

**ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLE,
MARRIAGE STRUCTURE
AND
MARITAL SATISFACTION**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the contents of this thesis, unless otherwise specified, represent my own original work.

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1996

While every precaution has been taken to conceal the identity of the subjects on whom this research is based, the entire contents are to be considered confidential.

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ABSTRACT

Recent research into marital satisfaction has highlighted distance regulation as a central source of controversy in couples' relationships ((Byng-Hall, 1991b, 1995; Marvin & Stewart, 1990; Pistole, 1994; Stevenson-Hinde, 1990). Shifts in the spatial arrangements or structural elements of the marital couple may escalate or de-escalate attachment behaviour and partners continually regulate this distance in order not to experience separation anxiety. Albeit differently, structural family theory (Minuchin, 1974) also emphasizes the spatial arrangements of the couple and how these differentially affect the viability of the system. In view of the fact that both attachment theory and structural family theory are concerned with the spatial arrangements of the couple, this research proposes to examine the interface between these theories and how they may jointly, rather than separately, inform research into marital satisfaction.

Opportunistic sampling of 6 groups was undertaken and self-report questionnaires assessing sociodemographics, attachment styles, attachment history, marriage structure and marital satisfaction distributed to married couples only. Self-report questionnaires comprised the following assessment instruments: the Close Relationships Questionnaire (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) measuring attachment style (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent, avoidant); an Adjective Checklist measuring attachment-history variables (Hazan & Shaver, 1987); the Adult Attachment Scale (Collins & Read, 1990) measuring attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend, Anxiety); the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales (FACES III) (Olson, Portner & Lavee, 1985) measuring both marriage structure (viz. the variables cohesion and adaptability) and marital satisfaction; and a 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale compiled by the researcher. The final sample constituted 82 participants of which 34 were couples and 14 were individuals. The 14 individual respondents comprised 10 wives and 4 husbands.

Statistical analyses included Pearson correlation coefficients, a Canonical Discriminant Functions Analysis, one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA's), chi-square tests of independence and t-tests.

Hypotheses examined the relationship between family/couple structure, attachment classifications and marital satisfaction. Relationships between individual attachment classifications and marriage structure (viz. cohesion and adaptability) (FACES III - Olson

et al., 1985) were, for the most part, not supported. The hypothesis investigating the relationship between individual attachment classifications and satisfaction with the marriage was, for the most part, not supported, however, the second part of the hypothesis investigating the relationship between couple attachment classifications and couples' satisfaction with the marriage showed a significant relationship between couple attachment style groupings (viz. secure husband, anxious wife, etc.) and one of the scales measuring couple satisfaction. Some significant relationships were found between individuals' attachment classifications and their recollection of childhood relationships with parents and parents' relationships with one another.

In view of the fact that research into this area has only recently been embarked upon, it is concluded that future research using multiple methods of assessment be undertaken in order to more comprehensively establish the merits or otherwise of combining attachment theory and structural family theory in research into marital satisfaction.

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LIST OF TERMS

To promote clarity, the following terms will be employed throughout:

Attachment classifications

'*Attachment style*' will refer to Hazan and Shaver's (1987) categorical attachment styles (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent, avoidant).

'*Attachment dimension*' will refer to Collins and Read's (1990) attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend, Anxiety).

Satisfaction with the marriage (couple scores)

'*Couple satisfaction*' will refer to couples' marital satisfaction scores derived from FACES III (Portner, Olson, & Lavee, 1985).

'*Marital satisfaction*' will refer to couples' marital satisfaction scores derived from the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale.

INTRODUCTION

In contrast to theories that emphasize separation, other theorists who come predominantly from the British school of Object Relations' (viz. Balint, 1934, 1937; Fairbairn, 1952, 1963; Guntrip, 1969, 1971; Winnicott, 1958, 1971, all in Blatt & Blass, 1990), focus primarily on attachment and attempt to understand the development of the individual as a unit in interaction. The individual is viewed as predominantly object seeking and relatedness is a major dimension by which the developmental process is measured. Support of this approach emphasizing attachment and relatedness has come from psychoanalytic investigators of infant development, most notably Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1988b) who regards the propensity to establish strong emotional attachments as embedded in the individual's biologically based motivational system (Blatt & Blass, 1990).

Attachment theory and object relations theory both focus on the caregiver-infant relationship and on the mental models of self and other that a child develops through interactions with the caregiver (Bowlby, 1980; Main, Kaplan & Cassidy, 1985; Winnicott, 1965). Both theories also posit that these representational models are formed early in childhood and tend to guide the individual's construction of subsequent relationships (Levine, Tuber, Slade, & Ward, 1991).

Bowlby (1977, p. 201) conceptualized attachment as "the propensity of human beings to make strong affectional bonds to particular others". In attachment theory, bonding is viewed as an innate disposition rather than as a secondary learned phenomenon arising from primary reinforcers such as food and sexual contact (Bowlby, 1969/1982; Johnson, 1986). The disposition to become attached is an independent system, built into primate biology to ensure survival. Were infants and caregivers not disposed to seek and maintain proximity, the helpless human infant would perish. By being programmed to stay near (maximise proximity) and to interact with familiar, more experienced people in situations of uncertainty, and thus to explore from a safe base, man increases his chances of survival. Evolutionary history thus guarantees a strong disposition to organize proximity-maintaining behaviours around a specific other. All that is required is the availability and responsiveness of that other for interaction (Sroufe, 1986).

Recent formulations view the attachment system as functioning to provide children with a sense of "felt security" (Collins & Read, 1990, p. 644) which facilitates exploration by the child (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Sroufe & Waters, 1977). Not the presence of attachment or even the strength of attachment, but the quality of the attachment is central. Based on beliefs and expectations as to whether the caretaker is someone who is caring and responsive and also whether the self is worthy of care and attention, children construct internal working models (IWM's) of attachment which determine their behavioural responses to real or imagined separation from and reunion with their caretaker(s) (Collins & Read, 1990). Thus, attachment behaviour is also regarded as an important psychological catalyst for a baby's trust in caregivers and understanding of self and in this sense, attachment theory unites interests in evolutionary biology and developmental psychology in understanding early parent-offspring bonding.

Unlike traditional psychoanalytic and object relations theories of development, attachment theory does not define discrete 'stages' of development, but rather formulates a theory of developmental continuity built on the elaboration and expression of the IWM of attachment (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994). IWM's formed in early childhood tend to shape current and future interpersonal transactions and behaviour; they are structured processes that facilitate or limit access to information (Main et al., 1985). Once the pre-attachment phases are past (generally by age 12 to 18 months), and an attachment relationship has been achieved, different attachment patterns have their source in a dyadic relationship without being tied to any endogenous phase of development viz. psychosexual stage (Blass & Blatt, 1992). Thus, outcome is not overdetermined by past experiences but rather restrained from alternative pathways (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994). In that IWM's are carried forward into new relationships where they guide expectations, perception and behaviour, they provide a mechanism for cross-age continuity in attachment style (Parker, Barrett, & Hickie, 1992).

Although Bowlby (1979, p. 129) stated that "attachment behaviour is held to characterize human beings from the cradle to the grave", it was not until recently that empirical research on attachment shifted its focus from an exclusive examination of attachment behaviour in childhood to the study of attachment behaviour in adult intimate relationships. Attachment theorists have suggested that three attachment styles phenotypically similar to those discovered by Ainsworth et al. (1978) in infants (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant), may also characterize adults. These

researchers have begun to explore whether an individual's early attachment history might influence his or her attachment style toward romantic partners and whether there is a relationship between attachment style and relationship satisfaction (Ainsworth, 1985; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Bowlby, 1973; Collins & Read, 1990; Davis & Kirkpatrick, 1990; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Kobak & Sceery, 1988; Levy & Davis, 1988; Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985; Simpson, 1990; Simpson, Rholes, & Nelligan, 1992; Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986).

The institution of marriage, in itself, tends to foster attachment in that it creates the context for familiarity and interdependence (Weiss 1982). Attachment in marriage is fostered by proximity and sexual accessibility and may well be further promoted by the very stressfulness of the transition to married life which raises uncertainty regarding the adequacy of the self and limits the pool of potential attachment figures to the marital partner (Weiss, 1991). In that marital bonds are the most likely to be true attachment relationships (Berman, Marcus, & Berman, 1994), researchers have recently begun to examine the role of attachment in marital interaction, marital satisfaction, communication and problem solving (Berman et al., 1994; Cohn, Silver, Cowan, Cowan, & Pearson, 1992; Kobak & Hazan, 1991b; Senchak & Leonard, 1992; Truant, Herscovitch, & Lohrenz, 1987).

Pistole (1994, p. 155) comments that a relationship that brings pleasure to its partners involves working through issues such as "how much closeness are we comfortable with; how available and accessible will we be for each other?". These are important questions when researching relationships from an attachment theory perspective as attachment behaviour is bound up with proximity-seeking and 'felt security' and is triggered through a control mechanism sensitive to the amount of space between self and the attachment figure that can be accommodated (Pistole, 1994). Any behaviour *can* be interpreted as an attachment activator if it alters the psychological proximity or distance within the dyad, hence altering anxiety-security. Once the attachment behavioural system is activated, it is terminated only through re-equilibration of proximity-security (Bowlby, 1982). Secondary activation of attachment engages the individual's attachment IWM, which then determines the meaning of the partner's behaviour and prescribes the range of behavioural responses (Berman et al., 1994). There is thus a reciprocal relationship between the spatial or interpersonal component and the IWM of attachment, or intrapsychic component. In essence, attachment theory is a spatial theory (Holmes, 1993) and Pistole (1994) observes that elements of the attachment

system provide some advantages in conceptualizing and intervening with closeness-distance disturbances which have been identified as pivotal to relationship satisfaction.

The translation of attachment theory into a family systems framework has only just been started (Byng-Hall, 1991b; Heard, 1982; Marvin & Stewart, 1990; Stevenson-Hinde, 1990). One reason that family therapists have not used attachment concepts more is that, up until now, the theory has been largely a dyadic one: caregiver/careseeker, parent/child (mostly mother/child) (Byng-Hall, 1991a). Patricia Minuchin (1985) discusses the problem posed by attachment research's classification of individual children rather than the relationship itself, but concludes that attachment theory is nevertheless a theory about bi-directional relationships in which two figures act as each other's environment. Like attachment theory, systems theory draws on principles of cybernetics, including reciprocal causality, positive and negative feedback loops, and homeostasis (Berman et al., 1994). Heard (1982) described the attachment dynamic that operates throughout the family system and emphasized how the complementary activities of attachment and caregiving behaviour govern the movements of family members/couples towards or away from each other, affect the degree to which they engage in creative exploratory activities and influence the internal representation each member builds of him or herself in action with others.

In essence, marital distress is the manifestation of a dysfunctional system and the attachment dynamic is considered to be played out in many forms which range along a continuum from highly adaptive to grossly maladaptive. The aim is to maintain the system in the most open state as is possible in any given circumstances and in any given environment. In circumstances in which intensely aroused attachment behaviour is not assuaged by appropriate caregiving, the behaviour of family members/couples will tend to be restricted to trying to reach the goals of attachment behaviour and to finding ways of coping with the psychological discomfort of failure to do so. Their capacity to be flexible, creative and exploratory in discovering new ways to attain these goals is likely to become restricted and their behaviour increasingly fixed into whatever pattern they find brings the greatest assuagement. In this state, family members are unresponsive to any attempts to make them change their behaviour and the system moves toward the rigid, closed end of the continuum. In contrast, when the family behaves as a more open system, the members are in a state in which there is little or no pressure to reach the goals of care-giving and attachment behaviour and they are free to be exploratory and creative (Heard, 1982; Heard & Lake, 1986).

The dimensions of adaptability and cohesion, central to both Minuchin's (1974) structural family theory and Olson, Sprenkle and Russell's (1979) Circumplex Model, are used to describe how families/couples continually regulate their internal structure in response to internal and external change (adaptability) and how members develop a preferred degree of emotional proximity/distance (cohesion) in relating to one another (Fish & Piercy, 1987). Couple closeness or cohesion concerns the regulation of proximity and distance, includes affect, and is relevant for questions concerning boundaries and subsystem relations. Flexibility (adaptability) concerns the family's/couple's ability to adapt to changing circumstances and involves openness, communication, feedback and calibration (P. Minuchin, 1988) and homeostasis is a construct that addresses the structures and behaviours used by the family/couple to deal with potentially destabilizing forces in its environment (Paolino & McCrady, 1978). In line with von Bertalanffy's (1969 in Minuchin, 1974, p. 60) belief that "system sickness is system rigidity", Minuchin (1974, p.60) maintained that "the label of pathology would be reserved for families who in the face of stress increase the rigidity of their transactional patterns and boundaries and avoid or resist any exploration of alternatives".

Both structural family theory and attachment theory, albeit differently, highlight the importance of the spatial arrangements of the family/couple and how these differentially affect family/marital satisfaction. Marvin and Stewart (1990) have pointed out that the three attachment classifications, namely secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant, can be conceptualised in terms of the structural family theory concept of how relationships are meshed along a continuum from enmeshed to disengaged. It would appear that structural family theory and attachment theory articulate well with one another and, in combination, provide a powerful means of exploring the interface between representational and interactional aspects of marital relations which is the goal of this thesis.

CHAPTER I : ATTACHMENT IN ADULTS

Background to attachment theory

Attachment theory is concerned with the bond that develops between child and caretaker and the consequences this has for the child's emerging self-concept and developing view of the social world (Collins & Read, 1990). Bowlby's theory (1973, 1980, 1982), which was the first formal statement of attachment theory, conceptualised the infant attachment system as an independent behavioural system, equivalent in function to other drive-behavioural systems such as feeding, mating and exploration. Via a homeostatic process, the attachment behavioural system regulates infant proximity-seeking and contact-maintaining behaviours. Infants will seek proximity until it is achieved and will maintain proximity within a tolerably limited distance in the manner of a goal-corrected feedback system. This goal-corrected behavioural system has a 'set goal' of maintaining proximity to a nurturing adult and a biological function of promoting the child's security and survival (Collins & Read, 1990).

In its simplest form, the dynamic postulated by attachment theory concerns two in-built behavioural systems mediating (a) proximity-seeking attachment behaviour and (b) parental behaviour (caregiving) (Heard, 1982). Proximity-seeking behaviour is, in the ordinary course of events, elicited whenever the individual concerned finds himself or herself in a situation he or she classes as fearful or as having unknown consequences. The termination of proximity seeking by adequate parental behaviour has the consequence of leaving the individual who was seeking proximity free to explore. At this point, the parental behaviour is diminished in intensity. The systems may thus be seen to act in a complementary way and to share a common goal which is not only to terminate proximity-seeking behaviour but to reinstate exploratory behaviour (Heard, 1982).

Ainsworth et al., (1978, p. 302) define infant attachment as "the affectional bond or tie an infant forms between himself and his mother - a bond that tends to be enduring and independent of specific situations". The idea of attachment as an affectional bond has supplemented the view of attachment as a behavioural control system. Attachment researchers have suggested that the set goal of the attachment system is not simply physical proximity but, more broadly, to maintain 'felt security' (Bretherton, 1985; Sroufe

& Waters, 1977). This seeking to obtain an experience of security and comfort is one criterion of attachment that is not necessarily present in other affectional bonds (Hinde, 1982; Weiss, 1982). Given that the function of attachment is the maintenance of safety and security, attachment relationships should be especially crucial in times of life crises and in determining successful adaptation as adults (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994).

Internal working models

A consideration of internal working models (IWM's) is perhaps a necessary diversion in discussing attachment across the life cycle as it is through IWM's that childhood patterns of attachment are carried through into adult life and transmitted to the next generation (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994).

Bowlby (1982) made it clear that the attachment-caregiving system is interactive, with bidirectional reinforcement and reciprocal interactions between the primary attachment figure and the infant. Through continued interaction, a child develops IWM's which are mental representations of the self and other in interaction. These IWM's mediate the experience and meaning of the relationship behaviours of both self and caretaker; contain beliefs and expectations about whether the caretaker is someone who is caring and responsive, and also whether the self is worthy of care and attention; and regulate affect and behaviour in the relationship according to rules that organize attachment-related information (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1988a; Collins & Read, 1990; Kobak & Hazan, 1991a; Kobak & Sceery, 1988; Main et al., 1985).

Main et al. (1985, pp. 66-67) define the IWM as "a set of conscious and/or unconscious rules for the organization of information relevant to attachment and for obtaining or limiting access to that information, that is, to information regarding attachment-related experiences, feelings and ideations". This metapsychological notion of mental representations of the self poses a departure from previous behaviourally oriented studies of infant-parent attachment, for example the Strange Situation protocol developed by Mary Ainsworth (Ainsworth et al., 1978), which relies on descriptions of the infant's nonverbal behaviour toward a particular parent in a structured separation-and-reunion task (Sperling & Berman, 1994). Main et al. (1985) reconceptualize individual differences in attachment organization as individual differences in the mental representation of the self in relation to attachment. This new focus on representation

and language permits investigation of attachment not only in infants but also in older children and adults.

Initially, Bowlby (1973) believed that the expectations concerning accessibility and responsiveness of attachment figures were reflections of actual experiences those individuals had in the past. However, more recently, attachment theorists have recognized that instead of internalizing objects, individuals internalize sets of rules and expectations that enable them to interpret and anticipate the behavioural and emotional responses of attachment figures. West and Sheldon-Keller (1994) argue that there is no discrete model maintained in the memory, but rather a *potential* to reclassify or recategorize past experiences in the light of current experiences and vice versa. Thus, what is fixed is not a memory, but an organizational ability.

Functioning as 'filters', IWM's either facilitate or limit access to information, thus shaping the construction of current and future interpersonal transactions and behaviour (Main et al., 1985; Sperling & Berman, 1994). When the attachment IWM (and hence the attachment system) is activated, the attachment behavioural system severely limits the behavioural repertoire at that point and the self must do those things that will re-establish optimal proximity and security and reduce or eliminate anxiety.

The concept of the IWM is central to understanding current difficulties in attachment relationships such as marriage. It explains consistency across relationships and indicates why individuals selectively attend to some behaviours of the spouse and not others. IWM's are not purely intrapsychic and historical products of early experience that remain impervious to outside influences, rather, IWM's and relationship functioning are seen as a reciprocal process. Ideally, IWM's both influence behaviour and relationship adjustment and accommodate the partner's behaviour and relationship functioning (Kobak & Hazan, 1991a; Sperling & Berman, 1994).

Adult attachment styles

Attachment style in adults is almost purely a representational configuration determined by the way in which the accessibility and responsiveness of the attachment figure, and complementary aspects of the self, are encoded in the internal working model of attachment (Bowlby, 1988b). These working models of attachment function to guide behaviour in relationships and these behavioural styles may affect the selection of

marital partners and the marital relationship (Bartholomew, 1990; Senchak & Leonard, 1992). Hazan and Shaver (1987) translated the three infant attachment styles classified by Ainsworth et al., (1978) into terms appropriate for adult relationships and subsequent authors have contributed further to these initial descriptions.

Secure attachment style

Research indicates that secure attachment is mediated by a working model in which self is considered worthy of care (Feeney & Noller, 1990), likeable and loveable (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). The securely attached seem able to accurately perceive and respond to attachment related cues (Main et al., 1985). Their partner is esteemed (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and expected to be responsive to attachment needs (Bowlby, 1988b). They are able to acknowledge distress and ask for support and can constructively regulate negative emotion in both problem-solving and social contexts (Kobak & Hazan, 1991a; Kobak & Sceery, 1988).

To the extent that they develop committed, satisfying, interdependent and well-adjusted relationships relative to their avoidant and anxious counterparts, people who display a secure attachment style tend to be involved in emotionally pleasant relationships characterized by frequent occurrences of mild and intense positive emotion and by less frequent occurrences of mild and intense negative emotion (Collins & Read, 1990; Hendrick & Hendrick, 1989; Kobak & Sceery, 1988; Levy & Davis, 1988; Simpson, 1990). Secure attachment relationships are distinguished by interdependence, mutuality, intimacy, satisfaction, trust and involvement (Pistole, 1994). Moreover, the securely attached "emphasize the importance of openness and closeness in their relationships, while at the same time seeking to retain their individual identity" (Feeney & Noller, 1990, p. 208).

Insecure attachment styles

Bowlby (1977) has described three patterns of insecure attachment: anxious/ambivalent, compulsive self-reliance and compulsive care-giving. In the latter two patterns the individual disavows the significance of his/her attachment needs whereas anxious/ambivalent individuals have a low threshold for attachment behaviour (West, Sheldon, & Reiffer, 1989).

Anxious/ambivalent

This attachment style is characterized by hypervigilance to distress and separation cues as well as a focus on distress (Kobak & Sceery, 1988). Self-worth is low and there is a high level of anxiety, obsessiveness, clinging and neediness designed to keep available a love partner whose responsiveness is uncertain (Bowlby, 1988a). The partner is often idealized (Feeney & Noller, 1990) and the focus on partner can be characterized as an "overwhelming need ... to simply be in a relationship, no matter what or with whom - the primary goal is emotional security" (Newcomb, 1981 in Pistole, 1989, p. 505). Given the uncertainty they harbour concerning the stability and dependability of their relationships, these people tend to be involved in affectively unpleasant relationships (Simpson, 1990).

Avoidant

The avoidantly attached demonstrate a compulsive self-reliance (Bowlby, 1988b). Affective rules are organized to inhibit or shut down the attachment system or more specifically to direct attention away from distress, to dismiss the importance of the relationship and to keep emotion at low levels of intensity (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Cassidy, 1988; Feeney & Noller, 1990). Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) identify two forms of avoidant attachment - fearful and dismissing. The working model of the fearful avoidant includes low levels of self-worth and fears surrounding intimacy, whereas the working model of the dismissing avoidant includes high self-worth reflecting a defensive idealization of self. In both cases, the partner is perceived to be unavailable, nonresponsive, or hostile.

Conceptualizing adult attachment

"Adult attachment is the stable tendency of an individual to make substantial efforts to seek and maintain proximity to and contact with one or a few specific individuals who provide the subjective potential for physical and/or psychological safety and security. This stable tendency is regulated by internal working models of attachment, which are cognitive-affective-motivational schemata built from the individual's experience in his or her interpersonal world."

(Sperling & Berman, 1994, p. 8)

These authors note that adult attachment provides the *potential* for relationship security rather than relationship security per se. Consequently, many people have attachment relationships that provoke significant anxiety and anger, however, these relationships are maintained because the persons believe that their attachment figures have the potential to provide felt security (Sperling & Berman, 1994).

Sperling and Berman (1994) differentiate between three major conceptualisations of adult attachment: attachment as state (attachment distress) which helps clarify the ubiquitous reaction to loss and separation among adults (viz. protest, despair and detachment); attachment as trait or style (the internal working model) which sheds light on how people think about close relationships and explains why people react to threat or loss in different yet stable ways; and attachment as interaction (love and marriage) which may be the most useful in exploring how attachment is manifested in specific close relationships and why individuals respond differentially depending on characteristics of their partners. It is this last conceptualization that is of specific relevance to this project.

The attachment bond in childhood and adulthood - similarities and differences

Extrapolating parent-infant attachment to adult-adult attachment presents problems, amongst which are the defensive processes available to adults and the multiple internal models active in adult relationships (Ainsworth, 1989; Shaver, Hazan & Bradshaw, 1988). The differences in the relative contributions of the pre-existing mental representation and current interpersonal processes to the development of adult attachment is an important issue. In infant-adult attachment, the infant has little prior history of attachment, so he or she initially contributes primarily interactional and temperamental aspects to the attachment bond. In adults, the presence of mental representations derived from prior experience greatly influences how one behaves with the potential attachment figure and how one experiences the other's behaviour (Sperling, Berman & Fagen, 1992). In addition, the caregiver and careseeker attachment roles are interchangeable in adults, whereas in healthy adult-infant attachment they are fixed and stable. However, although these relationships differ in some respects, they share a central feature of attachment relationships - that under conditions of stress, the individual will seek proximity to the primary figure as a means of deriving comfort and security (Ainsworth, 1985; Weiss, 1986).

