

PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL BONDING: RELATIONSHIP  
TO ATTACHMENT STYLE AND RELATIONSHIP  
SATISFACTION FOR ADULT  
DAUGHTERS

By

SISSY R. OSTEEN

Bachelor of Science  
University of Arkansas  
Fayetteville, Arkansas  
1979

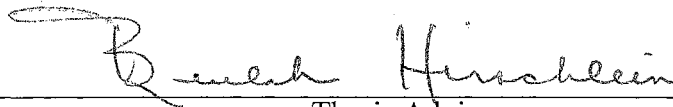
Master of Science  
University of Arkansas  
Fayetteville, Arkansas  
1981

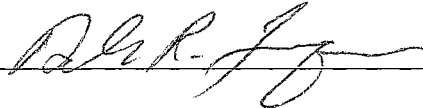
Specialist in Education  
University of South Carolina  
Columbia, South Carolina  
1992

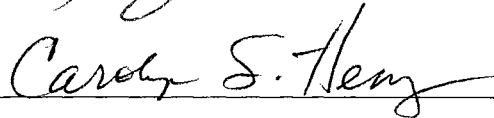
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Thesis Approved:

  
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Thesis Adviser

  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of the Graduate College

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CHAPTER I

MANUSCRIPT FOR SUBMISSION

SISSY R. OSTEEN

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

Adult Attachment Style: Enduring

Characteristic or Related to Current Status?

Author's note: This article was written in partial fulfillment of requirements for the doctoral dissertation in Family Relations and Child Development and appears within the context of the dissertation titled: PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL BONDING: RELATIONSHIP TO ATTACHMENT STYLE AND RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION FOR ADULT DAUGHTERS. This research was partially funded by the John and Sue Taylor Graduate Student Research Grant.

## Abstract

The current study was conducted to determine the relationship between parental characteristics that: a) are judged to promote or discourage attachment in childhood and b) establish a model for later relationship functioning, to examine whether these parental characteristics relate to adult relationship outcomes for women. The outcomes considered were adult attachment style (anxiety and avoidance), and adult relationship satisfaction. This article addresses whether attachment style is an enduring of individuals, based upon the subjective evaluation of satisfaction in current relationship, or simply a reflection of relationship status. The research addresses the following questions: 1) How are adult attachment patterns related to the parental characteristics theorized to lead to parent-child bonding? 2) How are adult attachment patterns related to satisfaction in current or most significant romantic relationship and current relationship status? 3) How are parental characteristics related to daughter's relationship satisfaction?

Parental characteristics, especially parental care, were significantly related to more positive outcomes for adult daughters. This supports the idea that attachment style is a quality of the individual.

Avoidance and anxiety were significant predictors of women's satisfaction and satisfaction was related to decreased anxiety and avoidance. These findings offer support for the conclusion that attachment style is a reflection of current relationship functioning. Overall support was found for both the trait and state arguments. Stronger support was offered for attachment style as an attribute influenced by status and satisfaction with current or most significant relationship.

## Introduction

Attachment theory proposes that interactions with significant others in childhood are internalized and form the basis for expectations about and behavior in adult relationships. Positive caring parents respond to the child in a way that teaches the child that she or he is worthy of care and that others can be depended upon to provide care. Neglectful or rejecting parents may lead children to view themselves as unworthy and others as undependable. According to Bowlby (1979) the resulting internal working model of self and other, whether negative or positive, serves as the basis for interactions and assessments and feelings about interactions throughout the life span.

Somewhat opposing theoretical views propose that individual differences in development are the result of varying experiences and contexts and concurrently are more dependent upon current situations and ongoing interactions. As such they are more malleable and subject to revision. From this perspective individual differences are influenced more by current experiences and contexts than previous experiences.

The current study was conducted to determine the relationship between parental characteristics that: a) are judged to promote or discourage attachment in childhood and b) serve as a model for later relationship functioning, to examine whether these parental characteristics relate to adult relationship outcomes for women. The outcomes considered were women's adult attachment style (anxiety and avoidance), and adult relationship satisfaction. This article addresses whether attachment style is an enduring trait of individuals, based upon the subjective evaluation of satisfaction in current relationship, or simply a reflection of relationship status. The study was conducted in an attempt to answer the following questions: 1) How are adult attachment patterns related to the

parental characteristics theorized to lead to parent-child bonding? 2) How are adult attachment patterns related to satisfaction in current or most significant romantic relationship and current relationship status? 3) How are parental characteristics related to daughter's relationship satisfaction?

### Attachment in Childhood and Adulthood

John Bowlby (1973, 1980, 1982) framed a theory of human development by combining his background in psychoanalytic object relations theory with his interest in ethological theory. Attachment theory, as proposed by Bowlby and expanded through his work with Ainsworth and her colleagues (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Hall, 1978) serves as a paradigm for understanding how bonds formed with caregivers in childhood result in internal models that guide interactions with others throughout the life span. According to Bowlby (1982) attachment theory addresses both episodic attachment behaviors, activated in times of stress, as well as the enduring bonds that children and adults form with significant others.

Since the 1980s research has focused on the idea that childhood attachment patterns, based on internal working models of self and other, persist and serve as a model for adult relationships. Weiss (1982) proposed that adult intimate relationships meet the criteria for attachment relationships. Partners seek proximity to each other and if felt security is maintained, use the relationship as a base for exploration. Separation often leads to protest in an effort to reestablish proximity, and prolonged separation leads to despair and eventual detachment.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) are widely credited with the first effort to expand the application of attachment theory to adult intimate relationships by conceptualizing adult romantic relationships as an attachment process. They also developed a forced-choice typological measure based on Ainsworth's (1982) three attachment classifications; secure, anxious resistant, and anxious avoidant. Use of this self-report measure identified differences based on the individual's self-classification, beliefs about self and other, and recall of familial experiences. Parental characteristics were related to attachment style, thus offering some preliminary support for continuity of attachment patterns beyond childhood.

Other researchers have expanded and modified Hazan and Shaver's (1987) instrument for assessing adult attachment (Feeney, Noller, & Callan, 1990; Simpson, 1990). Bartholomew and Horowitz (Bartholomew, 1990; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) made significant contributions to the study of adult attachment with the conceptualization of four attachment categories derived from models of self and models of other, also conceptualized as dependency and avoidance. Sanford (1997) offered support for a two-dimensional model of adult attachment, which he labeled relationship closeness and relationship anxiety. Brennan, Clark and Shaver (1998) proposed that all attachment classifications correspond to the two dimensions they label avoidance and anxiety. When Brennan et al. analyzed all available attachment instruments, they found that these two dimensions underlie all of them.

### Parental Contributions

Levels of sensitivity and responsiveness in caregiving serve as the basis for the attachment bond between infant and caregiver in childhood and contribute to the subsequent development of internal working models of self and other that serve as a prototype for adult relationships (Bretherton, 1993). Parental care has consistently been identified as the principal dimension that influences parental attitudes and behavior. A second dimension, control or overprotection, is also considered a primary determinant of parenting and is associated with a deficiency of care and denial of autonomy (Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979).

### Relationship Status

Researchers debate whether adult attachment is the result of an internal working model of self and other or the result of current relationship functioning (Feeney & Noller, 1996). In a longitudinal study of women, Klohnen and Bera (1998) measured participant's adult attachment style at age fifty-two and examined the relationships between these ratings and previous relationship functioning, childhood experiences, and internal working models. The results of their research offered support for continuity and stability of attachment styles. In another longitudinal study of adult attachment style and relationship status Kirkpatrick and Hazan (1994) found that relationship status appeared to be more closely associated with current attachment style than previous attachment style. Their overall findings provided support for viewing adult attachment styles as both an enduring quality of the individual and a reflection of current relationship functioning.

### Relationship Satisfaction

From the attachment perspective, satisfaction is contingent upon the ability of the relationship to meet the attachment criteria of close proximity, safe haven, and secure base for exploration (Koski & Shaver, 1997). According to Bartholomew (1990) relationship quality is related to attachment style because it affects partner selection as well as behavior in relationships. Other research supports the proposition that attachment style influences levels of satisfaction in adult relationships. Secure individuals report higher satisfaction in relationships than individuals in the other attachment classifications do (Feeney, Noller, & Callan, 1996; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Koski & Shaver, 1997).

Parental characteristics have also been linked to relationship satisfaction. Appleton (1981) conducted intensive interviews with women concerning their relationships with their fathers and other men in their lives. He found that early father's care and support impacted the daughter in childhood and was related to her reports of good relationships with men in adulthood. Although Appleton's data collection techniques have been criticized, his interviews presented a rich accounting of the relative importance of father's care in his daughter's life.

An association has been shown between relationship satisfaction and relationship status. In a study comparing married and never-married women, Walsh (1994) found that both groups showed a preference for marriage over singlehood. Overall, never-married women had less trust in relationships and more uncertainty when interacting with men than did the married group. Hoffman (1994) also found that single women were less satisfied than their married counterparts.



### Hypotheses

Attachment theory proposes that caring and responsiveness of caregivers in childhood leads to development of secure bonds in childhood that establish patterns and expectations about relationships in adulthood. Continuity of attachment patterns were expected to progress in the following ways:

1. Daughter's perception of parents as more caring will be negatively related to anxiety and avoidance.
2. Daughter's perception of parents as more overprotective will be positively related to anxiety and avoidance.

Parental characteristics of care and overprotection and the resulting adult attachment patterns were expected to impact the daughter's subjective evaluation of satisfaction in her most significant adult relationships in the following ways:

3. Daughter's perception of parents as more caring will be positively related to relationship satisfaction.
4. Daughter's perception of parents as more overprotective will be negatively related to relationship satisfaction.
5. Daughter's anxiety and avoidance will be negatively related to relationship satisfaction.

### Participants

The participants in this study consisted of a convenience sample of adult women solicited through professional women's clubs in a midwestern state. The ethnic makeup of the sample consisted of 83.3% Caucasian, 5.9% Native American, 6.3% African

American, 1.5% Asian, less than 1% Hispanic and 2.5% other or not reported. The age range for the sample was from 20 to 87 years with a mean of 44.2. The annual income ranged from zero to \$100,000 with a mean of \$30,618. The mean for years of education was 14.4.

Almost 15% of the participants had never married, 50.5% were in first marriages with a mean for years married of 21.17. Thirteen percent were in second marriages, and 3.7% were widowed. Thirty one percent had been divorced at least one time with 8.8% divorced two or more times. Of the 74 participants not currently married, 17.8% were living with a significant other, 35.6% were currently dating, and 45.2% were not currently dating.

### Measures and Procedures

A four page self-report measure was used to collect all data. The instruments were given to and completed by participants during monthly meetings. The measure included demographic questions about the participant's parents (marital status, death or divorce of parents, household composition), and participant's current relationship status (marital status and dating status). Three previously established instruments were utilized, a shortened version of the Parental Bonding Instrument, the PBI-BC (Klimidas, Minas, & Ata, 1992), the Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment (Brennan, Clark & Shaver, 1998), and the Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988). These instruments were used to measure parental bonding, adult attachment, and relationship satisfaction respectively. Means, standard deviations, and alpha reliabilities for the instruments are provided in Table 1.

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Insert Table 1 about here

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### Parental Care and Overprotection

Perceptions of parental care and overprotection before the age of sixteen were measured with a shortened version of the Parental Bonding Instrument (Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979). According to Parker and Gladstone (1996) substituting a shortened version of the PBI with a clinical sample is not advisable but in normative samples a short version would simplify administration. This study used the same eight items as the PBI-BC (Klimidas, Minas, & Ata, 1992) with some minor revisions. Klimidas et al. used the instrument to assess adolescents' perceptions of current relationship with parents and changed the items to reflect present tense. Because the current study relied on retrospective accounts of relationships with the parents up until the age of sixteen, items were used in their original past tense form. Responses were modified to a five-point Likert type scale from 1 = "always" to 5 = "never."

Before analysis all items were reverse scored except for items 2, 3, and 5 so that summing the subscales would result in higher scores representing higher values of care and overprotection, thus avoiding confusion interpreting the correlational analysis. The PBI-BC included two four-item subscales, one for care, example "Helped me as much as I needed." The overprotection scale included items like: "Tried to control everything I did." To increase the alpha reliability of the overprotection subscale, item number 7 was

dropped. With this change the maximum score for the care subscale was 20 and the maximum score for overprotection was 15.

### Adult Attachment Style

Adult attachment was assessed by the Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment developed by Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998). This instrument consists of two 18-item subscales, which measure the two dimensions of adult attachment, anxiety and avoidance. The avoidance subscale includes such items as, “I prefer not to let a partner know how I feel deep down” and “Just when my partner starts to get close I find myself pulling back.” Examples of items on the anxiety subscale include, “I worry about being abandoned” and “I need a lot of reassurance that I am loved by my partner.” The subscale responses are constructed on a seven-point Likert type scale, 1 = “disagree strongly” to 7 = “agree strongly.” Prior to analyses ten items of the Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment were reversed. Items 3, 15, 19, 22, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, and 35 were recoded so that 1 = 7, 2 = 6, and so on. Raw scores on all odd numbered items were then summed to create the total Avoidance score, and scores on all even numbered items were summed to create the total Anxiety score. The total maximum score for each subscale is 126.

### Relationship Satisfaction

The 7-item Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988) was developed as a brief measure of subjective satisfaction in many types of relationships. According to the author, “The RAS assesses general satisfaction, how well the partner meets one’s needs,

how well the relationship compares to others, regrets about the relationship, how well one's expectations have been met, love for partner, and problems in the relationship" (Hendrick, Dicke, & Hendrick, 1998, p. 138).

Satisfaction was measured on a five point Likert type scale. Items 4 and 7 were recoded. Scores were then summed resulting in a maximum score of 35. Higher scores are indicative of higher satisfaction in current or most significant relationship.

Satisfaction with relationship status was assessed with a single item "How satisfied are you with your current relationship status? (Whether in a relationship or not). Responses ranged from 1 = "very satisfied" to 7 = "very dissatisfied." The values on this scale were reversed so that higher values would reflect higher satisfaction with relationship status.

## Results

### Relationship Between Parental Characteristics and Adult Attachment Style

As can be seen from the correlations in Table 2 significant correlations exist between mother's care, mother's overprotection and daughter's anxiety, and avoidance. Correlations were found between father's care and daughter's avoidance but no significant relationship was found between father's characteristics, and daughter's anxiety.

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Insert Table 2 about here

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Analysis of variance was conducted to determine if there were between group differences in adult attachment based on relationship status. Anxiety and avoidance means were compared for marital status and the subgroup of unmarried individuals for dating status categories. Significant differences were found in means for avoidance between marital status categories,  $F = 7.78 (6,245)$ ,  $p < .01$  and dating status categories,  $F = 16.24 (2,63)$ ,  $p < .01$ . Anxiety means did not differ by either marital status or dating status categories.

Because the  $F$  ratios from the analyses of variance were significant, additional interpretation was required to examine the relationships among the groups. Tukey post hoc analysis was conducted to reveal the source of the significant difference based on the subgroups for current marital status, and current dating status. Marital status consisted of six groups: first marriage, divorced once, divorced two times, divorced more than two times, remarried, and widowed. Two of the original categories, divorced three times and divorced four times, were collapsed into divorced more than two times. As can be seen in Figure 1, means for avoidance were significantly lower for women who were in first marriages when compared to those who were currently divorced one, two, or more than two times, and with those who were widowed. Women who were remarried had significantly lower avoidance means than women who had been divorced two times.

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Insert Figure 1 about here

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Dating status consisted of four subgroups ( $n = 74$ ): living with significant other, currently dating, not currently dating, and never dated. Only one respondent indicated

that she had never dated so this case was dropped from post hoc analysis. Avoidance means of 66.53 for women who reported that they were not currently dating were higher than for those who reported living with significant other, and those who were currently dating with mean differences of 21.38,  $p < .01$ , and 14.19,  $p < .05$ , respectively.

### Relationship Between Adult Attachment Style and Relationship Satisfaction

As reflected in Table 2 significant correlations were found between anxiety, avoidance, satisfaction with relationship status, and relationship satisfaction. Participants' reports of higher anxiety and avoidance were related to lower relationship satisfaction.

Results of analysis of variance reflected significant differences for satisfaction means between marital status categories,  $F = 7.72 (6, 242)$ ,  $p < .01$ , and dating status variables,  $F = 7.10 (2,66)$   $p < .01$ .

When post hoc comparisons between satisfaction means and marital status were conducted, significant differences were found between women who were married for the first time and women who were divorced, divorced two times, and divorced more than two times. When remarried women were compared to the other groups significant differences were found between this group and women who were divorced one time, and women who were divorced more than two times. Graphic representation of these relationships and the significant mean differences are provided in Figure 2.

