial parent did not remarry.) How much does each of the following describe the relationship between your custodial parent and your step-parent? Rate each item by circling the appropriate number.

	not at all	slightly	moderately	very	extremely
loving	0	1	2	3	4
argumentative	0	1	2	3	4
distant	0	1	2	3	4
troubled	0	1	2	3	4
compatible	0	1	2	3	4
magical	0	1	2	3	4
comfortable	0	1	2	3	4
violent	0	1	2	3	4
unhappy	0	1	2	3	4
strained	0	1	2	3	4
trusting	0	1	2	3	4
giving	0	1	2	3	4
supportive	0	1	2	3	4
caring	0	1	2	3	4
close	0	1	2	3	4
playful	0	1	2	3	4
passionate	0	1	2	3	4

ENDNOTES

¹ From Hazan and Shaver's (1987) 13 item questionnaire, the following 2 items were dropped: "I find it difficult to depend on others," and "I want to merge completely with another person." The first item seems to measure the same thing as the item, "I feel comfortable depending on other people." The second item seemed to be an inappropriate question for this age group.

² An attempt was made to classify the respondents by attachment style using a median split method. We tried to find people who scored high on one attachment style and low on the other two, so they could be categorized as either Secure, Anxious/Ambivalent, or Avoidant, but were unable to find a clear grouping effect. In other words, the respondents did not split into the three categories neatly. Rather they seemed to possess characteristics from different attachment styles simultaneously.

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