In adult partner relationships attachment operates in conjunction with the caregiving and sexual/reproductive systems (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1988a). The most striking instance of attachment in later life which may actually overwhelm other behavioural systems is 'falling in love' - a relational change that is not unlike maternal bonding toward the newborn infant in its intensity and abrupt onset. Another form of intense attachment/caregiving emerges more gradually in long-standing marriages not necessarily in combination with 'love' or intimacy (Weiss, 1982; Wynne, 1984).

Adult attachments are typically peer relationships, involve a sexual relationship, and do not overwhelm other behaviourally based systems to the extent that infant attachment can do in times of stress (Weiss, 1982). In the face of mild stressors, the adult is more easily able to retain confidence in the availability of the attachment figure in the absence of physical proximity (Hinde & Stevenson-Hinde, 1988). Given these considerations, one may expect that it becomes more meaningful and complicated to sort out representational from contextual influences in adult versus childhood attachment.

Continuity versus discontinuity of attachment styles across the lifespan

While the claim of cross-age continuity of internal working models is still controversial, it is supported by a growing list of longitudinal studies from infancy through the early elementary school years (Donatas, Maratos, Fafoutis, & Karangelis, 1985; Erickson, Sroufe, & Egeland, 1985; Oppenheim, Sagi, & Lamb, 1988; Waters, Wippman, & Sroufe, 1979, all in Mayseless, 1991). On a number of occasions, Bowlby (1979, p. 135) emphasized that childhood attachment "underlies the later capacity to make affectional bonds" as well as a whole range of adult dysfunctions including "marital problems and trouble with children ... neurotic symptoms and personality disorders...". In that representational models are formed of the self in relation to others, the nature and success of the early bonding process with parental figures also has an effect on the individual's capacity to create and maintain emotional bonds later in life (Bowlby, 1973). Researchers have focused on the impressive continuity in patterns of attachment both throughout the life cycle and across generations (Fonagy, Steele, & Steele, 1991; Main et al., 1985; Ricks, 1985; Sroufe, 1988) and clinical work with adults strongly suggests that the attachment styles of childhood continue on into later life (Flaherty & Richman, 1986). Selective affiliation in the form of the seeking or avoidance of social contacts and the selection of social partners who are likely to confirm internal models is expected to be central in maintaining adult patterns of attachment (Collins & Read, 1990; Davis &

Kirkpatrick, 1994). In fact, it is precisely "because persons select and create later social environments that early relationships are viewed as having special importance" (Caspi & Elder, 1988, p. 72).

However, Parker et al., (1992) state that studies using the Parental Bonding Instrument and Intimate Bond Measure research strategies are consistent in their lack of support for the continuity model unless there has been gross deprivation of parental care. These researchers emphasize that later positive experiences tend to modify any initial vulnerability, thereby facilitating a move toward relational competence. Sperling and Berman (1994) concur with this viewpoint and note that attachment investigators tend to overlook the fact that IWM's undergo developmental transformations in their modes of representation as the individual matures.

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) argue that powerful emotional experiences inconsistent with existing models are required to change IWM's and that these experiences often arise within emotionally significant relationships such as marriage. Hazan and Hutt (1990) recently found that approximately 25% of two different samples reported a change in their romantic attachment style during adulthood and that the primary direction of change was from insecure toward secure. Consistent with attachment theory, change by the insecure person was strongly associated with being in a relationship that disconfirmed the initially insecure person's negative model of self or other.

Most studies of attachment have emphasized assimilation processes associated with working models of self and other. For instance, studies of adult attachment have suggested that working models assimilate love experience (Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and new relationship partners (Collins & Read, 1990; Davis & Kirkpatrick, 1990) into existing expectations about self and other. Although assimilation processes are central to accounting for continuity in personality development, Bowlby's (1973) theory places equal emphasis on how working models must accommodate changing circumstances. For instance, during times of dramatic change, working models must be altered to incorporate new information about self and other which Bowlby (1988b) referred to as revising or updating working models. Only models which are tolerably accurate will promote adaptive behaviour in relationships as they provide partners with more realistic expectations for each other's behaviour thus contributing to relationship adjustment.

Any conclusions about continuity over the life span remain tentative. However, Simpson et al. (1992) suggest that the utility of attachment theory for adult relationships does not require that attachment styles observed in adulthood date back to infancy. As long as the patterns of attachment identified in children are phenotypically similar to those that characterize adults, and as long as the consequences of these styles for behaviour and emotions are similar across different developmental levels, attachment theory remains a viable model for understanding adult relationships. Given this perspective, general comparisons between children and adults may be informative regardless of whether continuity exists within individuals over time.

Attachment history and adult intimate relationships

George, Kaplan and Main's (1985) Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) provides a promising new approach for considering how adults' working models of childhood relationships are associated with current attachment relationships. Rather than attempting to construct a retrospective account of adults' childhood experiences, the interview was designed to tap the adult's present state of mind with respect to attachment, as adult attachment classifications are determined not by the actual events of an adult's childhood, but instead by how the memories and feelings about these experiences are organized (Cassidy & Berlin, 1994; Levine et al., 1991). Although structurally similar to Ainsworth et al.'s (1978) taxonomy, it diverges in that it is a taxonomy of IWM's of attachment, not attachment behaviours per se (Sperling et al., 1992).

A direct application of attachment related notions to adult intimate relationships was attempted by Shaver et al., (1988) who suggested that since the attachment system is the primary socially relevant behavioural system which is learned and becomes internalized, it lays foundations for other intimate relationships as well. Thus, the three different attachment styles were thought to be manifested in different patterns of romantic relationships. In this respect, Hazan and Shaver (1987) conceptualized romantic love itself as a process of becoming attached and, in contrast to George et al.'s (1985) Adult Attachment Interview, which relies on inferences from a semi-structured interview, these authors developed a self-report procedure to classify adults into three categories (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) that correspond to the three attachment styles of childhood identified by Ainsworth et al. (1978).

Overall, results of Hazan and Shaver's (1987) studies showed that, in line with their hypotheses, the secure group described relationships characterized by happiness, trust and friendship, whereas the two insecure groups reported more negative experiences and beliefs about love, had a history of shorter romantic relationships and provided less favourable descriptions of their childhood relationships with parents and parents' relationships with one another. Results of Kobak and Sceery's (1988) study which used an interview method rather than self-classification, and relied on peers' reports, corresponded closely to those of Hazan and Shaver's (1987) above.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) assessed attachment history by asking respondents from a newspaper sample (average age 36) and a university sample (average age 18) to describe how each parent had generally behaved toward them during childhood and the parents' relationship with one other. Utilizing an adjective checklist, respondents indicated their answers by checking or not checking adjectives such as *caring*, *critical*, *intrusive*, and *responsive*. Results from the newspaper sample study showed secure subjects reporting warmer relationships with both parents and between their two parents. Mothers of avoidant respondents were characterized as more demanding, more disrespectful, and more critical when compared with secure respondents. Fathers of avoidant respondents were characterized as more forceful and uncaring and the relationship between mother and father was described as not affectionate. When anxious/ambivalent lovers were compared with avoidant lovers, mothers of the former were described as more responsive and funny, and their fathers were portrayed as relatively unfair but affectionate. Avoidant subjects, in comparison with anxious/ambivalent subjects, described their mothers as cold and rejecting. Nothing about the parental relationship predicted differences between these two groups. Overall, what stood out was the marked similarity of the results for men and women, however there were a few significant sex differences on individual items. Most notably, respondents tended to describe their opposite-sex parent more favourably than their same-sex parent viz. 62% of the women (vs. 44% of the men) described their fathers as loving and 78% of the men (vs. 69% of the women) described their mothers as loving. On negative trait dimensions, respondents tended to judge their same-sex parent more harshly.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) replicated the above-mentioned study utilizing undergraduates (average age 18 years). Avoidant subjects in this study described their attachment histories as more similar to those of secure subjects on positive trait

dimensions than did older avoidant subjects in Study 1 (newspaper sample). These authors concluded that this was due to the tendency for young avoidant subjects to idealize their attachment histories. The average person participates in several important friendships and love relationships, each of which provides an opportunity to revise mental models of self and others. As distance from parents increases and adult love experiences accumulate, the effect of childhood relationships on adult mental models and behaviour patterns appears to decrease (see Parker et al., 1992).

In their study based on self-report methodology, Feeney and Noller (1990) attempted to replicate the findings of Hazan and Shaver (1987) concerning the relationships among attachment style, attachment history, and mental models and to investigate attachment style differences on a number of measures of love. These authors found the relative frequencies of subjects endorsing the three attachment styles to be similar to those reported by Hazan and Shaver (1987) (viz. 56% secure; 25% avoidant and 19% anxious/ambivalent) and no sex differences in these frequencies. Securely attached subjects tended to report positive early family relationships and to express trusting attitudes towards others; anxious/ambivalent subjects were the most likely to perceive a lack of paternal supportiveness and also expressed dependence and desire for commitment in relationships; and avoidant subjects were most likely to endorse items measuring mistrust of and distance from others.

Hazan and Shaver's (1987) measure presumes that the three attachment styles are mutually exclusive. However, it is not possible to determine the degree to which a particular attachment style characterizes an individual and, in addition, each attachment style has several components which may have differential effects. Recently, several new measures of adult attachment have been developed (viz. Collins & Read, 1990; Kobak & Hazan, 1991a) which will enable fuller examination of the content of working models and more refined prediction of attachment behaviours.

Based on Hazan and Shaver's (1987) categorical measure, Collins and Read (1990) developed their 18-item Adult Attachment Scale to measure adult attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend and Anxiety). A limitation of discrete measures is that inevitably some members "better" represent the category than others (Collins & Read, 1990, p. 650). Without assessment of the dimensions that define category membership, valuable information on differences among category members is lost which may

weaken or distort differences between categories. A dimensional measure assists in detecting important individual differences.

Collins and Read (1990) explored the role of attachment dimensions in three aspects of ongoing dating relationships, one of which was the relation between the attachment dimensions of a subject's partner and the perceived caregiving style of the subject's parents, especially the opposite-sex parent. Attachment theory would suggest that the relation may result from expectations and beliefs about the self and about relationships, which develop out of early parent-child interactions and are carried forward into later relationships. The opposite-sex parent, in particular, may serve as a model for heterosexual relationships and in this regard, Sroufe and Fleeson (1986) suggested that people may seek to continue or re-establish relationships that are congruent with past relationships in order to maintain coherence and consistency within the self (see Bowlby, 1973; Swann, 1987; Swann & Read, 1981). Collins and Read (1990) obtained moderate evidence for parent-partner matching as, although only descriptions of the opposite-sex parent predicted the attachment style dimensions of their partner, the component of attachment style that was predicted was different for men and women. For men, ratings of their mother mainly predicted whether their partner was worried about abandonment, whereas for women, ratings of their father predicted whether their partner was comfortable with closeness and thought he could depend on others. This suggests that the opposite-sex parent may play a special role in shaping beliefs and expectations central to heterosexual love relationships.

The majority of these studies utilize retrospective self-report which introduces difficulties surrounding whether the accounts are accurate reflections of attachment history or a function of the IWM of attachment. Prospective data are needed because of the possibility that attachment styles change over time and this issue will be further commented on in the 'Discussion' section. However, taken together, the findings suggest that self-reported adult attachment styles can be reliably identified and that systematic differences in the quality of early attachment relationships influence personality, attachment styles, expectations and behaviour in the context of romantic relationships. Further study of individual differences in attachment styles is likely to contribute significantly to our understanding of why close relationships vary in both their quality and their interpersonal nature (Shaver et al., 1988).

Adult attachment classifications and satisfaction in relationships

Research with heterosexual couples has shown attachment styles and dimensions to be related to both partners' levels of trust, love, satisfaction and commitment in the relationship, including some indication of gender differences in these associations (Collins & Read, 1990; Davis & Kirkpatrick, 1994; Mikulincer & Nachson, 1991; Simpson, 1990). In a longitudinal study involving 144 dating couples, Simpson (1990) examined the impact of secure, anxious and avoidant attachment styles on romantic relationships. For both men and women, the secure attachment style was associated with greater relationship interdependence, commitment, trust, and satisfaction than were the anxious or avoidant attachment styles.

Collins and Read (1990) explored the role of partner matching on attachment dimensions as well as the role of attachment dimensions in the quality of romantic relationships. With reference to partner matching on attachment dimensions, considerable research has found partner similarity on a variety of demographic and personality characteristics (Buss, 1984; Buss & Barnes, 1986). Thus, there are reasons to anticipate similarity between partners in attachment style. In terms of attachment theory, IWM's about the nature of love and the self as a love object influence expectations, responses to others and interpretation of their actions. For instance, a partner who is comfortable with closeness may be unwilling to tolerate a partner who avoids intimacy. Because IWM's influence behavioural skills and interaction styles, it may be easier to deal with a partner who has a matching style.

Collins and Read (1990) obtained reasonable evidence for partner matching on attachment dimensions in that individuals tended to be in relationships with partners who shared similar beliefs and feelings about becoming close and intimate with others and about the dependability of others. However, subjects did not simply choose partners who were similar on every dimension of attachment. For instance, men and women who were anxious did not seek partners who shared their worries about being abandoned and unloved. Rather, by choosing partners who were uncomfortable with getting close, they appeared to be in relationships that confirmed their expectations. This finding was subsequently replicated in a study by Kirkpatrick and Davis (1994) and supports Weiss' (1982) belief that people may seek partners for whom their attachment system is already prepared to respond.

Concerning the role of attachment dimensions in the quality of romantic relationships, Collins and Read (1990) found that the attachment dimensions of a subject's partner were strong predictors of relationship quality, although the dimensions of attachment that best predicted quality differed for men and women. Both partners were less satisfied with their relationships when the man was avoidant or distant (rather than secure) and when the woman was anxious or preoccupied. Female anxiety was thus most predictive of male satisfaction and relationship perceptions and the male's degree of comfort with closeness was the best predictor of female satisfaction.

This gender conditioned pattern was also visible in Davis and Oathout's (1987), Kirkpatrick and Davis' (1994) and Simpson's (1990) study, with female anxiety (possessiveness) emerging as a particularly strong predictor of negative ratings by their male partners on virtually all relationship dimensions measured. Male possessiveness was much less predictive of female satisfaction which would seem to indicate that the extent of anxious attachment displayed by women assumes a greater role in affecting global satisfaction with relationships. However, some caution must be exercised in drawing conclusions about causality as the women in this sample tended to have partners whom they perceived as less warm and responsive and, as a result, their anxiety may reflect the lack of commitment and intimacy within the relationship, rather than be the cause of it.

Collins and Read (1990) found that men with high scores on Close rated themselves as high in disclosure and as warm, responsive listeners and that their partners tended to perceive them this way as well. Consistent with these findings, Davis and Oathout (1987) found that good communication by the man (including disclosure and listening skills) strongly predicted the woman's satisfaction, however, good communication by the woman did not predict the man's satisfaction (Davis & Oathout, 1987).

Kirkpatrick and Davis (1994, p. 505) examined the pairing of male and female attachment styles in 354 couples in "steady or serious dating relationships" (p. 505) recruited from undergraduate courses in the psychology of marriage. In addition, the role of own and partner attachment type in relationship satisfaction, commitment and conflict, and the degree to which attachment style contributes to the longitudinal prediction of couple stability and status were tested at Time 1, Time 2 (7-14 months later) and Time 3 (30-36 months after the initial phase). All measures in Time 1 were administered in a questionnaire and telephone interviews were conducted at Times 2

and 3. Their findings, described below, paint an intriguing and rather complex picture of the various roles attachment styles may play at different stages in the relationship development process yet preclude sweeping generalizations about which attachment styles are universally "good" or "bad" with respect to close relationships (p. 509). Results are consistent with the notion that attachment styles move toward security in more long-term or committed relationships (see Parker et al., 1992).

The most conspicuous aspect of Kirkpatrick and Davis' (1994) data is that there were no avoidant-avoidant or anxious-anxious pairs. Instead, avoidant participants tended to be paired with anxious partners and vice versa. Both insecure types were underrepresented when compared with Hazan and Shaver's (1987) sample. In samples where being a member of a romantic couple is not a criterion, between 55% and 60% of the respondents classified themselves as secure, but in this sample, 74.2% of the men and 76.7% of the women classified themselves as secure. Thus, the underrepresentation of both anxious and avoidant individuals in the sample appears to be related to the selection criterion concerning participation in a "serious dating relationship" (p. 506), as has been found in previous studies (Kobak & Hazan, 1991; Senchak & Leonard, 1992).

Kirkpatrick and Davis' (1994) results showed that men's relationship ratings varied significantly as a function of their own attachment style for all characteristics except conflict-ambivalence. Avoidant men reported the least positive characteristics in every case and were significantly less committed, satisfied, viable, intimate and caring than secure men and significantly less committed and passionate than anxious men. In contrast to findings reported by Collins and Read (1990) and Simpson (1990), women with avoidant male partners rated their relationships just as favourably as those with secure or anxious male partners. Consistent with findings of Collins and Read (1990) anxious and avoidant women did not differ significantly in any of their ratings of the relationship and men with an anxious female partner reported more conflict-ambivalence, less commitment, satisfaction, viability and intimacy than those with a secure female partner.

To summarize the above, men's attachment styles were strongly related to their own relationship ratings, with avoidant men displaying the most negative ratings and secure men the most positive, however, they were largely unrelated to their female partners' ratings of the relationship. Women's attachment styles were also related to both their own and their partners' relationship ratings but, in contrast to the men, it was the

anxious group (and their partners) that reported the most negative ratings of the relationship (Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994).

Kirkpatrick and Davis' (1994) findings concerning whether attachment styles contribute significantly to the longitudinal prediction of couple stability and status are consistent with previous research in that greater stability and status were associated with longer prior duration and with greater commitment and satisfaction for both partners. These univariate relationships were consistent across gender and follow-up time period. An interesting feature of these results was that although it was the avoidant men who rated the relationship most negatively at Time 1, it was anxious men who displayed the lowest level of stability at Time 2 indicating surprisingly high stability of avoidant men's relationships when prior duration and commitment are taken into account. A different pattern emerged for women at Time 3, when relationships of anxious women were significantly more stable (70%) than those of avoidant women (35%), with secure women (51%) in between. Thus, anxious women were found to display the highest stability and status of all the groups.

In terms of long term stability, Kirkpatrick and Davis' (1994) findings indicated that it was the anxious men and avoidant women who evinced the highest breakup rates across time. These authors hypothesize that this pattern might be due to the well-established observation that women are typically the maintainers and breakers of relationships. If, as would be expected from attachment theory, avoidant women are both less motivated and less skilled in relationship maintenance than secure and anxious women, then their relationships are likely to dissolve because no one is working to keep them together. On the other hand, anxious women, for whom abandonment and relationship loss are central concerns, would be expected to be more accommodating and active in relationship maintenance efforts. On the face of this, they could have relationships that are just as stable as those of secure individuals but not be as satisfied with them.

Part of the success of anxious women in retaining partners may be due to their tendency to pair with avoidant men as these women's behaviour in the relationship would confirm their partner's working model of attachment which includes disinterest in or fear of establishing close attachments and the need to maintain a safe interpersonal distance. In addition, conflict avoidance and low expectations of their partners manifested by

avoidant men may also contribute to long-term stability if not concurrent happiness and satisfaction (Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994).

Some investigators (viz. Simpson, 1990; Sroufe & Waters, 1977) have suggested that attachment theory should be viewed more globally as a theory of affect regulation. In Simpson's (1990) study, for both men and women, higher scores on the anxious style were reliably associated with less frequent, intense positive emotion as reported by the partner although these findings seem to suggest that the absence of positive emotion and not necessarily the presence of negative emotion may serve as one principle source of discontent underlying the relationships of anxiously attached people.

Combining measures of styles of love and conflict resolution strategies, Levy and Davis (1988) found that compared with secure individuals, anxious/ambivalent individuals were characterized by a higher level of conflict and lower level of intimacy, care, commitment and satisfaction and tended to utilize a dominating conflict-resolution style whereas avoidant individuals tended to score lower on intimacy, passion, commitment and satisfaction and tended to avoid conflict. These results support Gottman and Levenson's (1988 in Noller & Fitzpatrick, 1988) contention that the most consistent finding in terms of discriminating dissatisfied from satisfied couples is more negative affect (contempt, sadness, fear, disgust and their blends) and more reciprocity of negative affect.

Given that attachment styles are aspects of personality specifically concerned with interpersonal orientations in relationships with significant others and given their apparent relevance for adult romantic relationships, it seems reasonable to suggest that they might also be important with respect to marital relationships and be central dimensions on which individuals select marital partners.

Attachment theory and marriage

The study of marriage from an attachment theory perspective began with examinations of disruptions of marital bonds (Sperling & Berman, 1994). Since the attachment drive is only active at times of threat, stress, or perceived unavailability, initial efforts to understand adult attachment examined points of threat or unavailability through bereavement (Parkes, 1972), divorce (Weiss, 1975) and prolonged separation (McCubbin, Dahl, Lester, Benson, & Robertson, 1976). In fact, many researchers have

argued that the intensity of a bond can only be measured by the reaction to disruptions of that bond (Berscheid, 1983; Reite & Boccia, 1994). As Berscheid (1983) has shown in her analysis of the apparent unemotionality of many marriages, disruptions such as divorce and widowhood often activate the attachment system and reveal the strength of attachment bonds that were previously invisible.

However, more recent perspectives on adult attachment have been based on studying attachment within an existing marital relationship and have emphasized the systems aspects of Bowlby's theory, in which the internal working models of attachment both affect and are modified by current relationships (Berman et al., 1994; Cohn et al., 1992; Kobak & Hazan, 1991a). These researchers report significant correlations between attachment security, marital interaction, marital satisfaction, communication and problem solving.

Kobak and Hazan (1991a) investigated the role of working models in marital functioning. They anticipated that spouses' attachment security would be linked to constructive emotion regulation during two types of marital interaction, namely problem solving and confiding and that a spouse's ability to constructively modulate emotion would foster more secure working models in the partner. In addition, they considered the accommodation of working models in the marital relationship. Their findings support the notion that secure working models promote spouses' ability to modulate affect to maintain constructive problem-solving communication (see Simpson, 1990) and that security of spouses' working models consistently covary with relationship adjustment (see Collins & Read, 1990; Davis & Kirkpatrick, 1990). Results indicated significant associations between security of attachment and both partners' marital satisfaction, and agreement about working models accounted for significant variance in relationship adjustment. Furthermore, their findings suggest that working models are accommodated to the partner's behaviour in marriage. Husbands were less secure during problem solving when wives were more rejecting, however, husbands' problem-solving behaviour was not related to wives' attachment security although husbands' listening behaviour was. These findings are consistent with clinical reports of gender differences in goals for marital therapy with distressed wives often requesting increased intimacy with their husbands and distressed husbands requesting decreased conflict (Markman & Kraft, 1989 in Kobak & Hazan, 1991a).

Truant et al. (1987) examined links between early parent-child relationships and quality of marriage among 124 subjects who consecutively attended a Canadian family medical centre. The subjects rated their parents (and other parental figures) on the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI) and their spouses on the Locke-Wallace measure of marital quality. Recollections of parental care and overprotection measured by the PBI correlated significantly with Locke-Wallace measures of marital quality primarily in females with a history of major separation(s) during childhood. However, the relationship is not straightforward and depends on the parent figure being determined by objective criteria ('least caring parent') or, to a lesser extent, the subject's own choice ('most significant parent') rather than direct relationships to mother or father ratings. Contrary to the basic tenets of attachment theory, Truant et al. (1987) reported that evidence of developmental continuity appeared limited to psychologically well women and was not readily apparent in men or psychologically unwell women.