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Insert Figure 2 about here

---

When post hoc analysis was conducted for dating status subgroups, satisfaction means were significantly lower for women who reported they were not currently dating, 22.22, than those who were living with significant other, 29.38,  $p < .001$  and those who were currently dating, 28.69,  $p < .001$ .

#### Relationship Between Parental Characteristics and Relationship Satisfaction

Significant correlations were found between all parental characteristics and daughter's relationship satisfaction in current or most significant romantic relationship. Multiple correlations were conducted to determine whether father's characteristics accounted for any significant increment in variance when added to mother's characteristics in predicting daughter's relationship satisfaction. Mother's care was entered first in the regression, and father's care was added second, the result was an  $R^2$  change of .02,  $F = 4.05 (1, 237)$   $p < .05$ .

Correlations were conducted between daughter's anxiety, avoidance and relationship satisfaction. As reflected in Table 2 the correlations were significantly related with those reporting higher anxiety and avoidance, reporting lower satisfaction. To determine if daughter's avoidance accounted for a significant increment in variance accounted for when added to anxiety in predicting satisfaction, avoidance was added to anxiety in the regression equation. While anxiety accounted for 12% of the variance in satisfaction, avoidance contributed an additional 23%. The combination of these two variables accounted for 35% of the variance in satisfaction.



### Limitations

The current study was limited by the use of a convenience sample of adult professional women, collection of data through self-report measures, and a cross-sectional research design. Over 50% of this sample was currently in a first marriage with a mean for number of years married of over twenty-one. This suggests more relationship stability than would be found with the general population. Higher ratings of satisfaction in current or most significant adult relationships may reflect an overall life satisfaction bias that could influence an assessment of parents as more caring. It is likely that if this research were replicated with a more heterogeneous population, the relationships found in the current study would be stronger because of the increased variability. The correlational analysis used to answer the questions can in no way be interpreted as cause and effect. Even with the limitations of this research design, findings both confirm and disconfirm previous findings. This is a reflection of the need for further exploration into the relationship between parental characteristics and adult outcomes for women.

### Discussion

Adult attachment patterns appear to be related to parental characteristics theorized to lead to parent-child bonding in childhood and establish the models for later relationship functioning in adulthood (Bowlby, 1973, 1980, 1982). Parental characteristics, especially parental care were significantly related to more positive outcomes for this group of women. Women who perceived of their mothers as more caring reported lower anxiety and avoidance in adulthood. Father's care was associated with lower avoidance but not lower anxiety. These findings support the idea that

attachment style is an enduring and somewhat stable quality of the individual that can affect partner choice and thus reinforce internal working models of self and other.

However, it should be noted that although the correlations between parental characteristics and adult outcomes were statistically significant, they do not appear to be substantively significant. This leaves room for variables not considered in the current study, which can modify development in relationships during the life span. Relationship history, socialization, assessments of success in relationships and work can all impact levels of satisfaction in adulthood. Current satisfaction can also color retrospective assessments of childhood relationships.

In agreement with previous research adult attachment patterns were significantly related to relationship satisfaction. Anxiety and avoidance were significant predictors of women's satisfaction with higher levels of anxiety and avoidance being associated with lower relationship satisfaction. Satisfaction with current relationship status, whether in a relationship or not, resulted in increased relationship satisfaction, but decreased anxiety and avoidance. When attachment styles were compared for marital status groups, women who were currently married, whether for the first or second time, were less avoidant than most other groups except for the never married group. These findings offer support for the conclusion that attachment style is a reflection of current relationship functioning rather than a trait of the individual.

When relationship satisfaction means were compared for the various relationship status groups, women in first marriages and women in second marriages reported the highest levels of satisfaction. However they did not differ significantly from never married women, counter to results from Walsh (1994) that found a preference for

marriage by both married and unmarried women and Hoffman (1994) who found that married women were more satisfied than single women. For the subgroup of women who were not married ( $n = 74$ ), women who were currently in a relationship reflected higher satisfaction. Satisfaction was lowest for women who were not currently dating versus those who were living with a significant other or currently dating.

The overall research supports findings by Kirkpatrick and Hazan (1994) that attachment style is both an enduring and somewhat stable quality of the individual as well as reflective of the current relationship status and functioning of the individual. In addition past relationships with significant others are related to the current level of satisfaction that these women feel in their current or most significant relationship. A connection between parental characteristics and relationship satisfaction seems to be direct and may not be addressed by assessing the relationship between attachment style and parental characteristics. There may be continuing exchanges between parent and adult child that increase satisfaction in adulthood. Including present relationship with parents in the equation could compare these. It is important to assess the level of relationship functioning between the parents while the child was living at home as well. If parental characteristics serve as a basis for expectations about future relationships it seems important to know the specific areas of development that they impact the most. This would require methodologies other than the ones employed for this study. The strength of the relationship between adult attachment styles and current relationship satisfaction calls for further investigation focusing on how internal working models are updated by ongoing relationships in adulthood. Previous work and measurement developments have led to more clearly defined dimensions of adult attachment style.

Additional research can focus on various adult relationship outcomes and benefit from the advances made in measuring adult attachment.

The current study included measurement for adult daughter's perceptions of care and overprotection provided by both parents. Though the measures used were brief, correlations were found between mother *and* father's characteristics and the daughter's relationship outcomes. Care has been identified as the principal factor underlying parental attitudes and behavior (Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979). This study found more variability in father's care than in mother's care. Failing to assess how variations in fathering impact individual differences in daughter's development could be a major oversight. In order to achieve a good assessment of this a greater effort will be required to understand and define the content, contexts, and qualities of the relationship between fathers and daughters.

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Table 1  
Variables, Measures, Reliabilities, Means, and Standard Deviations

Variables	Measures	Reliabilities (Alpha)	Mean	SD
<b>Parental Bonding</b>	<b>Parental Bonding Instrument</b>			
Father's Care	Care Subscale	.91	13.66	4.68
Father's Overprotection	Overprotection Subscale	.67	8.53	1.86
Mother's Care	Care Subscale	.89	16.03	3.42
Mother's Overprotection	Overprotection Subscale	.72	8.74	2.22
<b>Adult Attachment</b>	<b>Multi-Item Measure of Adult Attachment</b>			
Avoidance	Avoidance Subscale	.92	49.95	20.11
Anxiety	Anxiety Subscale	.91	57.84	21.24
<b>Relationship Satisfaction</b>	<b>Relationship Assessment Scale</b>	.92	27.52	6.16



Table 2  
Correlations Among Parental Characteristics, Adult Attachment, and Relationship Satisfaction Variables

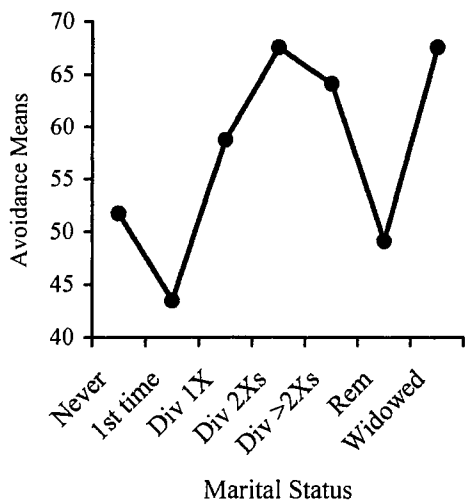
Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Father's Care	1.00							
2. Father's Overprotection	-.06	1.00						
3. Mother's Care	.25***	-.10	1.00					
4. Mother's Overprotection	-.11*	.30***	-.30***	1.00				
5. Daughter's Anxiety	-.07	.06	-.14*	.17**	1.00			
6. Daughter's Avoidance	-.15*	.11*	-.24***	.12*	.35***	1.00		
7. Daughter's Relationship Satisfaction	.19**	-.12*	.27***	-.26***	-.35***	-.58***	1.00	
8. Relationship Status Satisfaction	.10	-.08	.13*	-.04	-.29***	-.39***	.65***	1.00

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level

\*\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level.

\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level

Figure 1  
 Mean Avoidance Scores by Marital Status

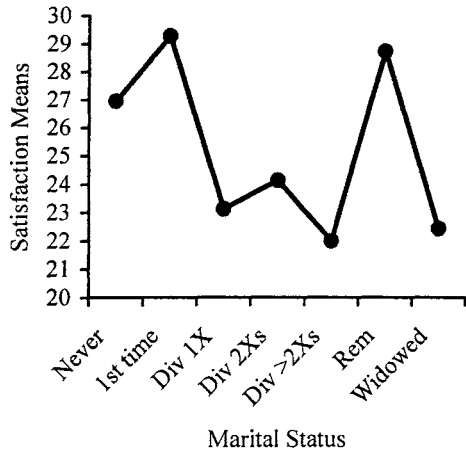


Mean Differences  
 N = 270

Between Married First Time and:	
Divorced 1 Time	-15.21**
Divorced 2 Times	-23.94**
Divorced > 2 Times	-20.50**
Widowed	-23.88**
Between Remarried and:	
Divorced 2 Times	-18.37**

\*\* p < .01

Figure 2  
Mean Satisfaction Scores by Marital Status



Mean Differences  
N = 270

Between Married First Time and:

Divorced 1 Time	6.16**
Divorced 2 Times	5.15*
Divorced > 2 Times	7.28**
Widowed	6.85*

Between Remarried and:

Divorced 1 Time	5.62**
Divorced > 2 Times	6.74*

\*\* p = < .01      \* p = < .05

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

Since 1970 there has been a growing awareness of the importance of fathers in child development. This growing interest in fatherhood was preceded by a period when fathers were considered unnecessary or ancillary to the process of raising children. Fathers were virtually ignored in research due to the assumption that the mother had more influence on the child because she was the principal caregiver. The theories that were used for studying the family supported this stance (Parke, 1996). There is now growing interest in the variety of ways that fathers provide and care for the betterment and future of their children as well as how fatherhood can best be understood as a developmental process for the father (Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997).

Fathers contribute to their daughter's development whether they are involved in their lives in a caring way or they are completely uninvolved. Absence of the father, whether through death, divorce, or unavailability has been shown to adversely affect the daughter's ability to interact with other men (Hetherington, 1972, 1973).

Caring and responsiveness of primary figures in childhood provides the groundwork for secure attachment bonds in childhood and establishes expectations for and influences behavior in adult relationships (Bowlby, 1973, 1980, 1982). Although attachment

patterns were conceptualized, operationalized, and tested empirically by observing the mother-infant dyad, evidence suggests that infants form strong bonds to their fathers as well (Kotelchuck, 1972; Lamb, 1976, 1977; Shaffer & Emerson, 1964). Characteristics of mothering and fathering appear to contribute to adult attachment styles and adult relationship outcomes regardless of the gender of the child (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and adults with different attachment styles have been shown to have differing experiences and assessments of experiences in close relationships. There is no argument that mothers contribute greatly to the development of children and are generally more involved in caring for children than fathers are, but what does the father offer beyond what the mother does? Relatively few investigations have been conducted into the effects of paternal care. Compared to what is known about the relative effects of maternal care upon development, little is known about the effects of paternal care. Even less is known about the father-daughter dyad and adult relationship outcomes for women.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between family of origin status variables (household composition, parents marital status, death or divorce of parents, visitation frequency with non-custodial parent), adult daughter's perceptions of mother and father's care and overprotection before the age of sixteen, and daughter's adult attachment style (avoidance and anxiety) and adult relationship outcomes (relationship status variables and relationship satisfaction).

### Theoretical Frameworks

The premise that early interaction patterns with significant others are continued into adult relationships is present in object relations, attachment, and developmental

theories. These frameworks offer support for continuity between childhood experiences and adult relationship outcomes (Sharabany, 1994) by suggesting that patterns of interaction experienced in childhood are internalized and guide relationships throughout life. Individual differences in caregiving have been related to differences in ways that children adjust to significant others in childhood and beyond.

Somewhat opposing theoretical views propose that individual differences are the result of varying experiences and contexts and as a result are more dependent upon current situations and ongoing interactions. As such they are more malleable than previous experiences that have been internalized and remain somewhat stable throughout the life span. Researchers attempting to understand individual differences in development have utilized other theories, specifically social learning theory and family systems theory. From a social learning perspective, individual differences in personality and gender are the result of socialization (Howard & Hollander, 1997). Family systems theory views family relationships and interactions as the principal precursor of individual functioning (Doherty & Baptiste, 1993).

### Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory is derived principally from behaviorism. We learn behaviors by observing others, imitating behaviors and experiencing the consequences of our actions, or by observing the consequences of a model's actions (Howard & Hollander, 1997). According to Bandura (1986), "human behavior is explained in terms of a model of triadic reciprocity in which behavior, cognitive and other personal factors and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants of each other" (p. 18).

An individual's character is determined by certain capabilities: (a) the capacity to use symbols to assign meaning to experiences, to communicate, and to plan future actions, (b) the capacity to see likely outcomes of actions, (c) the capacity to generate rules about behavior by observing others, (d) the capacity to self-regulate through personal standards and evaluation of actions, and (e) the capacity to reflect on personal experiences and cognitions to better understand oneself and one's environment for evaluating the adequacy of one's own knowledge (Bandura, 1986).

Modeling is a powerful form of transmitting behavior, thought, and attitudes. When an individual observes the behavior of another they acquire new patterns of behavior. Attentional and retentional processes as well as production and motivational processes guide observational learning (Miller, 1993). More powerful and attractive models with higher status receive more attention. According to Miller (1993), "Children's ability to attend selectively and their past experiences influence which models they attend to and how selectively they attend" (p. 204).

All behaviors that an individual sees modeled are not imitated immediately. The retention process consists of the component of a behavior that is observed which is retained for use when the model is not present. The production process occurs when a modeled behavior is reproduced. The motivational process is distinguished by the likelihood that behaviors, which have resulted in rewards, will be adopted over those that have produced negative consequences (Bandura, 1977).

In summary, social learning theory is a developmental theory in which behavior is best understood by viewing the person, the behavior, and the situation and how cognitive processes serve as a mediating factor as they accommodate and change with new

experiences and contexts. Social learning theory focuses on the manner in which we are socialized to act in certain ways, including gender specific ways (Howard & Hollander, 1997). Individual differences can be explained from this perspective as a result of varying contexts, rewards, and cognitions regarding experiences during the life span.

### Family Systems Theory

It is during the period from the mid 1950s through the late 1970s that the work of psychiatrists and family therapists laid most of the groundwork for modern family systems theory (Doherty & Baptiste, 1993). Many of Freud's associates had split off from his strict psychoanalytic roots to form new schools of thought. There was also an observed weakness in the medical model of treating patients and a new recognition that the success of a patient's treatment was in some way tied to the support and acceptance of his or her family (Kerr, 1981). It was during this time that Murray Bowen began his work with schizophrenic patients and their families and developed a comprehensive theory based on family functioning and in particular, differentiation of self (Hoffman, 1981).

The family is a *system* of interacting patterns and behaviors. The units of the system are not individual family members, but rather the patterns of interaction themselves (Klein & White, 1996). The complete system can only be explained by the relationship that exists between its members. All parts of the family system are *interrelated* and cannot be understood apart from each other. According to Berg-Cross (1988) there are other concepts that are important for understanding the basis of family systems theory. Well functioning families are living open systems with permeable *boundaries* or barriers that allow the flow of energy between the system and the



environment. Anything, which is received from the environment such as information, money, support, etc., is referred to as *input*. The family acts on these inputs according to certain established procedures called *rules of transformation*. The rules govern the way that decisions and choices are made. Information processing is a vital aspect of the family process and happens so frequently that it is often performed in an unconscious and effortless manner. Whatever the rules are the family attempts to maintain them through a self-regulation process known as *homeostasis* (Hoffman, 1981). Family rules and patterns operate from generation to generation

According to family systems theorists, because families function as a system, there exists a need for balance of togetherness and autonomy. Salvador Minuchin (1974) referred to issues of closeness and distance as *enmeshment/disengagement*. Bowen referred to this process of negotiating distance and closeness in the family as *differentiation* (Hoffman, 1981). From his perspective, humans function on an emotional and an intellectual level. The more emotional the motivation the less the differentiation and the more an individual's needs are dependent upon another. Balanced differentiation is conducive to balanced relationships in which each member can express individuality without threatening the other's security. From the family systems framework an individual's ability to relate to significant others outside the family may be the result of issues, rules, or boundaries as well as the level of functioning that occurs in the family and the balance they are able to maintain (Doherty & Baptiste, 1993).

