

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: PARTNER POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND RECIPIENT SATISFACTION IN MILD TO MODERATELY ABUSIVE COUPLES AS MODERATED BY ATTACHMENT STYLE

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This study examined the degree to which individuals' secure, insecure/preoccupied, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles moderated the relation between positive partner behaviors and the recipient's experienced pleasure and overall relationship satisfaction. Males with high insecure/preoccupied attachment styles experienced high levels of affection behavior as more pleasurable than low levels; those with low insecure/preoccupied attachment experienced little pleasure difference from high or low levels. Males and females with insecure/fearful or dismissive styles showed opposite patterns, in that males with low levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment experienced high levels of positive instrumental behavior as more pleasurable than those with high levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, whereas females with high levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment experienced more pleasure from high levels of instrumental behaviors than those with low insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment. Further, females with high insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment experienced higher levels of nurturing behavior as more pleasurable than those with low insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment.

PARTNER POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND RECIPIENT SATISFACTION IN MILD
TO MODERATELY ABUSIVE COUPLES AS MODERATED BY
ATTACHMENT STYLE

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PARTNER POSITIVE BEHAVIOR AND RECIPIENT SATISFACTION IN CLINIC
COUPLES AS MODERATED BY ATTACHMENT STYLE

Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Although partners' negative behaviors toward each other have been found to influence couples' relationship satisfaction more than exchanges of positive behavior, positive interactions play an important role in facilitating intimacy and satisfaction in close relationships (Epstein & Baucom, 2002; Weiss & Heyman, 1997). Limited research, however, has been conducted on the impacts of positive behaviors between partners, including factors that can influence the relation between positive acts and overall relationship satisfaction. Past research on couple relationships indicates that what is experienced as desirable to one individual may not be desirable for another, thus impacting overall relationship satisfaction (Epstein & Baucom, 2002).

Although many reasons have been suggested as to why individual differences in the experience of similar behaviors exist, some of the major hypotheses involve the recipient's pre-existing personality characteristics, and predispositions to interpret and respond to life experiences in particular ways. In recent years, attachment theory increasingly has been used to understand individuals' responses in their intimate relationships (Bartholomew, 1994; Campbell, Simpson, Boldry, & Kashy, 2005; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005; Mikulincer, Shaver, & Pereg, 2003; Simpson, 1990). Beginning with Bowlby's (1973) pioneering work on infants' attachment relationships with their mothers, theorists and researchers have identified different secure or insecure attachment styles that individuals develop early in life and

that become relatively stable traits in their responses to close relationships throughout their lives (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Models of attachment styles include variations in the ways that individuals anticipate and respond to approach behaviors from significant others; e.g., whether or not they perceive closeness with another person as safe and stable, and whether they respond to potential insecurity in relationships by pursuing closeness or avoiding it. Thus, attachment appears to offer an important model for examining the relationship between one person's positive behaviors in a couple relationship and the other person's satisfaction with the behavior and his or her overall relationship satisfaction. Understanding factors that influence individuals' responses to partner positive behavior is of great importance to clinicians who work with distressed couples due to the fact that a wide range of therapy approaches include interventions intended to increase intimate exchanges between partners.

Attachment, although formed initially in infancy, plays a different role in an individual's life depending on where they are in their life cycle. Specifically, attachment influences adult intimate relationships in such a way that the relationship between partners may be either reciprocal, where each member of the couple provides support to the other, or complementary, where one person seeks protection from the other much like a child seeks from a parent (Ainsworth, 1989). These attachment relationships will influence how partners perceive each other's actions, which may influence the couple's overall relationship satisfaction.

In one review of attachment in adult romantic relationships, Shaver and Clark (1996) found that communication patterns differ depending upon attachment style. Specifically, they found that partners with secure attachment styles related sensitively and

with little defensiveness to their own and their partner's feelings, partners with avoidant attachment styles shut out their own and their partner's feelings, and partners with anxious/ambivalent attachment styles seem only to care about their own feelings and disregard those of others. This study evidences the need for further research regarding the influence that attachment style has on couple relationships.

Although some studies have focused on different relationship dimensions such as instrumental and affectionate behaviors (Wills et al., 1974), few have investigated the specific influence of positive behaviors on partner reactions (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005). Given that it is known that both attachment style and positive behaviors have an impact on relationship satisfaction, it is important to investigate the possible relationship between the two.

One of the tenets of attachment theory has to do with how individuals with a specific attachment style respond to different types of approach behaviors as found in infant-caregiver attachment studies (Ainsworth, 1978); it follows that adults too will have specific reactions to approach behaviors depending on their attachment style. Although most literature supports the notion that people experience positive behaviors from significant others as pleasant (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005), the degree to which recipients' attachment styles influence their immediate pleasure from positive partner behaviors, as well as their overall relationship satisfaction, has not been investigated.

Additionally, many clinicians who work with couples assume that more communication, time spent together, and other so-called positive interactions will promote a healthier couple relationship. This, however, may not be the case for all individuals seeking couple therapy. It is important to do more research on individual

differences in the interpretation of behaviors, and to find if there are universally positive behaviors within the couple context. Whether or not there are positive behaviors that are universally experienced as pleasant in couple relationships, the findings of this study will be useful to clinicians in designing behavioral interventions to increase pleasing interactions between partners.

Purpose

This study examined the relation between positive partner behaviors and the degree of pleasure experienced by the recipient, as well as the recipient's overall satisfaction with the couple's relationship, but also the degree to which individuals' attachment styles moderate the relation between partner positive behavior and recipient satisfaction. The objectives of this study were to: 1) examine the relation between the degree to which each partner reports that the other exhibited positive behaviors (affectionate, instrumental, and nurturing behaviors) and the level of pleasure that the recipient derived from these acts; 2) examine the relation between positive behaviors from a partner and the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction; and 3) test whether the recipient's predominant type of attachment style (secure, insecure/preoccupied, insecure/dismissive or insecure/fearful) moderates the pleasure and overall relationship satisfaction associated with the partner's positive behavior.

It is important to research the relationships among positive behaviors, attachment style, and relationship satisfaction, for several reasons. First, the language of the current instrument used for assessing partner behavior implies an agreed upon, one-size-fits-all definition of positive behaviors when in fact some individuals may not experience some of these events as pleasurable at all. Second, if researchers and clinicians assume that

behaviors which they have defined as pleasurable are pleasurable to the general population, then important elements of individual differences in relationship satisfaction may be overlooked. Lastly, clinicians have much to gain by having deeper insights into the individual differences that lead to some couples being happy and others being distressed.

Review of Literature

The Role of Positive Partner Behavior in Couple Relationships

Whereas most literature suggests that negative behaviors have a greater influence than positive behaviors on couples' relationship satisfaction (Weiss & Heyman, 1997), there is some research that has identified significant contributions that positive behavior can have on relationship quality. Positive, supportive behaviors between partners, in which each partner feels cared for despite his/her shortcomings, have been linked to relationship satisfaction (Fincham & Beach, 2006).

In interpreting the findings of studies on couple behavioral interactions, it is important to consider the way in which data are collected. Many studies utilize data in which one partner reports on the other's actions. Typical of findings from such studies, Christensen and Nies (1980) found only a 46% agreement rate between spouses when it comes to reporting behaviors occurring in their relationship, a rate that is quite low. Given this low percentage of agreement regarding specific acts, even after partners have been given training in observing their interactions, some researchers have suggested that subjective perception is a large component of couple relationships (Fincham & Beach, 2006). Christensen (1987) pointed out that even when couples may agree on the

frequencies of certain behaviors they may have very different interpretations of the meanings of those behaviors.

Although each partner in a couple may experience his/her partner's behaviors differently, there is some consensus about what evidences a positive behavior. Weiss and Perry (1979) identified twelve areas in which positive and negative marital behavior occurs: affection, companionship, consideration, sex, communication process, decision-making, employment-education, personal habits and appearance, and self and spouse independence. Johnson (1986) asked couples about areas that determine marital satisfaction and developed a list that resembled Weiss and Perry's.

In an attempt to find what kinds of behavior lead to spouse agreement when reporting, Christensen and Nies (1980) conducted a study using an observation checklist consisting of items representing each of the twelve domains of marital satisfaction included in Weiss and Perry's list. They found that 18% of the items had a 70% or greater agreement rate. The top twenty items on which couples agreed represented pleasing behaviors while 75% of the behaviors that had the least agreement were displeasing behaviors. Thus there is evidence that couples often agree on what is positive in their relationship and report it accordingly. This study also found that couples were more likely to have agreement in reporting on behavior involving companionship, affection, and sex, whereas they were less likely to agree in reporting on acts involving consideration and communication.