Cohn et al. (1992) examined the relationship between adult attachment classifications measured by the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) and self-reported marital satisfaction and satisfaction with communication. In addition, the association between husbands' and wives' AAI classifications and observations of couple behaviour in the laboratory and at home were examined. Contrary to expectations, AAI classifications were not significantly associated with self-reported marital satisfaction and communication for either husbands or wives which supports results from a similar study by Benoit, Zenah and Barton (1989 in Cohn et al., 1992).

Also noteworthy in Cohn et al.'s (1992) study was the finding that working models of attachment were associated with observations of couple interactions for husbands, but not wives. Husbands whose working models of attachment were secure were in better-functioning couples who displayed more interactions and engaged in less conflict with one another than were husbands whose working models of attachment were insecure. However, significant associations were not found for wives which might suggest that links between childhood attachment relationships and the current marital relationship may be different for men and women (see Truant et al. 1987). For women, the connections between attachment and marital functioning emerged more clearly when the couple's joint attachment classifications were related to observed couple behaviour.

Cohn et al. (1992) suggest that links between working models of childhood attachment relationships and marital relations for the women in their sample seem to be mediated

by the quality of their husbands' working model of attachment relationships. Couples in which the wife was classified as insecure but the husband was classified as secure showed fewer conflictual behaviours and were rated as more well functioning than were couples in which both members were classified as insecure. In the context of a supportive marriage in which the spouse is able to respond to conflict and intense expressions of affect without becoming hostile, working models of intimate relationships may gradually be transformed. This suggests that a secure partner may buffer the negative effects of insecure parent-child attachment on the marital relationship (see Hazan & Hutt, 1990).

Senchak and Leonard (1992) examined attachment styles and marital adjustment among 322 young, newlywed couples. They examined the nature of pairing on attachment styles and the implications of particular pairings of attachment styles for marital intimacy, evaluations of partners' marital functioning and partners' conflict resolution behaviours. As they point out, it is difficult to make precise predictions concerning pairing and adjustment, since the combination of styles that might facilitate adjustment could be a function of either similarity or complementarity. However, their results confirmed those of Collins and Read (1990) in that they suggested a tendency for marital partners to pair on the basis of similarity of attachment security suggesting that attachment styles may be an important dimension by which individuals choose their marital partners. However, it was the nature of the pairings rather than their similarity per se which was associated with better marital adjustment. Husbands and wives in secure couple types had significantly higher ratings on intimacy and partner functioning than husbands and wives in both mixed couple types (viz. *mixed-W* - wife secure and husband insecure; and *mixed-H* - husband secure and wife insecure), and non-significantly higher ratings on partner functioning than husbands and wives in insecure couple types (viz. both partners insecure). There were no significant differences between mixed-H and mixed-W couples' ratings of negative partner behaviour although sex differences were found on several of the measures with wives reporting more intimacy and more favourable evaluations of their partners than husbands, regardless of couple type. Perhaps wives' greater perceptions of marital intimacy generalized to their more favourable evaluations of their partners.

Recent research being conducted by Berman et al., (1994) has progressed from attachment in disruption to attachment in interaction. In brief, the procedure assesses the dyadic behaviour not during a marital interaction per se, but rather upon reunion

after two different affectively salient interactions, namely discussion of a loving, vulnerable, or affectionate memory and discussion of an area of conflict in the marriage. The authors hypothesized that the first interaction would make all couples feel closer, but would only elicit attachment for spouses who were insecurely attached. It was further hypothesized that the conflictual interaction, when followed by a physical separation, would universally elicit mild feelings of threat or abandonment and be an attachment activator for all the couples.

Their data suggest that attachment behaviour plays a significant role in marriage, particularly with reference to changes in proximity in brief interactions. Secure-secure marital dyads exhibit less proximity-seeking behaviour following a distressing separation and are more satisfied in their marriages than insecure-secure dyads. As predicted, attachment behaviours were present more for the avoidant subjects than for the secure subjects and deactivation was less effective for insecure attachment styles.

Attachment theory and closeness-distance struggles

Many marriages may seem too close and suffocating at times; at other times they may feel too distant and remote. A central source of controversy in couples' relationships pertains to difficulties with distance regulation (Jacobson, 1989; Napier, 1978; Sullaway & Christensen, 1983 all in Pistole, 1994). While acknowledging that distance struggles may also be tied up with power and gender issues, Pistole (1994) describes how attachment theory can contribute to the understanding and treatment of closeness-distance struggles which may be sustained by systemic factors and/or by factors related to a person's subjective world.

As has been mentioned, adult intimate relationships and parent-infant attachment display similar characteristics (Weiss, 1982). Rausch, Barry, Hertel and Swain (1974 in Johnson, 1986) suggest that the issue of separateness and connectedness is, in fact, the core issue in marital conflict. Adults, like children, show a desire for easy access to attachment figures, particularly marital partners; a desire for closeness to such figures especially in times of stress; a sense of comfort and diminished anxiety when accompanied by their partners; and an increase in distress and anxiety when the attachment figure is perceived to be inaccessible (Johnson, 1986). In distressed marriages, where disagreement or distance are perceived as threatening the

relationship, attachment behaviours such as clinging, crying and/or angry coercion become more frequent and extreme.

In essence, attachment theory can be described as a spatial theory as "the attachment control system maintains a person's relation to his attachment figure between certain limits of distance and accessibility" (Bowlby, 1988, p. 123; Byng-Hall, 1991b, 1995; Holmes, 1993). Attachment behaviour is triggered through a control mechanism that functions as if there were a tolerable amount of space between self and the attachment figure (relationship partner) and partners must regulate this distance in order not to experience separation anxiety (Pistole, 1994). The experiencing of the intense emotion associated with separation anxiety (for example, panic) triggers behaviours (viz. clinging, crying, protesting, anger and approaching) designed to re-establish connection and the felt sense of security.

In this regard, Simpson et al. (1992) tested several hypotheses concerning how spontaneous interaction between dating couples differs as a function of each member's attachment style when one member of the dyad (the woman) is confronted with an anxiety-provoking situation. Findings revealed that secure and avoidant persons differ in extent of support seeking and support giving as a function of the *level* of anxiety displayed by their romantic partner. For instance, at lower levels of anxiety, more avoidant women seek more support from their partners than do more secure women and more avoidant men provide more support than do more secure men. Extrapolating from Ainsworth et al.'s (1978) research, Simpson et al. (1992) speculate that desire for proximity in adults is aroused more strongly than fear of proximity when environmental conditions are only moderately threatening and emotional distress is at lower levels.

Fear of separation and intimacy can lead to approach/avoidance conflicts which Byng-Hall (1980; Byng-Hall & Campbell, 1981) refers to as a 'too far / too close' system. In this potentially unstable dyad, each sees the other as being as powerful as, or more powerful than, the self. Each then feels compelled to regulate their interpersonal distance and take active measures to prevent the other from either approaching too close, or deserting altogether. If this does not seem to work then even greater efforts, on each participant's part, are felt to be needed to prevent the other from forcing an intolerable situation on an unwilling partner. There is then the possibility of a symmetrically escalating conflict in which each move away from, or towards, is resisted with increasing force. The withdrawal and attachment scripts become increasingly activated by the

other. In cybernetic terms, this mutually positive feedback system, if unchecked, can lead to escalating activity ('runaways') which pushes the system beyond the edge of the usual homeostatic plateau that is normally guarded by negative feedback mechanisms (Byng-Hall, 1985a, p. 2). As Hoffmann (1971 in Byng-Hall, 1980) points out, 'runaways' can also lead to a change that may produce a more functional homeostasis. For instance, greater autonomy may result because getting further away may turn out not to be calamitous but to be more comfortable and even desirable. The threshold of 'safe distance' is thus constantly recalibrated but sometimes, the solution to a problem becomes the new problem (Watzlawick et al., 1974 in Byng-Hall, 1980).

The escalating conflict is often extremely frightening to the protagonists who find that every effort each of them makes only exacerbates the situation. One or both members of a couple that lives in the shadow of this double-ended catastrophe may develop symptoms which remove the distance conflict by becoming the reason both for staying together and for the lack of intimacy. Often the couple triangles in a "go-between" (viz. child, in-law, etc.) to bring them together if they get too far apart, or separate them when they are too close. The triangle then provides the pathway through which anxiety is managed within an attachment configuration (Donley, 1993). Often the "go-between's" ambivalence becomes the couple's homeostat and symptoms are likely to appear in this individual who becomes the designated patient (Byng-Hall, 1980).

In contrast, a complementary system can develop in which, for example, a caregiver can see herself as the stronger one needing to accommodate to the more vulnerable careseeker's needs for proximity or distance, even if those demands are unwelcome at the time (Parkes et al., 1991).

The spatial aspect of attachment or 'too far / too close' dilemmas within couples/families, can be illustrated by Schopenhauer's porcupine metaphor:

A number of porcupines huddled together for warmth on a cold day in winter; but, as they began to prick one another with their quills, they were obliged to disperse. However the cold drove them together again, when just the same thing happened. At last, after many turns of huddling and dispersing, they discovered that they would be best off by remaining at a little distance from one another.

(Quoted in Melges and Swartz, 1989 in Holmes, 1993, p. 175)

Attachment theory might predict that the distance struggle, as a major and continuing relationship problem, would manifest most conspicuously when one partner displays an avoidant attachment style and the other a preoccupied or anxious/ambivalent style. Reactivity in the preoccupied style where the person stays attuned to distress as well as to the partner and separation cues and insensitivity in the avoidant style perpetuate the closeness-distance struggle (Pistole, 1994). Regardless of how the closeness-distance struggle is enacted, the partners might also flip positions, with the previous pursuer of closeness becoming the person being pursued (Napier, 1988 in Pistole, 1994). Sometimes the behaviour (viz. withdrawing or pushing away) may be an attempt to maintain the relationship, to get closer by provoking the counter response of clinging. Despite the couple's distress, they somehow collude to maintain a set amount of 'comfortable' distance (homeostatic equilibrium). The focus on the marriage thus becomes a mechanism by which the couple protects one or both members from individual developmental issues and updating outmoded IWM's of attachment.

Although Bowlby (1988b) has allowed for updating of the IWM, he has not clearly explained the process of change in the nature of the IWM, nor does the concept of the IWM explain why the same person can have very different experiences in different relationships (Berman et al., 1994). Essentially, it is not yet understood how attachment styles are operationalised in marriage. As such, the IWM is insufficient as an explanatory construct and clinical and experimental observations suggest that interactional components might play a significant role in activating, maintaining or changing attachment-based interactions in close relationship (Berman et al., 1994). As mentioned above, it is often distance-related interactions that activate the attachment system and, in this sense, attachment theory's emphasis on spatial issues is linked to that of the structural theories of marriage (Minuchin, 1974) where dynamic processes are neglected in favour of representing structural variables in a spatial dimension only. As Marvin and Stewart (1990) point out, the categories of attachment (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) are very similar to family therapy concepts used to describe how relationships are meshed: namely adaptable, enmeshed and disengaged (Minuchin, 1974).

CHAPTER II : STRUCTURAL THEORIES OF MARRIAGE

Extrapolations from General Systems Theory (von Bertalanffy, 1968) have had a dramatic impact on theories of marital and family relationships. Like attachment theory, systems theory draws on principles of cybernetics, including reciprocal causality, positive and negative feedback loops and homeostasis (Berman et al., 1994). In essence, marital distress is the manifestation of a dysfunctional system - the interactions themselves are not producing the desired result, but because of an organizational system's tendency to maintain homeostasis, the system is unable to change.

Whereas psychodynamic theorists maintain that marital discord can largely be understood by knowing the psychodynamics of the individual participants, for the structural family theorist, the particular interest is in looking for patterns in the spatial arrangements of the organizational and behavioural components of the family members (Jacobson, 1990 in Fincham & Bradbury, 1990). The ability of a family to function well depends on the degree to which the family structure is well defined, elaborated, flexible and cohesive. Boundary clarity (viz. differentiation, permeability and rigidity) is a major parameter in evaluating the marriage's level of functioning and family members/couples develop a preferred degree of emotional proximity/distance in relating to one another. The label of pathology is reserved for those families who, in the face of stress, increase the rigidity of their transactional patterns and boundaries and avoid or resist any exploration of alternatives (Minuchin 1974).

Although Bowen (1976b in Paolino & McCrady, 1978) shares with Minuchin an interest in context as it determines and structures behaviour, he emphasizes historical rather than structural context. A necessary component of marital satisfaction is the individual's development of autonomy or differentiation from the family of origin. Bowen's theory of the marital dyad rests on the concept of differentiation of self or its opposite, fusion. His belief is that people with most fusion with family of origin have most of the human problems and those with the most differentiation, the fewest.

MINUCHIN'S (1974) STRUCTURAL FAMILY THEORY

Structural Family Theory has five principle features: the family is a system which operates through transactional patterns; functions of the family system are carried out by

bounded subsystems; such subsystems are made up of individuals on a temporary or permanent basis and members can be part of one or more systems within which their roles will differ; subsystems are hierarchically organized in a way which regulates power structure within and between subsystems and cohesiveness and adaptability are key characteristics of the family (Gale & Vetere, 1987).

Major assumptions of Minuchin's (1974) theory of marriage and the family

Minuchin's theory of marriage and the family is based on three major assumptions (Steinglass, 1987). The first is that all individuals operate within a social context and it is the context that defines the constraints within which individual behaviour exists. The psychological structure of the individual is thus viewed as interdependent with the person's social structure.

The second assumption is that this social context can be seen as having a structure. The structural dimensions of transactions most often identified in structural family therapy are boundary, alignment and power, with each transaction containing all three of these structural dimensions. The boundaries of a subsystem are "the rules defining who participates and how" (Minuchin, 1974, p.60). Aponte (1976a in Gurman & Kniskern, 1981, p. 313) describes alignment as the "joining or opposition of one member of a system to another in carrying out an operation" and power as "the relative influence of each [family] member on the outcome of an activity".

The third assumption is that some structures are functional and some dysfunctional (Steinglass, 1987). Structural family therapists believe that problems emerge in families/couples when their boundaries (that define structures) are not clear and when they have hierarchical problems, with cross-generational coalitions and alliances (Gale & Vetere, 1987).

Marriage structure

In Minuchin's (1974) structural model, marriage is analysed in terms of three dimensions of its structure: its organizational characteristics (membership and boundaries); the patterning of transactions over time as a measure of the internal development of the system; and its response to stress (James & Wilson, 1986; Steinglass, 1978).

Organisational Characteristics

Minuchin (1974) places heavy emphasis on the concept of level - that is, the naturally occurring subsystems of the family (marital dyad, parental and childhood subsystems etc.) - which must be arranged in a functional hierarchy for the family to behave adaptively. For him, the marital dyad is best conceptualized as a subsystem within the family which is in turn composed of two individual subsystems, namely husband and wife. Minuchin does not concentrate on the individual husband and wife, rather on the relationship between the spouses which becomes structured into consistent patterns such that the wholeness of the marriage becomes greater than the sum of the characteristics of each of the spouses. The concept of wholeness, homeostasis and circular causality lead to dynamic interactions in which a change in one spouse will cause a change in the other and, conversely, a change in one spouse cannot occur without a change in the marital system (Steinglass, 1978).

Boundaries

The boundaries of a particular system are "the rules defining who participates and how" and the function of boundaries is "to protect the differentiation of the system" (Minuchin, 1974, p. 53). Central to his thinking is that marriages, in order to grow and prosper, must have clear boundaries which ensure that husband and wife are clearly enough defined as a separate system to be protected from interference by competing subsystems, such as in-laws or children. At the same time, boundaries must not be so rigid as to prevent interaction between the various subsystems.

Minuchin (1974) identifies three types of boundaries - disengaged, enmeshed and clear - which he postulates exist on a continuum. At the disengaged end, boundaries are firmly delineated, impermeable and rigid. Partners behave as if they have little to do with one another and tend to go their own ways with little overt dependence on one another for their functioning (Aponte & VanDeusen 1981 in Gurman & Kniskern, 1981). At the enmeshment end of the continuum, boundaries are relatively undifferentiated, permeable and fluid. There is little evidence of autonomy with partners functioning as if they are part of each other. Between these extremes are clear boundaries, in which partners have considerable room for interaction with one another but in which clear rules for this interaction exist (Christensen 1983 in Kelley, Berscheid, Christensen, Harvey, Huston, Levinger, McClintock, Peplau, & Peterson, 1983). These terms do not

refer to a qualitative difference between functional and dysfunctional types of boundaries, but rather to a transactional style or preference for a certain type of interaction (Steinglass, 1978).

Cohesion and adaptability

Central to Minuchin's (1974) structural family theory are the concepts of cohesion and adaptability. In this theory, cohesion reflects both emotional bonding of members and their individual autonomy and is an important indicator of the transactional patterns of couples and family members. Cohesion is greatest in the enmeshed couple where autonomy is not encouraged, relationships are intense and boundaries between individuals and between subsystems are diffuse. In contrast, cohesion is lowest in disengaged couples where boundaries are rigid, spouses lead separate lives and communication is poor (Gale & Vetere, 1987). Diffuse boundaries may lead to blurring or even reversal of roles across generations and the disruption of norms of authority and power. Minuchin pays more attention to cohesion than to power, the latter being expressed through hierarchical arrangements.

Adaptable couples are able to alter roles and relationships in response to pressures for change. However, Minuchin does not specify the precise way in which this happens for functional families. For Minuchin, the functional demands of each subsystem require different skills and different patterns of behaviour (Gale & Vetere, 1987).

Patterning of transactions

This second structural dimension highlights Minuchin's sensitivity to the relationship between context and behaviour and is, in many respects, analogous to the notions of homeostasis and cybernetic control (Steinglass, 1987). Transactions include intricate interrelationships between environmental contexts and individual behaviour and the constraints (viz. the inherent needs of the social system and the shared expectations of each spouse) placed on behaviour by the context in which that behaviour occurs. Patterns occur because a particular fit has been established and the implication is that were one to change the fit, there would be a concomitant change in the pattern of behaviour.

Patterned transactions are conceptualized in spatial rather than temporal terms as it is the relationship between different variables in space, rather than the sequential order of their occurrence, that becomes the critical variable on which Minuchin relies to make his judgements (Steinglass, 1987).

Response to stress

Common patterns of adaptation that emerge when the family/couple is under stress yield an underlying family structure.

In conclusion, the structural model deals with the here and now. Past history, although interesting, does not have a logical or consistent role in conceptualizing normality or pathology in this model. The emphasis on structure means that dynamic processes are neglected in favour of structural variables which are represented in a spatial dimension only. Primary attention is paid to the spatial distances between different family members, the rigidity or permeability of boundaries, the presence of strong affectional or conflictual relations, the pattern of coalitions and alliances, triangular modes of conflict resolution and generally to the rules that govern the relationships between the various sub-elements and organizational levels of the family system. Minuchin (1974) can describe how the couple is, but he cannot say how they arrived at that point.

THE CIRCUMPLEX MODEL OF MARITAL AND FAMILY SYSTEMS

The Circumplex Model of marital and family systems was developed by Olson et al., (1979) to facilitate the linkage between clinical practice with families and the theory and research which guide that practice. The Circumplex Model is dynamic in that it assumes that changes in family/couple types can and do occur over time depending on the stage of the family life cycle and composition of the family and this will have considerable impact on the type of family system (Olson, Russell, & Sprenkle, 1983).

At the time of developing the Circumplex Model, it appeared to these researchers (viz. Olson et al., 1979) that *cohesion* and *adaptability* were the most common dimensions in research and practice around family relationships and that they served as useful concepts for integrating various aspects of marital and family relationships (see Minuchin, 1974). The development of these two dimensions, which are central to

General Systems Theory in that a system has to be well structured as well as flexibly adaptive in order to function well, is in no way unique to the Circumplex Model.

Large numbers of clinicians and researchers have used very similar dimensions in their therapeutic work and research (Beavers & Voeller, 1983; Constantine, 1977; Epstein et al., 1978; French & Guidera, 1974; Gottman, 1979; Kantor & Lehr, 1975; Leff & Vaughn, 1985; Lewis et al., 1976, all in Olson et al., 1983). Related to cohesion are Minuchin's (1974) concepts of boundaries, disengagement and enmeshment, Bowen's (1960) concepts of emotional divorce, differentiation and emotional fusion, Hess and Handel's (1959) concepts of separateness and connectedness and Wynne, Ryckoff, Day, and Hirsch's, (1958) concepts of pseudohostility, mutuality and pseudomutuality. Related to adaptability are the concepts of flexibility and spousal adaptability (Kiernan & Tallman, 1972) and morphostasis and morphogenesis (Wertheim, 1975).

Dimensions of the Circumplex Model

Cohesion

The first dimension used in the Circumplex Model is that of family cohesion which assesses the degree to which couples are separated from or connected to one another. In their original definition of family cohesion Olson et al. (1979, p. 5) placed autonomy on the cohesion dimension - "the emotional bonding members have with one another and the degree of individual autonomy a person experiences in the family system". However, in order to avoid confounding the family system concept of cohesion and the individual developmental concept of autonomy which is more adequately described in a linear dimension, the developers of the Circumplex Model later dropped the second part of their definition which now became "the emotional bonding members have with one another" (Olson et al., 1983, p. 80). Cohesion thus remained a curvilinear dimension whereby too much or too little was not optimal.

Originally, Olson et al. (1979, 1983) conceptualized cohesion on a continuum from enmeshment to disengagement. When cohesion levels were high (enmeshed systems), there was overidentification (lack of autonomy), so that loyalty to and consensus within the family prevented individuation of family members. Low cohesion (disengaged systems) was associated with low bonding and maximum concern with individual

autonomy. In the model's central area (separated and connected), individuals were able to experience and balance being independent from and connected to their families which was associated with optimum family/couple adjustment. Thus, the central levels of cohesion (separated and connected) were considered the most viable for couple/family functioning whereas the extremes (disengaged or enmeshed) were generally seen as problematic. However, in the light of recent findings (Green et al., 1991a,b in Cluff, Hicks, & Madsen, 1994) and the cumulative evidence of supporting studies, Olson (1991) conceded that there was considerable evidence to suggest that cohesion and adaptability were linear dimensions. Thus, high scores on these two dimensions were reconceptualized as measuring balanced family types and low scores as measuring extreme family types (see Critique of the Circumplex Model). The most specific indicators of family cohesion are the concepts indicated in the Clinical Rating Scale (CRS) which include emotional bonding, family involvement, marital relationship, parent-child relationship, internal boundaries and external boundaries.

Adaptability

Family adaptability is derived from General Systems Theory and builds on the concept of systemic change on the continuum from morphogenesis (continual change) to morphostasis (no change). Through positive feedback, the family system tends to growth and development, i.e. morphogenesis and through negative feedback, the family system tends to reinforce the status quo, i.e. morphostasis (Olson et al., 1979). Both morphogenesis and morphostasis are deemed necessary for a viable family system but it is the dynamic balance between stability and change that is hypothesized as most functional to marital and family system development.

Adaptability is defined as "the ability of a marital or family system to change its power structure, role relationships, and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stress" (Olson et al., 1979, p. 12). Olson, Russell and Sprenkle (1980a, p. 132, in Cluff et al., 1994, p. 463) indicate that "systems need both stability and change and that it is the ability to change when appropriate that distinguishes functional couples and families from others".