## Object Relations Theory

Object relations theory is one of the major approaches for understanding the self in the family context. This theory builds upon the ideas advanced by a group of British psychoanalysts including Klein, Winnicott, and Fairburn and dispensed a theory of behavioral motivation that differed from that presented by Freud. This theory assumes that individuals are motivated by the drive to be related to others (Fox, 1996). Object relations *are* interactions with others. The object or internal object in object relations is a human figure as well as a mental representation of that figure which becomes internalized through repeated interactions (Muir, 1989). The child seeks connections with others, most commonly the parents. The interactions between parent and child establish patterns or generalized schemes for later interactions with others (Sharabany, 1994). It is important for the object, usually conceptualized as the mother, to be responsive and nurturing. Troublesome relationships with parents can translate into problematic relationships as adults because problems relating to significant others may lead to internal splits in the child. These splits occur as the individual attempts to deal with incompatible internal information thus producing dubious perceptions that are repressed from consciousness. Good interactions are internalized into the existing scheme while poor interactions are disowned. If the relationship is unresolved the disowned characteristics will remain repressed. According to Fox (1996) previous interactions will influence partner choice and the character of adult relationships. Disowned characteristics are projected onto adult intimate partners and the individual attempts to repair the other in an effort to make themselves whole (Doherty & Baptiste, 1993). Object relations theory examines the role

of early development of internal images of self and others and how relationships with others are subsequently shaped by these internal representations (Krampe, 1997).

According to object relations theory fathers play a role in the separation-individuation process whereby the infant achieves autonomy from the primary object, assumed to be the mother, by serving as an appropriate object to enable the daughter to focus away from the mother (Mahler, Pine, & Bergman, 1975). Object relations theory has been applied to studies connecting fathers to daughter's self esteem, attachment style, and autonomy (Wexler, 1996) and daughter's separation-individuation (Preece, 1996).

### Attachment Theory

Bowlby (1973, 1980, 1982) is credited with the initial development of attachment theory. Drawing from his background in psychoanalytic object relations theory and interest in ethological theory, Bowlby framed a new paradigm for understanding human development (Bretherton, 1992). Bowlby (1982) proposed that the attachment behavioral system serves to maintain proximity to one or more caregivers for the purpose of safety and survival. The attachment system is one of the systems guiding development and is activated when the individual is in a stressful situation. Within the first year of life most infants direct attachment behavior toward one person, seek proximity to them, and object when they are separated from them. A pattern of interaction develops based on the availability and responsiveness of the primary figure (Shaffer & Emerson, 1964).

According to Bowlby (1982), "The theory of attachment advanced is an attempt to explain both attachment behavior with its episodic appearance and disappearance and also the enduring attachments that children and older individuals make to particular

figures” (p. 372). Bowlby (1988) defined the object that is likely to elicit attachment behavior as older or wiser than the infant, thus making the process open for a broad spectrum of attachments, not just the mother. He also proposed that the pattern of attachment that developed in childhood was enduring and relatively stable throughout the life span.

Attachment theory focuses on the bond between child and caregiver and the child’s resulting views of self and others. Through interacting with the caregiver the child develops internal working models constructed of beliefs about the caregiver and the worthiness of the self as deserving of care and attending. According to Bowlby (1988) children internalize interactions with caregivers over time. These early attachments serve as a model for later relationships as the child assesses both the attachment figure and the self. It is here that the parallel between object relations and attachment theories can be seen. As Bowlby states, “Within the attachment framework the concept of internal working model of an attachment figure is in many respects equivalent to, and replaces, the traditional psychoanalytic concept of internal object” (1988, p. 120). According to Bowlby (1980) continuity of attachment style is due primarily to the persistence of these internal working models. Confidence in the attachment figure (or lack of it) builds up slowly from infancy through adolescence. Over time the internal working models become less a characteristic of the relationship and more a characteristic of the individual. As such they are more stable and less subject to change. According to Karen (1994) the internal working model, “reflects the child’s relationship history, codifying the behaviors that belong to an intimate relationship, and defining how he will feel about himself when he is closely involved with another person” (p. 204).

Ainsworth worked with Bowlby and in many ways influenced the development of his theory. It is her work with Baltimore families that led to eventual operationalization of his attachment behaviors using the strange situation technique (Bretherton, 1992). In-home observations of interactions between mothers and infants found that mothers exhibited differences in sensitivity and promptness when responding to their infants. This maternal sensitivity, or lack of it, was related to the patterns of attachment and exploratory behavior the children displayed in the laboratory when they were one year old (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Hall, 1978). It is through research using the “strange situation” technique that three principal attachment patterns were identified (for full description see Ainsworth et al., 1978).

The defining characteristics of attachment are proximity maintenance, safe haven, and secure base. It is these characteristics that are measured in the strange situation technique (Hazan & Shaver, 1994). *Secure* attachment is characterized by confidence that the attachment figure will be available and respond to the child’s needs. The other two patterns observed, *anxious resistant* and *anxious avoidant* were related to less responsiveness from the mother. Anxious resistant attachment results when the child cannot count on the availability or responsiveness of the attachment figure. Anxious avoidant attachment is the pattern that forms when the child comes to expect rejection, thus learning to avoid the attachment figure (Bowlby, 1988). Main and Solomon (1990) examined videotapes of 200 infants who were unclassifiable in the existing strange situation categories because they exhibited conflicted behaviors in the presence of their parents. A fourth category, *disorganized-disoriented* was added based on these

observations. It was found that the majority of maltreated infants fit into this category (Main, 1996).

### Attachment Figures

In discussing attachment figures Bowlby (1982) stated, “almost from the first many children have more than one figure towards whom they direct attachment behavior” (p. 304). After their first year of life most children have more than one attachment figure. However, Bowlby concluded that they are not equivalent but arranged in order of significance. He clarified that others besides the mother can take the role of the primary attachment figure if they are responsive to the needs of the child and interact with the child in a lively manner. Bowlby (1982) made the following observation concerning the attachment figure:

Naturally, quite often figures who were readily responsive to crying and who frequently interacted socially were also those who were most frequently available. But this was not always so: for example, some mothers who were available all day were not responsive to or sociable with their infants, whereas some fathers who were not frequently available interacted strongly with their infants whenever they were with them. In such families, Shaffer and Emerson found, a child tended to become more intensely attached to father than mother (p. 315).

Although Bowlby (1982) and Ainsworth et al. (1978) clarified that the attachment figure can be someone other than the biological mother, this was seen as the exception rather than the rule. Bowlby (1988) noted that most studies using the strange situation technique have been conducted by observing the mother and child. He added that since

the child develops attachment patterns with the mother based on her treatment, “it is more than likely that, in a similar way, the pattern he develops with his father is the product of how his father has treated him” (p. 10).

Data from additional research suggest that most children form strong bonds to both mother and father (Kotelchuck, 1972; Lamb, 1976, 1977; Shaffer & Emerson, 1964). Shaffer and Emerson (1964) found that while 65% of the infants in their study preferred mother, 27% preferred both father and mother. By eighteen months only 17% had a solitary attachment to mother. Kotelchuck’s (1972) findings support those of Shaffer and Emerson. He found that while 55% of infants showed maternal preference, 25% showed paternal preference and 20% exhibited joint preference. Lamb’s (1976, 1977) research found that infants showed no preference for mothers over fathers. Eight and twenty-four month olds showed no preference while twelve and eighteen-month-olds tended to prefer the mother when they were stressed. His research supported Bowlby’s contention that children arrange their attachments hierarchically, with the mother being favored when both parents were present and the child was stressed, while either parent was sought when the stranger was present. Because this preference was only present in twelve and eighteen-month-old infants and not present in those infants who were eight or twenty-four months old this finding could be explained based upon the developmental stage of the child.

The role of the mother in attachment cannot be dismissed because even in cases where the father is highly involved she continues to serve as primary caregiver. Neither can the father’s role in attachment be as readily ignored as it has been in the past. According to Karen (1994),

the formative power of the second parent – whether he is harsh or accepting, tyrannical or easygoing, highly involved or abdicating, living at home or long gone – is critical too. This fact has been established over and over again in clinical work, where unsatisfactory relationships with or abandonment by fathers often require years of working through (p. 199).

### Adult Attachment

Since the 1980s a great deal of research has focused on the idea that childhood attachment patterns, based on internal working models of self and other, persist and serve as a model for adult relationships (for review see Feeney & Noller, 1996). When Main and Goldwyn (1984) developed the Adult Attachment Interview to study children and their parents by focusing on internal working models the trend toward studying adult attachment began (Perlman & Bartholomew, 1994). Bowlby (1979) proposed that internal working models are constructed of our beliefs and expectations about self and others and form the basis for future relationships. In addition internal working models incorporate memories of previous attachment experiences, attachment needs as they relate to relationships and strategies for meeting those needs (Collins & Read, 1994).

Weiss (1982) proposed that adult romantic relationships meet the criteria for attachment relationships. Partners seek proximity to each other and, if felt security is maintained, use the relationship as a base for exploration. Separation often leads to protest in an effort to reestablish proximity, and prolonged separation leads to despair and eventual detachment. According to Hazan and Shaver (1994),



the process of attachment formation, at any age, is hypothesized to involve the same sequence: proximity seeking followed by safe-haven behavior followed by the establishment of a secure base. In some cases, of course, the process will not be completed (p. 12).

Though there are similarities in patterns of attachment from childhood to adulthood there are also some significant differences. In childhood the relationship exists between child and caregiver with the child depending on the adult for care and protection. In adulthood an attachment figure, usually a peer, is chosen freely and the relationship is reciprocal. Adults are not as readily subjected to activation of the attachment system when they are distressed or separated from the attachment figure. Adult attachment relationships are an integration of the attachment, caregiving, and sexual behavioral systems (Ainsworth, 1982; Hazan & Shaver, 1994; Weiss, 1982)

Hazan and Shaver (1987) are widely credited with the first effort to expand the application of attachment theory to adult intimate relationships by conceptualizing adult romantic relationships as an attachment process. They proposed that attachment theory serves as a valuable heuristic for understanding individual differences in experience of romantic relationships. Hazan and Shaver also developed a forced choice typological measure based on Ainsworth's three attachment classifications. The instrument consists of three paragraphs providing brief descriptions of the three attachment styles. Subjects are asked to choose the paragraph that best describes them. Use of this self-report measure identified differences based on the subject's self-classification, beliefs about self and other, and recall of childhood familial experiences. Individuals rated as secure reported more trust and happiness in relationships, were more accepting and supporting

of their partners, and were involved in relationships of longer duration. Avoidant subjects were found to be fearful of closeness and jealous of their partners. Anxious/ambivalent types experienced more obsession, need for reciprocation, desire for union, and extreme sexual attraction in relationships. Parental characteristics, including father's characteristics, were related to attachment style thus offering some preliminary support for continuity of attachment patterns beyond childhood (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Hazan and Shaver's (1987) adult attachment instrument has been used extensively in research in the area of adult attachment. Shaver and Hazan (1993) offer a comprehensive review of the research conducted through the early 1990s. Collins and Read (1990) expanded the typological instrument developed by Hazan and Shaver to form an 18-item Likert type instrument, the Adult Attachment Scale (AAS). When the data were subjected to a factor analysis three underlying dimensions of adult attachment were found, "the extent to which an individual (a) is comfortable with closeness (Close), (b) feels he or she can depend on others (Depend), and (c) is anxious or fearful about being abandoned or unloved (Anxiety)" (Bradford & Lyddon, 1994, p. 217). Other researchers have expanded and modified Hazan and Shaver's (1987) instrument and it has been used extensively for assessing adult attachment (Feeney, Noller, & Callan, 1990; Simpson, 1990).

Bartholomew and Horowitz (Bartholomew, 1990; Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991) presented a model of adult attachment based upon models of self and other (also conceptualized as dependency and avoidance). These models were dichotomized as either negative or positive to produce four attachment styles. According to Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991),

Dependency can vary from low (a positive self regard is established internally and does not require external validation) to high (positive self-regard can only be maintained by others' ongoing acceptance). Avoidance of intimacy reflects the degree to which people avoid close contact with others as a result of their expectations of aversive consequences (p. 228).

Individuals with a *secure* attachment style have a positive view of self and other.

*Preoccupied* individuals have a negative view of self and a positive view of others and need others' approval even though they feel unworthy of receiving such approval. This research further delineated the avoidant attachment style into two forms of adult avoidance of intimacy, *fearful* and *dismissive*. Although identification of both avoidant types appears to be related to negative childhood experiences, specifically rejection by parents, they vary in their dependency on others to provide acceptance. A negative view of self and a negative view of others characterize fearful avoidants. They see others as uncaring and unresponsive and though desirous of associations with others they fear rejection. Relationships with others are avoided in an effort to evade further rejection and vulnerability. Dismissive avoidants have a positive view of self but a negative view of others. Dismissive avoidants deny the need for attachments to others, and avoid attachments to others on the contention that they do not need relationships (Bartholomew, 1990). The four categories proposed by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) were determined to be distinct. Some view the contributions of this research to be one of the most significant advances in the study of adult attachment (Simpson & Rholes, 1998).

Sanford (1997) offered support for a two-dimensional model of adult attachment. He labeled the dimensions *relationship closeness* and *relationship anxiety*. He found that

this model fit married and non-married individuals equally well. Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998) proposed that all attachment classifications correspond to the two dimensions they label *avoidance* and *anxiety*. Bartholomew and other colleagues sometimes used these labels suggesting that, “a negative model of self is closely associated with anxiety about abandonment and that a negative model of others is closely associated with avoidant behavior” (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998, p. 50). Brennan et al. (1998) factor analyzed all available attachment instruments and found that these two dimensions underlie all of them.

Most research in the area of adult attachment has been based on the tenets of attachment theory and the concepts proposed by Bowlby and Ainsworth. Ainsworth's (Ainsworth et al., 1978) classifications were used in typological instruments developed by Hazan and Shaver (1987) to measure adult attachment classifications. This categorical measurement was then expanded and used as a continuous measure by Collins and Read (1990). Bowlby's (1979, 1982) concept of internal working models served as the basis for a two-dimension, four-category measurement developed by Bartholomew and Horowitz (Bartholomew, 1990, Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) to assess models of self and other. These and other adult attachment measures have been used recently to assess how adult attachment patterns relate to relationship outcomes particularly:

(a) relationship satisfaction (Davis, Kirkpatrick, Levy, & O'Hearn, 1994; Feeney, Noller, & Callan, 1994; Hoffman, 1994; Tucker & Anders, 1999), (b) trust (Mikulincer, 1998), (c) jealousy (Sharpsteen & Kirkpatrick, 1997), (d) nonverbal closeness (Tucker & Anders, 1998), (e) partner choice (Frazier et al., 1996) and (f) descriptions of romantic relationships (Morrison, Goodlin-Jones, & Urquiza, 1997). Although the debate

concerning continuity of attachment styles from childhood into adulthood remains unsettled there does appear to be adequate support for the assumption that early childhood relationships with significant individuals are linked to styles of relating to others in adulthood.

### Family of Origin Status

Most of Bowlby's (1973, 1980, 1982) work in the area of separation and loss focused on maternal deprivation and the resulting ill effects it visited upon development. Cases of temporary inaccessibility (separation) or permanent inaccessibility (loss) of the mothering figure were found to lead to protest, despair, and detachment (Bowlby, 1973). Losses occurring in the first five years of life were determined to be especially problematic for future development, often resulting in anxious attachment. Loss can have extreme effects on some individuals. Bowlby (1979) discussed adults who become so self-reliant that attachment behavior is inhibited. These individuals are distrustful and disclaim any need for relationships, similar to Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) dismissing avoidants. These individuals choose to avoid relationships or to be in the kinds of relationships that prevent the internal working model from being updated (Bowlby, 1979).

Though the attachment perspective paid little attention to the separation or loss of the father, this is a more common scenario in modern families. With current high divorce rates and greater occurrence of women having children without marrying almost 50% of children now live apart from their father (Minerd, 1999). Following divorce, the quality of the relationship between children and non-custodial parents tends to decline and

contact between parents and children diminishes (Amato, Loomis, & Booth, 1995; Arditti & Prouty, 1999, Seltzer, 1991).

Divorce of parents may be negatively related to children's assessments of their relationship with their father. Young adults often interpret the lessening involvement of the father as an indication that he no longer cares about them (Arditti & Prouty, 1999). This is an assumption that can lead to further isolation in the father-child relationship considering that even the most caring fathers go through a transition after divorce in which they are uncertain about how they should act around their children (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 1997). Fine, Moreland, and Schwebel (1983) studied the long-term effects of divorce on parent-child relationships and found that boys and girls had less positive perceptions of their relationships with fathers than their peers from intact families did. Hetherington (1972, 1973) compared adolescent females from three family forms: intact families, divorced families in which the father had little contact and families in which the father had died. During observation, daughters of divorced families sought out males more than the other two groups. When interacting with male peers and adult males these girls, "exhibited tension and inappropriately assertive, seductive, or sometimes promiscuous behavior" (Hetherington, 1972, p. 49). Girls whose fathers had died expressed discomfort, anxiety, and shyness around males. Daughter's age at onset of father absence was also related to variations in behavior with death or divorce before age five having the most effect. This is compatible with Bowlby's (1973) conclusions regarding the impact of age at maternal separation or loss. Hetherington noted that the differences she found when the girls were adolescents persisted into adulthood. After

twenty years many of the women were married to traditional and emotionally remote partners, while others continued to feel apprehensive around men (Secunda, 1992).