Mikulincer and Shaver's (2005) review of attachment theory and emotions in close relationships includes several interesting findings regarding recipients' reactions to positive partner behaviors. Most recipients of positive behaviors responded with

happiness and joy. However, some attachment style differences have been reported, in that securely attached individuals report higher levels of happiness than do insecurely attached individuals. Citing their own work (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2003), consisting of analyses of daily diaries of 55 newlywed couples, they report findings that suggest that individuals' perceptions of positive behavior received from their partners influence how much happiness was elicited by that positive behavior. For instance, they found that individuals who report high levels of avoidant attachment patterns did not feel as much gratitude for positive behaviors as did individuals with more secure attachments.

Pleasure and Partner Behavior

Christensen (1987) reviewed several findings from research investigating partner behaviors that recipients find pleasing and displeasing within couple relationships. When investigating couple behavior, some researchers have further defined pleasing and displeasing behaviors into instrumental and affectionate behaviors. Although some measures like the Spouse Observation Checklist (SOC; Wills, Weiss, & Patterson, 1974) ask partners to report how pleasurable various behaviors were, Wills et al. (1974) looked at more specific sub-categories of partner behaviors. Instrumental events were defined as acts that members of the couple did for each other to accomplish tasks (e.g., partner cleaned the house), and affectionate events were defined as those involving physical contact (e.g., hugs and kisses). The researchers found that instrumental behaviors were more predictive of satisfaction than were affectionate behaviors.

In addition to differentiating between instrumental and affectionate behaviors, Christensen also cites Jacobson, Waldron, and Moore (1980) who introduced two more classifications of couple behavior: interactive events and shared activities. Interactive

events are defined as those in which members of a couple engaged in direct communication; shared activities are defined as those activities in which both members participated in a recreational event. The researchers investigated these types of behaviors and their impact on relationship satisfaction in distressed and nondistressed couples. They found that for distressed couples, displeasing interactive events were the most predictive of daily satisfaction. For nondistressed couples, daily satisfaction was most influenced by both shared activities and pleasing interactive events.

Margolin (1981) categorized couple interaction behaviors into communication, intimacy, and companionship activities, which correspond to Jacobson's categorizations of interactive events, affectionate events, and shared activities, respectively. She found differences between distressed and nondistressed couples regarding the influence of partner interactions. Similar to Jacobson et al.'s (1980) results, Margolin found that the satisfaction ratings of distressed couples were more influenced by displeasing instrumental acts than were those of nondistressed couples. Thus, a variety of prior studies have demonstrated that positive partner behaviors as well as negative ones have important impacts on couple relationship quality; however, factors that account for individual differences in reactions to positive partner behavior are still largely unknown. The present study was designed to investigate the role that attachment styles may play in influencing partners' reactions to each other's positive acts.

Theoretical Base for the Study

Attachment theory addresses issues surrounding socialization and personality development. Bowlby's (1973) attachment theory proposed that infants' behaviors will be goal directed in that they will want to maintain proximity to their primary caregiver.

Bowlby's theory extends this notion to personality development in that a child will learn what kind of response he/she can get from people given the availability and responsiveness of their initial primary caregiver. The infant learns whether or not their caregiver is someone who will take care of them, and also creates a concept of whether or not they are worthy of having their needs met. These conceptions of the self and the potential nurturer, or "working models," will later guide an individual regarding how he/she perceives him/herself in relation to others (See *Working Models of Attachment* section that follows).

Ainsworth et al. (1978) made distinctions between three styles of individual attachment. Based on their observations of primary caretakers, specifically mothers and their infants in laboratory settings completing the Strange Situation test in which caregivers would leave the infant and then return, they developed a model of attachment that included secure, anxious/avoidant, and anxious/ambivalent attachment styles. Ainsworth classified those caregiver-infant relationships in which the infant sought comfort from the mother, calmed quickly, and returned to other activities as secure. Those caregiver-infant relationships in which the infant had a mixed reaction to his/her mother, were not easily calmed, and did not return to other activities were categorized as anxious/ambivalent. Lastly, those caregiver-infant relationships in which the infant did not acknowledge the caregiver's return were classified as avoidant. Rholes and Simpson (2004) are careful to point out that the attachment classification referred to the caregiver-infant relationship and not just to the infant.

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) expanded on Ainsworth et al.'s (1978) attachment model, proposing a four-category model for adult attachment. This model (see

Figure 1) posits that individuals have either a positive or negative view of themselves (i.e., as either lovable or unlovable) and a positive or negative view of others as objects for attachment (i.e., as physically and emotionally available as a source of nurturance or not). Given these categories, an individual can have one of four attachment styles.

Individuals who have positive views of both the self and others have a secure attachment style and will be comfortable with both intimacy and autonomy. Those with a positive view of themselves and a negative view of others have a dismissing attachment style and will feel worthy of love, but will not engage in intimate relationships for fear of disappointment. Individuals with a negative view of self and a positive view of others have a preoccupied attachment style and will seek out self-acceptance by receiving acceptance from others. Last, individuals with a negative view of self and a negative view of others have a fearful-avoidant attachment style in which they will avoid intimate relationships so that they do not get hurt by others.

Figure 1. Bartholomew and Horowitz 4-Category Model of Attachment

		Model of Self	
		Positive	Negative
Model of Other	Positive	Secure	Preoccupied
	Negative	Dismissing	Fearful

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) investigated patterns of attachment using their 4-category model in a study consisting of 77 students (40 female, and 37 male) in an

introductory psychology class. The subjects were administered two sets of questionnaires, one which included information about themselves and one that asked for information about their partner. Subjects were also administered an attachment interview and a battery of self- and friend-report forms consisting of the Demographics Questionnaire, the Friendship Questionnaire, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory, the Fey Self-Acceptance Scale, the Sociability Scale, the Relationship Questionnaire, and the Inventory of Interpersonal Problems. In conducting this study, they found that with regard to interpersonal relationships, individuals with preoccupied attachment styles were dependent on others in order to maintain a higher level of positive self worth. If they did not receive this attention from others, they were more likely to use controlling behaviors to get it. It was also found that more women than men had a preoccupied attachment style, whereas there was no significant gender difference on the other three styles of attachment.

Upon further investigation of interpersonal relationships and attachment style, the preoccupied and fearful groups expressed greater levels of interpersonal distress. Individuals with dismissive attachment styles gave responses that reflected high levels on coldness and competitive subscales. The preoccupied group reported responses that were highest on the overly expressive subscale. The fearful group reported interpersonal problems related to being too nurturing, expressive, and competitive (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991, p. 237).

Working Models of Attachment

One of the fundamental principles of attachment theory is the notion of working models. When Bowlby (1969) first articulated his conceptualization of human behavior,

he stated that individuals have a kind of internal map that guides their behaviors during the course of their life span. He then revised this idea of a map to the idea of a working model, saying that a map implied that human responses were static, and he did not believe that to be the case. Working models, according to Bowlby, are the ways in which people are likely to interact with their environments given their past experiences, specifically past experiences with attachment figures. The ways that individuals see themselves as fitting into their environment or social setting, and their expectations about how others will treat them, form working models. Given that the notion of working models is fundamental to attachment theory, and that attachment styles are formed based on an individual's working model, it is important to consider the way that working models are formed and operate when investigating how members of a couple perceive each other's actions.

According to attachment theorists, working models are formed from infancy given the expectations that a child develops for their caregivers. For example, if a child cries, and no one attends to him, he might develop a working model of himself in which he believes that he is not worthy of being taken care of. Conversely, if an infant learns that when he cries he receives warmth and care from his primary caregiver(s), he will develop a positive working model in which he believes that he is worthy of care and attention. These initial attachments to caregivers provide the foundation on which working models are created. If an individual receives similar responses to his/her needs from multiple people in his/her life, then a consistent working model is established (Zhang & Hazan, 2002).

Working models serve as a bridge between what has happened in the past and new information that a person receives. The theory underlying working models is that individuals will base their actions, thoughts, and responses based on their past experiences. That said, the idea of working models is not a fixed notion, and it implies that the ways that individuals perceive and respond to their environment may change over time. Though working models are relatively consistent over time, they may change based on new experiences with attachment figures or a new understanding of past experiences with attachment figures (Davila & Cobb, 2004; Fraley & Brumbaugh, 2005).