Cluff et al. (1994, p. 463) state that it is difficult to conceive of this variable as being anything but linear and believe that Olson confuses "ability" to change with "change" itself. In this regard, it was Lee (1988) who drew attention to the possible confusion

between first-order adaptability (that which occurs within a family system type) and second-order adaptability (the ability of a system type to change to another type). First-order change is curvilinear in that too much or too little change is problematic. In contrast, second-order change is believed to be linearly related to family health.

Subsequent to these articles, Olson (1994, p. 463) redefined adaptability as "the amount of change in its leadership, role relationships and relationship rules". The most specific indicators of adaptability are leadership, discipline, negotiation, roles and rules (Olson, 1994). The four levels of adaptability range from rigid (very low) to structured (low to moderate) to flexible (moderate to high) to chaotic (very high). As with cohesion, it was originally hypothesized that the central levels (structured and flexible) were more conducive to marital and family functioning, while the extremes (rigid and chaotic) were the most problematic for families/couples as they moved through the life cycle. However, as mentioned above, Olson (1991) has reconceptualized his thinking stating that adaptability is a linear measure with high scores measuring balanced family types and low scores measuring extreme family types (see Critique of the Circumplex Model).

Family communication is the third dimension in the Circumplex Model and is considered a facilitating dimension. Although not graphically included in the model, it is considered critical for facilitating couples and families to move on the other two dimensions (Olson et al., 1983). Positive communication skills (viz. empathy, reflective listening, supporting comments) enable couples and families to share with each other their changing needs and preferences as they relate to cohesion and adaptability whereas negative communication skills restrict their movement on these dimensions.

Hypotheses derived from the Circumplex Model

Various hypotheses regarding family/couple functioning have been derived from the Circumplex Model. The first hypothesis postulates a curvilinear relationship between the dimensions of cohesion, adaptability and family effectiveness. According to this, couples/families with balanced cohesion and adaptability will tend to function more effectively than those at the extremes (Olson et al., 1983). In terms of family development, these authors hypothesized that healthy families move within the model depending on their life cycle or stage of development and life stressors (Olson et al., 1979).

Significant alterations were made to Olson's hypotheses about where families would be located on the model. Olson et al. (1980a in Cluff et al., 1994, p. 459) later qualified the above position stating that "in fact, family members in balanced systems can experience both extremes of the dimension when it is appropriate but they usually do not stay at these extremes for extended periods of time". Perhaps in an attempt to qualify the normative expectations and cultural bias apparent in the first hypothesis, Olson et al. (1980a in Cluff et al., 1994) again changed their position hypothesizing that where family or sub-cultural expectations endorse extremes on one or both of these dimensions, these families will function well as long as all family members accept these expectations.

A further hypothesis states that balanced family types, those that fall in the moderate range of adaptability and cohesion, have a larger behavioural repertoire and are more able to change compared with extreme family types (Olson et al., 1983). Focusing on the satisfaction of family members/couples with their current systems, it is hypothesized that couples/families will function more effectively if there is high congruence between ideal and perceived descriptions. The assumption here is, that it is less important where the couple/family fall on the Circumplex Model than how they feel about the kind of marriage/family they have (Olson et al., 1983).

The facilitating dimension of communication leads to two further hypotheses. Firstly that balanced couples/families will tend to have more positive communication skills than extreme families and secondly that these positive communication skills will enable balanced couples/families to change their levels of cohesion and adaptability more easily than those at the extremes (Olson et al., 1983).

Empirical investigation of the Circumplex Model

Two previous studies, one by Angell (1936) with his concepts of family integration (similar to cohesion) and family adaptability, and another by Hill (1949) whose model investigated the adaptation of families to war separation and reunion, developed notions very similar to those of the Circumplex Model. The latter's findings showed some similarity to the curvilinear hypothesis in that he found that families with medium integration and high adaptability had the best overall adjustment to separation and reunion. It was not, however, until a series of studies of military separation by McCubbin et al. (1976), that there was an attempt to build upon and extend the classic studies of Angell (1936) and Hill (1949).

Sprenkle and Olson (1978) compared clinic and nonclinic couples on the dimensions of adaptability and cohesion. They found nonclinic couples were characterised by more moderate levels of adaptability especially under stressful conditions, thus providing partial support for the Circumplex Model. Russell (1979), in her investigation of families with adolescents, found support for the Circumplex Model in that high functioning families had moderate scores on cohesion and adaptability.

Studies of clinical samples (Bonk, 1984; Carnes, 1985; Clarke, 1984; Olson & Killorin, 1984; Roddick, Jenggeler, & Hanson, 1986, all in Olson, 1986) clearly demonstrate the discriminant power of FACES (one of the scales developed by Olson, Portner, and Lavee (1985)) to assess the two major dimensions of the Circumplex) and the Circumplex Model in distinguishing between problem and nonsymptomatic families. Using FACES and the Inventory of Parent Adolescent Conflict (IPAC), Portner (1981 in Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1982) compared 55 families (parents and one adolescent) in family therapy with a control group of 117 nonproblem families. As hypothesized, nonclinic families were more likely to fall in the balanced areas of the Circumplex Model than clinic families (58 and 42 percent respectively). Clinic families tended to be more toward the "chaotic disengaged" extreme (30 percent) with fewer nonclinic families at that extreme (12 percent). Bell and Bell's (1982 in Olson et al., 1982) study of families with runaways had similar results.

Christensen and Margolin (1988) examined three hypotheses concerning conflict and alliance in distressed and non-distressed families. Their data are consistent with a number of notions from structural family theory (Minuchin, 1974; Minuchin, Rossman, & Baker, 1978) namely that distressed families with problem children are characterized by weak marital alliances, discrepant cross-generational alliances and spread of conflict between family subsystems, particularly the marital and parent-child subsystems.

The Circumplex Model has been applied in a range of studies investigating family functioning, especially in problem or symptomatic families. However, there appear to be a lack of studies utilising the Circumplex Model to investigate marital functioning *per se*.

Critique of the Circumplex Model - linear versus curvilinear debate

Despite the support which has been found for the Circumplex Model to date, its developmental history, which has included redefinition of the central concepts, namely cohesion and adaptability, reveals a pattern of disconfirming evidence of curvilinear patterns followed by refinements resulting in a progressively more linear measure and model (Cluff et al., 1994).

The original formulation of the Circumplex Model held that there was a curvilinear relationship between cohesion, adaptability and effective functioning (Olson et al., 1979). Olson's (1986) more recent work has, however, moved away from this stand by stating that in "normal" families this relationship appears more linear than curvilinear because these families "represent only a narrow spectrum of the range of behaviour on these two dimensions" (p. 341). Thus, it would seem that the Circumplex assumes a curvilinear relationship between cohesion, adaptability and effective functioning only in more diverse populations in which 'nonnormal' or 'clinical' families are represented (Anderson & Gavazzi, 1990).

As Cluff et al. (1994) point out, 'normal' is by definition a measure of the majority so how can normal only represent a narrow spectrum? These authors further query how researchers are to distinguish between a score representing a balanced family temporarily functioning in an extreme area and the same score representing an extreme family that always functions in that area? In addition, they note that a family might be satisfied with where they are on the model (or in life) yet still be dysfunctional. This has certain practical implications, in that it is difficult to know which model to apply to various groups.

Although Halvorsen (1991) states that outside the Olson group there has been scant empirical confirmation of the curvilinear hypothesis, different studies have reached varying conclusions. As mentioned above, studies investigating family functioning in problem or symptomatic families have found support for the curvilinear hypothesis (Carnes, 1989; Clarke, 1984; Olson & Killorin, 1984; Roderick, Henggler, & Hanson, 1986, all in Green, Harris, Forte, & Robinson, 1991). A second group of Circumplex studies, however, report findings of no relationship between adaptability and cohesion scores and indicators of family functioning (Green, Kolevzon, & Vosler, 1985; Walker, McLaughlin, & Greene, 1988, all in Green et al., 1991) and a third group report linear,

rather than curvilinear, relationships between the major dimensions of the Circumplex Model and family functioning (Miller, Epstein, Bishop, & Keitner, 1985; Beavers, Hampson, & Hulgus, 1985; Thomas & Cierpka, 1989, all in Green et al., 1991).

Green et al. (1991) note that it is possible that the different methods employed, sample sizes and sampling from homogeneous populations may have influenced the different findings. Although these authors acknowledge that the cohesion subscale may be a useful linear measure of family functioning, they feel that the adaptability dimension requires conceptual as well as measurement attention. They recommend discontinuing combining the FACES III adaptability and cohesion subscale scores to provide family assessments and question whether FACES III is in fact accurately measuring the Circumplex Model at all. This is in line with comments by Green et al., (1991) who state that "while cohesion may be a curvilinear concept, FACES is not measuring it" (p. 71) even though "the cohesion subscale may be a useful linear measure of family functioning" (p. 70).

Given the findings of two extensive studies (Green et al., 1991a,b in Cluff et al., 1994) and the cumulative evidence of supporting studies, Olson (1991) concedes that there is considerable evidence that high scores on cohesion and adaptability are related to more functional family relationships. Thus, high scores on these two dimensions are reconceptualized as measuring balanced family types and low scores as measuring extreme family types.

Concluding comments

Attachment theorists are interested in the relationship between individual or intrapsychic properties *and* interpersonal aspects, whereas structural family theorists (an offshoot of General Systems Theory) focus exclusively on the structure and organization of the system with particular emphasis on its spatial arrangements. Having made these differentiations, the following section will explore whether Minuchin's (1974) structural family theory and attachment theory are in fact opposed, mutually exclusive approaches or whether some common ground exists and, if so, what some of the implications might be.

CHAPTER III : INTERFACE

From the preceding chapters, it becomes apparent that there are a number of similar and different themes underlying attachment theory and structural family theory as they pertain to marital satisfaction. Some of these will be highlighted in order to lead up to the rationale for this study.

THEMES

Interpersonal and intrapsychic

Whereas attachment theory is bound up with both intrapsychic (IWM) *and* interpersonal (structural) elements, Minuchin's structural family theory largely disregards the effects of early object relational experiences (intrapsychic), preferring to concentrate exclusively on the current interpersonal context. Despite these differences, both theories view the person as a social being embedded in an environmental context of other persons and are sensitive to the relationship between behaviour and context and how the spatial arrangements of the particular context differentially affect the viability of the system.

As mentioned, attachment theory is not exclusively concerned with the current interpersonal (structural) context. Rather, attachment theorists acknowledge the recursive nature with which the intrapsychic (IWM) and the interpersonal transact. Bowlby (1969) has placed bonding, which may be loosely construed as an emotional tie between individuals, in the framework of evolutionary adaptation - in a dangerous world a close and responsive attachment figure ensures survival. The attachment system can thus be viewed as a biologically based tendency to maintain or re-establish proximity to an identified protector and has an evolutionary function of protection and survival (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1988; Bretherton, 1985; Main et al., 1985).

In addition, attachment researchers have suggested that the set goal of the attachment system is not simply physical proximity (structural) but, more broadly, to maintain 'felt security' (intrapsychic) (Bretherton, 1985; Sroufe & Waters, 1977). The concept of 'felt security' introduces the notion of IWM's of attachment which are guided both by their own fixed rules and by transactions with the interpersonal environment. One of the most important factors in the maintenance of 'felt security' (IWM) is the perceived

availability and responsiveness (interpersonal) of the attachment figure. In this sense, the systems aspects of Bowlby's (1969 - 1973) theory are acknowledged as IWM's are not only static intrapsychic and historical products of early experience but both affect and are modified by the current interpersonal context. In a healthy marital relationship, IWM's should be sufficiently elastic to permit revision or adjustment to differing interpersonal conditions as they must not only assimilate new experiences to existing expectations but must also accommodate the partner's behaviour and relationship functioning in a reciprocal process (Kobak & Hazan, 1991a).

One of the fundamental linking concepts between object relations theory and attachment theory is that of mental representations or IWM's of attachment (Zelnick & Buchholz, 1990 in Sperling et al., 1992). However, whereas the development of IWM's in attachment theory stem primarily from the interaction patterns between parent and child (Bowlby, 1969), mental representations in object relations theory involve the complex interplay of external reality and internal fantasy (Diamond & Blatt, 1994-in Sperling & Berman, 1994). To illustrate the interface between the realms of the intrapsychic and the interpersonal, the object relationist Slipp utilizes one of the major defense mechanisms operative in marriage, namely projective identification.

Projective identification provides an important conceptual bridge between the intrapsychic and the interpersonal in that an awareness of the mechanism permits an understanding of specific interactions *among* persons in terms of specific dynamic conflicts occurring *within* them (Slipp, 1984). When individuation is not encouraged in the child, the internal self-representational and object-representational world and the external field of family relationships mirror one another in an inextricably tied vortex. Later, the adult will perpetuate the fixation by using splitting and projective identification to shape significant others (the marital partner) to parallel the internal fantasy. The subjectivity of the intrapsychic world thus colours that of external interpersonal relations (the marital relationship) and the lack of accommodation between the intrapsychic and interpersonal worlds results in a rigid, mutually controlling, intrusive form of interaction referred to by Slipp (1984, p. 58) as the "symbiotic survival pattern". Instead of being growth promoting, the marriage then serves a defensive purpose and is used to defend against a fear of symbolic merger, loss of identity, depression, or object loss (Nadelson 1978 in Paolino & McCrady, 1978).

Projection of disavowed elements of the self onto the spouse charges a marital relationship with conflict that has been transposed from an intrapsychic sphere to an interpersonal one. The necessity for partners to disown and project, to split and collude, is an attempt to establish ego boundaries and a sense of identity through difference. However, diffusion of ego boundaries is the natural consequence and efforts at reparation will succeed only to the extent that partners are able to effectively differentiate their respective egos and identities while simultaneously integrating into a unified marital ego system wherein they are able to coordinate functionally in mutual sharing, empathy, respect and affirmation (Klein, 1990).

Bowlby's concept of defense is both intrapsychic and interpersonal. If pathological defenses are viewed as methods of retaining proximity to rejecting or unreliable attachment figures, insecure attachments can be formulated in terms of dilemmas arising out of the need to get close and the imagined dangers of so doing - rejection, abandonment or intrusion (Holmes, 1993).

Attachment and separateness

Most, if not all, close relationships contain some degree of tension between the pair's shared welfare and each partner's individual well-being. The two primary developmental tasks facing the individual during the course of a life cycle are the achievement of a differentiated, consolidated, stable, realistic and essentially positive identity and the establishment of the capacity to form stable, enduring and mutually satisfying interpersonal relationships - the complementary development of autonomy and connectedness (Bowlby 1969-1973; Stern, 1979). The meaning and quality of self experience is largely determined by the dialectic between attachment and separateness aims. Progress in each developmental line is essential for progress in the other and a sense of self emerges through an ongoing dialectic between the self as separate and the self as experienced in its attachment to objects (Bowlby 1969-73; Blass & Blatt, 1992; Wynne & Wynne, 1986). Ambivalence prevails as individuals, to varying degrees, struggle continuously with simultaneous desires for dependence and nurturance and independence and self-sufficiency.

In an emotionally significant relationship such as a marital pair, the interplay between togetherness and individuality critically influences how individuals function. Couples in interchange of separate personalities construct firm yet permeable ego boundaries

within the marital system as well as between the system ego and the external world. Where ego boundaries are blurred and ego differentiation tenuous, introjective and projective mechanisms subjugate the involved marital and family members and increase dependence on the entrapment in the system's emotional process (Ryder & Bartle, 1991). Instead of the internal object worlds of both partners being relived and mastered in the marriage, a unified marital ego results. This reinforces their internalized object worlds (viz. IWM's) and sustains a defensive equilibrium or homeostatic balance which, if permanently established between the spouses, serves to constrict the healthy differentiation of individual ego systems (Slipp, 1984). The marital partners remain stuck in the redundant repetition of dysfunctional early object-relational experiences, unable to correctively modify these via relations with external objects (viz. the spouse). For the most part, it is the ability to work within a joint marital ego system while maintaining individual identities that is the hallmark of a healthy relationship (Fincham & Bradbury, 1990; Slipp, 1984).

Distance regulation

Distance regulation, in the sense of regulating attachment and separateness aims, is a major underlying theme in attachment theory and structural family theory (viz. cohesion and adaptability) and has been identified as playing an important role in marital satisfaction (Pistole, 1994). Attachment theory assumes that man's behaviour is goal directed and organized according to a cybernetic model in that attachment behaviour is elicited and terminated by specific events (Heard, 1982). The attachment behavioural system constantly regulates proximity-seeking and contact-maintaining behaviours with one or a few specific individuals who provide physical or psychological safety and security. The attachment system both triggers and is triggered by 'too far / too close' dilemmas (Byng-Hall, 1980) and has been described as, in essence, a spatial theory (Holmes, 1993). This spatial component is also evident in Minuchin's (1974) structural family theory which looks for patterns in the spatial arrangements of the organizational and behavioural components of the family/couple and how these differentially affect the viability of the system.

Although the mechanisms and hence terminology differ, the following concepts, pertaining to distance regulation, are central to both theories of marriage: boundaries (permeable, flexible, rigid), feedback, cohesion (emotional bonding and individual autonomy), adaptability (the ability to alter roles and relationships in response to

pressures for change) and homeostasis which lies on a continuum ranging from no change (morphostasis) to continual change (morphogenesis).

Both Minuchin (1974) and Olson et al., (1979) utilize the dimensions of cohesion and adaptability to inform their concept of boundaries and how relationships are meshed (viz. adaptable, enmeshed and disengaged). The categories of attachment bear a striking resemblance to these family therapy concepts. For instance, the anxious-ambivalent attachment style is characterized by clinging and needy behaviour due to a fear of abandonment and concomitant hypervigilance to separation cues. The tendency is towards enmeshment where boundaries are diffuse, cohesion is high and adaptability low. In contrast, affective rules of the avoidant attachment style are organized to inhibit or shut down the attachment system. Cohesion and adaptability are low and a disengaged system is often the result.

Depending on the couple's need and ability to adapt or otherwise to changing situational requirements, their individual attachment styles may either be reinforced (morphostasis) or updated (morphogenesis). Attachment theory stresses the role of adaptability in that relationship development ideally involves the continual construction, revision, integration and abstraction of IWM's which both influence behaviour and relationship adjustment and accommodate the partner's behaviour and relationship functioning. This idea is compatible with the possibility of change based on new information and experiences, although change may become more difficult with repeated, uncorrected use of habitual models. Lack of adaptability is evidenced in the insecurely attached who tend to react to partners in a manner which elicits a corroboration of their expectations. For example, an ambivalent person will trigger an ambivalent and inconsistent response from others; an avoidant and cool person will trigger coolness and emotional distance from others.

Ideally, an insecure person might become increasingly secure by participating in relationships that disconfirm negative features of experience-based mental models. In essence, the balance the couple achieves in their striving for proximity / distance will influence their ability to assimilate and accommodate new information by allowing them to move on the continuum from rigid (closed marital system) to flexible (open marital system) while maintaining a healthy differentiation of individual ego systems.

This section on 'Distance regulation' has attempted to highlight the fact that structural family theory and attachment theory are both, albeit differently, concerned with closeness-distance issues. This spatial component is the critical link between the two theories, however, therapists from the two schools of thought would approach a problem with distance regulation very differently. The next section will briefly describe some of the practical implications of the different approaches before moving onto the rationale for this study which is concerned with the empirical investigation of closeness-distance struggles, central to both attachment theory and structural family theory, and how these pertain to marital satisfaction.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ATTACHMENT THEORY AND STRUCTURAL FAMILY THEORY AS REGARDS DIFFICULTIES WITH DISTANCE REGULATION

Attachment theory

Although there has been little empirical investigation of the implication of attachment theory for clinical practice, Bowlby (1988a) suggested that the therapist's role is to provide a secure base for the client while disconfirming the client's problematic working models of relationships. Corresponding to attachment theory's picture of a secure base facilitating exploration, the overall goal of psychotherapy is "emotional autonomy" - the capacity to form relationships in which people feel both close and free (Holmes & Lindley, 1989 in Holmes, 1993, p. 154). Changing the thresholds of anxiety about distance frees intimacy and autonomy to function again.

Like the caregiver, the clinician optimally serves as a secure base by being available and appropriately responsive. Unlike the caregiver, the clinician also has a role in helping the client change working models of relationships, a task made difficult by the strong pull from the client to respond in ways that confirm existing models (Dozier, Kelly, & Barnett, 1994). In line with a continuity model, people may operate using models that are outdated and do not correspond well to their current reality. It is these static working models that inhibit the accommodation of new attachment information that are the focus of clinical intervention from an attachment perspective (West et al., 1989).

NB { Two factors are at work in maintaining outmoded models. The first is defensive exclusion of painful emotions and the second is the need to preserve meaning and to order incoming information from the environment in some kind of schema, however inappropriate. Thus, the goal of clinical intervention is to increase the "permeability" of the individual's working model of attachment through affective and cognitive re-assessment of attachment experiences and expectations (West et al., 1989, p. 369).

NB { Attachment theory is therapeutically useful since the working model provides both cognitive and affective points for intervening and changing awareness of both self and partner. For example, interventions can be directed toward addressing the emotional meaning of both partners' behaviour in order to afford them some recognition of how they are perhaps inadvertently, reciprocally triggering each other in a reactive cycle. For instance, insecure attachment arises from a representational model based on feared loss of the attachment figure, which predisposes the individual to have little confidence in the attachment figure's availability, responsiveness and permanence. Behavioural responses to insecure attachment can then lead to specific patterns of interpersonal relationships which, in turn, strengthen the representational model. A relatively stable, self-reinforcing system evolves and results in a consistent inability to experience security within attachment relationships.

Functionally attachment relationships address security needs. Consistent with attachment's protective and survival function, intense and urgent emotions accompany the loss of or any threat to the relationship. A break in physical or psychological protection can feel as if survival were at stake (Pistole, 1994). A therapist may need to help clients restructure their emotional experiences and realise that such feelings do not represent reality. In other words, they will survive; it only feels like they won't. Thus, interventions with an avoidantly attached person might focus on helping him/her to attend to distress cues from a partner and simultaneously feel safe.

In addition, therapy may need to address the appropriate level of reliance on both self and partner. For example, an anxious/ambivalent adult appears to get the attachment function of protection from physical and psychological harm emotionally mixed up with "I can't take care of myself at all" which results in an inordinate need to cling to the partner (Pistole, 1994, p.153). In this case, the relationship might be enhanced if the person can develop self-care strategies and learn to rely more on self. In contrast, avoidant attachment is associated with low levels of using the partner as a safe base and

an insulated independence manifesting in a need to keep their distance (see Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). For these persons it would be useful to learn that reliance on others and self-reliance are compatible, and that both are productive strategies depending on the situation (Bowlby, 1979). In sum, partners need to understand that they interpret attachment related issues differently.

Low levels of self worth and idealization of self or other function as vulnerabilities related to attachment behaviour. For example, in the anxious/ambivalent style the person experiences worth by merging with an idealized partner whereas the dismissing-avoidant (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) protects self through idealizing self and through hostility that keeps the partner at bay. Self-protective manoeuvres can be effective only if the partner maintains the needed distance or closeness. Should the partners want different levels of closeness and distance then the sense of protection fails. Thus, interventions that strengthen the self-structure and feelings of worthiness will also lead to changes in the sensitivity and activity of the individual's attachment system and to how the relationship operates.

In sum, persons' sensitivity to attachment 'dangers', their sense of their own worthiness and others' responsiveness, the strategies they use for responding to attachment information and their interpretation of others' behaviour may need to be revised. While recognising the interplay between the realms of the intrapsychic and the interpersonal and how these are reciprocally involved in maintaining outmoded patterns of attachment which manifest in problems with distance regulation, the attachment therapist focuses principally on intrapsychic mechanisms (the IWM of attachment), in order to address relationship difficulties with distance regulation.