Family of origin status appears to be related to attachment style. A study of college women whose parents had divorced found that these women reported less secure attachment styles. The authors concluded that parental divorce might play a vital role in the development of internal working models of self and relationships (Evans & Bloom, 1996). Henry and Holmes (1998) found that daughters of divorce reported poorer relationships with parents, especially with fathers, were less likely to be classified as secure, and “were much more likely to be preoccupied- to hold negative views of themselves in relationships, yet to think positively about significant others” (p. 291). They also reported a sense of helplessness in dealing with interpersonal problems. Brennan and Shaver (1998) surveyed 1,407 nonclinical individuals and found that subjects with divorced parents were more often classified as fearful, while those with one or both of their parents deceased were more often classified as dismissing.

Long-term effects of parental divorce remain inconclusive. The previously cited research noted differences in adjustment levels of adults from divorced families and those who had suffered the loss of a parent through death while other researchers find no differences for individuals from divorced and intact families (Sinclair & Nelson, 1998). Ample evidence suggests that the loss of a father, whether through divorce or death, creates a situation in which the attachment bond is altered or broken often resulting in insecure attachment patterns and anxiety about relationships in adulthood. According to Sexton, Hingst, and Regan (1989), “The apparent effect of a divorce on parental bonding is that children later report that their parents were less able to provide affection, warmth

and an emotional bond” (p. 163). Biller (1993) maintained that when children, both male and female, face this kind of loss they experience a deprivation of exposure to a male figure because few situations exist that can provide the continuous availability of a male that matches the significance of the father. In addition, reason for the loss and age that the loss occurred may contribute to the seriousness of the perceived loss since attachment theory views the first five years as critical to the development of attachment bonds.

### Parental Contributions

Although there has been some speculation of late that parents have less influence than previously thought most family scientists agree that parental characteristics are antecedent to individual differences in children’s development. Dimensions of care and control have consistently been identified as the principal elements in measures of parenting and have been linked to diverse outcomes in individuals from childhood through adulthood (Arindell et al., 1998; Baumrind, 1991; Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979; Schaefer, 1965; Weiss & Schwartz, 1996). Lamb (1997) proposed that, “students of socialization have consistently found that parental warmth, nurturance, and closeness are associated with positive child outcomes whether the parent or adult involved is the mother or father” (p. 13). Levels of sensitivity and responsiveness in caregiving serve as the basis for the attachment bond between infant and caregiver in childhood and contribute to the subsequent development of internal working models of self and others (Ainsworth, 1982; Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1988; Bretherton, 1993). Infant attachment styles are related to caregiver behavior. Secure attachment results from caregiving that is sensitive and responsive, anxious resistant attachment



results when caregiving is inconsistent, and anxious avoidant attachment results when the caregiver is rejecting (Bowlby, 1988). The disorganized/disoriented pattern is observed in infants when the caregiver is neglectful or depressed (Main & Solomon, 1990).

According to Parker et al. (1979), “care has been identified theoretically and supported empirically by factor analytic studies, as the major parental dimension” (p. 8). Care can be dichotomized as high care, which is associated with empathy, closeness, emotional warmth, and affection versus absence of care characterized by neglect, indifference and emotional coldness. Control varies from high, including intrusion, excessive contact, prevention of independent behavior, overprotection, and infantilization to low or “allowance of independence and autonomy” (Parker et al., 1979, p. 8).

Although there is variation in quality and quantity of maternal involvement most children grow up with a mother who is “accepting and emotionally accessible” (Billler, 1993, p. 4). There are vastly different levels of involvement for fathers. Some fathers are available and committed to their children and others are more like strangers. Failure to attempt to discern individual differences in daughter’s adjustment based on these qualitative differences in fathering could be a major oversight.

Early research conducted on the effects of fathering on children’s development focused primarily on the father’s impact on sex role development. Research was conducted predominately with absent and uninvolved fathers (Hetherington, 1972, 1973; Vargon, Lynn, & Barton, 1976). It was assumed that comparing intact families with those without a father present would illuminate the differences between groups and identify the unique contributions of the father. What was usually highlighted in research was that fathers were deficient in their role and in the contributions they make to the family

(Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997). This is not a surprising conclusion when studying divorced families considering the large percentage of children who reside with the mother after divorce and the declining involvement of noncustodial fathers. Fathers seem to play an important role in the daughter's sex role development as well as her personality and personal adjustment. Fathers are more discriminating and reinforcing of what they consider to be gender appropriate behavior (Biller & Weiss, 1970; Phares, 1996). Fish & Biller (1973) found that high paternal nurturance and positive paternal involvement were related to daughter's personal adjustment while high levels of paternal rejection were negatively related to daughter's personal adjustment. This study supported findings of the research conducted by Biller and Weiss (1970) in which five-year-old children with uninvolved or rejecting fathers had more difficulty in personality adjustment than those with a warm and nurturing father. Biller and Kimpton (1997) presented support for father's emotional warmth and availability during the school-aged years. There is ample evidence that children benefit from father's care and function better socially and emotionally as adults when the father is involved in their lives.

Mothers and fathers interact with children differently. Fathers tend to spend more time in play (Lamb, 1997). Even though fathers are repeatedly shown to spend less time playing with children than mothers do, it is believed that the intensity of the play and the novelty of it make it more memorable and sought after. According to Lamb (1997), "This enhanced salience may increase father's influence beyond what would be expected based on the amount of time they spend with their children" (p. 5). Hammer (1982) agreed that the father represents a more powerful figure to the child because of his scarcity. This can have a particular effect on the daughter. Because the father is more distant his role is

often perceived as more powerful and he, more than the mother, tends to be the parent that the daughter wants to please (Sharpe, 1994). Lamb et al. (1979) added, "Relative paternal inaccessibility means that girls have to work harder for their father's attention and are thus motivated to behave in a way that will meet with paternal approval" (p. 103).

Appleton (1981) conducted intensive interviews with women concerning their relationships with their fathers and other men in their lives. He maintained that the early father-daughter relationship impacts women's adult development. He found that father's care and support impacted the daughter in childhood and was related to her reports of good relationships with men in adulthood. Women who reported that their fathers were distant, intrusive, or completely unavailable cited various adult adjustment problems. Appleton found that only 20% of the women in his study felt they had received the type of fathering necessary for developing the kinds of skills they would need for participating in adult intimate relationship. Although Appleton's data collection practices have been criticized, his interviews presented a rich accounting of the father's importance in his daughter's life. Biller and Trotter (1994) offered support for the importance of fathers. They proposed that the father has a major influence on the daughter's ability to relate to men. Frustration in the father-daughter relationship can lead to a negative attitude toward men and difficulty maintaining intimate relationships. When daughters suffer repeated separations from their fathers they learn not to fully trust men. Biller (1993) contended that when the father is available and nurturing the child has a greater chance of developing socially, emotionally, and intellectually. He proposed that the contributions that the father makes to the daughter have been underestimated. As he stated,

Because the relative involvement of the father may not have an obvious and immediate influence on the young female, the tendency has been to overlook his long-term effect on his daughter. Just as the mother is the first woman in her son's life, the father is the first man in his daughter's life (p. 64).

Only in the last ten years has research begun to highlight the importance of the father in the development of children. There still remains a dearth of research in the area of fathers and daughters. Despite the fact that the father's role in development may be important, the father-daughter dyad remains the least studied relationship in the family (Lamb, Owen, & Chase-Lansdale, 1979). Failing to assess the importance of the father's role in his daughter's life may overlook valuable insights into her development. Tessman (1989) states,

The quality of emotional engagement between father and daughter frequently remains as a powerful undercurrent giving direction to that particular vision of *happiness* which may become one guiding force in a woman's life and affects her perception of the future or futility of her own efforts in striving toward it (p. 198).

The role of the father in his daughter's development is still relatively unknown. Recent research in the area of fathers and daughters has focused on the father daughter bond and daughter's adult relationship outcomes (Hoffman, 1994; Yalcinkaya, 1997) but more research needs to be conducted in this area. It appears that mother's care as well as father's care will make a positive contribution to the daughter's emotional well-being and relationship outcomes.

## Relationships Outcomes

Roles for women and the types of intimate relationships they form in adulthood continue to grow in diversity. According to the U.S. Census report (Day, 1996), 20% of women never marry and women who do marry enter a marriage at a later age. In 1995 there were 2,333,000 marriages performed while 1,169,000 divorces were awarded. According to projections by McGoldrick, Heiman, and Carter (1993) 15% of women will not have children, half will divorce, and 20% will divorce twice. Increasingly more women are opting to have children outside of marriage. All of these statistics reflect changes in the way women approach the issues of relationships and family formation.

In a study comparing married and never-married women, Walsh (1994) found that both groups showed a preference for marriage over singlehood. Overall, never-married women had less trust in relationships and more uncertainty when interacting with men than did the married group. A notable difference was that women in the never-married group reported poorer father-daughter relationships than did the married group. In addition these ratings of poor father-daughter relationships increased over the life span (Walsh, 1994).

Research into relational issues for women benefited from the redirection of focus found in the work of women like Carol Gilligan (1982). Gilligan focused on the centrality of relationships in women's lives and provided new understanding of the development of women. Women develop in the "context of relationships, rather than as an isolated or separated autonomous individual" (Surrey, 1991, p. 59). In their work from the attachment perspective Davis, Kirkpatrick, Levy, and O'Hearn (1994) provided support for the importance of relationships in women's lives. They proposed that traditional

gender roles and expectations might impact attachment styles and other variables of study. The authors state, “females are the makers, maintainers, and breakers of relationships” (p. 187). It is because relationships are important to women that anxiously attached women may work harder than securely attached individuals to make a relationship work. Thus offering a different reason for relationship outcomes than those found for men. Although Hazan and Shaver (1987) found no differences based on gender, Levy, Blatt and Shaver (1998) did find gender differences in attachment style. Women were disproportionately rated as fearful avoidant and “fearful avoidant individuals are often seen as the most distressed and least healthy (They are the least trusting, the least assertive, and so on)” (p. 416). Men were similarly rated along gender lines as dismissing avoidant. It would appear from this distinction that women wanted to be in relationships, even if they feared rejection or the inherent vulnerability, while men more often denied the need for relationships.

In a study to examine stability of attachment patterns over time Kirkpatrick and Hazan (1994) compared attachment styles at Time 1 and then four years later. They found that relationship status appeared to be more closely related to current adult attachment style than previous attachment style. Individuals rated as secure were more likely to have married and less likely to be divorced or separated after four years, avoidants were more likely to not be dating and not looking or to be dating more than one person. Ambivalent individuals were the most likely to be looking for a partner while avoidant and ambivalent types were both more likely to have experienced a breakup in the last four years than the secure types were.

Secure attachment is related to higher levels of relationship satisfaction in adult romantic relationships (Koski & Shaver, 1997). Insecure attachment types vary in both their motivation to become involved in relationships, and their ability to maintain relationships. According to Bartholomew (1990) relationship quality is influenced by attachment style because it influences partner selection as well as characteristics of relational interactions. The preponderance of evidence presented from previous research suggests that adult relationship outcomes are strongly influenced by attachment patterns.

#### Purpose of the Study

This research is a descriptive study to determine the relationship between parental characteristics that a) are judged to promote or discourage attachment in childhood and b) serve as a model for later relationship functioning, to examine whether these parental characteristics relate to adult relationship outcomes for women. The outcomes considered were women's adult attachment patterns (avoidance and anxiety) and adult romantic relationship satisfaction).

#### Importance of the Study

Though much is known about the contributions that the mother makes to the development of children, research into the dynamics of the father-daughter relationship suffers from a relative lack of exploration even though fathers may be antecedent to individual differences in the daughter's development and concomitant ability to form satisfying relationships with men in adulthood. Significant findings would impact individuals, families, and professionals who work with families through education and

counseling. Understanding father's contributions to their daughter's development would guide programming in parenting education and hopefully lead to greater father involvement. More importantly, contributions could be made to a greater understanding of women's perspectives on previous experiences and the impact it can have in their lives.

#### Definition of Terms

1. Father, for the sake of this study, will be the biological father.
2. Mother, for the sake of this study, will be the biological mother.
3. Parental characteristic that will be studied to assess if they contribute to the variance in daughter's relationship satisfaction and adult attachment style will be mother's and father's levels of care and overprotection before the daughter's age of sixteen. These are the parental characteristics that lead to parent-child bonding in childhood.
4. Family of Origin Status includes composition of the household, biological parents' marital status, divorce, or death of parents, custodial parent, and frequency of contact with noncustodial parent up until the age of sixteen.
5. Relationship status reflects the respondent's marital status (number of times and length), dating status and length of involvement, number of romantic relationships, and average length of romantic relationships.
6. Daughter's adult attachment style is the amount of avoidance and anxiety she experiences in general about adult romantic relationships.



7. Relationship satisfaction for women is a subjective assessment of the individual's experience of happiness and contentment they perceive in their current or most significant relationship.

### Conceptual Hypotheses

Attachment theory proposes that caring and responsiveness of caregivers in childhood leads to development of secure bonds in childhood that establish patterns and expectations about relationships in adulthood. Continuity of attachment patterns are expected to progress in the following ways:

1. Daughter's perception of parents as more caring will be negatively related to anxiety and avoidance.
2. Daughter's perception of parents as more overprotective will be positively related to anxiety and avoidance.

Parental characteristics of care and overprotection and the resulting adult attachment patterns will be expected to impact the daughter's subjective evaluation of satisfaction in her most significant adult relationships in the following ways:

3. Daughter's perception of parents as more caring will be positively related to relationship satisfaction.
4. Daughter's perception of parents as more overprotective will be negatively related to relationship satisfaction.
5. Daughter's anxiety and avoidance will be negatively related to relationship satisfaction.

## Outline of Dissertation

The remainder of the dissertation will progress through Chapter III which provides a description of the methodology employed to conduct the study including the research design, characteristics of the participants chosen for the study, and the reasons they were chosen, instruments used to measure the variables under investigation, limitations and assumptions, and the statistical analyses that were used in this study. Chapter IV will outline the results of the research including characteristics of the sample, the instruments used, and present the findings of the data analyses as they relate to the hypotheses of the study. Chapter V will summarize the findings and offer suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

This research is a descriptive study to determine the relationship between parental characteristics that are, a) judged to promote or discourage attachment in childhood and b) serve as a model for later relationship functioning, to examine whether these parental characteristics relate to adult relationship outcomes for women. The outcomes considered were women's adult attachment patterns (avoidance and anxiety) and adult romantic relationship outcomes (relationship status and relationship satisfaction).

All data were collected by a four page self-report measure (see Appendix A) containing demographic information, the shortened version of the Parental Bonding Instrument, the PBI-BC (Klimidis, Minas, & Ata, 1992), with the same versions for mother and father, the Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998), and the Relationship Assessment Scale, (Hendrick, 1988). Inconclusive evidence exists concerning the relationship between any unique contributions of father's care and overprotection and adult daughter's relationship satisfaction when the Parental Bonding Instrument is used as a categorical measure (Hoffman, 1994). This study used the PBI and the adult attachment instrument as continuous measures of the underlying dimensions of each, parental care and

overprotection for the PBI and avoidance and anxiety for the Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment.

The instrument and a consent form (see Appendix B) explaining the study were given to a convenience sample of 270 adult women during monthly meetings of professional women's organizations across the state, and were distributed during one statewide meeting. Instruments were collected at the meetings or a stamped addressed envelope was provided to subjects who wished to complete the measure at home. Participants were asked to provide demographic information, perceptions of parental care and overprotection up to the age of sixteen, general feelings about romantic relationships, and subjective feelings of satisfaction in current or most significant romantic relationship. According to Copeland and White (1991), "Perceptions fall under the rubric of subjective conditions, amenable to self-report methodology rather than being interpersonal events" (p. 29). Because continuity between patterns of interacting in childhood and adulthood was assumed for this study, self-report measures were considered to be useful for determining variables that were not directly observable.

### Instruments

In outlining suggestions for future research Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) indicated that investigating attachment patterns in terms of the two dimensions of anxiety and avoidance might be more advantageous than using the four prototypes of secure, fearful, preoccupied, and dismissing. Griffin and Bartholomew (1994) later proposed that the four category model, which uses a prototypical approach, contributed greater explanatory power and suggested that the factors involved in the dimensional approach

might not truly reflect the underlying qualities of what is being studied. Fraley and Waller (1998) provided evidence that using the dimensional approach can best assess attachment because, “use of categorical measurement models assessing continuously distributed constructs seriously undermines reliability, validity, and statistical power” (p. 105). The instruments chosen to measure parental bonding and adult attachment for this research were dimensional models, were used as continuous measures, and adhered to the recommendations made by Fraley and Waller (1998).