Fraley and Brumbaugh (2005) investigated the stability of working models over time using mathematical models. They examined how level of stability (secure attachment) is influenced over time given various life events. In constructing these mathematical models, they expected that 1) security levels for individuals treated coldly by attachment figures will decrease; 2) security levels for individuals treated warmly by attachment figures will increase; and 3) individuals will seek out responses based on their internal working models. Using this transactional model, the authors found that the level of impact that environmental factors were allowed to influence a person's life greatly influenced the rate of speed toward or away from security. From this, the authors concluded that there may not be as much longitudinal stability in working models as thought by Bowlby, and that predictions about human behavior based on internal working models may be difficult to make given individual differences.

Although working models may be transformed over time as individuals assimilate new information into their internal representations of themselves, specific patterns of behaviors are associated with the working models of different attachment styles.

Individuals with secure working models generally believe that people are trustworthy, and have greater feelings of self-worth than those who have insecure working models. Individuals with insecure/ambivalent (similar to insecure/preoccupied) attachment styles would like to have close relationships, but often do not feel that they are worth it and fear abandonment, whereas those with insecure/avoidant working models do not trust others and avoid most social contact. In looking at the behaviors and perceptions of individuals given their attachment style, it can be seen that there are many individual differences depending on attachment style (Zhang & Hazan, 2002).

Components of working models. According to Crittenden (1990), who attempted to further define the concept of working models, there are eight components of working models that require consideration when investigating how working models influence individual experience. The eight components consist of focus, memory systems, content, cognitive function, meta-structure, quality of attachment, behavioral strategies, and attitude toward attachment.

Kobak (2002) discussed the differences between viewing attachment as a personality construct or as a relationship construct, stating that there are several negative effects from conceptualizing adult attachment as a personality construct. First, he says that in conceptualizing attachment as a personality construct it is assumed that attachment is immutable over time when in fact there is evidence that supports both the idea that attachment style is stable over time (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and the fact that attachment style is dynamic and changes over time (Bartholomew, 1994). The second effect of focusing on attachment as a personality construct is that attachment is viewed as independent of significant experiences that individuals have in relationships beyond their

early childhood ties with caretakers, especially in their adult relationships. Next, Kobak states that in assuming that attachment is a personality construct it is often treated as an independent variable, and he argues that attachment style may be the result of a current relationship or a stable pattern over time. Lastly, he mentions that in investigating attachment style as a personality construct, the notion that attachment style is unique given certain of the individual's personal relationships is lost. The author comments on the need to consider attachment as *both* a personality and relationship construct in order to fully understand attachment functioning.

Working Models and Relationships

Kobak and Hazan (1991) investigated how working models of attachment influence marriage. The sample used in their study consisted of 40 married couples. The couples had been together for an average of seven years and ranged in age from 24 to 46 years. The measures used for the study consisted of the Marital Q set used to measure attachment security and marital functioning using a Q-sort method, the Attachment Style Measure used to measure attachment style, and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale to measure attitude toward marriage. In addition to these measures, ratings of the couples' problem-solving communication and confiding communication were used in this study.

Consistent with Kobak and Hazan's (1991) hypothesis, husbands and wives who reported that they rely on their spouse for support had higher levels of marital adjustment. Investigating a 4-category model consisting of wife's support-validation, husband's support-validation, wife's rejection, and husband's rejection, the study investigated couple agreement on each partner's level of attachment security and its relation to communication tasks and self-report measures. The self-report measures provided an

index for investigating the accuracy of each partner's working model of themselves and of their partner, and on marital adjustment. The study also investigated communication behaviors and problem-solving behaviors in relation to attachment style by gathering two communication samples from each partner. One communication sample involved the couple discussing a disagreement in their relationship, and the other involved each member of the couple discussing a disappointment or loss with the other partner. Wives with secure attachment security exhibited less rejection of their husbands during the problem-solving communication component of the study, and reciprocally, those husbands who expected their wives to exhibit low levels of rejection experienced less rejection and more support during the problem-solving task (Kobak & Hazan, 1991). It was found that problem solving communication was significantly related to the couple's agreement about each partner's level of security. Additionally, it was found that those husbands and wives who listened to each other more reported higher levels of agreement on each other's level of security.

Kobak and Hazan draw several conclusions about working models based on their findings. They define a secure working model of self as a relationship in which each partner can rely on his/her partner and believe that his/her partner is emotionally available. First, they state that husbands and wives with secure working models of the self exhibited higher levels of relationship adjustment. Second, given that working models of self and level of relationship adjustment covaried, those wives who described their husbands as unavailable to attend to their needs exhibited more rejection during communication tasks with their husbands, leading the authors to conclude that wives with insecure attachment contribute to a cycle of negative affect. Given these findings, Kobak

and Hazan cite the need for further studies to investigate attachment working models in relational contexts, given that individuals function relationally based on their working models, and they add new information to their working models given interactions with their significant others.

Conceptualizing and Measuring Attachment Style

There is some debate about the best and most accurate ways to measure attachment. The two primary ways that attachment is measured consist of self-reports and interviews. Bartholomew and Moretti (2002), commenting on Shaver and Mikulincer's (2002) report on the use of self-report measures of attachment, conclude that perhaps the most effective way of measuring attachment includes using a combination of clinical strategies, including interviews and empirically supported questionnaires.

In her commentary about the assessment of adult attachment, Bartholomew (1994) found that little empirical evidence supports the notion that attachment style is stable throughout the life course, and additionally found sources stating that attachment style might actually depend upon the specific relationship a person is in. Hazan and Shaver (1987) found that secure patterns of attachment may be more stable than insecure patterns of attachment, and that attachment pattern changes are more likely to go from insecure to secure than the reverse.

Bartholomew (1994) also cites that in her 1993 study she found that 80% of subjects rated themselves as securely attached, whereas only 50% of the subjects were rated as securely attached by trained judges who used a semi-structured interview (Bartholomew & Scharfe, 1993). These findings suggest a possible bias in the use of self-report measures. Further, it remains unclear which perspective is more accurate: that of

the subject, an insider when it comes to the experience of him/herself, or that of an observer, an outsider who is trained to report on specific behaviors yet does not have the same experience with the subject as has the subject him/herself.

In their seminal article, Hazan and Shaver (1987) consider how romantic relationships could be viewed as an attachment process. Their studies addressed an issue that had not previously been addressed by applying what was known about patterns of infant attachment, and how attachment patterns were developed to adult romantic relationships. According to Fraley and Shaver (2000) who summarize the 1987 article, the 4 tenets of the article are: 1) infant-caregiver relationships and adult romantic relationships are both dictated by the same biological system; 2) individual differences in infant-caregiver relationships are similar to individual differences in romantic relationships; 3) individual differences in attachment behavior in romantic relationships reflect attachment histories with their caregivers due to a working model of attachment that is formed in infancy and relatively stable throughout adulthood; and 4) romantic love is composed of attachment, care-giving, and sex.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) published a “love quiz” in a local newspaper and asked for replies. They received responses from 620 individuals ranging in age from 14 to 82 with a mean age of 36. The questionnaire that each of the respondents completed consisted of three parts: part one consisted of questions about the subject’s most significant relationship, part two asked whether the relationship they responded for in part one was current or past, and part three addressed attachment style and attachment history. Of the respondents, 56% classified themselves as secure, 25% classified themselves as avoidant, and 19% classified themselves as anxious ambivalent (it is

important to note that they tested a three-category model of attachment given that the study was conducted before Bartholomew developed the 4-category model of adult attachment). The results of this study provided the foundation for many subsequent studies in that they found individuals with different attachment styles experienced romantic relationships differently. Respondents with secure patterns of attachment stressed the importance of accepting and supporting their partners, whereas those with avoidant and anxious/ambivalent patterns reported fears of intimacy and obsession respectively.

Expanding upon their newspaper respondent study, Hazan and Shaver (1987) conducted a second study to investigate patterns of attachment and influence on romantic relationships. They hoped to test the same hypotheses on a non-self-selected sample, and also test for mental models (sometimes referred to as working models), and loneliness. The sample in study two consisted of 108 undergraduate students (38 men and 70 women) with a mean age of 18 years. The subjects completed the same questionnaire about their most serious relationship as in the original study; however, more questions about mental models and loneliness were included. The distribution of attachment styles reflected those found in study one: 56% reported secure patterns of attachment, 23% reported avoidant attachment patterns, and 20% reported anxious ambivalent attachment styles. Study two also found that patterns of attachment and love experiences were related in the same way that they were in study one. Additionally, the second study found that those with similar attachment styles reported similar mental models. Responses to the question of how subjects describe themselves consisted of those with secure attachment patterns reporting that they were easy to get to know, which was in contrast to the

answers given by those with anxious/ambivalent patterns, which consisted of reports of having difficulty having people commit to them as they commit to others and being misunderstood by others. Subjects with avoidant patterns of attachment were found to give answers somewhere between those of the securely attached and the anxious/ambivalently attached, however their responses fit more closely with those given by the anxious/ambivalent group. Overall, the authors conclude that the results of the two studies indicate that further research regarding attachment theory approaches to romantic behaviors are warranted.