Structural Family Theory

Structure denotes the family configuration which is produced when family members adopt specific amounts of proximity and distance to and from one another with respect to a given task or family event. The structural family therapist's theoretical assumption is that behaviour can only be understood in context. Little importance is attached to past history and the belief is that the past is enacted in the present. Structural family therapists are change rather than insight oriented and change occurs in the here and now (Israelstam, 1988). Symptomatic behaviour is not perceived as "inherently" problematic but rather as construed as such, based on the reality that is created by the

family (Fish & Piercy, 1987, p. 123). The notion that the identified patient, who serves as a homeostatic mechanism for resisting change, is not the true patient, is the key rationale for the use of family therapy which seeks to alter family organization as a primary goal in treating individually expressed pathology.

Structural family therapists believe that they need to 'join' with the family in order to diagnose and implement change. It is the joining that makes restructuring possible by creating a context of trust and faith in the therapist as a leader and director of the change process. Cohesiveness and adaptability are regarded as key characteristics of the family and structural family therapists challenge the family system by engaging actively to probe its structure and test its flexibility. Structural therapists disrupt functional coalitions and form alliances with one family member against the other. They may encourage action by changing seats to emphasize restructuring and to clarify individual and subsystem family boundaries. Space is used to explore family members' different distance thresholds by, for instance, asking them to stand up and walk towards each other, indicating at what point they feel uncomfortable. By escalating stress, an attempt is made to unbalance and restructure the system especially when families are rigid and stuck. The aim is to afford the family the opportunity of discovering alternative transactional possibilities which can become self-reinforcing.

The above-mentioned clinical implications highlight the need (a) for attachment therapists to recognize the contextual forces that activate personality structures and (b) for systems therapists to recognize the idiosyncratic meanings of interactional behaviours as inner dynamics and interactional behaviour dovetail to create systemic and personal crises.

RATIONALE FOR THIS STUDY

While attachment theory and structural family theory both have their own views on marital satisfaction, this review attempts to show the complementarity of views in that the implementation of structural (spatial) arrangements may depend on and, in turn, reinforce the intrapsychic properties (IWM) of attachment.

The concept of attachment is bound up with proximity-seeking and contact-maintaining behaviours with a particular attachment figure (viz. spouse) and recently attachment theory has begun to be examined in relation to closeness-distance struggles which have

been identified as a major theme in relationship distress (Byng-Hall, 1991b; Pistole, 1994). Central to both Minuchin's (1974) structural family theory and Olson et al.'s (1979) Circumplex Model are the dimensions of adaptability and cohesion. Differing configurations of these dimensions yield differences in the spatial arrangements of the couple/family (viz. enmeshed, disengaged, etc.) which are held to be either more or less conducive to marital satisfaction. Shifts in the couple's spatial patterning may escalate or de-escalate attachment behaviour and partners must continually regulate this distance in order not to experience separation anxiety (Pistole, 1994).

Whereas structural family theorists are exclusively concerned with the structural or spatial configuration of the family/couple and how this context informs marital satisfaction, attachment theorists acknowledge that the spatial arrangements of the couple, or closeness-distance struggles, are sustained by both systemic factors and/or factors related to the couple's subjective worlds (viz. IWM's). Utilizing one of the central defense mechanisms operative in marriage, namely projective identification, the object relationist Slipp (1984) has theorized this tendency to externalize the internal representation (IWM) into external structure with external structure in turn confirming or modifying the internal representation (IWM). However, although interesting, there is an apparent lack of empirical investigation of these ideas.

Whilst acknowledging that the nature of the IWM of each spouse both shapes and responds to the behaviours of the partner in a complex interplay between overt behaviours (interpersonal) and the meaning each person ascribes to these behaviours (intrapsychic), attachment theorists have tended to concentrate on the intrapsychic properties (IWM) of attachment and how the IWM informs marital satisfaction. This project extends the quest for consideration of how both the spatial arrangements of the couple (structural elements) and the IWM of attachment (intrapsychic) inform marital satisfaction as it would seem that these components (viz. the IWM and structural elements) are simply different faces of the same reality. To date there has been little, if any, empirical investigation of the interface between Minuchin's (1974) structural family theory and attachment theory as they pertain to marital satisfaction and this is the aim of this project. More specifically, the project aims to investigate the relationship between: (1) individual attachment classifications and the structural components of marriage (viz. cohesion and adaptability); (2) both individual attachment classifications and couple attachment groupings and their relationship to individual and couple satisfaction with the marriage respectively; and (3) the relationship between individual attachment

classifications and recollection of childhood relationships with parents and parents' relationships with one another. The specific aims of the project will be more fully discussed in the following section under the heading 'Objectives'.

CHAPTER IV - OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

Objectives

Given the descriptions of the attachment styles (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) (Hazan & Shaver, 1987 - Close Relationships Questionnaire), and the attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend, Anxiety) (Collins & Read, 1990 - Adult Attachment Scale) and the possible correspondence between the behavioural and emotional characteristics inherent in these attachment classifications (viz. avoidant attachment style) and the structure of the marriage (viz. disengaged) (Marvin & Stewart, 1990), this research will utilize the two above-mentioned measures of adult attachment and the FACES III (Olson et al., 1985) dimensions of adaptability and cohesion which yield differing marriage structure configurations, to examine whether there is a relationship between individual spouse's attachment classifications and their assessment of the marriage's structure.

Considering the different types of mental models (IWM's) they harbour, people who exhibit secure, avoidant, and anxious attachment styles tend to be involved in different kinds of romantic relationships (Bowlby, 1973, 1980). For instance, people who exhibit a secure style tend to gravitate toward and develop stable, supportive, relationships in which relatively high levels of trust, interdependence, commitment and satisfaction are evident, whereas those who display an avoidant style tend to develop emotionally distant relationships defined by lower levels of trust, interdependence, commitment and satisfaction (Cohn et al., 1992; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Kobak & Sceery, 1988; Simpson, 1990). Bearing the above in mind, it is hypothesized that a relationship might exist between individuals' attachment classifications (viz. secure, anxious ambivalent) and their satisfaction with the marriage. For instance, it might be that in terms of attachment mechanisms, individuals of an anxious/ambivalent attachment style rarely perceive relationships as satisfactory. On the other hand, however, it may be that perceptions of satisfaction with the marriage are linked to the relationship or particular 'mix' of attachment styles (viz. anxious/ambivalent wife and secure husband). With respect to attachment style, perhaps satisfaction with the marriage is a function of similarity of attachment styles which allows the couple to use a familiar, shared framework or maybe, where their attachment styles are different, the

complementarity allows for greater satisfaction. Thus, it is further hypothesized that there might be a relationship between couples' attachment styles (viz. anxious/ambivalent wife and secure husband) and couples' satisfaction with the marriage.

As stated above, the different attachment classifications have different behavioural and emotional styles. In view of this, it is hypothesized that there will be differences between individuals with different attachment classifications as regards their ideals of marriage structure. For instance, a spouse exhibiting an anxious/ambivalent attachment style might desire more cohesion in the marriage than a spouse exhibiting an avoidant attachment style.

Because attachment style is thought to develop in infancy and childhood, it is hypothesized that respondents with different attachment styles will report different attachment histories. This hypothesis replicates one of Hazan and Shaver's (1987) hypotheses where the best predictors of adult attachment style were found to be respondents' perceptions of the quality of their relationship with each parent and the parents' relationship with each other.

Hypotheses

1. A significant relationship exists between individual attachment styles / dimensions and perceived marriage structure (viz. the variables perceived cohesion and perceived adaptability - FACES III).
2. A significant relationship exists between individual attachment styles / dimensions and individual satisfaction with the marriage (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale and FACES III). A significant relationship exists between couple attachment styles (viz. anxious/ambivalent wife and secure husband) / couple attachment dimensions and couple satisfaction with the marriage (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale and FACES III).
3. A significant relationship exists between individual attachment styles / dimensions and ideal marriage structure (viz. ideal cohesion and ideal adaptability).

4. Recollection of childhood relationships with parents and recollection of parents' relationships with one another will differ across individual attachment styles / dimensions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Assessment instruments

Two scales were utilized to assess attachment, namely Hazan and Shaver's (1987) Close Relationships Questionnaire which is a categorical measure of attachment style (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) and Collins and Read's (1990) Adult Attachment Scale which measures attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend, Anxiety). Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales (FACES III) (Olson et al., 1985) and the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale, constructed by the researcher, were used to measure marital satisfaction. FACES III was utilized to measure marriage structure.

Participants voluntarily completed a questionnaire package containing the following:

Demographic Data

A demographic data section included standard items (age, sex, home language, education, religion) as well as specific items regarded as determinants of marital quality (number of children, duration of marriage, previous marriages, family of origin). With reference to attachment theory, respondents were asked to indicate which parent they were closer to as a little child.

Close Relationships Questionnaire (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) (see Appendix A)

The Close Relationships Questionnaire (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) contains 3 paragraphs describing attitudes towards partners, expectancies about relationship longevity and varying degrees of comfort with emotional closeness. Subjects were instructed to select the description which most resembled their experiences in close relationships in order to classify their attachment style as secure, avoidant or anxious/ambivalent. As evidence of the validity of the adult attachment construct, Hazan and Shaver (1987) found that older adults in their first study (mean age 36) and college students in their second study

(mean age 18) classified themselves in the same proportions of secure (56% vs 56%), avoidant (25% vs 23%) and anxious/ambivalent (19% vs 20%) as had been found in infant-mother attachment studies (viz. Campos, Barrett, Lamb, Goldsmith, & Sternberg, 1983 in Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Further, the types could be discriminated on the basis of attitudes about love (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Since Hazan and Shaver (1987) do not report reliability data, Pistole (1989) collected data from another demographically similar sample who responded to Hazan and Shaver's (1987) attachment questionnaire two times, one week apart. In Pistole's (1989) study, statistical analyses applied to the categorical data resulted in a contingency coefficient of 0.598 (maximum = 0.707), suggesting adequate consistency for Hazan and Shaver's (1987) attachment measure over a 1-week interval.

Adjective Checklist (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) (see Appendix B)

According to Hazan and Shaver's (1987) study, the best predictors of adult attachment type were respondents' perceptions of the quality of their relationship with each parent and the parents' relationship with each other. From a list of 22 adjectives, subjects in this study were requested to tick only those descriptions that best described how each parent had generally behaved toward them during childhood (viz. 'respectful mother') and the parents' relationship with each other (viz. 'caring parental relationship').

Hazan and Shaver (1987) conducted one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA's) with attachment style as the independent variable on each of the initial 86 child-parent and parent-parent relationship variables. These yielded 51 F ratios that were significant at the .05 level. Because many of the variables were correlated, a hierarchical discriminant-function analysis was performed to assess predictability of membership in the three attachment categories from a combination of attachment-history variables. 506 subjects were included in the analysis and Hazan and Shaver (1987) retained 22 attachment-history variables (see Appendix B) as significant predictors of attachment type. Both discriminant functions (two being the maximum possible number given three target groups) were statistically significant, with a combined chi-square (46, $N = 506$) = 131.16, $p < .001$. After removal of the first function, chi-square (22, $N = 506$) was 40.94 ($p < .01$). The two functions accounted for 69.78% and 31.13%, respectively, of the between-groups variability.

Adult Attachment Scale (Collins & Read, 1990) (see Appendix C)

Due to the problems inherent in the categorical assessment of adult attachment styles as measured by Hazan and Shaver's (1987) measure, Collins and Read (1990) developed the 18-item Adult Attachment Scale which is a dimensional measure of attachment. In this scale, Hazan and Shaver's (1987) paragraphs were broken down into their component statements, each forming one scale item. This resulted in 15 items, 5 from each attachment style. Six further statements were developed by Collins and Read (1990) to measure two important aspects of attachment not included in Hazan and Shaver's (1987) measure, namely beliefs about whether the attachment figure will be available and responsive when needed and reactions to separation from caretaker.

Collins and Read's (1990) scale initially contained a final pool of 21 items, 7 for each style. Subjects rated the extent to which each statement described their feelings on a scale ranging from *not at all characteristic* (1) to *very characteristic* (5). The 21 scale items were factor analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). After rotation, the three items concerning responses to separation loaded on a single factor that had an eigenvalue less than 1 and did not account for substantial variance. They were deleted from further analyses leaving 18 scale items.

After joint consideration of Kaiser's eigenvalue criterion (retaining only factors with eigenvalues greater than 1) and a scree test, Collins and Read (1990) extracted three factors for the final solution. The first factor contained items concerning the extent to which subjects could trust others and depend on them to be available when needed (Depend). Factor 2 consisted of items reflecting anxiety in relationships, such as fear of being abandoned and not being loved (Anxiety). The third factor contained items regarding the extent to which subjects were comfortable with closeness and intimacy (Close). On the basis of the items defining each factor, they were labelled Depend, Anxiety and Close respectively.

It is important to note that each factor was composed of items from more than one of Hazan and Shaver's (1987) original attachment style descriptions. For example, Factor 1 (Depend) and 3 (Close) contained items from both the secure and avoidant descriptions, and Factor 2 (Anxiety) had items from both the anxious and secure descriptions. In order to examine the relation between attachment dimensions and attachment styles, Collins and Read (1990) performed a discriminant function analysis

(see Table 3 in Collins & Read, 1990, p. 648). Their results indicate that (1) a person with a secure attachment style is comfortable with closeness, able to depend on others and not worried about being abandoned or unloved; (2) a person with an avoidant attachment style is uncomfortable with closeness and intimacy, not confident in others' availability and not particularly worried about being abandoned or unloved; and (3) a person with an anxious attachment style is comfortable with closeness, fairly confident in the availability of others, but very worried about being abandoned and unloved. Thus, the dimensions measured by the Adult Attachment Scale capture much of the core structures that are thought to underlie differences in attachment styles.

The discriminant function analysis could not completely overcome the limitations of Hazan and Shaver's (1987) measure because it used that measure to assign people to groups. Moreover, the assumption still was that there were three attachment styles and that by choosing one description adults could adequately assign themselves to a category. In order to overcome these limitations, Collins and Read (1990, p. 649) used a clustering procedure to determine whether there are distinct clusters of people and whether the clusters differ in ways consistent with theoretical conceptions of the three attachment styles. These authors concluded that differences between clusters seemed to correspond closely to the three attachment styles: Cluster 1 - people with high scores on Close and Depend coupled with low scores on Anxiety appeared to have a secure attachment style; Cluster 2 - people with high scores on Anxiety coupled with moderate scores on Close and Depend fit well with an anxious attachment style; and Cluster 3 - people with low scores on Close, Depend and Anxiety suggest an avoidant cluster.

Cronbach's alpha for the Depend, Anxiety and Close items of Collins and Read's (1990) Adult Attachment Scale were .75, .72 and .69 respectively. Means and standard deviations for the Depend, Anxiety and Close composites were 18.3 and 4.7, 16.2 and 5.1 and 21.2 and 4.8 respectively. Test-retest correlations for Close, Depend and Anxiety were .68, .71 and .52 respectively.

To summarize:-

Description of attachment dimensions

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Close | extent to which comfortable with closeness and intimacy |
| Depend | extent to which able to trust others and depend on them to be available when needed |
| Anxiety | extent of anxiety in relationships such as fear of being abandoned and not being loved |

Comparison of attachment styles and attachment dimensions

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| secure attachment style | comfortable with closeness, able to depend on others and not worried about being abandoned or unloved (high scores on Close and Depend coupled with low scores on Anxiety) |
| avoidant attachment style | uncomfortable with closeness and intimacy, not confident in others' availability and not particularly worried about being abandoned and unloved (low scores on Close, Depend and Anxiety) |
| anxious attachment style | comfortable with closeness, fairly confident in the availability of others, but very worried about being abandoned and unloved (high scores on Anxiety coupled with moderate scores on Close and Depend) |

Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales - FACES III (see Appendix D)

FACES III is the third version in a series of FACES scales developed by Olson, Portner and Lavee (1985) to assess the two major dimensions of the Circumplex Model, namely family cohesion and family adaptability. It is a 20-item couple/family measure containing 10 cohesion statements and 10 adaptability statements. The respondent is asked to read the statements and decide for each one how frequent, on a scale that ranges from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always), the described behaviour occurs in his/her marriage. The questionnaire is administered twice in order to elicit both perceived and ideal couple functioning. In both instances (viz. perceived and ideal), scoring on the two dimensions of adaptability and cohesion enables classification into one of sixteen couple types which fall into the balanced, mid-range and extreme categories on the Circumplex grid. The perceived-ideal discrepancy provides an inverse measure of level of couple satisfaction with the current couple system.

One of Olson's original hypotheses postulated a curvilinear relationship between the dimensions of cohesion and adaptability and family effectiveness. According to this, couples/families with balanced cohesion and adaptability will tend to function more effectively than those at the extremes who will have more difficulties coping with situational and developmental stress. However, in the light of recent findings (Green et al., 1991a,b in Cluff et al., 1994), Olson (1991p. 74) concedes that there is considerable evidence to suggest that high scores on cohesion and adaptability are related to more functional family/couple relationships. Thus, high scores on these two dimensions are reconceptualized as measuring balanced family types and low scores as measuring extreme family types.

Olson (1986) states that ideally, the two dimensions in the Circumplex Model should be uncorrelated or orthogonal. Olson's (1986) validation studies indicate that cohesion and adaptability in FACES III meet this criteria ($r = .03$). Because social desirability has an impact on most self-report scales, Olson (1986) attempted to minimize its impact on the two dimensions of FACES III. The correlation between adaptability and social desirability was thus reduced to zero ($r = .00$) with some correlation between social desirability and cohesion ($r = .39$). Internal reliability of FACES III was high (adaptability 0.62 and cohesion 0.77) (Olson, 1986).

5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale (see Appendix E)

This 5-item measure was derived by the researcher and face validity discussed with her supervisor. In order to determine whether the scale was unidimensional (viz. measuring one construct, namely, marital satisfaction), a principal-components analysis was performed on the 5-item measure. After joint consideration of Kaiser's eigenvalue criterion (eigenvalue > 1) and a scree test, one factor emerged, which explained 83% of the variance. Internal reliability of this scale constituted by the 5 items was high (Cronbach's alpha = 0.95).

Procedure

Opportunistic sampling of 6 groups (viz. Lifeline, the Marriage Encounter Movement, Systematic Training in Effective Parenting (STEP), the Parent Centre, Church of Christ and married acquaintances) was undertaken. A representative from each group was contacted and informed about the research. It was explained that participants should be

married at the time of the research and would be required to complete an anonymous questionnaire. Confidentiality was assured.

Subsequent to the representative of each group agreeing to participate in the research, questionnaires were either given to the representative for distribution or, in the case of the Marriage Encounter Movement, posted according to a list of names and addresses supplied by that representative. A personalised letter accompanied questionnaires sent to the Marriage Encounter Movement (see Appendix H). Each questionnaire (see Appendix G) contained seven sections which are described in detail under 'Assessment instruments' above. Sociodemographics, attachment styles, attachment history, marriage structure and marital satisfaction were assessed. A covering letter gave instructions to participants and emphasized that spouses should not discuss the contents of the questionnaire prior to completion. Participants were requested to return their questionnaires in the stamped, addressed envelope provided with each questionnaire.

A total of 238 questionnaires were handed out or posted to 119 married couples. Of the 238 questionnaires distributed, 82 (34%) were returned. Number of questionnaires distributed to each group and percentage returned were as follows: Lifeline - 40, 60%; STEP - 20, 0%; Marriage Encounter Movement - 78, 40%; Church of Christ - 20, 50%; Parent Centre - 60, 8%; married acquaintances - 20, 60%.

Subjects

All participants were married at the time of the research and questionnaires were sent to both spouses with the request that ideally both partners should participate in the research, however, should this not be possible, receipt of a questionnaire from one spouse only would also be welcome. The manner in which subjects were elicited is described under the heading 'Procedure'.

Analyses reported later are based on 82 replies received from 44 women and 38 men. 34 couples replied and of the remaining replies, 10 came from women and 4 from men. Participants ranged in age from 25 to 63 with a mean age of 41 (SD = 9.88). The majority (91%; N = 75) were English speaking, 39% (N = 32) had matric and 51% (N = 42) had a diploma or degree(s) post matric. 59% (N = 48) were Christian, 29% (N = 24) Roman Catholic and 12% (N = 10) atheist or agnostic. The average length of the current marriage was 15.7 years (SD = 10.3) with 90.2% (N = 74) of the sample in their first

marriage. 9.8% (N = 8) had been previously married and of these, one participant had two previous marriages. On average, there were 2 children per couple. 82.9% of participants described a nuclear family of origin (mother, father and children) and 11% grew up in a single parent family. Of the remainder, 3.7% grew up in a step family, 2.4% in a foster family, 1.2% in a children's home and 3.7% in none of the above.

To summarize, the sample constituted married participants who were, on average, in their early forties, mostly in their first marriage, with the average length of current marriage being 15.7 years and average number of children per couple being 2. The greater majority were English speaking, Christian, from a nuclear family of origin and more than half had post matric qualifications.

Data Analysis

Scored and coded self-report questionnaires were entered into the computer and analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows.

Hypothesis I

One-way analyses of variance (ANOVA's) were conducted to examine the differences between individual attachment styles (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent) on variables reflecting perceived marriage structure (viz. perceived cohesion and perceived adaptability). Correlations examined the relationship between individual adult attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend and Anxiety) and variables reflecting perceived marriage structure (viz. perceived cohesion and perceived adaptability).

Hypothesis II

ANOVA's were conducted to see whether there would be differences in satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale) across individual attachment styles (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent). For example, whether secure people perceived greater or lower satisfaction with their marriages than anxious people. Correlations examined the relationship between individual attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend and Anxiety) and satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale).

ANOVA's were conducted to determine whether couples with different attachment style groupings (viz. anxious wife, secure husband) showed different levels of couple satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale). Variables were created in order to reflect (1) attachment style groupings of couples and (2) couple satisfaction. Correlations tested the relationship between couple attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend and Anxiety) and couple satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale).

Hypothesis III

ANOVA's were conducted to examine the differences between individual attachment styles on ideal marriage structure (viz. ideal adaptability and ideal cohesion). Correlations indexed the relationship between individual attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend, Anxiety) and ideal marriage structure (viz. ideal adaptability and ideal cohesion).

Hypothesis IV

A Canonical Discriminant Functions Analysis attempted to predict attachment style from responses to Hazan and Shaver's (1987) attachment-history variables. Subsequently, Pearson chi-square tests of independence were conducted to examine the relationship between individual attachment style and each of the 22 Hazan and Shaver (1987) attachment-history variables. Correlations tested the relationship between individual attachment dimensions and Hazan and Shaver's (1987) 22 attachment-history variables.

CHAPTER V : RESULTS

Results will be described using 'attachment style' to refer to Hazan and Shaver's (1987) categorical attachment styles (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent, avoidant) and 'attachment dimension' to refer to Collins and Read's (1990) attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend, Anxiety) (Collins & Read, 1990, p.647). See sections entitled 'Description of attachment dimensions' and 'Comparison of attachment styles and attachment dimensions' for further clarification of the meaning of these attachment classifications.

Internal reliability

The following scales were investigated in order to determine internal reliability:-

Adult Attachment Scale (Collins & Read, 1990)

A coefficient alpha was calculated for the three attachment dimensions measured in this scale (viz. Anxiety, Close and Depend). Each of the three dimensions comprised 6 items making a total of 18 items which constitute the Adult Attachment Scale. The alpha coefficient was low for Anxiety. However, removing one Anxiety item (Anxiety 1 - "I do not often worry about being abandoned") and summing over the rest produced an alpha coefficient of 0.64. The coefficients for Close and Depend were satisfactory (0.72 and 0.77 respectively). There is a close correspondence between these coefficients and those obtained by Collins and Read (1990, p. 646) for Anxiety, Close and Depend, namely 0.72, 0.69 and 0.75 respectively.

Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scales (FACES III)

The alpha coefficients for the adaptability and cohesion dimensions of the FACES III scale were 0.73 and 0.90 respectively. These compare favourably with those obtained by Olson (1986, p. 345), for adaptability (0.62) and cohesion (0.77).

Descriptive statistics

All participants were married at the time of the research and the sample constituted 82 respondents (N = 82) of which 44 were women and 38 men. 34 couples (N = 68) and 14 individual spouses (10 wives, 4 husbands) replied. The mean age of respondents was 41 years (SD = 9.88) and average length of marriage 15.7 years (SD = 10.3). 91% (N = 75) were English speaking, 39% (N = 32) matriculated and 51% (N = 42) had either a post matric diploma and/or degree(s). Religious affiliation was predominantly Christian (59%; N = 42) and Roman Catholic (24%; N = 29) with 12% (N = 10) being atheist or agnostic. 90% (N = 74) of respondents were currently in their first marriages with 10% (N = 8) having been previously married. On average, there were two children per couple. In terms of family of origin, 82.9% described a nuclear family of origin (mother, father and children) and 11% a single parent family. Of the remainder, 3.7% grew up in a step family, 2.4% in a foster family, 1.2% in a children's home and 3.7% in none of the above. Table 1 contains a summary of this data.

Table 1

Demographic data (N = 82)

| (N = 82) | Age | Length of marriage |
|--------------------|------|--------------------|
| Mean | 41.0 | 15.7 |
| Standard deviation | 9.88 | 10.3 |

| (N = 82) | Percent |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| English speaking | 91 (N = 75) |
| Matriculated | 39 (N = 32) |
| Diploma and/or degree(s) | 51 (N = 42) |
| Christian | 59 (N = 48) |
| Roman Catholic | 29 (N = 24) |
| Atheist / agnostic | 12 (N = 10) |
| First marriage | 90 (N = 74) |
| Previously married | 10 (N = 8) |

| Family of origin (N = 82) | |
|---------------------------|------|
| Nuclear family | 82.9 |
| Single parent family | 11.0 |
| Step family | 3.7 |
| Foster family | 2.4 |
| Children's home | 1.2 |
| Other | 3.7 |

A breakdown of attachment style according to responses to Hazan and Shaver's (1987) Close Relationships Questionnaire is contained in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Classification of attachment style according to Hazan and Shaver's (1987) categorical measure of attachment (N = 82)

| Attachment Style | Frequency | Percent (N = 82) |
|--------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Secure | 61 | 74.4% |
| Anxious/ambivalent | 19 | 23.2% |
| Avoidant* | 2 | 2.4% |

* Since the number of subjects in the avoidant category was very small (2), it was decided to exclude this category from further analyses. Both avoidant respondents were women - one of the avoidant respondents formed part of a couple where the husband was secure and the other avoidant respondent's spouse did not reply.

A further breakdown of attachment style according to sex is contained in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Breakdown of attachment style according to sex (N = 80)

| Attachment Style | Male | Female | (N = 80) |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Secure | 30 (79%) | 31 (74%) | 61 (76%) |
| Anxious/ambivalent | 8 (21%) | 11 (26%) | 19 (24%) |

Respondents' replies to the question concerning which parent they were closest to is detailed in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Closest parent (family of origin) (N = 80)

| Mother | Father | Neither |
|--|---|--|
| 56 (70%) Males = 30 (53.6%) Females = 26 (46.4%) | 20 (25%) Males = 5 (25%) Females = 15 (75%) | 4 (5%) Males = 2 (50%) Females = 2 (50%) |

It is noted that subject variables such as education, religion, length of current marriage, family of origin etc., pose the validity problem most characteristic of correlational research in that other subject variables are invariably correlated with those measured. Thus, although the correlations discussed below demonstrate an association between two or more variables, they provide no information about cause and effect. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that due to the number of statistical tests conducted in this study, the Type I error rate will be higher than accepted and results should be read with this in mind.

HYPOTHESIS I

A significant relationship exists between individual attachment styles / dimensions and perceived marriage structure (viz. the variables perceived cohesion and perceived adaptability - FACES III).

Descriptive statistics for measures investigated in Hypothesis I are detailed in Table 5 below:

Table 5

Descriptive statistics for measures investigated in Hypothesis I (N = 80)

(Key: Means are depicted in ordinary typeface and standard deviations are depicted in bold typeface)

| Attachment dimensions | | | FACES III | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Close | Depend | Anxiety | Cohesion perceived | Adaptability perceived |
| 22.56 4.26 | 19.25 4.55 | 12.47 4.31 | 41.74 6.75 | 35.04 6.09 |

| Attachment Styles | Attachment dimensions | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Close | Depend | Anxiety |
| Secure | 23.95 3.37 | 20.78 3.71 | 11.98 4.33 |
| Anxious | 18.53 4.06 | 14.68 3.77 | 13.57 3.82 |

| Attachment Styles | FACES III | |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| | Cohesion perceived | Adaptability perceived |
| Secure | 41.87 6.85 | 35.22 6.42 |
| Anxious | 41.11 6.68 | 34.00 4.70 |

One-way analyses of variance (ANOVA's) with attachment style (viz. secure, anxious/ambivalent) as the independent variable, were conducted on the two dimensions measured by FACES III, namely adaptability and cohesion (dependent variables). ANOVA's revealed no significant effects for attachment style on perceived marriage structure (attachment style by perceived adaptability ($F = 0.57$; $df = 1,78$; $p > 0.45$); attachment style by perceived cohesion ($F = 0.21$; $df = 1,78$; $p > 0.65$)). (Analyses of variance are reported in Appendix F.)

Correlations of the adaptability and cohesion dimensions (marriage structure) and attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend, Anxiety) yielded a significant relationship between Close attachment and perceived adaptability ($r = 0.26$; $df = 78$; $p < 0.022$) and

Close attachment and perceived cohesion ($r = 0.3030$; $df = 78$; $p < 0.006$). There was no significant relationship between Depend and Anxiety attachment and perceived structure of marriage.

There was some support for the second part of the hypothesis pertaining to attachment dimensions in that a relationship exists between Close attachment and perceived structure of marriage (perceived adaptability and perceived cohesion), however, there was no support for the first part of the hypothesis pertaining to the relationship between individual attachment styles and marriage structure. Thus, the measure of dimensional attachment (Collins & Read, 1990) is significant when related to perceived structure of marriage whereas the categorical measure of attachment (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) is not.

HYPOTHESIS II

A significant relationship exists between individual attachment styles / dimensions and individual satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale). A significant relationship exists between couple attachment styles (viz. anxious/ambivalent wife and secure husband) / couple attachment dimensions and couple satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale).

Descriptive statistics for measures investigated in Hypothesis II are detailed in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 below. Table 6.1 refers to individual scores and Table 6.2 refers to couple scores.

INDIVIDUAL SCORES (N = 80)

Table 6.1

Descriptive statistics for measures investigated in Hypothesis II - INDIVIDUAL SCORES (N = 80)

Key: Means are depicted in ordinary typeface and standard deviations are depicted in bold typeface

| Attachment styles | 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale | FACES III satisfaction |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| | 20.86 4.13 | 8.28 12.37 |
| Secure | 21.43 4.14 | 7.97 11.84 |
| Anxious | 19.68 3.96 | 9.26 14.24 |

One-way ANOVA's revealed no significant effects for individual attachment style on individual satisfaction with the marriage using both the FACES III measure of satisfaction ($F = 0.157$; $df = 1, 78$; $p > 0.69$) and the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale measure of satisfaction ($F = 2.06$; $df = 1, 78$; $p > 0.16$).

Correlations yielded no significant relationships between individual attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend and Anxiety) and individual satisfaction with the marriage utilising the FACES III measure of satisfaction with the marriage. However, correlations between individual attachment dimensions and the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale yielded a significant relationship between Close attachment and satisfaction ($r = 0.3376$; $df = 78$; $p < 0.002$). There were no significant relationships between Anxiety and Depend attachment dimensions and the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale.

COUPLE SCORES (N = 32)

Table 6.2

Descriptive statistics for measures investigated in Hypothesis II - COUPLE SCORES (N = 32)

Key 1: Means are depicted in ordinary typeface and standard deviations are depicted in bold typeface

Key 2: H = husband; W = wife

| Couple attachment styles (N = 32)* | 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale (couple scores) | FACES III satisfaction (couple scores) |
|--|---|--|
| | 21.13 3.90 | 7.19 9.71 |
| Group 1 H secure / W secure (N = 18) | 21.97 2.97 | 7.19 9.71 |
| Group 2 H anxious / W secure (N = 7) | 22.00 2.52 | 2.57 7.45 |
| Group 3 H secure / W anxious (N = 7) | 18.07 5.77 | 14.64 15.26 |

- * In keeping with the above-mentioned decision to omit the avoidant category from further analyses, one couple containing a secure husband and an avoidant wife was excluded from the couple analyses. Furthermore, the one couple containing an anxious/anxious pairing was excluded.

Investigation of the second part of this hypothesis pertaining to couple scores required fairly complicated calculations which are detailed below:-

Couple attachment classifications

Couple attachment dimensions

In order to obtain couple scores on attachment dimensions, mean scores for couples on Close, Depend and Anxiety were calculated. Correlations between husbands' and wives' attachment dimensions were weak, (Close ($r = 0.1377$; $p > 0.45$); Depend ($r = 0.0370$; $p > 0.84$); Anxiety ($r = 0.2889$; $p > 0.10$)). Due to the fact that correlations between scores need not necessarily indicate complete congruence, a dependent measures t-test was performed. This revealed no mean differences between husbands' and wives' scores on these dimensions (Close ($t = -0.3$; $df = 32$; $p > 0.77$); Depend ($t = 0.8$; $df = 32$; $p > 0.43$); Anxiety ($t = -1.44$; $df = 32$; $p > 0.16$)). Consequently, a mean score has been used to reflect couple attachment dimensions.

Couple attachment styles (see Table 6.2)

To consider the association between couples' joint attachment style and the quality of the marital relationship, analyses were conducted using paired attachment classifications for both partners (see Cohn et al., 1992; Senchak & Leonard, 1992). These pairings are consistent with results obtained from both Senchak and Leonard (1992, p. 57) who state that their "results suggest a tendency for marital partners to pair on the basis of their attachment styles", and Kirkpatrick and Davis (1994) who suggest that evidence for nonrandom pairing of attachment styles would be consistent with the logic of internal working models. A breakdown of husbands' attachment style by wives' attachment style is contained in Table 7 below.

Table 7*Breakdown of husbands' attachment style by wives' attachment style (N = 33)*

| Wives' attachment style | Husbands' attachment style | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|---------|-------|
| | SECURE | ANXIOUS | TOTAL |
| SECURE | 18 | 7 | 25 |
| ANXIOUS | 7 | 1 | 8 |
| TOTAL | 25 | 8 | 33* |

- * In keeping with the above-mentioned decision to omit the avoidant category from further analyses, one couple containing a secure husband and an avoidant wife was excluded from the couple analyses.

A variable was created which coded couples into three groups as follows: (1) secure husband / secure wife (2) anxious husband / secure wife (3) secure husband / anxious wife. In view of the fact that only one couple fell into the anxious husband / anxious wife category, calculations concerning couple attachment styles and couples' satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale) have been done on 32 couples constituting combinations of the above-mentioned 3 groups.

Couple satisfaction with the marriage

Two scales were used to obtain scores reflecting couples' satisfaction with the marriage. The scores obtained from the FACES III scale will be referred to as 'couple satisfaction' and those obtained from the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale will be referred to as 'marital satisfaction'.

'Couple satisfaction' (FACES III)

The method for deriving the 'couple satisfaction' score is detailed in the manual by Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, and Wilson (1982, pp. 26 - 37). As has been previously explained, there is an inverse relationship between the 'couple satisfaction' score and level of couple satisfaction. Olson (1982) points out that, should husbands' and wives' individual marital satisfaction scores vary considerably, collapsing these scores in order to obtain a couple satisfaction

score would reflect an inaccurate picture of the couple's satisfaction with their marriage. However, the viability of the 'couple satisfaction' score was supported by a significant correlation between husbands' and wives' individual reports of satisfaction with their marriages as measured by FACES III ($r = 0.5927$; $p < 0.001$).

In addition, a t-test ($t = 0.31$; $df = 32$; $p > 0.76$) showed no difference between husbands' and wives' mean scores on satisfaction with their marriages.

'Marital satisfaction' (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale)

Spouses' scores on the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale were averaged in order to obtain a mean 'marital satisfaction' score. The high correlation between spouses' marital satisfaction scores ($r = 0.7126$; $p < 0.001$) supported the viability of this calculation. In addition, a t-test ($t = 0.83$; $df = 32$; $p > 0.42$) showed no difference between husbands' and wives' mean scores on satisfaction with their marriages.

Marriage satisfaction variables for couples

Correlations between the two variables describing couples' satisfaction with their marriage, namely 'marital satisfaction' (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale) and 'couple satisfaction' (FACES III) were high ($r = -0.7522$; $p < 0.001$). This provides some support for the validity of the two measures.

Gender and satisfaction with the marriage

Before examining the various couple scores pertaining to this hypothesis, it is noted that ANOVA's revealed no significant effects for gender on satisfaction with the marriage using both the FACES III measure ($F = 0.01$; $df = 1,78$; $p > 0.97$) and the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale ($F = 0.44$; $df = 1,78$; $p > 0.51$).

Length of marriage and couple satisfaction and marital satisfaction

There was no relationship between length of marriage and couple satisfaction ($r = 0.3272$; $p > 0.06$) (FACES III) or length of marriage and marital satisfaction ($r = 0.1495$; $p > 0.41$) (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale).

Couple attachment styles (viz. (Group 1) secure husband / secure wife; (Group 2) anxious husband / secure wife; (Group 3) secure husband / anxious wife) and couple satisfaction (FACES III)

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed no significant difference between the three attachment style groupings on couple satisfaction (FACES III) ($F = 2.287$; $df = 2, 29$; $p > 0.12$). Although differences between means on couple satisfaction (FACES III) look substantial (see Table 6.2), examination of standard deviations shows that the couple satisfaction variable (FACES III) has a large variance.

Couple attachment styles (viz. (1) secure husband / secure wife; (2) anxious husband / secure wife; (3) secure husband / anxious wife and marital satisfaction (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale)

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed a significant difference between the three attachment style groupings on marital satisfaction ($F = 3.119$; $df = 2, 29$; $p < 0.059$) (see Table 6.2).

Couple attachment dimensions and satisfaction with the marriage

Close attachment averaged for husband and wife correlated significantly with both couple satisfaction (FACES III) ($r = -0.3688$; $p < 0.04$) and marital satisfaction (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale) ($r = 0.6163$; $p < 0.001$). The correlation between the couple's Close attachment dimension and couple satisfaction (FACES III) was negative ($r = -0.3688$), due to there being an inverse relationship between the couple satisfaction score and level of couple satisfaction with the marriage - the lower the couple satisfaction score, the greater the level of satisfaction with the marriage. There were no significant correlations between the other two attachment dimensions, namely Depend and Anxiety averaged for husband and wife, and either of the two variables reflecting couples' satisfaction with their marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale).

HYPOTHESIS III

A significant relationship exists between individual attachment styles / dimensions and ideal marriage structure (viz. ideal cohesion and ideal adaptability).

Descriptive statistics for measures investigated in Hypothesis III are detailed in Table 8 below:

Table 8

Descriptive statistics for measures investigated in Hypothesis III (N = 80)

| Attachment style | FACES III Cohesion ideal | FACES III Adaptability ideal |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | 45.55 4.39 | 39.50 5.75 |
| Secure | 45.50 4.71 | 39.65 5.65 |
| Anxious | 45.47 3.24 | 38.89 6.30 |

One-way ANOVA's revealed no significant effects for individual attachment style on ideal marriage structure (adaptability ideal, $F = 0.2412$; $df\ 1, 78$; $p > 0.62$; cohesion ideal, $F = 0.0052$; $df = 1, 78$; $p > 0.94$).

Correlations indexing the relationship between attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend, Anxiety) and ideal marriage structure (viz. ideal adaptability and ideal cohesion) revealed a significant relationship between Close attachment and ideal cohesion ($r = 0.36$; $df = 78$; $p < 0.001$). No significant correlation was found between Close attachment and ideal adaptability and there were no significant correlations between Depend and Anxiety attachment and ideal marriage structure.

HYPOTHESIS IV

Recollection of childhood relationships with parents and recollection of parents' relationships with one another will differ across individual attachment styles / dimensions.

In order to predict attachment style from the responses to Hazan and Shaver's (1987) 22 attachment-history variables, a Canonical Discriminant Functions Analysis was done using attachment style as the grouping variable and entering the 22 Hazan and Shaver (1987) attachment-history variables as predictor variables. The discriminant function produced by the analysis yielded a high classification accuracy (80%) which would seem to indicate that the measure correctly classified secure and anxious/ambivalent people

on the basis of their responses to the 22 Hazan and Shaver (1987) attachment-history variables. However, chi-square was not significant (chi-square = 25.68; df = 22; $p > 0.27$) which indicates a lack of flexibility in that there are too many variables (22) for too few subjects (80).

Attachment styles and Hazan and Shaver's (1987) 22 attachment-history variables

Pearson chi-square tests of independence were run between attachment style and each of the 22 Hazan and Shaver (1987) attachment-history variables (see Table 9 below).

Table 9

Chi-square tests of significant relations between attachment style and Hazan and Shaver's (1987) attachment-history variables

| | Hazan and Shaver's (1987) attachment-history variables | Chi-square | df | p value |
|-----|---|------------|----|---------|
| 1. | Affectionate parental relationship (Secure = 70%) (Anxious = 47%) | 3.41 | 1 | 0.07* |
| 4. | Caring father (Secure = 67%) (Anxious = 37%) | 5.57 | 1 | 0.02 |
| 6. | Loving father (Secure = 49%) (Anxious = 21%) | 4.70 | 1 | 0.03 |
| 9. | Unhappy parental relationship (Secure = 7%) (Anxious = 21%) | 3.38 | 1 | 0.07* |
| 11. | Caring parental relationship (Secure = 69%) (Anxious = 47%) | 2.89 | 1 | 0.09* |
| 13. | Affectionate father (Secure = 44%) (Anxious = 16%) | 5.01 | 1 | 0.03 |
| 17. | Unresponsive father (Secure = 13%) (Anxious = 37%) | 5.35 | 1 | 0.02 |

* Although these items are not significant, they approach significance and have thus been included for comment.

As seen in Table 9, there was a significant relationship between positive father traits and secure attachment style (viz. "caring father", "loving father" and "affectionate father"). In contrast, "unresponsive father" was significantly related to an anxious attachment style. Although not detailed in Table 9, with the exception of item 13 ("affectionate father"), there were no significant differences between the sexes' endorsement of the other 21 items which supports Hazan and Shaver's (1987, p. 517) findings. For item 13 ("affectionate father"), the association with sex was significant ($\chi^2 = 5.1$; $df = 1$; $p < 0.02$). Considerably more females ($N = 21$) than males ($N = 9$) endorsed item 13 which suggests that an affectionate father might play an important role in secure attachment style for females.

Although Pearson chi-square tests of independence were not significant for those attachment-history variables describing positive parental relationships (viz. "affectionate parental relationship" and "caring parental relationship") and attachment style (see Table 9), they approached significance, with a higher percentage of secure than insecure participants endorsing both attachment-history variables. The reverse was observed in the relationship between "unhappy parental relationship" and attachment style which also approached significance but with a higher percentage of anxious (21%) than secure (7%) participants endorsing the item. There was no significant relationship between any mother traits and attachment style, despite 70% of subjects having described their mother as their closest parent when they were a little child.

Attachment dimensions and Hazan and Shaver's (1987) 22 attachment-history variables

Correlations were calculated on attachment dimensions (viz. Close, Depend, Anxiety) and Hazan and Shaver's (1987) 22 attachment-history variables (see Table 10).

Table 10

Significant correlations between Hazan and Shaver's (1987) attachment-history variables and attachment dimensions

| ATTACHMENT-HISTORY VARIABLES | | ATTACHMENT DIMENSIONS | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | | Anxiety | Close | Depend |
| 1. | Affectionate parental relationship | | 0.3442 (80) $p < 0.002$ | 0.2804 (80) $p < 0.012$ |
| 2. | Respectful mother | | -0.2233 (80) $p < 0.046$ | |
| 3. | Intrusive mother | | | -0.2133 (80) $p < 0.058$ |
| 4. | Caring father | | 0.2906 (80) $p < 0.009$ | |
| 5. | Demanding mother | | | -0.2398 (80) $p < 0.032$ |
| 6. | Loving father | | 0.3270 (80) $p < 0.003$ | |
| 9. | Unhappy parental relationship | | -0.2233 (80) $p < 0.046$ | -0.2490 (80) $p < 0.026$ |
| 13. | Affectionate father | | 0.3691 (80) $p < 0.001$ | |
| 14. | Sympathetic father | -0.2268 (80) $p < 0.043$ | | |
| 17. | Unresponsive father | | -0.2921 (80) $p < 0.009$ | |

As evidenced in Table 10, "Affectionate parental relationship" was positively correlated with Close and Depend attachment dimensions and "unhappy parental relationship" negatively correlated with Close and Depend attachment dimensions. There was a significant relationship between positive father traits (viz. "caring father", "loving father", "affectionate father") and Close attachment dimension. In contrast, "unresponsive

father" was negatively correlated with Close attachment dimension. The only significantly correlated item for Anxiety attachment was with "sympathetic father" which suggests that a sympathetic father might mitigate the anxiously attached's fears surrounding being abandoned or unloved. Negative mother traits, namely "intrusive mother" and "demanding mother" were negatively correlated with Depend attachment dimension and "respectful mother" was negatively correlated with Close attachment dimension.

In summary, there is some support for hypothesis IV in that recollection of childhood relationships with parents and recollection of parents' relationship with one another does differ across both attachment styles and attachment dimensions.

Summary of results

There was a significant relationship between Close attachment dimension and perceived structure of marriage (viz. perceived adaptability and perceived cohesion), however, there was no relationship between Depend and Anxiety attachment dimensions and perceived structure of marriage. There was no significant relationship between individual attachment styles (secure, anxious) and perceived structure of marriage.

There were no significant effects for individual attachment style on individual satisfaction with the marriage utilising both the FACES III measure of satisfaction and the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale. There were no significant relationships between individual attachment dimensions and satisfaction with the marriage utilising the FACES III measure of satisfaction, however, Close attachment dimension was significantly related to satisfaction with the marriage using the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale but Depend and Anxiety were not.

There were no significant differences between the 3 attachment style groupings on couple satisfaction (FACES III), however, there were significant differences between the attachment style groupings on marital satisfaction (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale). Close attachment dimension, averaged for husbands and wives, was significantly related to both measures of couples' satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale), yet Depend and Anxiety couple attachment dimensions were not related to either of the measures of couples' satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale).

There were no significant effects for individual attachment style on ideal marriage structure (viz. ideal adaptability and ideal cohesion). Close attachment dimension for individuals was significantly related to ideal cohesion although there was no relationship to ideal adaptability. There was no relationship between individuals' Depend and Anxiety attachment dimensions and ideal marriage structure.