According to Feeney, Noller, and Roberts (1998), “there is a strong association between attachment style and relationship satisfaction no matter which methods are used to assess attachment style” (p. 486). It was thought that using continuous dimensional measures for parental care and overprotection, and adult attachment avoidance and anxiety, even with a brief instrument for relationship satisfaction would elucidate those associations. Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998) proposed that research might benefit from a more carefully constructed instrument like the one they designed. Their measure was used for this study as a continuous measure of avoidance and anxiety in adult romantic relationships.

### Parental Care and Overprotection

Parker, Tupling, and Brown (1979) developed the Parental Bonding Instrument to measure parent-child bonding from the perspective of the child. According to the authors the scale can be used with adult children as a retrospective measure of parental behavior. The instrument uses two subscales to assess the dimensions of parenting, one for care (versus indifference and rejection) and one for overprotection (versus encouragement of

independence and autonomy). Both subscales are scored ranging from zero to three. Subjects are asked to rate each parent as they remember them in their first sixteen years. Combining scores on the subscales allows classification of four styles of parental bonding: high care-low overprotection (optimal bonding), low care-low overprotection (absent or weak bonding), high care-high overprotection (affectionate constraint), and low care-high overprotection (affectionless control). The original version was shown to have excellent test-retest reliability (Wilhelm & Parker, 1990), and has been used extensively as a categorical model of the four parental bonding patterns (Gittleman, Klein, Smider, & Essex, 1998; Hoffman, 1994) and as a dimensional model measuring parental care and overprotection (Cavedo & Parker, 1994; Kitamura, Sugawara, Shima, & Toda, 1998; Mackinnon, Henderson, & Andrews, 1993).

The PBI has undergone several modifications from its original 25-item version. One of the original authors identified five items that might lead to response problems due to double negative interpretations. These items were subsequently dropped from the measure (Parker & Gladstone, 1996). Because of validity issues with the shortened scale Gamsa (1987) reconstructed the scale by replacing the negatively worded statements with positively worded statements. By eliminating the confusion caused by the negatively worded items the researcher found mean scores for subjects, which were in line with the original norms reported by Parker et al. (1979).

Several authors have presented shortened versions of the PBI (Klimidis, Minas, & Ata, 1992; Todd, Boyce, Heath, & Martin, 1994). Klimidis et al. (1992) developed an 8-item version of the PBI (the PBI-BC) and found that the factor structure closely matched the original version. The shortened version was, “shown to have reasonable internal

reliability” (p. 374). When used with a sample of 631 adolescents, Klimidas et al. (1992) reported alpha coefficients of .80 for father care ratings, .72 for father overprotection ratings, .75 for mother care ratings, and .72 for mother overprotection ratings. According to Parker and Gladstone (1996) substituting the shortened versions of the PBI is not advisable for clinical samples but in normative samples a short version would simplify administration.

There has been some question concerning whether the PBI represents the two factors of care and overprotection or three factors including: care, denial of physical autonomy, and encouragement of behavioral freedom. Some researchers have found a three-factor model is more satisfactory (Murphy, Brewin, & Silka, 1997; Sato et al., 1999). Sato et al. (1999) maintained that even though the three-factor model seems to fit better, there is some advantage in using the two-factor model, namely the assignment of parental behaviors to one of the four quadrants formed by the two-dimensional model. Mackinnon, Henderson, Scott, and Duncan-Jones (1989) conducted research with a nonclinical sample and confirmed the two factors of care and overprotection. The shortened version of the PBI developed by Klimidis et al. (1992) closely matches the two-factor structure of the original PBI of care and overprotection. The measure includes two four-item subscales, one for care, example, “Helped me as much as I needed” and “Seemed emotionally cold to me,” and the other for overprotection. The subscale for overprotection includes items like, “Tried to control everything I did” and “Liked me to make my own decisions.” Responses were modified for this research by changing the three-response scale of “never,” “sometimes,” and “usually” (Klimidis et al., 1992) to a five-item Likert type scale from 1 “always” to 5 “never.” Scores range from 1 to 5 for a

maximum score for each subscale of 20. Higher scores indicate higher care and overprotection.

### Adult Attachment Measure

Adult attachment was assessed by the Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). The two dimensions of this measure were factor analytically derived from an initial pool of 482 items representing 60 attachment constructs. According to the authors the avoidance dimension correlated highly with scales measuring avoidance or discomfort with closeness and the anxiety dimension correlated highly with scales measuring preoccupation with attachment, jealousy, and fear of rejection.

This instrument contains an eighteen-item subscale for avoidance, example, “I am nervous when my partners get too close” and “I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down.” The eighteen items for the avoidance subscale include such items as, “I worry about being alone” and “I resent it when my partner spends time away from me.” The subscale responses are constructed on a seven-point Likert type scale ranging from 1= “disagree strongly” to 7 = “agree strongly.” Several items on each subscale are reverse scored and when scores are summed the maximum total score for each subscale is 126.

This instrument can also be used to cluster individuals into the four attachment categories outlined by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991). Even though their research produced stronger results than Bartholomew’s model, the authors recommended use of dimensional scores rather than a categorization technique (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). Dimensional scores were used for the current study.



### Relationship Satisfaction

Relationship satisfaction was measured with the seven-item Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988). The RAS was developed as an instrument that could be used to measure satisfaction in many types of romantic relationships. It is a brief and easy to use measure. Correlations of .80 and .88 between this measure and the much longer Dyadic Adjustment Scale have been reported. “The RAS assesses general satisfaction, how well the partner meets one’s needs, how well the relationship compares to others, regrets about the relationship, how well one’s expectations have been met, love for partner, and problems in the relationship (Hendrick, Dicke, & Hendrick, 1998, p. 138). Alpha reliability of .86 was reported when this instrument was administered to 57 dating couples (Hendrick, 1988).

Satisfaction was measured on a five-point Likert type scale. With two items reverse scored the maximum score for satisfaction is 35 with a higher score indicating a higher rating of satisfaction. This instrument underwent one minor modification for the current study. The letter responses were changed to number responses to match the formatting of the remainder of the questionnaire. Relationship satisfaction with current relationship status was assessed by one item, “How satisfied are you with your current relationship status? (Whether in a relationship or not)” on a seven-point scale with a range from 1 = very satisfied to 7 = very dissatisfied. The values on this scale were reversed so that higher values reflected higher satisfaction with relationship status.

### Family of Origin Status

Six items including parental marital status, death of parents, custodial parent, visitation frequency with noncustodial parent, presence of siblings, and other household members, were used to assess family of origin status. For categories of sibling presence participants were asked to specify gender of sibling. For other household members participants were also asked to specify relationship.

### Relationship Status

Relationship status was assessed in two areas: marital status, and current relationship status. Marital status included number of marriages, years of marriage, and number of divorces. Relationship status consisted of non-marital relationship groups specifically: living with significant other, currently dating, currently not dating, never dated. Participants were asked to specify number of previous significant relationships and average duration of relationships.

### Sample

The identified population for this study was a convenience sample of adult women in professional women's clubs throughout the state of Oklahoma. The demographics for the state indicate a population composition that is 82.9% Caucasian, 8% Native American, 7.7% African American, 3.1% Hispanic, and 1.2% Asian (Oklahoma Almanac, 1997). The results of this research can only be generalized to other groups with characteristics similar to this sample population.

## Data Collection Procedures

Program coordinators of statewide women's professional organizations were contacted to seek participation. The researcher a) explained the purpose of the research being conducted, and b) requested an opportunity to solicit participants for the research study. For the statewide meeting a request was made to have a booth in the exhibition area. When permission was granted the following data collection procedures were adhered to:

1. Researcher or a representative attended meeting and at specified time questionnaire packets were given to participants. Subjects were asked to read and sign consent letter (see Appendix B). Any questions were answered and incentives for participation were explained.
2. Name, address and signature area were detached from the consent letter, the letter portion was returned to subjects, and the name portion was placed in an entry box.
3. All completed surveys were collected at the end of the meeting and sealed in a manila envelope.
4. Addressed, stamped envelopes were provided to participants who had not completed surveys or wished to complete surveys at home. A number was placed on the envelope, which corresponded with the number placed on the name portion of the consent.
5. When all data had been collected three names and addresses of participants were chosen from the pool of names and incentives were awarded. When this process was completed, names and addresses were shredded.

6. Data were coded and entered into the database by the researcher. Instruments will be retained for a minimum of five years, according to guidelines established by the American Psychological Association (1994), and will be secured in a locked cabinet. After five years instruments will be shredded.

### Data Analyses

“Variance accounted for measures describe how much of the variability in the dependent variable is associated with variability in the independent variable(s)” (Newton & Rudestam, 1999, pp. 74-75). Correlation is one of the most popular techniques for determining the variance accounted for by different variables and sets of variables and can be used to determine the strength and direction of the association between variables (Pedhazur, 1997). Correlation coefficients are “relatively direct measures of relations” between variables of interest (Kerlinger, 1986, p. 214). Zero order correlations were computed between the pairs of variables a) mother care, b) mother overprotection, c) father care, d) father overprotection, and e) daughter avoidance, f) daughter anxiety, and g) daughter relationship satisfaction, to determine the direction and strength of relationships

Multiple correlation represents the correlation between scores on a criterion variable and scores from predictor variables combined (Miller, 1991). Multiple correlations were computed to determine if there is a significant increment of variance accounted for when father relationship is added to mother relationship in predicting the daughter’s adult attachment characteristics and relationship satisfaction.

Based on the conceptual hypotheses, the following null hypotheses were developed to test for continuity of attachment patterns:

1. Conceptual hypothesis - Daughter's perception of parents as more caring will be negatively related to anxiety and avoidance.
  - a. There will be no significant relationship between mother's care and daughter's avoidance.
  - b. There will be no significant relationship between mother's care and daughter's anxiety.
  - c. There will be no significant relationship between father's care and daughter's avoidance.
  - d. There will be no significant relationship between father's care and daughter's anxiety.
  - e. There will be no significant increment in variance accounted for when father's care is added to mother's care in predicting daughter's avoidance.
  - f. There will be no significant increment in variance accounted for when father's care is added to mother's care in predicting daughter's anxiety.
2. Conceptual hypothesis - Daughter's perception of parent's as more overprotective will be positively related to anxiety and avoidance.
  - a. There will be no significant relationship between mother's overprotection and daughter's avoidance.
  - b. There will be no significant relationship between mother's overprotection and daughter's anxiety.

- c. There will be no significant relationship between father's overprotection and daughter's avoidance.
- d. There will be no significant relationship between father's overprotection and daughter's anxiety.
- e. There will be no significant increment in variance accounted for when father's overprotection is added to mother's overprotection in predicting daughter's avoidance.
- f. There will be no significant increment in variance accounted for when father's overprotection is added to mother's overprotection in predicting daughter's anxiety.

To determine how parental characteristics and adult attachment patterns impact the daughter's subjective evaluation of satisfaction in her most significant adult relationship, the following null hypotheses were developed from the conceptual hypotheses:

3. Conceptual hypothesis - Daughter's perception of parents as more caring will be positively related to relationship satisfaction.
  - a. There will be no significant relationship between mother's care and daughter's relationship satisfaction.
  - b. There will be no significant relationship between father's care and daughter's relationship satisfaction.
  - c. There will be no significant increment in variance accounted for when father's care is added to mother's care in predicting daughter's relationship satisfaction.

4. Conceptual hypothesis - Daughter's perception of parents as more overprotective will be negatively related to relationship satisfaction.
  - a. There will be no significant relationship between mother's overprotection and daughter's relationship satisfaction.
  - b. There will be no significant relationship between father's overprotection and daughter's relationship satisfaction.
  - c. There will be no significant increment in variance accounted for when father's overprotection is added to mother's overprotection in predicting daughter's relationship satisfaction.
  
5. Conceptual hypothesis - Daughter's anxiety and avoidance will be negatively related to relationship satisfaction.
  - a. There will be no significant relationship between daughter's avoidance and daughter's relationship satisfaction.
  - b. There will be no significant relationship between daughter's anxiety and daughter's relationship satisfaction.
  - c. There will be no significant increment in variance accounted for when daughter's avoidance is added to daughter's anxiety in predicting daughter's relationship satisfaction.

Analysis of variance is an appropriate statistical analysis to conduct with categorical independent variables and continuous dependent variables to determine differences between groups (Keppel, 1991). Analysis of variance was conducted between the continuous variables relationship satisfaction scores, and anxiety and avoidance scores, and the categorical variables relationship status and family of origin status. These

were used to test the following null hypotheses related to daughter's relationship satisfaction and adult attachment style:

6. There will be no significant differences in means for relationship satisfaction and relationship status variables.
7. There will be no significant differences in means for relationship satisfaction and family of origin status variables.
8. There will be no significant differences in means for daughter's attachment style and relationship status variables.
9. There will be no significant differences in means for daughter's attachment style and family of origin status variables.

#### Assumptions

This research was guided by several assumptions. As a retrospective study of parental characteristics it assumed the participant's ability to accurately recall aspects of parental care and overprotection up to the age of sixteen. A self-report instrument was used to collect data and this method assumes that subjects understand the questions and answer honestly (Isaac & Michael, 1997). It is assumed that perceptions of parental characteristics are reflections of actual parenting behavior and not merely an indication of a social desirability bias or parental idealization.

#### Limitations

This research used a cross-sectional design to measure continuity of attachment related characteristics. Truly measuring continuity of these characteristics would require



a longitudinal design that assesses stability of the patterns that this study was attempting to capture. The number of variables that could influence adult relationship outcomes is abundant. Evidence of this can be assessed by the amount of error variance in the variables of study. This is not explained by the direct relationships of the variables to the outcomes or the combinations of the variables in predicting the outcomes. Use of a convenience sample limits the generalizability of the findings to groups other than those with characteristics similar to the sample studied. Self-report measures present several possible limitations. Questions can be misunderstood and result in missing data and the response rate can be affected by participants' failure to return questionnaires (Isaac & Michael, 1997). With a sample population of adult women there are concerns of accurate recall of relationship behaviors of parents before the age of sixteen.

This study did not address parental conflict. This is one aspect of family of origin characteristics, which has been shown to affect adjustment outcomes following parental divorce (Amato & Booth, 1996). In addition, no measure for current relationship with mother or father was conducted. Parker and Gladstone (1996) proposed that continued support and care of the mother to the adult child could result in a general "maternal care response bias" (p. 213).

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA ANALYSES

#### Results

The SPSS Base 9.0 statistical package (1999) was used to analyze all data. Before conducting statistical analyses, scatter plots were generated for each pair of variables, and histograms and tables of residuals were produced to verify that the assumptions for the planned statistical treatments were met. Three of the variables, mother's care, father's care, and daughter's relationship satisfaction, resulted in negatively skewed distributions, thus violating the normality assumption. Logarithmic transformations were performed but failed to contribute any significant correction. According to Gardner (1975), violation of one assumption does not appreciably alter statistical tests. Kerlinger (1992) is stronger in his assessment of violation of statistical assumptions and argues that the importance of normality and homogeneity of variance are overrated. He proposes that, "unless there is good evidence to believe that populations are rather seriously nonnormal and that variances are heterogeneous, it is usually unwise to use a nonparametric statistical test in place of a parametric one" (p. 267). Support was found for use of parametric measures over nonparametric measures in the literature. Due to the robustness of parametric measures (Gardner, 1975; Kerlinger, 1992; Pedhazur, 1997) and the strength of using

parametric measures over nonparametric measures, the decision was made that parametric measures would be used for this study.

### Sample Demographics

Prior to running descriptive statistics for the sample, codes were assigned to the categorical variables. The participants in this study consisted of a convenience sample of 270 adult women solicited through professional women's clubs throughout the state of Oklahoma. The age range of the participants was from 20 years to 87 years with a mean of 44.2. The annual income of the sample ranged from zero to \$100,000 with a mean of \$30,618. Years of education ranged from 11 to 20 with a mean of 14.4. All demographic information for the sample is summarized in Appendix C.

### Instruments

Reliability analyses were conducted on the three measures used in this study, the shortened versions of the Parental Bonding Instrument, the PBI-BC (Klimidas, Minas, & Ata, 1992), the Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998), and the Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988). Means, standard deviations, and alpha reliabilities for all instruments are summarized in Table 1. Treatment of each of the measures is described in the following paragraphs.