In addition to the debates about whether working models and attachment styles are stable throughout adulthood and generalizable to multiple relationships, or if they are dynamic through adulthood and specific to different relationships, and the debate over measuring attachment styles using self-report measures or interviews, is the debate whether attachment styles are distinct categories or if they are continuous classifications in which people can have varying degrees of different styles. Fraley and Speiker (2003) address this issue by considering how the categorical model of attachment has facilitated growth in the field of attachment research, how a continuum of securities might fit into the two-dimensional model (avoidance and anxiety) of attachment, and the roles of categories and continua in understanding behavior. They disagree with Cassidy's (2003) statement that the categorical conceptualization of attachment styles has facilitated growth in the field and state that they believe that the growth would have occurred without a categorical model. The authors argued that a conceptualization of attachment styles as continua rather than as discrete categories indeed could fit a two-dimensional model. They go on to state that they believe that human behavior can be effectively

studied using continuous variable approaches because this approach assumes that individuals differ from one another in degrees rather than categorically.

Attachment, Social Perception, and Social Support

Attachment theory states that individuals with secure attachment styles are likely to view others as willing to support them and view themselves as worthy of support. Although attachment is believed to be formed in infancy and childhood, many researchers have investigated how attachment style influences adult relationships. Florian, Mikulincer, and Bucholtz (1995) conducted a study to investigate how adult attachment patterns influence adult individuals' perceptions of social support. The study found that securely attached adults perceived higher levels of emotional and instrumental support from others than did individuals with avoidant or ambivalent attachment styles. Following the notion that securely attached individuals perceive that there is social support available to them, the study also found that securely attached individuals are more likely to seek emotional and instrumental support than are avoidant or ambivalently attached individuals.

Attachment theory holds that individuals respond to others based on their working models of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Collins (1996) confirms this notion in her study of individual differences in social responses associated with different attachment styles. This study examined 82 female and 53 male undergraduate students. Each participant was administered the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George, Kaplan, & Main, 1985), a relationship events questionnaire, and an attribution questionnaire. The attribution measure consisted of: a) four items that addressed the locus of the cause event (partner, self, outside circumstances, or the relationship), b) two items that addressed

whether the behavior that caused the event is stable, unstable, global or specific, c) three items that assessed attributions regarding the partner's intentions regarding the event, and d) the participant's rating of the extent to which the partner's negative attitude led to the event. Participants' open-ended responses to questions asked on the questionnaires were coded into one of several response categories: a) partner responsiveness; b) participant's self-worth; c) trust in partner; d) confidence in partner's love; e) confidence that partner is dependable; f) confidence that relationship is secure; g) participant's self-reliance, h) partner warmth and closeness; and i) minimize-maximize negative impact of event.

Participants with preoccupied attachment styles reported events more negatively than did securely attached participants, and they reported more emotional distress and behaviors that lead to conflict. Participants with avoidant attachment styles also reported events more negatively than did securely attached participants, but they did not report the emotional distress reported by those with preoccupied styles. The study found that attachment style and relationship quality predicted event explanations whereas attachment style alone predicted emotional responses. Specifically, those subjects with preoccupied styles of attachment explained events in more negative ways than those individuals with secure styles of attachment and reported experiencing emotional distress at the thought of the event. Those with avoidant attachment styles explained events in negative ways, but they did not report emotional distress (Collins, 1996).

Mikulincer, Shaver, and Pereg (2003) discuss attachment related strategies that individuals use depending upon their pattern of attachment regarding affect regulation. The authors state that attachment strategies have specific goals: security based strategies are implemented as a means of alleviating stress, whereas secondary strategies are used to

hyperactivate or deactivate the attachment system. In using this framework, the authors imply that individuals with different attachment styles will respond differently to the same situation, and that individuals with different styles will need different kinds of therapeutic support.

In their continued work, Schachner, Mikulincer, and Shaver (2005) propose that attachment style affects an individual's sensitivity to others' nonverbal behavior. Based on the idea that nonverbal communication is a learned form of communicating needs with others, the authors suggest that individuals who have had exposure to a sensitive, responsive caregiver have a primary sense of security. Those who do not have such an attachment figure do not have this sense of security and are likely to develop defensive ways of interacting in relationships (e.g., an individual may go to extreme lengths in order to get the attention of an attachment figure).

Adopting the notion of attachment strategies, Schachner, Shaver, and Mikulincer (2005) also propose how individuals with different attachment styles function in relation to their attachment figures, and they suggest that these functions are based on nonverbal skills including the ability to nonverbally express feelings in such a way that attachment figures respond, as well as the ability to interpret nonverbal information from attachment figures about their availability for support. Securely attached individuals possess both of the skills necessary to receive attention from attachment figures, given that they possess nonverbal ways of communicating their own needs while being able to accurately assess the kind of support they will receive from their attachment figure(s). In contrast, the authors argue that individuals who do not have secure attachment styles tend to use hyperactivating and deactivating strategies of coping, which are defensive ways of

relating to others. These include being either self-focused (anxious attachment) or opposed to closeness with others (avoidant attachment). They state that hyperactivating strategies are those that lead an individual to overestimate nonverbal communications of rejection and disapproval from another person. Individuals with anxious attachment tend to use hyperactivating strategies that lead them to focus on their personal weaknesses. This may be why they generally give more negative responses to their partners than do securely attached individuals. Deactivation is defined as dismissing verbal and nonverbal expressions of feelings. Avoidant attachment is viewed as commonly involving patterns of deactivation, in that individuals with avoidant attachment styles often do not express sensitivity to their partner's needs (Schachner, Shaver, & Mikulincer, 2005).

The previously stated theory addresses how individuals with different attachment styles perceive and respond to attachment figures. Given that there is much support for the notion that individuals respond to attachment figures depending on their own style, it is important for those who work with couples (two individuals who serve as attachment figures for each other) take their potentially different styles of relating to each other into consideration. For example, according to Mikulincer, Shaver, and Pereg (2003), therapy conducted with clients who report anxious attachment should address fears of loneliness by strengthening their self-regulatory skills, and therapy conducted with avoidant clients should address reconnecting them with their feelings and their comfort with proximity to people (Mikulincer, Shaver, & Pereg, 2003). In sum, individuals with different attachment styles will need different kinds of help in order to more effectively interact in their relationships.

Attachment and Conflict Perception and Resolution

Given the idea that people respond to others in different ways depending on their predominant attachment style is a core concept in attachment theory, several studies have been conducted to examine the influence attachment style has on conflict perception and behavior in the context of romantic relationships. These studies all have found that perception and execution of behaviors differs by attachment style (Babcock, Gottman, Jacobson, & Yerington, 2000; Boldry, Campbell, Kashy, & Simpson, 2005; Phillips, Rholes, & Simpson, 1996) in dating and marital relationships between men and women.

Simpson, Rholes, and Phillips (1996) conducted a study to investigate how couples in dating relationships perceive conflict after they attempt to resolve a conflict in their relationship, given their attachment styles. The study consisted of 123 dating couples. The mean age for men was 19.6 and the mean age for women was 18.9. In order to qualify to participate in the study, couples were required to have been together for a minimum of six months. The study consisted of two phases. In the first phase each member of the couple was administered a battery of forms including the Adult Attachment Questionnaire, the Relationship Questionnaire, a measure of personality traits, and several relationship measures including the Satisfaction Scale, the Commitment Scale, the Love and Liking Scale, the Trust Scale, and the Subjective Closeness scale. Phase two consisted of the couple discussing a minor or major problem based on random assignment and the responses they gave to a questionnaire about what issues had recently been a source of disagreement for the couple. The study found that men and women with ambivalent attachment styles perceived their partner and the relationship in more negative terms after discussing a problem they were having. After

discussing a major problem, women with ambivalent styles displayed more stress and exhibited more negative behaviors than individuals with other attachment styles. Men who discussed major problems and who had avoidant attachment styles displayed lower levels of warmth and support for their partner than did men with other styles after discussing relationship problems.