Recollection of childhood relationships with parents and of parents' relationships with one another differed across attachment styles and attachment dimensions. Participants with secure attachment styles reported warmer relationships with father and between their two parents than did those with anxious/ambivalent attachment styles, although positive relationships between parents only approached significance. There was a significant relationship between participants high on Close and Depend attachment dimensions and positive father traits and positive parental relationships. "Unresponsive father" was negatively correlated with Close attachment dimension and both "unresponsive father" and "sympathetic father" were significantly related to anxious attachment style. There were no significant relationships between attachment style and any mother variables, however, "respectful mother" was negatively correlated with Close attachment dimension and "intrusive mother" and "demanding mother" negatively correlated with Depend attachment dimension. With the exception of one item ("affectionate father"), there was no difference in the sexes' endorsement of the other items.

CHAPTER VI : DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Demographics

Participants were, on average, in their early forties and the mean length of marriage was 15 years. The great majority were Christian, from a nuclear family of origin and in their first marriages. This data might have a bearing on the fact that a high percentage endorsed the secure condition. The attachment style distribution was not categorized by major sex differences which is in accordance with other studies (viz. Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Mikulincer & Nachson, 1991, etc.). It should be borne in mind that the sample in this study was not randomly selected and thus probably represents a biased sample.

Reviewing the high percentage of secure spouses in their sample, Kobak and Hazan (1991a), suggest that being married may influence attachment style and that secure individuals may simply be more likely to marry than insecure individuals and/or insecure individuals may take other relationship paths, such as multiple partners or cohabitation. This is consistent with the notion that attachment styles move toward security in more long-term or committed relationships (Hazan & Hutt, 1990). Further evidence for the effects of relationships on attachment style come from Davis and Kirkpatrick's (1990) study of dating couples. In comparing dating couples with an unselected sample of college students, these authors reported higher levels of security in the dating couples.

Hypotheses I and III

Hypothesis I

A significant relationship exists between individual attachment styles / dimensions and perceived marriage structure (viz. the variables perceived cohesion and perceived adaptability - FACES III).

Hypothesis III

A significant relationship exists between individual attachment styles / dimensions and ideal marriage structure (viz. ideal cohesion and ideal adaptability).

These hypotheses sought to examine the link between attachment style and family structure (cohesion and adaptability). The translation of attachment theory into a family systems framework has only just been started (Byng-Hall, 1991b; Heard, 1982; Marvin & Stewart, 1990; Minuchin, 1985; Stevenson-Hinde, 1990) with the linking concept between the two theories being their emphasis on the spatial component of relationships and how differing spatial configurations affect marital satisfaction which has come to be linked with closeness-distance struggles (Byng-Hall, 1980, 1991b; Pistole, 1989, 1994). The IWM of attachment, which is bound up with 'felt security', both triggers and is triggered by structural (too far / too close) changes in the relationship. Both Olson et al. (1983) and Minuchin (1974) utilize the dimensions of cohesion and adaptability to inform the family therapy concept of structure. Extrapolating from this, Marvin and Stewart (1990) have related attachment style categories (viz. secure, anxious, avoidant) to the family therapy concepts used to describe how relationships are meshed (viz. enmeshed, disengaged, etc.) (Minuchin, 1974). To illustrate this relationship, an anxiously attached individual, whose central concerns are fear of abandonment and loss, requires a partner to be continually available and responsive. Thus, an enmeshed relationship is likely to quieten their attachment system as it signifies availability and responsiveness. On the other hand, an avoidantly attached person with his/her fears surrounding intimacy might be more comfortable with a disengaged relationship.

The above-mentioned hypotheses yielded no significant relationships between attachment style and marriage structure, either perceived or ideal. In terms of attachment dimensions, the only significant relationships were with Close attachment which was related to perceived marriage structure (both perceived cohesion and perceived adaptability) in hypothesis I, and to one dimension of ideal marriage structure, namely ideal cohesion, in hypothesis III. Thus, the component of attachment reflecting comfort with closeness and intimacy is related to structural configurations of the marriage, particularly the cohesion dimension of ideal marriage structure. In a sense this is to be expected as the cohesion dimension reflects "the emotional bonding members have with one another" (Olson et al., 1983, p. 71) and is bound up with comfort with proximity (intimacy/closeness).

In terms of these hypotheses, the only significant relationships were with Close attachment dimension. The fact that there were no significant relationships between attachment style and both perceived and ideal marriage structure perhaps highlights the

difficulties inherent in the categorical assessment of attachment style (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), the shortcomings attached to an exclusive reliance on self-report measures and the consequent need to include multiple measures of assessment (see 'Limitations of this research' below). Furthermore, given the small sample size, the high percentage of secure subjects, and the fact that the majority were in their first marriages and had been married for approximately 15 years, these results should generally be viewed in a tentative light.

Hypothesis II

A significant relationship exists between individual attachment styles / dimensions and individual satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale). A significant relationship exists between couple attachment styles (viz. anxious/ambivalent wife and secure husband) / couple attachment dimensions and couples' satisfaction with the marriage (FACES III and 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale).

The only component of attachment that contributed to individual satisfaction with the marriage was Close attachment dimension. Thus, the more comfortable individuals are with closeness and intimacy the more satisfied they appear to be with their marriage. There were no significant relationships between Depend and Anxiety attachment dimensions and satisfaction with the marriage and no significant relationships between individual attachment styles and individual satisfaction with the marriage. In addition, results revealed no significant relationship between gender and satisfaction with the marriage.

The second part of this hypothesis explored the relationship between couples' attachment style groupings (viz. (1) secure husband (H) / secure wife (W); (2) anxious H / secure W; (3) secure H / anxious W) and the couples' satisfaction with the marriage. A significant relationship was found between couple attachment style groupings and marital satisfaction as measured by the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale but no relationship was found utilizing the FACES III measure of couple satisfaction. In addition, the relationship between couple means on the three attachment dimensions and their relationship to satisfaction with the marriage was explored. Close attachment dimension averaged for husband and wife was significantly related to the couple's satisfaction with the marriage utilizing both the FACES III and the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale and a similar result was found for individual attachment dimensions (see above) and satisfaction with the marriage. The component measuring comfort with

intimacy and closeness (viz. Close attachment dimension) is thus significantly related to marital satisfaction.

In their study, Cohn et al., (1992) examined the relationship between adult attachment classifications, measured by the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), and self-reported marital satisfaction and satisfaction with communication. Similarly to these results, yet contrary to the above-mentioned authors' expectations, AAI classifications were not significantly associated with self-reported marital satisfaction and communication for either husbands or wives which supports results from a similar study by Benoit, Zenah and Barton (1989 in Cohn et al., 1992). Cohn et al., (1992) did, however, find an association between husbands' attachment style and marital satisfaction on observational ratings of couple interaction rather than self-report which highlights the shortcomings of the latter.

With regard to couple attachment dimensions and couples' satisfaction with the marriage, Collins and Read (1990) found that the attachment dimensions of a subject's partner were strong predictors of relationship quality, although the dimensions of attachment that best predicted quality differed for men and women. In their study, female anxiety (Anxiety) was most predictive of male satisfaction and relationship perceptions and the male's degree of comfort with closeness was the best predictor of female satisfaction.

Male and female attachment style groupings were nonrandomly paired, for example, no anxious-anxious or avoidant-avoidant pairs were found (see Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994). This suggests that individuals tended to be in relationships with partners who shared similar beliefs and feelings about becoming close and intimate with others and about the dependability of others (Collins & Read, 1990). Although it has been stated that attachment style may be an important dimension by which individuals choose their marital partners (Berman et al., 1994), these couples had been involved in their relationships for some time when they entered the study, and it is therefore not clear to what degree pairing of male and female attachment styles reflect the selection of marital partners at the outset. The data showed no relationship between length of marriage and couple satisfaction, however, it is not clear to what degree the quality of the marriage has impacted on the current attachment styles and vice versa, as working models of intimate relationships may gradually be transformed (Hazan & Hutt, 1990) as IWM's of

attachment both affect and are modified by current relationships (Berman et al., 1994; Cohn et al., 1992; Kobak & Hazan, 1991a).

Results utilizing the 5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale showed mean marital satisfaction scores for the H secure / W anxious grouping to be significantly lower than the other two groupings (viz. H secure / W secure; H anxious / W secure) where mean marital satisfaction scores were very similar. The H anxious / W secure grouping evidenced the highest mean marital satisfaction score with the H secure / W secure grouping being non-significantly lower. Extrapolating from the results of hypothesis I, where no relationship was found between individual attachment style and satisfaction with the marriage, it would appear that it is not the attachment style of the partner per se that impacts on marital satisfaction, but rather the particular mix of attachment styles that differentially and uniquely affect the couple's satisfaction with their marriage. Furthermore, the particular blend of attachment styles appears to impact differently on marital satisfaction depending on the sex and attachment style of the partner. For instance, the attachment style grouping containing an anxious H and a secure W was significantly more satisfied with the marriage than the grouping containing a secure H and an anxious W.

Ratings of the couples' satisfaction with their marriage were non-significantly lower in the H secure / W secure grouping when compared with the H anxious / W secure grouping. However, previous research into marital satisfaction has found that couples in which both partners were secure evidenced the best overall marital adjustment when compared with couples in which one or both partners were insecure (Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Kobak & Hazan, 1991a; Senchak & Leonard, 1992). This finding has been replicated in studies utilizing dating couples where significant associations were found between security of attachment and both partners' satisfaction with the relationship (Collins & Read, 1990; Davis and Kirkpatrick, 1990; Simpson, 1990).

Cohn et al. (1992) suggest that links between working models of childhood attachment relationships and marital relations for the women in their sample seem to be mediated by the quality of their husbands' working model of attachment relationships. Couples in which the wife was classified as insecure but the husband was classified as secure were rated as more well functioning than were couples in which both members were classified as insecure. In terms of the effects of an insecure/secure attachment style blend on marital satisfaction, the opposite of this trend was observed in this study in that

marital relations for the men in this sample seem to be mediated by their wives' working model of attachment relationships. Husbands whose IWM's were insecure and whose partners' IWM's were secure were more satisfied with the relationship than husbands whose IWM's were secure and whose partners' were insecure. Although a secure partner may buffer the negative effects of insecure parent-child attachment on the marital relationship (see Hazan & Hutt, 1990), this depends, not only on the particular attachment style, but on the unique characteristics of the partners and how their interpersonal and intrapsychic worlds intertwine.

The gender conditioned pattern found in this study was also visible in Davis and Oathout's (1987), Kirkpatrick and Davis' (1994), Mickulincer and Nachson's (1991) and Simpson's (1990) studies. Their results support these findings in that female anxiety (possessiveness) emerged as a particularly strong predictor of negative ratings by their male partners on virtually all relationship dimensions measured whereas male anxiety was much less predictive of female satisfaction. This would seem to indicate that the extent of anxious attachment displayed by women assumes a greater role in affecting global satisfaction with relationships.

Kirkpatrick and Davis (1994) found that generally, men with an anxious female partner reported more conflict-ambivalence, less commitment, satisfaction, viability and intimacy than those with a secure female partner. In contrast to the group of anxious men in their sample, it was the group of anxious women (and their partners) that reported the most negative ratings of the relationship. Their findings are supported here in that it was the attachment style grouping containing an anxious wife that reported the most negative ratings of marital satisfaction.

Gottman and Levenson (1988 in Noller & Fitzpatrick, 1988) contend that the most consistent finding in terms of discriminating dissatisfied from satisfied couples is more negative affect and more reciprocity of negative affect. Levy and Davis (1988) found that compared with secure individuals, anxious individuals were characterized by a higher level of conflict and lower level of intimacy, care, commitment and satisfaction and tended to utilize a dominating conflict-resolution style. Should this be the case, anxiously attached partners appear to be better 'received' by secure wives than secure husbands which raises the issue of whether there is a vast difference in the interpersonal style of anxious wives as compared to anxious husbands.

In addition to general models of self and others, people develop working models of specific partners and relationships (see Bowlby, 1969, 1973) and Parker et al. (1992) note that attributes of the adult intimate partner reflect not only the past developmental experiences of the subject but also relevant characteristics of the partner. As has been stated earlier, the intrapsychic and interpersonal intertwine both within and between individuals in a relationship and this might account for the fact that people can have very different experiences with different partners. In accordance with a discontinuity model of attachment, future research should focus not only on enduring styles of people, but on how two people come together to form a unique relationship with unique IWM's.

Kirkpatrick and Davis (1994) have suggested that women are typically the maintainers and breakers of relationships. Given that abandonment and relationship loss are central concerns for anxious individuals, anxious women might be expected to be more accommodating and active in relationship maintenance efforts. If this is the case, these efforts have not impacted on marital satisfaction in this study although they might impact on relationship stability which does not necessarily correspond to marital satisfaction. In fact, paradoxically, low happiness may often be associated with marital stability (Hick & Platt, 1970, in James & Wilson, 1986). Thus, an important question to be addressed is whether the relationship between attachment style groupings and marital satisfaction contribute significantly to the prospective predictiveness of stability versus breakup.

This study focused on married couples at different points or stages of the family/marriage life cycle. Replication with couples at specific phases of the marital relationship might shed light on developmental processes associated with maintaining accurate working models and whether there is a relationship between changes in working models and marital satisfaction. Results highlight the difficulties attached to investigating marriage as a dynamic process rather than providing a static picture. The dynamics of relationship initiation, satisfaction and conflict, and maintenance-stability across time are different and although attachment theory might have the potential to advance our understanding of all these processes within a single conceptual framework, research requires considerable refining of assessment techniques.

Hypothesis IV

Recollection of childhood relationships with parents and recollection of parents' relationships with one another will differ across individual attachment styles / dimensions.

A significant relationship was found between positive father traits (viz. "caring father", "loving father" and "affectionate father") and secure attachment style (see Table 9) and Close attachment dimension (see Table 10) suggesting that a positive father relationship plays an important role in security of attachment and comfort with closeness and intimacy. This was further borne out by the fact that "unresponsive father" correlated negatively with Close attachment dimension (see Table 10) and was significantly related to an anxious attachment style (see Table 9). "Sympathetic father" was the only item to correlate significantly with Anxiety attachment dimension (see Table 10). Thus, results suggest that a sympathetic father might mitigate the anxiously attached's fears surrounding being abandoned or unloved. Feeney and Noller (1990) noted that anxious/ambivalent subjects were the most likely to perceive a lack of paternal supportiveness, whereas securely attached subjects tended to report positive early family relationships.

In accordance with Hazan and Shaver's (1987) study which found no significant differences between the sexes' endorsement of the 22 attachment-history variables, this study showed that only one item, namely "affectionate father", was significantly related to gender. Considerably more females than males endorsed the item which suggests that an affectionate father might play a particularly important role in secure attachment style for females. In Collins and Read's (1990) study, both men and women's descriptions of the opposite-sex parent predicted the attachment style dimensions of their partner although the component of attachment style differed. These authors suggested that the opposite-sex parent may play a special role in shaping beliefs and expectations central to heterosexual love relationships. Thus, methods for assessing working models of parental attachment figures could be used to predict the formation of working models of marital partners (Kobak and Hazan, 1991).

Although Pearson chi-square tests of independence were not significant for those attachment-history variables describing positive parental relationships (viz. "affectionate parental relationship" and "caring parental relationship") and attachment style (see Table 9), they approached significance, with a higher percentage of secure than insecure participants endorsing both attachment-history variables. The reverse was observed in the relationship between "unhappy parental relationship" and attachment style (see Table 9) which also approached significance but with a higher percentage of anxious than secure participants endorsing the item. "Unhappy parental relationship" was negatively correlated with Close and Depend attachment dimensions and "affectionate

parental relationship" positively correlated with Close and Depend attachment dimensions (see Table 10). These results suggest that a positive parental relationship is related to a secure attachment style for both sexes and significantly affects individuals' capacity to trust others and depend on them to be available when needed (Depend) and affects individuals' comfort with closeness and intimacy (Close).

Despite 70% of subjects having described their mother as their closest parent when they were a little child, there were no significant relationships between any mother traits and attachment style (see Table 9). Negative mother traits, namely "intrusive mother" and "demanding mother" were negatively correlated with Depend attachment dimension. Thus, an intrusive and demanding mother impacts negatively on individuals' ability to trust others and depend on them to be available when needed. "Respectful mother" was negatively correlated with Close attachment dimension (see Table 10) suggesting that individuals with respectful mothers experience difficulty with closeness and intimacy. It is suggested below that this result might be due to the fact that the adjective "respectful" connotes distance in the relationship.

Hazan and Shaver's (1987) Adjective Checklist is characterized by more mother (12) than father (7) items. In this research, father-related items are more positively correlated with attachment security than mother-related items for both sexes. Considering the adjectives describing mother and father, it is evident that none of the adjectives pertaining to father descriptions (viz. affectionate, caring, loving) are evident in the mother descriptions, with the latter appearing to contain adjectives lacking warmth and connoting distance (viz. respectful, confident, accepting, responsible, strong-minded, likeable, respected). It is questioned whether these differences have a bearing on the absence of significantly correlated mother items with attachment style. Moreover, utilizing a checklist approach to assess the quality of the early attachment relationship is problematic because it ignores distinctions of degree - all mothers may be intrusive, demanding or disinterested at times (therefore allowing all three items to be endorsed by almost anyone) but the *extent* to which mothers possessed these characteristics during subjects' childhoods cannot be assessed. This problem may have resulted in a minimization of observed differences among the three attachment groups.

Conclusions remain subject to the limitations that follow from a reliance on self-report measures and the distortions emerging from retrospective recall which may not be an accurate assessment of childhood experience. Since the accuracy, consistency, and

accessibility of memories of childhood are significantly affected by changing circumstances in an adult's life, it might be argued that subjects' memories of early relationship experience are simply reconstructions of those events, not veridical characterizations. In this regard, both Hazan and Shaver (1987) and Parker et al. (1992) note that the younger the sample, the easier it is to predict their adult attachment styles from descriptions of relationships with parents. As distance from parents increases and adult love experiences accumulate, the effect of childhood relationships on adult mental models and behaviour patterns appears to decrease (Main et al., 1985).

Reported associations could be a direct result of a failure to distinguish parental from adult social relationships. In this sense, the current relationship of the spouses may colour their sense of the past, and it seems likely that the developmental stage of the marriage (viz. new parents) affects the recall of parent-child relationships in childhood (Minuchin, 1988; Parker et al., 1992; Ricks, 1985; Rothbard & Shaver, 1994 in Sperling & Berman, 1994; Truant et al., 1987). In addition, retrospective data are confounded by changes in attachment styles over time, particularly shifts from insecure to secure styles (Hazan & Hutt 1990). However, as Collins and Read (1990) point out, we do not yet know that this is the case, and besides, memories can provide valuable information about an individual's current organisation and representation of attachment-related experience which, in itself, is meaningful and informative.

The attachment history measure used here is a fairly simple assessment of what are surely very complex relationships between parents and children. In this regard, it is noted that what was being assessed in this hypothesis was what Object Relations theorists would call 'internal objects', rather than actual characteristics of parents. Additional work is needed to understand the role of early relationships in the formation of working models and future research will benefit from richer, more sensitive measures. One such measure, the Adult Attachment Interview (George et al., 1985), is a long clinical interview that should be a valuable tool in this area (see Kobak & Sceery, 1988).

Limitations of the study

As Ricks (1985) points out, the two basic methodological problems in the study of attachment across generations concern firstly the formidable problem of how best to capture the important aspects of relationships and secondly how to gather the necessary information across lengthy time spans. In this study, the reliance on self-report data is an

obvious limitation. Self-report questionnaires are susceptible to some well-known biases and limitations, such as the possibility of answers biased by social desirability, defensiveness, the difficulty of probing related concepts without undue repetition, and the necessity to deal in generalities that will be applicable to a broad range of people but that cannot describe the unique characteristics of individual situations (Parker et al., 1992; Shaver et al., 1988). However, a clear understanding of the self-report domain is an important step toward a more broadly based research, in which a range of methodologies can be applied to the analysis of romantic relationships. The use of such techniques as the coding of couple communication and the analysis of subjects' descriptions of their romantic partners would enable an assessment of the convergence of findings with those from the self-report domain (Feeney & Noller, 1990).

In addition to the limitations of self-report measures, there are problems inherent in the categorical assessment of attachment style. Hazan and Shaver's (1987) questionnaire assumes that the three attachment styles are mutually exclusive and it is therefore not possible to determine the degree to which a particular attachment style characterizes an individual. Assigning people to discrete categories may result in groups whose members share some features but differ considerably on other dimensions. In this connection, Sperling et al., (1992) comment that there might be a wide range of attachment security. In the childhood and adult adaptations of Ainsworth et al.'s (1978) model, security of attachment and stylistic variables cannot coexist - one is either secure or, if not, avoidant or ambivalent. These authors suggest that there appears to be a frequent coexistence of relative security and a stylistic manifestation, the latter which is often within the realm of normal dependence. However, in the literature on adult attachment, stylistic manifestations are all assumed to be linked with insecurity of attachment. In many western cultures, normal dependence in attachments tends to be highly valued and associated with attachment security. A phenomenological distinction needs to be made between moderate normal dependence and extreme dependent behaviours, which are generally maladaptive and usually reflect attachment insecurity. In an attempt to remedy some of these difficulties, Collins and Read (1990) introduced the Adult Attachment Scale. This dimensional measure of attachment goes some way towards detecting important individual differences by determining which component of attachment most strongly contributes to a particular relation.

This study makes extensive use of correlations to examine the relationship between various variables. However, although sound theoretical reasons exist for hypothesizing

that attachment styles may directly affect the quality and emotional tenor of relationships, these correlational data do not permit causal inferences.

Recommendations for future research

As has been mentioned in the 'Discussion' section, the couples in this study had been married for, on average, 15.7 years and it is thus unclear to what extent attachment styles were implicated in partner selection. An important area for future research will be to examine the influence of attachment style and attachment history on the processes of mate selection. Furthermore, an examination of relationship histories might help determine the extent to which people repeat relationship patterns.

In order to accomplish this, techniques need to be developed to examine in detail the contents and structure of individual models and how they relate to attachment styles and account for differences in relationship experience (Collins and Read, 1990). Because some aspects of working models may operate outside conscious awareness (Bretherton, 1985; Main et al., 1985), this may require a multimethod approach including in-depth interviews and such things as the analysis of problem-solving styles, simulated interactions and social perception tasks that may reveal underlying models.

The fact that self-report measures were relied on exclusively in this study underscores the importance of including multiple methods of assessing the couple relationship. One way to circumvent the limitations of self-report measures is to ask outsiders or spouses to describe each other's relationship-relevant characteristics. In this regard, Kobak and Sceery (1988) found that college students' adult attachment classifications were more strongly associated with peer reports of personality than were self-reports.

Rather than relying on self-report measures, future research might consider naturalistic and laboratory observations to provide more sensitive indices of the affective quality of the adult attachment relationship and how it might both affect and be affected by the implementation of differing structural arrangements in the dyad. It might be useful to have raters describe spouses on the basis of this observational data.

To further examine the controversy surrounding continuity versus discontinuity of attachment styles, future research must track people longitudinally to unequivocally establish whether attachment styles remain stable across several relationships. Virtually

nothing is known about stability of attachment styles across the life span or about factors that may precipitate shifts during adulthood from one attachment style to another (Sperling & Berman, 1994). An important next step is to identify the mechanism by which an attachment style may be maintained (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), however, given the multiple pathways through which representations of attachment relations may perpetuate self-confirming social experiences, perhaps the more difficult question is how such representations come to be modified? Future studies should consider individual differences in the ability to update and accommodate working models during the formation of new attachment relationships. Longitudinal studies would provide a more dynamic picture of how attachment patterns are externalized, maintained, and revised in interaction with the social environment.