#### Parental Care and Overprotection

Parental care and overprotection were measured by the shortened version of the PBI developed by Klimidis et al. (1992), the PBI-BC. Before analyses all items were

Table 1  
Variables, Measures, Reliabilities, Means, and Standard Deviations

Variables	Measures	Reliabilities (Alpha)	Mean	SD
<b>Parental Bonding</b>	<b>Parental Bonding Instrument</b>			
Father's Care	Care Subscale	.91	13.66	4.68
Father's Overprotection	Overprotection Subscale	.67	8.53	1.86
Mother's Care	Care Subscale	.89	16.03	3.42
Mother's Overprotection	Overprotection Subscale	.72	8.74	2.22
<b>Adult Attachment</b>	<b>Multi-Item Measure of Adult Attachment</b>			
Avoidance	Avoidance Subscale	.92	49.95	20.11
Anxiety	Anxiety Subscale	.91	57.84	21.24
<b>Relationship Satisfaction</b>	<b>Relationship Assessment Scale</b>	.92	27.52	6.16

reversed except for items 2, 3, and 5 so that summing the subscale would result in higher scores representing higher values of care and overprotection, thus avoiding confusion in interpreting correlations. The reliability analysis for this sample resulted in alphas of .45 for father's overprotection and .54 for mother's overprotection. Item number 7 was dropped from analysis of the overprotection subscale to increase the alpha reliability to .67 and .72 for father and mother's overprotection respectively. These three-item subscales were then used in all analyses utilizing father and mother's overprotection. The maximum score for care was 20 and for overprotection was 15. The mean for this sample was 13.66 for father's care and 16.03 for mother's care while the means for overprotection were 8.53 for fathers and 8.74 for mothers.

### Adult Attachment Style

Prior to analyses ten items of the Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment were reversed. Items 3, 15, 19, 22, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, and 35 were recoded so that 1 = 7, 2 = 6, and so on. Raw scores on all odd numbered items were then summed to create the total Avoidance score, and scores on all even numbered items were summed to

create the total Anxiety score. The highest score possible for each subscale is 126, with higher scores indicating higher levels of the attributes. The mean for the anxiety subscale was 57.84 with a standard deviation of 21.24. The mean for the avoidance subscale was 49.95 with a standard deviation of 20.11.

### Relationship Satisfaction

The RAS (Hendrick, 1988) was used to measure satisfaction. Two items of the RAS were reverse scored. Before analysis items 4 and 7 were recoded so that 1 = 5, 2 = 4, and so on. Scores were then summed to yield a total score for Satisfaction. Scores for satisfaction range from 7, the lowest satisfaction, to 35, the highest satisfaction. The mean satisfaction score for this sample was 27.52 with a standard deviation of 6.16.

### Demographic Variables

Bivariate correlations (2-tailed) were performed between all demographic variables and the variables under study. Age was negatively related to anxiety,  $-.21, p < .001$ , and mother's care,  $-.14, p < .05$ , and positively related to avoidance,  $.15, p < .01$ . Income was negatively related to anxiety,  $.17, p < .01$ . Satisfaction with current relationship status (whether in a relationship or not) was negatively related to anxiety,  $-.29, p < .001$ , and avoidance,  $-.39, p < .001$ , and positively related to satisfaction,  $.65, p < .001$ . Parent's marital status was negatively related to father's care,  $-.41, p < .001$ , and father's overprotection,  $-.18, p < .01$ . More frequent visitation following parental divorce was related to the daughter's perception of the father as more caring,  $.34, p < .01$ .

### Family of Origin Status

Seventy four percent of the participants' parents were married while the participants lived at home; 21.9% divorced. Visitation frequency with non-custodial parent ranged from 1 = "almost never" to 7 = "at least once a week." The mean for visitation frequency was 3.7. Thirty percent responded that they saw the non-custodial parent "almost never." Additional family of origin status information is available in Appendix C.

### Relationship Status

Slightly more than fifty percent of the subjects were in first marriages, 13% were in second marriages, 14.8% had never married, 31% had been divorced at least one time, 8.8% had been divorced 2 or more times, and 3.7% were widowed. The mean for years married was 21.17. Of the 74 participants not currently married, 17.8% were living with a significant other, 35.6% were dating, and 45.2% were not currently dating. Only one participant (1.4%) reported that she had never dated. The range for previous significant relationships was one to ten with a mean of 2.35.

### Relationship Between Parental Characteristics and Adult Attachment Style

Correlations were conducted to test the hypotheses that relate to the strength and direction of relationships between the variables: mother's care, mother's overprotection, father's care, father's overprotection, and daughter's anxiety, and avoidance. Summaries of correlations are presented in Table 2 and reflect significant relationships between all variables with the exception of father's care and overprotection, and daughter's anxiety.

Table 2  
Correlations Among Parental and Adult Attachment Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Father's Care	1.00					
2 Father's Overprotection	-.06	1.00				
3 Mother's Care	.25***	-.10	1.00			
4 Mother's Overprotection	-.11*	.30***	-.30***	1.00		
5 Daughter's Anxiety	-.07	.06	-.14*	.17**	1.00	
6 Daughter's Avoidance	-.15*	.11*	-.24***	.12*	.35***	1.00

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level (one tailed test)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level.

\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

### Combination of Parental Characteristics in Predicting Adult Attachment Style

Multiple correlations were computed to determine if a significant increment in variance was accounted for when father's characteristics was added to mother's characteristics in predicting daughter's anxiety, and avoidance. In separate regressions, mother's care was entered in block one and father's care was entered into block two. Mother's care accounted for 2% of the variance in anxiety and 6.3% of the variance in avoidance. Adding father's care to mother's care resulted in no significant increment in variance accounted for in predicting daughter's anxiety or avoidance. When the same procedure was followed for entering father's overprotection to mother's overprotection in the equation neither mother's or father's reached significance in predicting daughter's avoidance. Mother's overprotection accounted for 3% of the variance in anxiety, but the addition of father's overprotection provided no significant increment in variance accounted for. Results of all regression analyses are reported in Table 3.

Table 3  
Summary of Regression Analyses

Variable	Predictor Entered and Order	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	F Change	p of F Change	Zero Order
Anxiety	1. Mother Care	.15	.02	.02	5.03	.03	-.15
	2. Father Care	.15	.02	.00	.41	.52	-.08
Anxiety	1. Mother Overprotection	.17	.03	.03	6.59	.01	.17
	2. Father Overprotection	.17	.03	.00	.00	.95	.06
Avoidance	1. Mother Care	.25	.06	.06	16.16	.00	-.25
	2. Father Care	.27	.07	.01	2.05	.15	-.15
Avoidance	1. Mother Overprotection	.11	.01	.01	2.76	.10	.11
	2. Father Overprotection	.13	.02	.01	1.53	.22	.11
Satisfaction	1. Mother Care	.27	.07	.07	19.14	.00	.27
	2. Father Care	.30	.09	.02	4.05	.05	.19
Satisfaction	1. Mother Overprotection	.25	.06	.06	15.89	.00	.25
	2. Father Overprotection	.26	.07	.00	.51	.48	.12
Satisfaction	1. Anxiety	.35	.12	.12	32.06	.00	-.35
	2. Avoidance	.59	.35	.23	80.36	.00	-.57

#### Relationship Between Parental Characteristics and Daughter's Relationship Satisfaction

Correlations were conducted to test the hypotheses that relate to the strength and direction of relationships between the variables mother's care, mother's overprotection, father's care, father's overprotection, and daughter's relationship satisfaction. Results are summarized in Table 4. Significant correlations exist between all parental characteristics and daughter's relationship satisfaction.

Table 4  
Correlations Among Parental Characteristics and Relationship Satisfaction Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1 Father's Care	1.00				
2 Father's Overprotection	-.06	1.00			
3 Mother's Care	.25***	-.10	1.00		
4 Mother's Overprotection	-.11*	.30***	-.30***	1.00	
5 Daughter's Relationship Satisfaction	.19***	-.12*	.27***	-.26***	1.00

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level (one tailed test)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level.

\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level.



Multiple correlations were conducted to determine whether father's characteristics accounted for any significant increment in variance when added to mother's characteristics in predicting daughter's relationship satisfaction. Mother's care was entered first in the regression, and father's care was added second, the result was an  $R^2$  change of .02,  $F = 4.05 (1, 237) p < .05$ . When father's overprotection was added to mother's overprotection in predicting satisfaction, no significant change was observed.

#### Relationship Between Adult Attachment Style and Relationship Satisfaction

Correlations were conducted between daughter's anxiety, avoidance and relationship satisfaction. As reflected in Table 5 the correlations were significantly related. Those reporting higher anxiety and avoidance, reported lower satisfaction. To determine if daughter's avoidance accounted for a significant increment in variance

Table 5  
Correlations Among Adult Attachment and Relationship Satisfaction

Variables	1	2	3
1 Daughter's Anxiety	1.00		
2 Daughter's Avoidance	.35***	1.00	
3 Daughter's Relationship Satisfaction	-.35***	-.58***	1.00

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level (one tailed test)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level.

\* Correlation is significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

accounted for in predicting satisfaction, avoidance was added to anxiety in the regression equation. While anxiety accounted for 12% of the variance in satisfaction, avoidance contributed an additional 23%. The combination of these two variables accounted for 35% of the variance in predicting relationship satisfaction.

### Differences Based on Family and Relationship Status Variables

Analysis of variance was conducted to determine if there were mean differences in anxiety and avoidance scores, and relationship satisfaction scores based on family of origin status groups or relationship status variables. Analyses were run between anxiety, avoidance, and relationship satisfaction means, and the following family of origin variables: parents' marital status, death of parent, custody, visitation frequency, presence of stepparent, and presence of siblings. No significant differences were found between groups for parent's marital status, death of parent, custody, visitation frequency, or presence of stepparent and these were dropped from further analyses. Significant differences were found between means for avoidance by presence of siblings,  $F = 3.77$  (3,248),  $p < .05$

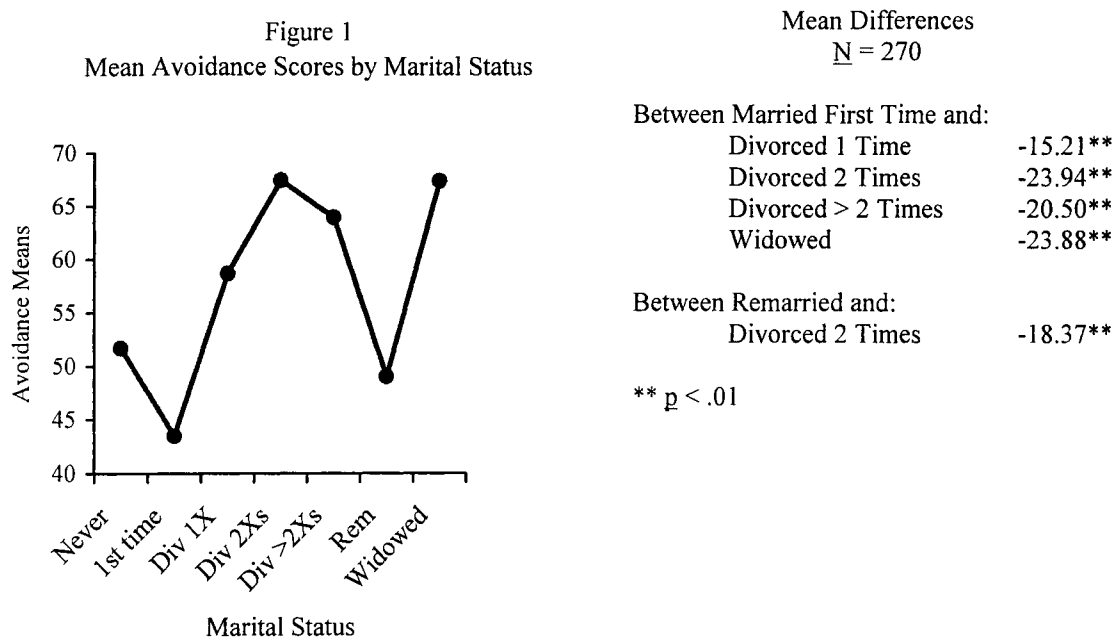
Analysis of variance was also conducted for difference between means for anxiety, avoidance, and relationship satisfaction with the following relationship status variables: marital status, and dating status. Significant differences were found in means for avoidance between marital status categories,  $F = 7.78$  (6,245),  $p < .01$  and the subgroup of dating status categories,  $F = 16.24$  (2,63),  $p < .01$ . Differences were also found for satisfaction means between marital status categories,  $F = 7.72$  (6, 242),  $p < .01$ , and dating status variables,  $F = 7.10$  (2,66)  $p < .01$

### Post Hoc Analysis

Because the  $F$  ratios from the analyses of variance were significant, additional interpretation was required to examine the relationships among the variables. Tukey post

hoc analyses were conducted to interpret the differences based on the subgroups for marital status, dating status, and sibling presence. Tukey HSD is the most common post hoc analysis for assessing all pair wise comparisons, is robust with unequal  $n$ s and has good power (Newton & Rudestam, 1999).

Marital status consisted of six groups: first marriage, divorced once, divorced two times, divorced more than two times, remarried, and widowed. Two of the original categories, divorced three times and divorced four times, were collapsed into divorced more than two times so that post hoc analyses could be conducted. As can be seen in Figure 1, means for avoidance were significantly lower for women who were in first

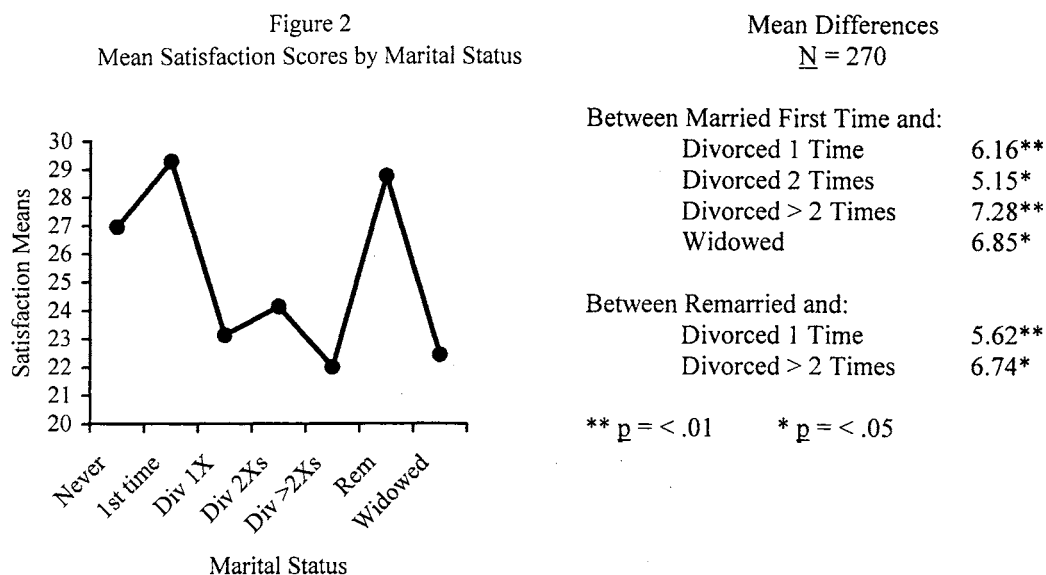


marriages when compared to those who were divorced one, two, or two or more times, and with those who were widowed. Women who were remarried had significantly lower avoidance means than women who had been divorced two times.

When post hoc comparisons between satisfaction means and marital status were conducted, significant differences were found between women who were married for the

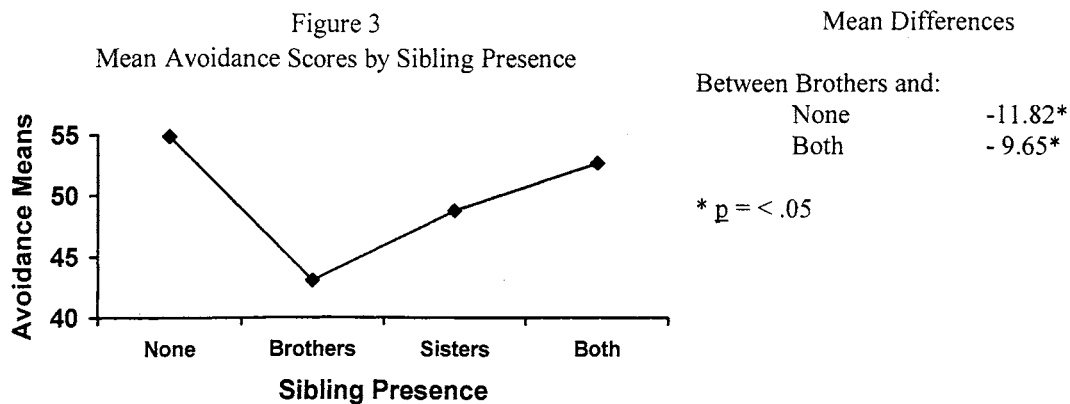
first time and women who were divorced, divorced two times, and divorced more than two times. When remarried women were compared to the other groups significant differences were found between this group and women who were divorced one time, and women who were divorced more than two times. Graphic representation of these relationships and the significant mean differences are provided in Figure 2.