In their study consisting of 103 couples who were asked to keep a daily diary asking questions regarding conflictual and supportive interactions with their partners for 14 days, Campbell, Simpson, Boldry, and Kashy (2005) reported that individuals with anxious attachment styles perceive more conflict from their dating partners than do those with other attachment styles. Additionally, individuals with anxious attachment styles reported that they feel more distressed while discussing concerns in their relationship than do securely attached individuals. The study also found that anxiously attached individuals reported lower levels of relationship satisfaction on days when they perceived high levels of conflict in their relationship than did those with other attachment styles, and in keeping with these results, reported less hope in the future of the relationship. Additionally, those individuals with a more anxious style reported being more satisfied than their less anxious partners on days in which they perceived support from their partner.

Babcock, Jacobson, Gottman, and Yerington (2000) went a step further in investigating conflict in relationships; they studied attachment style differences between violent and nonviolent husbands. The sample consisted of 60 couples in which the husband was violent, 23 couples experiencing marital distress but not violence, and 13 couples with no distress or violence. Each member of the couple was given the AAI, and

then the couple completed a 15-minute taped interaction discussing a topic of disagreement in their relationship. These interaction samples were then coded for affect. In addition to these measures, those couples who experienced violence were asked to discuss their most violent episode. These discussions were later coded as well. Of interest is that significantly more violent husbands were found to have insecure patterns of attachment than were nonviolent husbands. The study found that securely attached husbands were more defensive than others when engaged in an argument with their wife in the laboratory. For both violent and nonviolent husbands, those with dismissive attachment styles exhibited the highest levels of control and distancing during the arguments while those with preoccupied styles were the least distancing.

The researchers also asked the participants for reports of events surrounding violent incidents at home. Of the violent husbands, it was found that a significant predictor of violence for those with preoccupied attachment styles was wife withdrawal. For those with a dismissing style, wife defensiveness was a significant precursor to violence. Given these results, the authors conclude that violent husbands with preoccupied attachment styles batter their wives fearing that their wives will leave them, whereas those with dismissive styles batter their wives to assert control over them (Babcock, Jacobson, Gottman, & Yerington, 2000).

Relationship Satisfaction and Attachment

The previously discussed research presents differences in perceptions and behaviors of individuals in the couple context depending on attachment style. Another body of research investigates attachment style and the degree to which members of couples are satisfied with their relationships. Simpson (1990) found that individuals with

secure attachment styles had higher levels of trust, commitment, interdependence, and satisfaction with their couple relationship than did individuals with anxious or avoidant attachment styles. The same study followed participants for six months and found that of those individuals in relationships that ended, men with avoidant styles experienced less emotional distress regarding the break-up than did all other categories of participants.

Although much of the literature focuses on how attachment style influences individuals' perceptions of the actions of others, some authors theorize that self-attributions, the ways that individuals describe their own behavior and their understanding of why they behave the way they do, influence relationship quality. Sumer and Cozzarelli (2004) studied couples who were involved in romantic relationships. The study consisted of 352 participants (93 men and 259 women) with a mean age of 19.81 who were in romantic relationships. Each completed questionnaires regarding attachment style, attributions, and relationship quality. In keeping with previously reported findings, this study found that insecure individuals reported higher levels of maladaptive attributions as they were more likely to interpret their partner's behaviors as negative. The authors conclude that the findings of the study suggest: a) a positive self model is associated with lower levels of negative attributions, which lead to higher levels of relationship satisfaction, b) the ways in which individuals view themselves contribute to relationship satisfaction, and c) the models individuals have about themselves influence their attributions about themselves and their partners.

In an attempt to investigate how attachment style influences individual experience on both a general and relationship specific level, Treboux, Crowell, and Waters (2004) used two separate measures of attachment while investigating relationship changes

between engaged/dating couples and their later marital outcomes. The study consisted of 157 couples who were assessed between 2 weeks and 3 months prior to their wedding date. Couples were then contacted 6 years later to provide a report on their marital status. At both points of contact, couples were asked to complete several measures. The Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) was used to assess general attachment style and the Current Relationship Inventory (CRI) was used to assess more specific styles of attachment in relation to a specific relationship (although its categorizations are similar to those of the AAI). From these measures each individual was classified into one of four groups, the first classification based on results from the AAI and the second classification based on the CRI: secure/secure, secure/insecure, insecure/secure, or insecure/insecure (Treboux, Crowell, & Waters, 2004).

This study found that individuals who were classified as secure/secure had many significant differences from the other groups. It found significant differences with regard to self-feelings, base behavior, and avoidance between this group and those who were classified as insecure/insecure. It also found that the variance between the secure/secure and the secure/insecure group predicted relationship conflict, relationship feelings and self-feelings. Between those who were classified as insecure/insecure and those who had only one insecure classification, it was found that both the insecure/insecure and the insecure/secure groups experienced a higher level of conflict than did other groups, but that those in the insecure/insecure group felt less positive about their relationships overall. The study's authors concluded that attachment styles might factor into relationship satisfaction given that individuals with different attachment styles handle

stressors and view life events and their relationships in various ways, some harmful and some protective (Treboux, Crowell, & Waters, 2004).

In Koski and Shaver's (1997) review of literature on attachment and relationship satisfaction in romantic relationships, they found that individuals with secure patterns of attachment report higher overall levels of relationship satisfaction. Additionally, they found that women's relationship satisfaction is influenced by men's security and avoidance, and that men's relationship satisfaction is influenced by women's attachment anxiety. Collins and Read (1990) found that women's anxiety was negatively correlated with both their own and their male partner's relationship satisfaction. Their study found that men's comfort with closeness was correlated with their own and their partner's relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, in Feeney, Noller, Callan, and Victor's (1994) study of newlyweds, they found that for both husbands and wives anxiety was correlated with the use of destructive strategies during communication.

Summary

The literature reviewed suggests that there is a correlation between positive partner behaviors and overall relationship satisfaction. Although some research has been conducted investigating the impact of attachment style on relationship satisfaction, little research has investigated the relations among attachment style, pleasure experienced from positive partner behaviors, and overall relationships satisfaction. The present study aimed to investigate how positive partner behavior, divided into three subcategories of behavior (affection, instrumental, nurturance) influences pleasure experienced from these behaviors as well as overall relationship satisfaction, and how attachment style moderates these relationships.

Definitions of Variables

Independent Variable

Positive behaviors by partner. Amounts of positive behaviors (affectionate, instrumental, or nurturing) that each member of the couple perceives the other as exhibiting during the past week that has been identified as involving the partner approaching the person (e.g., “Partner greeted me affectionately”).

Moderator Variable

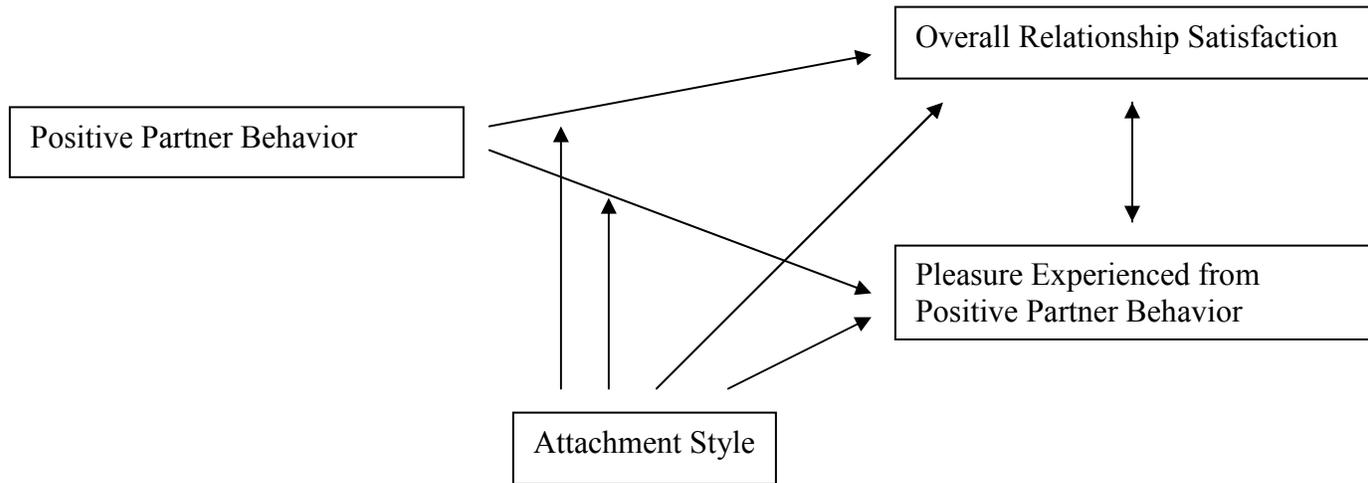
Attachment styles. Which of four attachment styles (secure, insecure/fearful, insecure/dismissive, insecure/preoccupied) each participant believes is most characteristic of him or her.