Conclusions and implications

An attempt has been made to examine the relationship between family structure, attachment theory and marital satisfaction. Closeness-distance struggles (distance regulation), which are considered to be at the heart of marital satisfaction (Byng-Hall, 1980, 1991b; Jacobson, 1989; Napier, 1978; Sullaway & Christensen, 1983 all in Pistole, 1994; Pistole, 1989), provide the linking concept between attachment theory and structural family theory in their research into marital satisfaction (Minuchin, 1974). In that the attachment IWM both activates and is activated by structural (spatial) elements of the relationship, attachment theory has been described as, in essence, a spatial theory (Holmes, 1993). Albeit differently, Minuchin's (1974) structural family theory is also a spatial theory with differing configurations of cohesion and adaptability yielding differing structural arrangements in the dyad which are held to be either more or less conducive to marital satisfaction. Thus, the spatial component common to both theories provides a vehicle to explore the interface between them and how they might jointly, rather than separately, inform research into marital satisfaction.

In sum, attachment theory addresses the meaning and purpose of closeness-distance movements, the ubiquity and intensity of the emotion people experience, and the mechanism by which incoming information from the partner is processed and responded to emotionally and behaviourally (Pistole, 1994). Using these elements, an attachment perspective can organize the emotional process by which spouses interpret their partner's behaviour, persons' reciprocal impact on one another, and the disruption of the couple's fit. These elements provide both systemic (which is the link with

structural family theory) and individual means of changing thresholds of anxiety about distance in relationships and helping couples be more satisfied in their relationships.

Heard (1982) has described the attachment dynamic that operates throughout the family system and emphasized how the complementary activities of attachment and caregiving behaviour govern the movements of family members/couples towards or away from each other, affect the degree to which they engage in creative exploratory activities and influence the internal representation each member builds of him or herself in action with others. However, results of this project (viz. hypotheses I and III) did not support a relationship between attachment style and either perceived or ideal marriage structure.

As previously mentioned, the concept of attachment is bound up with proximity-seeking and contact-maintaining (spatial) behaviours with a particular attachment figure (viz. spouse) and regulation of this distance both affects and is informed by the IWM of attachment which seeks 'felt security'. Essentially, the attachment control system maintains a person's relation to his attachment figure between certain limits of distance and accessibility (Bowlby, 1988; Byng-Hall, 1991b, 1995; Holmes, 1993) and recently, marital satisfaction has begun to be examined in relation to closeness-distance struggles which have been identified as a major theme in relationship distress (Byng-Hall, 1991b; Pistole, 1994). Results of the second part of hypothesis II yielded a significant relationship between couple attachment style groupings and couples' satisfaction with the marriage. The possibility thus exists that the attachment IWM both activates and is activated by closeness-distance struggles which are pivotal to marital satisfaction. In this sense, this result affords some empirical investigation of the interface between the realms of the intrapsychic (IWM) and the interpersonal (closeness-distance struggles / structural elements) and how these mutually inform one another.

Essentially, it is not yet understood how attachment styles are operationalised and difficulties in clearly explaining the process of change in the nature of the IWM and why the same person can have very different experiences in different relationships has highlighted the insufficiency of the IWM as an explanatory construct (Berman et al., 1994). The fact that attachment style groupings vary significantly in their levels of marital satisfaction and the fact that closeness-distance struggles (structural elements) are the linking factor between attachment theory and marital satisfaction suggests that these interactional components might play a significant role in activating, maintaining or changing attachment-based interactions in close relationships (Berman et al., 1994).

The significance of the interplay between the intrapsychic and the interpersonal components of attachment in informing marital satisfaction has various implications for marital therapy. Because activation of the attachment system suppresses other behavioural systems, thus constricting the behavioural repertoire, coping responses become severely limited and intervention often more difficult (Heard, 1982; Heard & Lake, 1986; West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994). While therapy from an attachment perspective is aimed at increasing the "permeability" of the individual's working model of attachment through affective and cognitive re-assessment of attachment experiences and expectations (West et al., 1989, p. 369), the possibility exists that structural family therapy concepts utilizing the spatial arrangements of the couple to inform marital satisfaction might, in addition, significantly contribute to altering the permeability of the IWM as attachment security is bound up with changing thresholds of anxiety about distance thus freeing intimacy and autonomy to function again. Byng-Hall (1995) proposes that attachment theory provides a framework that can integrate several ways of working as opposed to providing a school of family/couple therapy with set premises and specific techniques.

In raising attachment to the status of a primary motivational system with its own inner workings and its own interface with other motivational systems, attachment theory enables the clinician to attend to attachment experiences in their own right and not as displacements or derivatives of other motives (Bowlby, 1991 in Parkes, et al., 1991, p. 297). Bowlby (1991 in Parkes, et al., 1991) comments that the urge to keep proximity or accessibility to someone seen as stronger or wiser, and who if responsive is deeply loved, is to be respected, valued, and nurtured as making for potential strength, instead of being looked down upon, as so often hitherto, as a sign of inherent weakness. This radical shift in valuation has a far-reaching influence on how we perceive and treat other people, especially those whose attachment needs have been and are still unmet.

An exploration of the interface between attachment theory and structural family theory and how they might mutually inform research and clinical intervention into marriage is still in its infancy and further research is required to explore their proposed integrative value. In conclusion, "the implications of attachment research do not warrant a new school of therapy. Thank goodness! Rather, attachment theory has the potential to offer something to all therapists" (Byng-Hall, 1995, p. 56).

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APPENDIX A

CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS QUESTIONNAIRE (Hazan & Shaver, 1987)

Which **one** of the following three descriptions best describes your feelings? Please tick **the most relevant** description.

1. I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.
2. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.
3. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't want to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away.

APPENDIX B

ADJECTIVE CHECKLIST (Hazan & Shaver, 1987)

Please tick only those qualities that best describe your relationship with your parent/caretaker when you were a little child.

Affectionate parental relationship
Respectful mother
Intrusive mother
Caring father
Demanding mother
Loving father
Humorous father
Confident mother
Unhappy parental relationship
Accepting mother
Caring parental relationship
Responsible mother
Affectionate father
Sympathetic father
Strong mother
Disinterested mother
Unresponsive father
Unfair father
Humorous mother
Likeable mother
Respected mother
Rejecting mother

APPENDIX C

ADULT ATTACHMENT SCALE (Collins & Read, 1990)

For each statement, please circle one number on the scale which reflects the extent to which that statement is characteristic or typical of your feelings.

- Scale:
1. not at all characteristic
 2. infrequently characteristic
 3. sometimes characteristic
 4. frequently characteristic
 5. almost always characteristic

1. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on others.
2. People are never there when you need them.
3. I am comfortable depending on others.
4. I know that others will be there when I need them.
5. I find it difficult to trust others completely.
6. I am not sure that I can always depend on others to be there when I need them.
7. I do not often worry about being abandoned.
8. I often worry that my partner does not really love me.
9. I find others are reluctant to get as close as I would like.
10. I often worry my partner will not want to stay with me.
11. I want to merge completely with another person.
12. My desire to merge sometimes scares people away.
13. I find it relatively easy to get close to others.
14. I do not often worry about someone getting too close to me.
15. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others.
16. I am nervous when anyone gets too close.
17. I am comfortable having others depend on me.
18. Often, love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.

APPENDIX D

FAMILY ADAPTABILITY AND COHESION SCALES (FACES III) (Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985)

Perceived version

For each statement please circle the number on the scale which best describes how you feel about your relationship **at the present moment**.

| | | |
|---------------|----|-----------------|
| <u>Scale:</u> | 1. | Almost never |
| | 2. | Once in a while |
| | 3. | Sometimes |
| | 4. | Frequently |
| | 5. | Almost always |

1. We ask each other for help.
2. When problems arise, we compromise.
3. We approve of each other's friends.
4. We are flexible in how we handle our differences.
5. We like to do things with each other.
6. Different persons act as leaders in our marriage.
7. We feel closer to each other than to people outside our family.
8. We change our way of handling tasks.
9. We like to spend free time with each other.
10. We try new ways of dealing with problems.
11. We feel very close to each other.
12. We jointly make the decisions in our marriage.
13. We share hobbies and interests together.
14. Rules change in our marriage.
15. We can easily think of things to do together as a couple.
16. We shift household responsibilities from person to person.
17. We consult each other on our decisions.
18. It is hard to identify who the leader is in our marriage.
19. Togetherness is a top priority.
20. It is clear who is responsible for different household chores.

APPENDIX D (contd.)

FAMILY ADAPTABILITY AND COHESION SCALES (FACES III)

Ideal version

For each statement please circle the number on the scale which reflects how you would **ideally** like your relationship to be.

- Scale:
1. Almost never
 2. Once in a while
 3. Sometimes
 4. Frequently
 5. Almost always

21. We would ask each other for help.
22. When problems arise, I wish we would compromise.
23. We would approve of each other's friends.
24. We would be flexible in how we handle our differences.
25. We would like to do things with each other.
26. Different persons would act as leaders in our marriage.
27. We would feel closer to each other than to people outside our family.
28. We would change our way of handling tasks.
29. We would like to spend free time with each other.
30. We would try new ways of dealing with problems.
31. We would feel very close to each other.
32. We would jointly make the decisions in our marriage.
33. We would share hobbies and interests together.
34. Rules would change in our marriage.
35. We could easily think of things to do together as a couple.
36. We would shift household responsibilities from person to person.
37. We would consult each other on our decisions.
38. We would know who the leader is in our marriage.
39. Togetherness would be top priority.
40. We would be flexible as to who is responsible for different household chores.

APPENDIX E

5-ITEM MARITAL SATISFACTION SCALE

For each statement please indicate one number on the scale which reflects the extent to which that statement is characteristic or typical of your feelings.

- Scale:
1. Almost never
 2. Once in a while
 3. Sometimes
 4. Frequently
 5. Almost always

1. We have a happy marriage.
2. We communicate well in our marriage.
3. By comparison with other marriages ours is happy.
4. We have a good understanding of one another.
5. My marriage is what I had hoped for.

APPENDIX F

ONE-WAY ANALYSES OF VARIANCE (ANOVA) TABLES

HYPOTHESIS I

Variable 'adaptability perceived' by variable 'attachment style'.

| Source | df | Sum of Squares | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob. |
|----------------|----|----------------|--------------|---------|---------|
| Between Groups | 1 | 20.7482 | 20.7482 | 0.5723 | 0.4516 |
| Within Groups | 78 | 2827.6393 | 36.2518 | | |
| Total | 79 | 2848.3857 | | | |

Variable 'cohesion perceived' by variable 'attachment style'.

| Source | df | Sum of Squares | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob |
|----------------|----|----------------|--------------|---------|--------|
| Between Groups | 1 | 9.5704 | 9.5704 | 0.2084 | 0.6493 |
| Within Groups | 78 | 3582.3796 | 45.9279 | | |
| Total | 79 | 3591.9500 | | | |

HYPOTHESIS II

Variable 'satisfaction with marriage' (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale) by variable 'sex'.

| Source | df | Sum of Squares | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob |
|----------------|----|----------------|--------------|---------|--------|
| Between Groups | 1 | 7.4913 | 7.4913 | 0.4367 | 0.5107 |
| Within Groups | 78 | 1337.9962 | 17.1538 | | |
| Total | 79 | 1345.4875 | | | |

APPENDIX F (contd.)

HYPOTHESIS II (contd.)

Variable 'satisfaction with marriage' (FACES III) by variable 'sex'.

| Source | df | Sum of Squares | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob. |
|----------------|----|----------------|--------------|---------|---------|
| Between Groups | 1 | 0.2379 | .2379 | .0015 | .9688 |
| Within Groups | 78 | 12079.7121 | 154.8681 | | |
| Total | 79 | 12079.9500 | | | |

INDIVIDUAL SCORES

Variable 'satisfaction with marriage' (FACES III) by variable 'attachment style'

| Source | df | Sum of Squares | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob |
|-----------|----|----------------|--------------|---------|--------|
| Explained | 1 | 24.331 | 24.331 | 0.157 | 0.693 |
| Residual | 78 | 12055.619 | 154.559 | | |
| Total | 79 | 12079.950 | 152.911 | | |

Variable 'satisfaction with marriage' (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale) by variable 'attachment style'

| Source | df | Sum of Squares | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob |
|-----------|----|----------------|--------------|---------|--------|
| Explained | 1 | 34.595 | 34.595 | 2.058 | 0.155 |
| Residual | 78 | 1310.892 | 16.806 | | |
| Total | 79 | 1345.488 | 17.031 | | |

APPENDIX F (contd.)

HYPOTHESIS II (contd.)

COUPLE SCORES

Variable 'marital satisfaction' (5-item Marital Satisfaction Scale) by variable 'couple attachment style'(Group 1: H secure / W secure; Group 2: H anxious / W secure; Group 3: H secure / W anxious).

| Source | df | Sum of Squares | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob |
|-----------|----|----------------|--------------|---------|--------|
| Explained | 2 | 83.550 | 41.775 | 3.119 | 0.059 |
| Residual | 29 | 388.450 | 13.395 | | |
| Total | 31 | 472.000 | 15.226 | | |

Variable 'couple satisfaction' (FACES III) by 'couple attachment style'. (Group 1: H secure / W secure; Group 2: H anxious / W secure; Group 3: H secure / W anxious).

| Source | df | Sum of Squares | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob. |
|-----------|----|----------------|--------------|---------|---------|
| Explained | 2 | 525.734 | 262.867 | 2.287 | 0.120 |
| Residual | 29 | 3332.641 | 114.919 | | |
| Total | 31 | 3858.375 | 124.464 | | |

HYPOTHESIS III

Variable 'adaptability ideal' by variable 'attachment style'.

| Source | df | Sum of Squares | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob. |
|----------------|----|----------------|--------------|---------|---------|
| Between Groups | 1 | 8.0325 | 8.0325 | 0.2412 | 0.6247 |
| Within Groups | 78 | 2597.8550 | 33.3058 | | |
| Total | 79 | 2605.8875 | | | |

APPENDIX F (contd.)

HYPOTHESIS III (contd.)

Variable 'cohesion ideal' by variable 'attachment style'.

| Source | df | Sum of Squares | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob. |
|----------------|----|----------------|--------------|---------|---------|
| Between Groups | 1 | 0.1015 | 0.1015 | 0.0052 | 0.9425 |
| Within Groups | 78 | 1511.7860 | 19.3819 | | |
| Total | 79 | 1511.8875 | | | |

APPENDIX G



University of Natal

Faculty of Social Science
Department of Psychology
Private Bag X01 Scottsville,
Pietermaritzburg 3209 South Africa
Telephone (0331) 2605369 Fax (0331) 2605809

Dear Respondent,

Thank you for participating in this research which is being conducted by the Psychology Department of the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

We are researching psychological aspects of family functioning and it is hoped that the results will have certain implications for helping families and couples. Should you be interested, I would willingly provide you with a summary of the findings at the end of the research.

Attached is a questionnaire about your marriage. It should take approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Please ensure that you read the instructions carefully and answer the statements as honestly as you can. Please respond to **every** statement in each section of the questionnaire.

Ideally both partners should participate by each completing a questionnaire but should this not be possible, we would also welcome receipt of a questionnaire from one spouse only.

It would be appreciated if you and your spouse did not discuss the contents prior to completion of the questionnaire as this would defeat the purpose of the research. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence and you are assured of anonymity. Kindly return the questionnaire at your earliest convenience, using the stamped, addressed envelope provided with each questionnaire.

You will note that this is a Cape Town address as I have recently relocated here.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Mandis

FIONA NAUDE

The University of Natal
is an equal opportunities,
affirmative action University

DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

QUESTIONNAIRE NUMBER

AGE

SEX:

MALE

FEMALE

HOME LANGUAGE

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

RELIGIOUS PERSUASION

LENGTH OF CURRENT MARRIAGE

NUMBER OF CHILDREN FROM CURRENT MARRIAGE

PREVIOUS MARRIAGE(S):

NUMBER OF MARRIAGE

DURATION

NUMBER OF CHILDREN

NUMBER OF MARRIAGE

DURATION

NUMBER OF CHILDREN

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD DESCRIBE THE FAMILY YOU GREW UP IN?

MOTHER, FATHER AND CHILDREN

SINGLE PARENT FAMILY

STEP FAMILY

FOSTER FAMILY

CHILDREN'S HOME

OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)

AS A LITTLE CHILD WHICH PARENT WERE YOU CLOSER TO?

(Please tick appropriate box)

MOTHER
FATHER

☐

If neither, please specify: _____

WHICH **ONE** OF THE FOLLOWING THREE DESCRIPTIONS BEST DESCRIBES YOUR FEELINGS? PLEASE TICK [☐] **THE MOST RELEVANT** DESCRIPTION.

1. I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me. ☐
2. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being. ☐
3. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't want to stay with me. I want to feel completely united with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away. ☐

PLEASE TICK [☐] ONLY THOSE QUALITIES THAT BEST DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARENT/CARETAKER WHEN YOU WERE A LITTLE CHILD

1. Affectionate parental relationship ☐
2. Respectful mother ☐
3. Intrusive (domineering) mother ☐
4. Caring father ☐
5. Demanding mother ☐
6. Loving father ☐
7. Humorous father ☐
8. Confident mother ☐
9. Unhappy parental relationship ☐
10. Accepting mother ☐
11. Caring parental relationship ☐
12. Responsible mother ☐
13. Affectionate father ☐
14. Sympathetic father ☐
15. Strong-minded mother ☐
16. Disinterested mother ☐
17. Unresponsive father ☐
18. Unfair father ☐
19. Humorous mother ☐
20. Likeable mother ☐
21. Respected mother ☐
22. Rejecting mother ☐

FOR EACH STATEMENT, PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER ON THE SCALE WHICH REFLECTS THE EXTENT TO WHICH THAT STATEMENT IS CHARACTERISTIC OR TYPICAL OF YOUR FEELINGS

For example: If you feel that statement number 1 is 'very characteristic', you will circle '5' and if you feel that it is 'sometimes characteristic' you will circle '3'.)

Scale:

1. not at all characteristic
2. infrequently characteristic
3. sometimes characteristic
4. frequently characteristic
5. almost always characteristic

1. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on others.

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

2. People are never there when you need them

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

3. I am comfortable depending on others

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

4. I know that others will be there when I need them

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

5. I find it difficult to trust others completely

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

6. I am not sure that I can always depend on others to be there when I need them

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

7. I do not often worry about being abandoned

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

8. I often worry that my partner does not really love me (e.g. husband/wife)

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

9. I find others are reluctant to get as close as I would like

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

10. I often worry my partner will not want to stay with me

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

11. I like to feel completely united with friends/partners, as though we were one person

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

12. My desire to feel completely united with close friends/partners sometimes scares them away

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

13. I find it relatively easy to get close to others

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

14. I do not often worry about someone getting too close to me

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

15. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others

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

16. I am nervous when anyone gets too close

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

17. I am comfortable having others depend on me

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

18. Often, love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being

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

FOR **EACH** STATEMENT PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER ON THE SCALE WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR RELATIONSHIP **NOW**. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THIS NUMBER REFLECTS HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP **AT THE PRESENT MOMENT**.

Scale: 1. Almost never
2. Once in a while
3. Sometimes
4. Frequently
5. Almost always

1. We ask each other for help

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

2. When problems arise, we compromise (settle them by mutual arrangement)

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

3. We approve of each other's friends

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

4. We are flexible (adaptable) in how we handle our differences

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

5. We like to do things with each other

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

6. Different persons act as leaders in our marriage

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

7. We feel closer to each other than to people outside our family

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

8. We are flexible in the way we handle family or household tasks

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

9. We like to spend free time with each other

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

10. We try new ways of dealing with problems

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

11. We feel very close to each other

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

12. We jointly make the decisions in our marriage

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

13. We share hobbies and interests together

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

14. Rules change in our marriage

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

15. We can easily think of things to do together as a couple

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

16. We shift household responsibilities from person to person

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

17. We consult each other on our decisions

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

18. It is hard to identify who the leader is in our marriage

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

19. Togetherness is a top priority

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

20. It is clear who is responsible for different household chores

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

FOR **EACH** STATEMENT PLEASE CIRCLE THE NUMBER ON THE SCALE WHICH REFLECTS HOW YOU WOULD **IDEALLY** LIKE YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO BE.

Scale: 1. Almost never
2. Once in a while
3. Sometimes
4. Frequently
5. Almost always

21. We would ask each other for help

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

22. When problems arise, I wish we would compromise (come to a mutual arrangement)

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

23. We would approve of each other's friends

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

24. We would be flexible (adaptable) in how we handle our differences

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

25. We would like to do things with each other

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

26. Different persons would act as leaders in our marriage

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

27. We would feel closer to each other than to people outside our family

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

28. We would be flexible in the way we handle family or household tasks

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

29. We would like to spend free time with each other

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

30. We would try new ways of dealing with problems

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

31. We would feel very close to each other

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

32. We would jointly make the decisions in our marriage

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

33. We would share hobbies and interests together

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

34. Rules would change in our marriage

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

35. We could easily think of things to do together as a couple

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

36. We would shift household responsibilities from person to person

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

37. We would consult each other on our decisions

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

38. We would know who the leader is in our marriage

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

39. Togetherness would be top priority

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

40. We would be flexible as to who is responsible for different household chores

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

FOR **EACH** STATEMENT PLEASE WRITE **ONE** NUMBER ON THE SCALE WHICH REFLECTS THE EXTENT TO WHICH THAT STATEMENT IS CHARACTERISTIC OR TYPICAL OF YOUR FEELINGS

Scale: 1. Almost never
2. Once in a while
3. Sometimes
4. Frequently
5. Almost always

1. We have a happy marriage

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

2. We communicate well in our marriage

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

3. By comparison with other marriages ours is happy

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

4. We have a good understanding of one another

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

5. My marriage is what I had hoped for

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

FOR **EACH** STATEMENT PLEASE CIRCLE **ONE** NUMBER ON THE SCALE WHICH REFLECTS THE EXTENT TO WHICH THAT STATEMENT IS CHARACTERISTIC OR TYPICAL OF YOUR FEELINGS.

Scale: 1. Almost never
2. Once in a while
3. Sometimes
4. Frequently
5. Almost always

1. I am aware of my partner's interactions with the opposite sex

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

2. I feel confident that my partner will not have relationships (affairs) with other people.

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

3. I worry that my partner finds others more attractive than myself.

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

APPENDIX H

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL

Psychology Dept

P.O. Box 375, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa 3200.
Telephone 0331-260-5335 Fax 0331-260-5809

Dear

I write to request your assistance with a research project into marriage. It is with the kind assistance of Roy and Bronwyn McTaggart, and their very close association with the Marriage Encounter Movement, that this request comes to you.

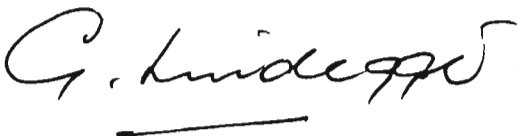
For many years I have assisted Roy and Bronwyn (and others) in marriage preparation programmes. I also run numerous other training courses on aspects of couple relationships for various community organizations. But in order to continue this kind of work it is necessary to research various aspects of marriage, to understand many of its complexities. This research project is part of this broad attempt to understand marriage relationships better.

Fiona Naude and I currently have a research project under way looking into a rather specific aspect of marriage. We are looking for a broad range of couples to assist us in this research project - hence this letter to you.

We would be very grateful if you would be prepared to spend a little time completing the attached questionnaires for us. We realize this will take a little of your time. But it will be a great help to us, and hopefully to married couples.

We are also very grateful to Roy and Bronwyn McTaggart for their assistance with this project.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Graham Lindegger



Ms Fiona Naude