Dating status consisted of four subgroups ( $n = 74$ ): living with significant other, currently dating, not currently dating, and never dated. Only one respondent indicated that she had never dated so this case was dropped from post hoc analyses. Satisfaction means were significantly lower for women who reported they were not currently dating, 22.22, than those who were either living with significant other, 29.38,  $p < .001$  or those



who were currently dating, 28.69,  $p < .001$ . Avoidance means were higher for women who reported that they were not currently dating, 66.53, than those who reported living with significant other, or those who were currently dating with mean differences of 21.38,  $p < .01$ , and 14.19,  $p < .05$ , respectively.

To determine the between group differences in avoidance means by sibling subgroups, four subgroups were analyzed: no siblings, brothers only, sisters only, and both brothers and sisters. Participants with brothers only were found to have significantly lower avoidance means, 43.04, than those with no siblings, and those with both brothers and sisters with mean differences of  $-11.82$  and  $-3.92$ ,  $p < .05$ . These relationships are depicted in Figure 3.



### Summary of Results

The conceptual hypotheses, the variables under study, statistical techniques used to assess the relationships between the variables and test the null hypotheses, with a summary of the findings for this study is provided in Table 6. Significant correlations were found between mother's care and daughter's anxiety, avoidance, and relationship satisfaction, and between father's care and daughter's avoidance and relationship satisfaction. Father's care did not contribute any significant increment in variance when added to mother's care in predicting daughter's avoidance, or anxiety. Father's care contributed significantly to mother's care in predicting daughter's relationship satisfaction. Mother's overprotection and father's overprotection were positively related

to daughter's avoidance, but only mother's overprotection was related to daughter's anxiety. Father's overprotection accounted for no significant increment in variance accounted for when added to mothers in predicting daughter's anxiety, avoidance, or relationship satisfaction.

Daughter's adult attachment style, anxiety and avoidance, were related to relationship satisfaction. Avoidance accounted for a significant increment in variance accounted for when added to anxiety in predicting relationship satisfaction. The combination of these two variables accounted for 35% of the variance in predicting relationship satisfaction. Differences were found for attachment means, and relationship satisfaction means between relationship status subgroups, but relationship satisfaction means differed only by relationship status and not family of origin status. Post hoc analyses identified the between group differences related to marital status, dating status, and sibling presence.

Table 6  
Summary of Hypotheses, Variables, Statistical Techniques, and Results

Conceptual Hypotheses				
1. Daughter's perception of parents as caring will be negatively related to anxiety and avoidance.				
2. Daughter's perception of parents as overprotective will be positively related to anxiety and avoidance.				
3. Daughter's perception of parents as more caring will be positively related to relationship satisfaction.				
4. Daughter's perception of parents as overprotective will be negatively related to relationship satisfaction.				
5. Daughter's anxiety and avoidance will be negatively related to relationship satisfaction.				
Null Hypotheses		Variables	Statistics	Results
1a	No relationship	Mother's care & daughter's avoidance	Correlation	-.24***
1b	No relationship	Mother's care & daughter's anxiety	Correlation	-.14*
1c	No relationship	Father's care & daughter's avoidance	Correlation	-.15*
1d	No relationship	Father's care & daughter's anxiety	Correlation	-.07
1e	No significant variance accounted for	Mother's care + father's care in predicting daughter's avoidance	Multiple correlation	2.05 <sup>a</sup>
1f	No significant variance accounted for	Mother's care + father's care in predicting daughter's anxiety	Multiple correlation	.41 <sup>a</sup>
2a	No relationship	Mother's overprotection & daughter's avoidance	Correlation	.12*
2b	No relationship	Mother's overprotection & daughter's anxiety	Correlation	.17**
2c	No relationship	Father's overprotection & daughter's avoidance	Correlation	.11*
2d	No relationship	Father's overprotection & daughter's anxiety	Correlation	.06
2e	No significant variance accounted for	Mother's overprotection + father's overprotection, in predicting daughter's avoidance	Multiple correlation	1.53 <sup>a</sup>
2f	No significant variance accounted for	Mother's overprotection + father's overprotection, in predicting daughter's anxiety	Multiple correlation	.00 <sup>a</sup>
3a	No relationship	Mother's care & daughter's relationship satisfaction	Correlation	.27***
3b	No relationship	Father's care & daughter's relationship satisfaction	Correlation	.19***
3c	No significant variance accounted for	Mother's care + father's care in predicting daughter's relationship satisfaction	Multiple correlation	4.65** <sup>a</sup>
4a	No relationship	Mother's overprotection & daughter's rel. satisfaction.	Correlation	-.26***
4b	No relationship	Father's overprotection & daughter's rel. satisfaction.	Correlation	-.12*
4c	No significant variance accounted for	Mother's overprotection + father's overprotection in predicting daughter's relationship satisfaction.	Multiple correlation	.51 <sup>a</sup>
5a	No relationship	Daughter's avoidance & relationship satisfaction	Correlation	-.58***
5b	No relationship	Daughter's anxiety & relationship satisfaction	Correlation	-.35***
5c	No significant variance accounted for	Daughter's anxiety + daughter's avoidance in predicting relationship satisfaction	Multiple correlation	80.36*** <sup>a</sup>
6	No difference	Relationship satisfaction means & relationship status	ANOVA	Reject
7	No difference	Relationship satisfaction means & family status	ANOVA	Fail
8	No difference	Attachment means & relationship status variables	ANOVA	Reject
9	No difference	Attachment means & family status variables	ANOVA	Reject

\*\*\* significant at the  $p < 0.001$  level

\*\* significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level

\* significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level

<sup>a</sup> =  $F$  change

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Attachment theory proposes that interactions with significant others in childhood form the basis for expectations about and behavior in adult relationships. Positive, caring parents respond to the child in a way that teaches the child that she or he is worthy of care, and that others can be depended on to provide care. Neglectful or rejecting parents may lead children to view themselves as unworthy and others as unreliable. According to Bowlby (1979) the resulting internal working model of self and other, whether negative or positive, serves as the basis for interactions, and feelings about interactions in adult relationships.

This study was conducted to determine the relationship between parental characteristics that: a) are judged to promote or discourage attachment in childhood, and b) serve as a model for later relationship functioning to examine whether these parental characteristics relate to adult relationship outcomes for women. The outcomes considered were women's adult attachment style (anxiety and avoidance), and adult relationship satisfaction.

#### Characteristics of the Sample

In order to place the findings of the current study into perspective several characteristics of the sample require discussion. Seventy four percent of the participants



grew up in intact families, at least up until the age of sixteen. This percentage of intact families is higher than would be expected with a less homogenous population. No measure was taken in this study concerning the quality of the relationship between the parents, but since so many of the participant's parents were married while the daughter lived at home it could be assumed that these women grew up with the care and attention of two parents. In addition, less than 32% of this sample had experienced divorce themselves, which reflects a lower divorce rate than would possibly be found with another sample. More than fifty percent were in first marriages with a mean of 21.17 years of marriage. A negative skew in the distribution of this sample for mother and father's care, a correlation between mother's care and father's care, and the stability of current relationship could impact results, most likely underestimating the correlations between the variables under study. Most findings were based on correlations and no cause and effect relationships can be assessed or implied. The group of women that this sample was drawn from are interested in and focused upon women's professional lives. As such their socialization may differ from that of the general population. It is likely that if this research were replicated with a more heterogeneous group, the relationships found in this study would be stronger because there would be more variability.

#### Continuity of Attachment Patterns

Parental characteristics of care and overprotection have been identified as the principal elements linked to individual differences in development (Arindell et al. 1998; Baumrind, 1991; Parker et al. 1979; Schaefer, 1965; Weiss & Schwartz, 1996). Consistent with findings by Parker and Gladstone (1996) this sample rated mothers as

more caring and than fathers with means for mothers of 16.03 for care versus 13.66 for fathers. Divorce of parents was negatively related to daughter's perceptions of their fathers as caring. This is consistent with previous research, which reflected that children whose parents divorced had less positive perceptions of their relationship with their fathers than their peers from intact families did (Fine, Moreland, & Schwebel, 1983). Sexton, Hingst, and Regan (1989) found that children of divorce later reported that their parents were less able to provide care and a sufficient emotional bond. For the current sample, a reported increase in visitation frequency was positively related to father's care. It would seem that continued contact with the father mediates a negative perception of paternal care following divorce. Means for father's care were lower in cases of divorce than in cases where parents were married or either parent had died. These results are consistent with conclusions by Arditti and Prouty (1999) who found that young adults interpret a lessening involvement of fathers following divorce as an indication that he no longer cares about them. Henry and Holmes (1998) found that in cases of divorce the relationship with the father seems vulnerable to compromise, resulting in poorer quality.

Rey, Bird, Kopec-Shrader, and Richards (1993) found that older subjects rate their mothers and fathers as less caring. Consistent with their findings age was negatively related to mother's care in this study. Ratings of father's care were not related to age.

The current study offers partial support to previous research relating secure attachment style to parental characteristics. Women who perceived of their mothers and fathers as more caring were less likely to be avoidant or uncomfortable with closeness in adult relationships. Mother's care in the current study was negatively related to daughter's anxiety over abandonment or preoccupation with attachment related issues.

Father's care was not significantly related to daughter's anxiety. When father's care was added to mother's care to determine if additional variance could be accounted for in predicting daughter's anxiety and avoidance, no significant findings resulted. Mother and father's overprotection was related to daughter's avoidance, but only mother's overprotection was related to daughter's anxiety. Findings that father's overprotection was related to daughter's avoidance are counter to those by Yalcinkaya (1997) who found that father's control was not related to attachment style.

As hypothesized significant relationships were found between parental characteristics and adult attachment specifically between parental care and avoidance. Mother's care accounted for 2% of the variance in daughter's anxiety and 6.3% of the variance in avoidance. Though father's care was related to both daughter's anxiety and avoidance, it made no significant contribution above that made by mother's care. This finding is consistent with attachment theory when assumed that the mother is the primary caregiver and attachment figure.

#### Parental Characteristics and Relationship Satisfaction

Neither Yalcinkaya (1997) nor Hoffman (1994) found differences in satisfaction based on parental characteristics. For this study parental characteristics were related to daughter's relationship satisfaction. Father and mother's care contributed to daughter's satisfaction directly and in combination. This is an interesting finding considering that father's care did not make a significant contribution to predicting attachment style above what mother's care contributed. Women who perceived of their mother and father as

overprotective reported lower relationship satisfaction, but father's overprotection did not contribute any variance beyond mother's in predicting lower satisfaction for daughter's.

### Attachment and Relationship Satisfaction

According to Bartholomew (1990) relationship quality is influenced by attachment style because it affects partner selection as well as the types of interactions that occur in the relationship. Adult attachment patterns were expected to impact the daughter's subjective evaluation of satisfaction in her current or most significant adult relationships. In support of findings by other adult attachment theorists (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney, Noller, & Callan, 1994; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) adult attachment style was related to relationship satisfaction in the current study. The more anxiety or preoccupation with attachment issues the women reported, the lower their satisfaction in current or most significant relationships. Avoidance of intimacy accounted for 23% of the variance in relationship satisfaction. When anxiety and avoidance were combined they accounted for 35% of the variance in predicting daughter's relationship satisfaction.

### Differences in Adult Attachment and Relationship Satisfaction Between Groups

Comparisons were made between means scores for anxiety, avoidance, and satisfaction, and family of origin groups and relationship status groups to determine if daughter's differed by family background or current relationship status. The only significant differences for family background were related to sibling presence. Klohnen and Bera (1998) found that avoidantly attached individuals grew up with fewer siblings.

The current study found differences based on gender of siblings. Avoidance means were lower for women who were raised with brothers, than those who were raised with no siblings and those who were raised with both brothers and sisters. The role of the brother in the woman's life could best be understood if assessed as another potential attachment figure.

Despite research relating family of origin status to attachment style and behavior in adult relationships (Evans & Bloom, 1996; Henry & Holmes, 1998; Hetherington, 1972, 1973) no significant differences were found based on parental marital status or death of parent. Due to the low number of women who had experienced the death of a parent or divorce of their parents, no conclusions could be reached.

When between-group differences in attachment style were assessed by marital status it was found that women who were widowed or had been divorced two times were the most avoidant. Women in a first marriage were the lowest in avoidance and significantly lower in avoidance than almost all other groups with the exception of never married women and women who were currently married for the second time.

Satisfaction also differed by relationship status groups by both marital status and dating status. Hoffman (1994) found that married women were more satisfied than single women. This was not the case with the current study. Never married women did not have significantly lower satisfaction scores than any of the other groups. Women in first marriages and those in second marriages did report similar levels of satisfaction while women who had been divorced more than two times reported the lowest satisfaction. Women who were widowed also reported low satisfaction. This could be understood in attachment terms if viewed as a breaking of attachment bonds.

## Conclusions and Suggestions for Future Research

### Adult Attachment Style

Continuity and stability of attachment styles was a major issue to be addressed by this research. The relationships found between parental characteristics and attachment style lend support to the notion that attachment style is a somewhat enduring trait of the individual based on previous experiences with significant others. These relationships are confirmed by previous research by Klohnen and Bera (1998) who found support for longitudinal consistency of attachment patterns.

Direct relationships were found between mother's characteristics, and daughter's anxiety and avoidance, suggesting that the mother has a strong influence on the daughter's development. With this sample of women mothers seem to have provided the quality and quantity of care that led to positive outcomes in adulthood. The basic tenets of theories on women's development highlight the importance of the mother in development. Self in relation theory proposes that the mother-daughter relationship is the earliest model for the daughter to develop empathy and closeness to others. According to Surrey (1991) "The mother-daughter relationship represents only the beginning of a process that can be developed through important relationships with other significant people in childhood, and throughout life if relational contexts are available" (p. 55).

What about the father? There were direct effects between fathers and daughters as well, but they were not as strong as the mother's and added no variance over that which could be accounted for by the mother's characteristics in predicting adult attachment style. It is possible that with this group of adult women the involvement of the father was

less direct than providing care. It is the indirect contributions that the father makes to the family that are difficult to assess (Palkovitz, 1997). The concept of father as economic provider or breadwinner has been prevalent for so long that the term “dead-beat dad” was coined to describe a father who does not financially support his children. Historically as well as in the present, abandoning the breadwinner role is a serious flaw. Bad dads are those that fail to live up to the vital responsibilities of acknowledging paternity, and supporting the children (Pleck & Pleck, 1996). Pressure has remained on the father over the years to at least provide adequate financial care for the family. This expectation sometimes overrides other roles for the father and can best be illustrated through the comments of one of the participants in this study. A seventy two year old woman wrote,

In those days the father was the head of the family. He was a good provider. We lived in the nice part of town and he spent much time keeping grounds and house nice. He was always there for us. He drank some but I don't think he was an alcoholic. Not as affectionate as people are today, played games with us, took us for short trips and did lots of explaining. He was always trying to teach us the important things.

Another fifty-four year old woman wrote, “He instilled an honest, hard-working work ethic, combined with a “can-do” attitude. He loved his children and wife and made many sacrifices to insure their security during his working years.” Many of the women wrote comments that reflected ambivalence. Some spoke of never seeing the father but loving him anyway, many making excuses about his absence or distance. One woman even wrote that her father was emotionally and verbally abusive during her childhood, but that he was a lot of fun and her friends believed that he “hung the moon.” The fact that the

father makes an impact on the development of the daughter is evident in these comments, but evident too is the confusion inherent in the daughter's determination of how to interpret the father's role.

Although correlations between parental characteristics and attachment style were statistically significant, they were not substantively significant. This may indicate that internal working models of self and other may be refined through ongoing experiences and relationship history. No measure was taken for current relationship with parents so the influence of continued parental support cannot be assessed. Stronger correlations between relationship satisfaction, relationship status satisfaction, and adult attachment style suggest that attachment style is more closely linked to current situation than previous experiences. Overall the current study lends support to previous research concluding that attachment styles have enduring as well as situational traits and that both factors play a part in adult relationships (Feeney & Noller, 1996; Kirkpatrick & Hazan, 1994).

### Relationship Satisfaction

Direct relationships were found between mother and father's characteristics and daughter's relationship satisfaction. These correlations were generally stronger than those found between parental characteristics and adult attachment style. It could be concluded that parental characteristics, specifically parental care, contribute to adult relationship satisfaction in a direct way that is not measured by assessing their relationship to attachment style.