Dependent Variables

Pleasure from partner approach behavior. The degree to which the recipient of the approach behavior experiences the behavior as pleasant.

Overall relationship satisfaction. The overall level of satisfaction that the individual reports experiencing in the couple relationship, ranging from highly distressed/unhappy to highly satisfied/happy.

Figure 2. Diagram of Proposed Study



Hypotheses

This study investigated eleven hypotheses:

1. Members of couples who receive higher levels of positive partner behavior from their partners will experience more pleasure from those behaviors than members of couples who receive lower levels of positive behaviors.
2. Members of couples who receive higher levels of positive partner behavior from their partners will report greater overall relationship satisfaction than members of couples who receive lower levels of positive behaviors from their partners.
3. There will be a positive association between level of pleasure experienced from positive partner and level of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction.
4. The more that recipients have secure attachment styles, the more they will experience positive behaviors from a partner as pleasurable.
5. The more that recipients have insecure/preoccupied attachment styles, the more they will experience positive behaviors from a partner as pleasurable.

6. The more that recipients have insecure/fearful or insecure/dismissive attachment styles, the less they will experience positive behaviors from a partner as pleasurable.
7. The more that recipients have secure attachment styles, they will experience greater overall relationship satisfaction.
8. The more that recipients have insecure/preoccupied attachment styles, they will experience lower overall relationship satisfaction.
9. The more that recipients have insecure/fearful or insecure/dismissive attachment styles, they will experience lower overall relationship satisfaction.
10. Degrees of recipients' attachment styles will interact with the degree of the partner's positive behavior in influencing the recipient's pleasure received from the approach behavior such that
 - a. For recipients with greater secure attachment styles there will be less difference in pleasure from higher versus lower levels of partners' positive behavior compared with recipients with lower levels of secure attachment.
 - b. For recipients with greater insecure/preoccupied attachment styles there will be more pleasure from higher levels of positive approach behaviors than from lower levels of positive behavior, whereas those with lower insecure/preoccupied attachment styles will show less difference in pleasure as a function of degree of positive partner behaviors.
 - c. For recipients with greater insecure/fearful and insecure/dismissive attachment styles will experience lower levels of pleasure from higher

levels of partners' positive behaviors than from lower levels of positive behavior.

11. Recipients' attachment styles will interact with the degree of the partner's approach behavior in influencing the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction, such that
 - a. For recipients with secure attachment styles there will be no difference in overall relationship satisfaction from higher versus lower levels of partners' positive behavior;
 - b. Recipients with insecure/preoccupied attachment styles will experience greater overall relationship satisfaction when they receive higher levels of positive partner behaviors than when they receive lower levels of positive partner behavior.
 - c. Recipients with insecure/fearful and insecure/dismissive attachment styles will experience less overall relationship satisfaction when they receive higher levels of partners' positive behavior than when they receive lower levels of positive partner behavior.

Research Question

In addition to the above hypotheses, this study will address one research question:

1. Is there a difference in the pleasure and overall relationship satisfaction that males and females experience from positive partner approach behaviors?

It is important to note that gender was not included in the study as a moderator variable due to the complexity of running analyses with two moderators. Analyses were run separately for males and females in order to examine differences. These differences are noted in the results section.

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

Sample

The sample used in this study was comprised of 83 heterosexual couples who sought couple therapy at a university-based clinic, the Family Service Center at the University of Maryland, College Park, between 2000 and 2006. Each couple voluntarily participated in a treatment outcome study, which compared various couple therapy models in treating psychological and/or physical abuse.

All couples qualified to participate in the study based on the following criteria:

1) both partners are 18 or older; 2) both partners report commitment to the relationship; 3) one or both partners report mild to moderate levels of psychological and/or physical abuse; no severe forms of abuse; 4) both partners feel safe living and participating in conjoint couple therapy with each other; and 5) neither partner has untreated substance abuse.

The sample consisted of 83 males and 83 females. The mean age for males was 33 years, and the mean age for females was 31 years. Of the 83 couples, the mean number of years together is six, and 78% of the couples are married or cohabitating. The sample demographics regarding race are as follows: 48% of the population is Caucasian, 37% African-American, 8% Hispanic, 1% Native American, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 4% reported their race as “other.”

Instruments and Procedures

The data used for this study were gathered from questionnaires given to all couples who present for treatment at the university-based clinic. Each member of the

couple is given a battery of assessment forms on Day 1 when they present for treatment regardless of whether they are eligible for participation in the research study. Measures included in this Day 1 assessment that are used in this study are the *Dyadic Adjustment Scale* (DAS) and the *Relationship Questionnaire* (RQ). These instruments are described below. After the Day 1 assessment is completed, the couple is invited to participate in the research study if they meet all of the eligibility criteria. If the couple volunteers to participate in the study they complete a Day 2 assessment upon their next visit to the clinic. The *Positive Partner Behavior* scale (PPB) is the Day 2 measure that is used in this study. The following provides descriptions of the measures that were used to collect data for this study.

Positive Partner Behavior was measured with the *Positive Partner Behavior* scale (PPB, based on the Spouse Observation Checklist; Wills et al., 1974). The PPB is a 54 item (see Appendix A for measure), self-report instrument that is used to assess both the amount of positive behavior that each member of the couple perceives the other as exhibiting during the past week and the degree of pleasure that the recipient experienced from those acts. Three subscales were determined based on a factor analysis. Each item in each of the three subscales made contributions to the scale with high internal consistency. The three subscales were labeled based on the content of the internally consistent items. Affection, instrumental, and nurturance were the subscales determined. The Cronbach alpha for the 9-item affection scale was .84 for females and .85 for males; the Cronbach alpha for the 6-item instrumental scale was .73 for females and .71 for males; and the Cronbach alpha for the 9-item nurturance scale was .77 for females and .86 for males. Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 33, 34, 37, 38, 39, 40, 44, 45, 46, 47,

48 (see Appendix D for the subscale item content) measured positive partner behavior such that 1 = yes it happened, or 0 = no it did not happen. If the behavior happened, the partner rated this behavior according to pleasure that it elicited, ranging from 1 = extremely unpleasant to 9 = extremely pleasant. From these ratings, a sum pleasure score was calculated by taking whether each behavior happened (1 or 0) and multiplying it by the rating (1-9) and then adding the score from each question. This process was completed for each subscale resulting in variables for affection behavior, instrumental behavior, and nurturing behavior for males and females, as well as pleasure experienced from affection behavior, pleasure experienced from instrumental behavior, and pleasure experienced from nurturing behavior for males and females. In order to test for interaction effects between positive behavior and attachment style as they predict pleasure experienced and overall relationship satisfaction, a variable was created by multiplying the amount of positive behavior on each of the subscales by the degree of attachment style as reported on the RQ.

Attachment Style was measured using the *Relationship Questionnaire* (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) which is a self-report measure used to assess the degree to which each member of a couple reports each of four types of attachment styles (secure, insecure/fearful, insecure/dismissive, insecure/preoccupied) as characteristic of him or her. First, this measure asks each member of the couple to circle one of four paragraphs (each representing an attachment style) that the individual feels *best describes* how they respond in relationships. Next the respondent is asked to rate the *degree* to which each of the four paragraphs describes him or her, on a scale ranging from “not at all like me” = 1 to “very much like me” = 7 on each of the four attachment styles. For the purposes of this

study, insecure/fearful and insecure/dismissive were combined and coded the same way due to small sample sizes for each category alone, resulting in the analysis of three attachment styles: secure, insecure fearful or dismissive, and insecure/preoccupied. The index of the individual's degree of each attachment style was used for the purposes of this study.

Relationship Satisfaction was measured using the *Dyadic Adjustment Scale* (DAS; Spanier, 1976), which is a widely used 32-item self-report measure designed to assess overall relationship satisfaction. Rather than using the score for the entire measure, this study only used participants' responses to question 31 (see Appendix C for exact question) so as not to introduce confounding of measures, in that many of the DAS items describe positive and negative behaviors that may occur between partners, whereas item 31 is a "pure" index of overall subjective satisfaction. Participants' responses to item 31 were coded from 0 to 6 (0 being "extremely unhappy", and 6 being "perfect"). This index served as the measure of overall relationship satisfaction for this study.