A stronger relationship was found between attachment style and relationship satisfaction. The combination of adult anxiety and avoidance accounted for 35% of the variance in satisfaction. The proposition that adult attachment style impacts assessments of satisfaction in relationships was supported. Lower levels of anxiety and avoidance were related to higher satisfaction. The strongest direct correlation found was between relationship satisfaction in current or most significant relationship and satisfaction with current relationship status. This certainly makes sense on an intuitive level. It would follow that women who are satisfied that they are in a relationship would be more satisfied with the relationship.

### Implications

Despite the limitations of this study, specifically use of a convenience sample, cross-sectional approach, and self-report measures, many areas remain that deserve further exploration. There is certainly adequate support for the importance of contributions that parents, both mothers and fathers, make to the daughter's continuing development and relationship outcomes in adulthood. Discovering the aspects of the interchange between parent and child that lead effectively to positive outcomes will not only enlighten preferred parental practices, but will increase our understanding of women's development.

### Suggestions for Future Research

Future research in the area of father-daughter relationships should address the expectations of the fathers and the daughters, and the meanings they contribute to the

the women assess the contribution that the father made to their professional choices. Overall there is a contribution that the father makes to the daughter's satisfaction that is not measured from an attachment perspective. Bowlby (1988) defined the attachment figure as older or wiser than the infant. Future research could test further the differences found in this study as they related to sibling presence. How does having a brother to interact with lessen the female's avoidance or discomfort with closeness?

Social learning theory proposes that through socialization individuals learn the norms and values of their social environments. Children imitate the behavior of both sexes. Observation leads to a greater understanding of each person's role in the interaction (Howard & Hollander, 1997). Appropriate actions are reinforced, repeated, and added to the repertoire of behaviors. Future research could benefit from a social learning perspective on how significant males in the woman's environment encourage and discourage differences in her development deserves more exploration. What types of behaviors are modeled and rewarded that lead to a greater understanding of the expectations others have for women? A social learning perspective would also contribute greatly to a better understanding of women's development. According to Feeney and Noller (1996), "Females greater comfort with intimacy can be understood in terms of socialization patterns, with females being encouraged to be more nurturing and more relationship oriented" (p. 123). With this group of women who focus on occupational goals it could be that work achievement supplants relationship needs as the primary goal, thus leading to less preoccupation with attachment related issues. Why avoidance increases with age for these women is an issue worthy of further investigation. It could be

that increased involvement in professional issues leads to a view that romantic relationships are secondary to other goals.

From a family systems perspective, the parts of the system cannot be understood apart from each other. Future research could benefit from using this perspective to understand how the interaction between the daughter and her father or other male family member helps her develop rules for interacting with men. Families transmit rules from generation to generation. This could explain the lower than normal divorce rate found with the current sample. In addition it would be vital to know how the father interacts with other siblings and the mother. The current study makes clear the need to understand not only the parent-child interactions, but also the interactions in the parent's spousal subsystem as well as the sibling subsystem.

Much more effort needs to focus on the unique and specific contribution that the father can make to the daughter's development. One woman in this study made the following comment on her relationship with her father, "He is wonderful! I married a man just like him." There is little doubt that the father impacts many decisions throughout a daughter's life. Understanding the characteristics of the roles that the father plays and the manner in which he is involved may enlighten the motives for choices that daughters make in adulthood and the feelings that they have about those choices.

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APPENDIX A  
RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION  
SECTION 1**

1. Your race or ethnic origin: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Highest level of education completed: (Please provide response.)  
High School: Grades completed \_\_\_\_\_ College: Years completed \_\_\_\_\_ Degree(s) earned \_\_\_\_\_
3. Your age: \_\_\_\_\_ years      4. Your annual income: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
4. Your biological parents marital status while you were living at home: (Please check  correct response.)  
Married \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed \_\_\_\_\_ Separated \_\_\_\_\_ Never married \_\_\_\_\_
5. If your parents **divorced** or if either of your parents **died** while you were living at home what was **your** age at the time? (Please check  event.)  
Divorce: \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_      Death of parent: Mother \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_ Father \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_
6. If your parents divorced: a. Indicate with whom you lived: Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Father \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
b. Indicate how often you saw the parent you did not live with: (Please circle number.)  
  

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
●						●
At least once a week			Once or twice a year			Almost never
7. What other people lived in the household while you lived at home?  
Brothers \_\_\_\_\_ Sisters \_\_\_\_\_ Stepmother \_\_\_\_\_ Stepfather \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify)

**Answer the following questions based on your romantic relationship(s) status.**

8. What is your current relationship status? (Please check  the response/s that apply.)  
  

<b>I am currently:</b>		<b>Single and:</b>	
Married _____ # of times _____	# of yrs. _____	living w/ significant other _____	# of yrs. _____
Divorced _____ # of times _____		currently dating _____	# of yrs. _____
Separated _____ # of times _____		not currently dating _____	
Widowed _____ # of times _____		never dated _____	
9. How many romantic relationships have you had that were significant? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What length of time do your romantic relationships usually last? \_\_\_\_\_
12. How satisfied are you with your current relationship status? (Whether in a relationship or not.)  
  

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
●						●
Very satisfied			Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied			Very dissatisfied

**Answer the following question if you have not had a romantic relationship that you consider significant. If you have had a relationship that you consider significant please skip to section two.**

13. What are the reasons that you have not had a significant romantic relationship?

**Continued on next page**

**PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS DURING FIRST SIXTEEN YEARS OF LIFE**  
**SECTION TWO**  
**FATHER RELATIONSHIP**

*This questionnaire lists various attitudes and behaviors of parents. Circle the correct number next to each statement as you remember your FATHER in your first sixteen years of life.*

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1. Helped me as much as I needed	1	2	3	4	5
2. Let me do those things I liked doing	1	2	3	4	5
3. Seemed emotionally cold to me	1	2	3	4	5
4. Appeared to understand my problems and worries	1	2	3	4	5
5. Liked me to make my own decisions	1	2	3	4	5
6. Tried to control everything I did	1	2	3	4	5
7. Tended to baby me and tried to protect me from everything	1	2	3	4	5
8. Could make me feel better when I was upset	1	2	3	4	5

Any additional comments about your relationship with your father:

**MOTHER RELATIONSHIP**

*Circle the correct number next to each statement as you remember your MOTHER in your first sixteen years of life.*

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1. Helped me as much as I needed	1	2	3	4	5
2. Let me do those things I liked doing	1	2	3	4	5
3. Seemed emotionally cold to me	1	2	3	4	5
4. Appeared to understand my problems and worries	1	2	3	4	5
5. Liked me to make my own decisions	1	2	3	4	5
6. Tried to control everything I did	1	2	3	4	5
7. Tended to baby me and tried to protect me from everything	1	2	3	4	5
8. Could make me feel better when I was upset	1	2	3	4	5

Any additional comments about your relationship with your mother:

Continued on next page

### SECTION THREE

The following statements concern how you feel in romantic relationships. Please answer according to how you **generally** experience relationships, **not just in a current relationship**. Respond to each question according to how much you agree or disagree with it. Write the number in the space provided.

Disagree strongly			Neutral			Agree Strongly
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I worry about being abandoned.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I am very comfortable being close to romantic partners.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I worry a lot about my relationships.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Just when my partner starts to get close to me I find myself pulling back.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I worry that romantic partners won't care about me as much as I care about them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I get uncomfortable when a romantic partner wants to be very close.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I worry a fair amount about losing my partner.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I don't feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I want to get close to my partner, but I keep pulling back.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I often want to merge completely with romantic partners, and this sometimes scares them away.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I am nervous when partners get too close to me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I worry about being alone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I try to avoid getting too close to my partner.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. I need a lot of reassurance that I am loved by my partner.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. I find it relatively easy to get close to my partner.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Sometimes I feel that I force my partners to show more feeling, more commitment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on romantic partners.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. I do not often worry about being abandoned.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I prefer not to be too close to romantic partners.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. If I can't get my partner to show interest in me, I get upset or angry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. I tell my partner just about everything.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. I find that my partner(s) don't want to get as close as I would like.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. When I'm not involved in a relationship, I feel somewhat anxious and insecure.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. I feel comfortable depending on romantic partners.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. I get frustrated when my partner is not around as much as I would like.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. I don't mind asking romantic partners for comfort, advice, or help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. I get frustrated if romantic partners are not available when I need them.

Continued on next page

**SECTION THREE: CONTINUED**

- |  |                   |   |         |   |                |
|--|-------------------|---|---------|---|----------------|
|  | Disagree strongly |   | Neutral |   | Agree Strongly |
|  | 1                 | 2 | 3       | 4 | 5              |
|  | 6                 | 7 |         |   |                |
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. When romantic partners disapprove of me, I feel really bad about myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. I turn to my partner for many things, including comfort and reassurance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. I resent it when my partner spends time away from me.

**SECTION FOUR**

*Please answer these questions based on your current or most significant intimate relationship. If you have not had a romantic relationship that you consider significant you may skip this section.*

Please circle the number for each item that best answers that item for you.

- |    |   |               |   |         |   |                     |
|----|---|---------------|---|---------|---|---------------------|
| 1. | How well does (did) your partner meet your needs?                     | 1             | 2 | 3       | 4 | 5                   |
|    |   | Poorly        |   | Average |   | Extremely well      |
| 2. | In general how satisfied are (were) you with your relationship?       | 1             | 2 | 3       | 4 | 5                   |
|    |   | Unsatisfied   |   | Average |   | Extremely Satisfied |
| 3. | How good is (was) your relationship compared to most?                 | 1             | 2 | 3       | 4 | 5                   |
|    |   | Poor          |   | Average |   | Excellent           |
| 4. | How often do (did) you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship? | 1             | 2 | 3       | 4 | 5                   |
|    |   | Never         |   | Average |   | Very often          |
| 5. | To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?  | 1             | 2 | 3       | 4 | 5                   |
|    |   | Hardly at all |   | Average |   | Completely          |
| 6. | How much do (did) you love your partner?                              | 1             | 2 | 3       | 4 | 5                   |
|    |   | Not much      |   | Average |   | Very much           |
| 7. | How many problems are (were) there in your relationship?              | 1             | 2 | 3       | 4 | 5                   |
|    |   | Very few      |   | Average |   | Very many           |

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.**



**Consent to Participate  
in an  
Oklahoma State University Research Study**

Women are involved in many types of relationships throughout life. Beginning with connections to parents in childhood and beyond and progressing on to peers, coworkers, and significant others in adulthood many bonds are formed and some are broken. Never before have women had so many options concerning the types of relationships they choose to be involved in. Understanding how women experience relationships leads to an overall view of what we are, where we are going, and how we will get there.

We would like to request your voluntary participation in a study to determine the relationship between women's early family relationships and adult relationships. As a member of an organization that supports women, your input is invaluable. Your participation in this project entails completion of a survey, which requires about 15 minutes of your time. If you choose to participate please answer all questions and answer as honestly as possible. All answers will be strictly confidential. Your name will not be associated with the survey in any way. The sheet of paper on the top can be used as a cover sheet for your privacy while answering. This form and the instrument may have an identification number, but only if you decide to mail your response. In that case when your packet is returned you will be checked off the mailing list and the number will be removed. The bottom of this letter will be used as an entry in a drawing. After the drawing the slip with your name and address will be shredded.

The data from this study will be used for a doctoral dissertation and will be reported only in the aggregate. Completed surveys will be kept in a locked cabinet for five years and then shredded. No one except the researcher will have access to the surveys. If you have any questions or concerns you may contact Dr. Beulah Hirschlein at (405) 744-8347 or Sissy Osteen at (405) 744-6282. You may also contact the Institutional Review Board Secretary Sharon Bacher at (405) 744-5700.

I understand the above procedures and guidelines for participation in this study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I may withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty after notifying the project director.

A sincere thank you for your time,

*Sissy R. Osteen*

Sissy R. Osteen

✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕

I am willing to participate in this study       I am **not** willing to participate in this study

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

This section will be cut off and entered in a drawing for a gift certificate. One \$50.00 and two \$25.00 certificates will be awarded.

Please provide your choice of store for a gift certificate in case your name is drawn \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument number \_\_\_\_\_



APPENDIX C  
DEMOGRAPHIC TABLE

Demographic Table (N= 270)

Characteristics		Number	Percent	Cumulative Percent*
Race	Caucasian	225	83.3	83.3
	Native American	16	5.9	89.3
	African American	17	6.3	95.6
	Asian	4	1.5	97.1
	Hispanic	1	.4	97.5
	Other	7	2.5	100.0
		<u>N = 270</u>		
Years of Education <sup>a</sup>	High School <sup>b</sup>	63	23.3	23.3
	Some College	32	11.9	35.2
	2 yrs or Associates Degree	35	13.0	48.2
	>2 yrs without Bachelors	10	3.7	51.9
	Bachelors Degree	91	33.7	85.6
	>4 yrs without Masters	4	1.5	87.1
	Masters Degree	24	8.9	96.0
	Doctorate or Prof. Degree	11	4.1	100.1
	<u>N = 270</u>			
Parents Marital Status	Married	199	73.7	73.7
	Divorced	59	21.9	95.6
	Widowed	7	2.6	98.1
	Separated	1	.4	98.5
	Never Married	4	1.5	100.0
		<u>N = 270</u>		
Death of Parent	Both Parents Living	245	94.5	94.5
	Mother Died	8	3.0	93.7
	Father Died	17	6.3	100.0
		<u>N = 270</u>		
Custody	Mother	54	88.5	88.5
	Father	4	6.6	95.1
	Grandparents	2	3.3	98.4
	Other	1	1.6	100.0
		<u>n = 61</u>		
Siblings	None	39	14.4	14.4
	Brothers Only	61	22.6	37.0
	Sisters Only	57	21.1	58.1
	Brothers and Sisters	113	41.9	100.0
		<u>N = 270</u>		

<sup>a</sup> Range = 11 to 22 years Mean = 14.83<sup>b</sup> Includes one case with 11 years

\* May not equal 100% due to rounding

Characteristics	Number	Percent	Cumulative Percent*
<b>Lived With Stepparent</b>			
Stepmother	4	13.3	13.3
Stepfather	25	83.3	96.7
Both	1	3.3	100.0
	$n = 30$		
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Never Married	40	14.8	14.8
First Marriage	136	50.4	65.2
Divorced	26	9.6	74.8
Divorced Two Times	16	5.9	80.7
Divorced Three Times	3	1.1	81.9
Divorced Four Times	4	1.5	83.3
Remarried	35	13.0	96.3
Widowed	10	3.7	100.0
	$N = 270$		
<b>Dating Status</b>			
Living W/Significant Other	13	17.8	17.8
Currently Dating	26	35.6	53.4
Not Currently Dating	33	45.2	98.6
Never Dated	1	1.4	100.0
	$n = 72$		
<b>Number Previous Relationships</b>			
None	6	2.3	2.3
One	72	27.4	29.7
Two	86	32.7	62.4
Three	52	19.8	82.1
Four	28	10.6	92.8
Five	15	5.7	98.5
Six	2	.8	99.2
Ten	2	.8	100.0
	$N = 263$		

APPENDIX D

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FORM

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Date: June 25, 1999 IRB #: HE-99-105

Proposal Title: "PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL BONDING: RELATIONSHIP TO ATTACHMENT STYLE AND RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION FOR ADULT DAUGHTERS"

Principal Investigator(s): Beulah Hirschlein  
Sissy Osteen

Reviewed and Processed as: Expedited

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

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Signature:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance

\_\_\_\_\_  
June 25, 1999

Date

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modification to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

VITA

Sissy R. Osteen

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL BONDING: RELATIONSHIP TO ATTACHMENT STYLE AND RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION FOR ADULT DAUGHTERS.

Major Field: Human Environmental Sciences

Area of Specialization: Family Relations

Biographical:

Education: Attended Carthage Public School, Carthage, Arkansas until 1971. Received Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics Education from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, Arkansas in August 1979. Received Master of Science degree in Clothing and Textiles from the University of Arkansas in August 1981. Received Specialist in Education degree in Counselor Education from the University of South Carolina in May 1992. Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in Human Environmental Sciences at Oklahoma State University in December 1999.

Experience: Assistant State Specialist in Family Resource Management Education with the Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service, Stillwater, Oklahoma 1996 to present. Director of Consumer Credit Counseling Service, Columbia, South Carolina 1992 to 1996. Financial Counselor with Consumer Credit Counseling Service, Columbia, South Carolina 1991 to 1992. Associate County Agent, Dillon County, Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service 1989 to 1990. Food Service Director, Epicure Management Services, Rock Hill, South Carolina 1985 to 1989. Instructor, Department of Home Economics, Morehead State University, Morehead, Kentucky 1981 to 1985.