Model for Analysis for Hypotheses:

* Independent variables:

- Degree of positive partner behavior (PPB affection items, PPB instrumental items, PPB nurturance items)
- Degree of individual's attachment style (secure, insecure/preoccupied, insecure/fearful or dismissive as measured by the RQ)
- Interaction of type of positive partner behavior and the type of attachment style

* Dependent variables:

- Males' pleasure from partner's positive behavior (as measured by the PPB)
- Females' pleasure from partner's positive behavior (as measured by the PPB)
- Males' overall relationship satisfaction (as measured by DAS item 31)
- Females' overall relationship satisfaction (as measured by DAS item 31)

Procedure

As previously stated, this study utilized the assessment information gathered from couples who presented to couple therapy at a university-based clinic who qualified for participation in a treatment outcome study. At presentation for treatment each member of the couple was given an assessment packet (including the DAS and RQ), and was individually interviewed to inquire about substance abuse and feelings of safety with his/her partner.

At the completion of the Day 1 assessment, the therapists assigned to the case examined the assessment materials to determine whether the couple was eligible to participate in the study. If the couple meets the eligibility requirements, they are offered a place in the study. If they voluntarily accept this offer, they complete a Day 2 assessment packet (in which the PPB is included) and begin treatment in one of two treatment groups.

CHAPTER 3

Results

Overview of Analyses

Each hypothesis was tested with multiple regression analyses, separately for females and males. In each analysis one independent variable was the degree of one type of positive partner behavior (affection, instrumental, or nurturance). The second independent variable was the degree of one of the attachment styles (secure, insecure/preoccupied, or insecure/fearful or dismissive). The final independent variable was the interaction (i.e., product) of the type of positive partner behavior and the type of attachment style.

Each analysis also was run twice, once for the dependent variable of degree of pleasure experienced from receiving positive partner behavior, and once for overall relationship satisfaction.

For each multiple regression analysis, the three predictor variables were entered simultaneously, controlling for their statistical redundancy in accounting for variance in the dependent variable.

In order to obtain an overview of the relationship satisfaction and attachment styles of the sample, the ranges of scores, means, and standard deviations were calculated for the total DAS (in order to assess overall relationship adjustment), DAS Question #31 (to assess general relationship happiness), and each attachment style assessed by the RQ.

Table 1. Ranges, Means, and Standard Deviations of the Sample's Scores on the Measures

<i>DAS</i>	Min/Max	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Males	33/136	91.58	21.53
Females	9/128	85.66	22.77
<i>DAS item #31</i>	Min/Max	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Males	0/5	2.48	1.48
Females	0/5	1.87	1.43
<i>RQ Secure Style</i>	Min/Max	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Males	0/7	4.53	2.00
Females	1/7	3.87	2.14
<i>RQ Insecure/Preoccupied Style</i>	Min/Max	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Males	1/7	3.61	2.02
Females	1/7	4.37	2.08
<i>RQ Insecure/Fearful or Dismissive Style</i>	Min/Max	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Males	1/6.5	3.48	1.54
Females	1/7	3.71	1.40

Note. DAS = Dyadic Adjustment Scale; RQ = Relationship Questionnaire (attachment styles)

The results of the analyses are presented below for each hypothesis.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Members of couples who receive higher levels of positive partner behavior from their partners will experience more pleasure from those behaviors than members of couples who receive lower levels of positive behaviors.

In the multiple regression analysis predicting males' pleasure as a function of partner's affection behavior, secure attachment, and their interaction, the set of predictors significantly predicted the recipient's pleasure; $R=.36$, $R^2= .13$, $F(3,74)=3.76$, $p=.014$. Of the three predictors, the degree of partner's affection behavior approached significance on its own ($\beta=.36$, $p=.054$).

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure from degree of partner's affection behavior, secure attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.62$, $R^2=.38$, $F(3,74)=15.06$, $p < .001$. Degree of affection from the partner was a significant predictor of the recipient's pleasure ($\beta=.58$, $p=.002$).

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure from degree of partner's instrumental behaviors, secure attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R=.33$, $R^2=.11$, $F(3,77)=3.15$, $p=.03$. Degree of positive instrumental behavior from the partner was not a significant predictor of the recipient's pleasure. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and pleasure from instrumental behaviors, however, was significant, $r=.33$, $p=.001$.

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure from degree of partner's instrumental behavior, secure attachment, and their interaction, there was a trend for the overall model to be significant; $R=.29$, $R^2=.09$, $F(3,70)=2.17$, $p=.099$. None of the individual predictors was significant.

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure from degree of partner's affection behavior, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.39$, $R^2=.16$, $F(3,74)=4.53$, $p=.006$. Degree of affection was not a significant predictor of the recipient's pleasure. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/preoccupied attachment and pleasure from affection behaviors, however, was significant, $r=.30$, $p=.003$.

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure from degree of partner's affection behavior, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was

significant: $R=.61$, $R^2=.38$, $F(3,75)=15.11$, $p < .001$. Degree of affection behavior was a significant predictor of pleasure experienced ($\beta = .34$, $p=.005$).

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure from degree of partner's instrumental behavior, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R=.34$, $R^2=.11$, $F(3,77)=3.23$, $p=.027$. There was a trend for degree of partner's instrumental behavior to be a significant predictor of pleasure experienced ($\beta = .34$, $p=.068$).

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure from degree of partner's instrumental behavior, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, there was a trend for the overall model to be significant: $R=.30$, $R^2=.09$, $F(3,71)=2.27$, $p=.088$. Degree of instrumental behavior was a significant predictor of pleasure experienced ($\beta = .37$, $p=.041$).

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure from degree of partner's nurturing behavior, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, there was a trend for the overall model to be significant: $R=.29$, $R^2=.08$, $F(3,72)=2.18$, $p=.098$. Degree of nurturing behavior was a significant predictor of pleasure experienced ($\beta = .26$, $p=.032$).

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's affection behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R=.35$, $R^2=.12$, $F(3,74)=3.43$, $p=.021$. Degree of affection behavior was a significant predictor of pleasure experienced ($\beta = .47$, $p=.022$).

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's affection behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the

overall model was significant, $R = .61$, $R^2 = .37$, $F(3,75) = 14.91$, $p < .001$. None of the individual predictors was significant.

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's instrumental behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R = .45$, $R^2 = .20$, $F(3,77) = 6.36$, $p = .001$. Degree of instrumental behavior was a significant predictor of pleasure experienced ($\beta = .93$, $p = .001$).

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's instrumental behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, there was a trend for the overall model to be significant: $R = .29$, $R^2 = .08$, $F(3,71) = 2.14$, $p = .10$. Degree of instrumental behavior was not a significant predictor of pleasure experienced.

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's nurturing behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant, $R = .44$, $R^2 = .19$, $F(3,72) = 5.63$, $p = .002$. Degree of nurturing behavior was not a significant predictor of pleasure experienced.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 1: The hypothesis was supported by the relationship between pleasure experienced and males with degrees of secure attachment who received affection behavior, females with degrees of secure attachment who received affection behavior, females with degrees of insecure/preoccupied attachment who received affection and instrumental behavior, males with degrees of insecure/preoccupied attachment who received instrumental and nurturing behavior, and males with degrees of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment who received affection and instrumental

behavior in that the more positive behavior received the higher the pleasure experienced. The hypothesis was also supported by the Pearson correlations for males with degrees of secure attachment who received instrumental behavior, and males with degrees of insecure/preoccupied attachment who received affection, in that higher levels of positive behaviors were associated with higher levels of pleasure experienced.

Hypothesis 2: Members of couples who receive higher levels of positive partner behavior from their partners will report greater overall relationship satisfaction than members of couples who receive lower levels of positive behaviors from their partners.

In the multiple regression analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction as a function of partner's affection behavior, secure attachment, and their interaction, the set of predictors significantly predicted the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction; $R=.50$, $R^2=.25$, $F(3,79)=8.73$, $p<.001$. Degree of positive affection behavior was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from affection behaviors, however, was significant, $r=.48$, $p<.001$.

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction as a function of partner's affection behavior, secure attachment, and their interaction, the set of predictors significantly predicted the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction; $R=.44$, $R^2=.19$, $F(3,78)=6.08$, $p=.001$. None of the individual predictors was significant.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's instrumental behaviors, secure attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R=.32$, $R^2=.10$, $F(3,79)=2.98$, $p=.036$. Degree of positive instrumental behavior from the partner was not a significant predictor of the recipient's

overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from instrumental behaviors, however, was significant, $r=.19, p=.041$.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, secure attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R=.50, R^2=.25, F(3,79)=8.95, p<.001$. Degree of positive nurturing behavior from the partner was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from nurturing behaviors, however, was significant $r=.50, p<.001$.

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, secure attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R=.38, R^2=.14, F(3,78)=4.37, p=.007$. None of the individual predictors was significant.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's affection behaviors, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R=.49, R^2=.24, F(3,79)=8.51, p<.001$. None of the individual predictors was significant.

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's affection behaviors, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.43, R^2=.18, F(3,79)=5.83, p=.001$. Degree of affection from the partner was a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction ($\beta =.27, p=.018$).

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.52$, $R^2=.27$, $F(3,79)=9.92$, $p<.001$. Degree of nurturing behaviors from the partner was a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction ($\beta =.20$, $p=.032$).

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.37$, $R^2=.13$, $F(3,79)=4.09$, $p =.009$. Degree of positive nurturing behavior from the partner was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/preoccupied attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from nurturing behaviors, however, was significant, $r= .35$, $p=.001$.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's affection behaviors, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.49$, $R^2=.24$, $F(3,79)=8.51$, $p<.001$. Degree of positive affection behavior from the partner was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from affection behaviors, however, was significant, $r= .48$, $p<.001$.

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's affection behaviors, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.42$, $R^2=.18$, $F(3,79)=5.79$, $p=.001$. None of the individual predictors was significant.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's instrumental behaviors, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.30$, $R^2=.09$, $F(3,79)=2.66$, $p=.054$. Degree of positive instrumental behaviors from the partner was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from instrumental behaviors, however, was significant, $r=.19$, $p=.041$.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.53$, $R^2=.28$, $F(3,79)=10.11$, $p<.001$. Degree of nurturing behaviors from the partner was a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction ($\beta =.31$, $p=.014$).

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.38$, $R^2=.14$, $F(3,79)=4.45$, $p=.006$. None of the individual predictors was significant.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 2: The hypothesis was supported by the relationship between overall relationship satisfaction for females with degrees of insecure/preoccupied attachment who received affection behavior, males with degrees of insecure/preoccupied attachment who received nurturing behavior, and males with degrees of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment who received nurturing behavior in that the more positive behavior received the higher the overall relationship satisfaction. The hypothesis was also supported by the Pearson correlations for males with degrees of

secure attachment who received affection, instrumental, and nurturing behaviors, females with degrees of insecure/preoccupied attachment who received nurturing behaviors, and males with degrees of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment who received affection and instrumental behaviors in that higher levels of positive behaviors were associated with higher overall relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a positive association between level of pleasure experienced from positive partner and level of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction.

For males, the Pearson correlation between pleasure experienced from affection behavior and overall relationship satisfaction was $r=.56, p<.001$; the Pearson correlation between pleasure experienced from instrumental behavior and overall relationship satisfaction was $r=.37, p=.001$; and the Pearson correlation between pleasure experienced from nurturing behavior and overall relationship satisfaction was $r=.45, p<.001$.

For females, the Pearson correlation between pleasure experienced from affection behavior and overall relationship satisfaction was $r=.53, p<.001$; the Pearson correlation between pleasure experienced from instrumental behavior and overall relationship satisfaction was $r=.24, p=.041$; and the Pearson correlation between pleasure experienced from nurturing behavior and overall relationship satisfaction was $r=.36, p=.001$.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 3: All findings support the hypothesis showing that the more pleasure that males and females experience from positive behavior (affection, instrumental or nurturing) the more they report higher overall relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: The more that recipients have secure attachment styles, the more they will experience positive behaviors from a partner as pleasurable.

For the variables tested below, the findings from Hypothesis 1 are reported, along with the results from the univariate analyses for degree of attachment style.

In the multiple regression analysis predicting males' pleasure as a function of partner's affection behavior, secure attachment, and their interaction, the set of predictors significantly predicted the recipient's pleasure; $R=.36$, $R^2=.13$, $F(3,74)=3.76$, $p=.014$. Degree of secure attachment style was not a significant predictor of the recipient's pleasure. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and pleasure from affection behaviors, however, was significant, $r=.23$, $p=.023$.

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure from degree of partner's affection behavior, secure attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.62$, $R^2=.38$, $F(3,74)=15.06$, $p < .001$. Degree of secure attachment style was not a significant predictor of the recipient's pleasure. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from affection behaviors, however, was significant, $r=.28$, $p=.007$.

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure from degree of partner's instrumental behaviors, secure attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R=.33$, $R^2=.11$, $F(3,77)=3.15$, $p=.03$. Degree of secure attachment style was not a significant predictor of the recipient's pleasure. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from instrumental behaviors, however, was significant, $r=.33$, $p=.001$.

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure from degree of partner's instrumental behavior, secure attachment, and their interaction, there was a trend for the overall model to be significant; $R=.29$, $R^2=.09$, $F(3,70)=2.17$, $p=.099$. None of the individual predictors, including secure attachment style, was significant.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 4: The hypothesis was supported by the Pearson correlations that indicated that individuals with secure attachment experienced more pleasure from positive behaviors than those with lower levels of secure attachment. The correlations were significant for males with secure attachment styles who received affection and instrumental behavior, and for females with secure attachment styles who received affection behavior.

Hypothesis 5: The more that recipients have insecure/preoccupied attachment styles, the more they will experience positive behaviors from a partner as pleasurable.

For the variables tested below, the findings from Hypothesis 1 are reported, along with the results from the univariate analyses for degree of attachment style.

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure from degree of partner's affection behavior, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.39$, $R^2=.16$, $F(3,74)=4.53$, $p=.006$. Degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment was a significant predictor of pleasure experienced ($\beta = -.70$, $p=.034$).

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure from degree of partner's affection behavior, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R=.61$, $R^2=.38$, $F(3,75)=15.11$, $p<.001$. Degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment was not a significant predictor of pleasure experienced. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/preoccupied attachment and overall

relationship satisfaction from affection behaviors, however, was significant, $r = -.26$, $p = .011$.

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure from degree of partner's instrumental behavior, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, there was a trend for the overall model to be significant: $R = .30$, $R^2 = .09$, $F(3,71) = 2.27$, $p = .088$. Degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment was not a significant predictor of pleasure experienced. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/preoccupied attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from instrumental behaviors also indicated a trend, $r = -.17$, $p = .069$.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 5: The hypothesis was not supported by the findings for males with insecure/preoccupied attachment who received affection behaviors, in that the higher the degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment, the less pleasure experienced from affection behaviors. Further, the hypothesis was not supported by the findings for females with insecure/preoccupied attachment who received affection or instrumental behaviors in that the higher the degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment, the lower the pleasure experienced from positive behaviors.

Hypothesis 6: The more that recipients have insecure/fearful or insecure/dismissive attachment styles, the less they will experience positive behaviors from a partner as pleasurable.

For the variables tested below, the findings from Hypothesis 1 are reported, along with the results from the univariate analyses for degree of attachment style.

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's affection behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the

overall model was significant: $R=.35$, $R^2=.12$, $F(3,74)=3.43$, $p=.021$. Degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was not a significant predictor of pleasure experienced.

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's affection behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant, $R= .61$, $R^2=.37$, $F(3,75)=14.91$, $p<.001$. Degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was not a significant predictor of pleasure experienced. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from affection behaviors, however, was significant, $r= -.20$, $p=.037$.

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's instrumental behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R= .45$, $R^2=.20$, $F(3,77)=6.36$, $p=.001$. There was a trend for degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment to be a significant predictor of pleasure experienced ($\beta =.54$, $p=.085$).

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's nurturing behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant, $R= .44$, $R^2=.19$, $F(3,72)=5.63$, $p=.002$. Degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was a significant predictor of pleasure experienced ($\beta = -.64$, $p=.007$).

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 6: The Pearson correlation for females' pleasure experienced from affection behaviors indicated that higher insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was related to lower pleasure experienced from affection

behaviors. The hypothesis was also supported by the analyses for females who receive instrumental behavior and males who receive nurturing behaviors in that the higher the insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment style, the lower the pleasure experienced from positive behaviors. The hypothesis was not supported by the analysis for males who receive instrumental behaviors as it was found that those males with higher levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment who receive higher levels of instrumental behaviors experience more pleasure from these behaviors.

Hypothesis 7: The more that recipients have secure attachment styles, they will experience greater overall relationship satisfaction.

For the variables tested below, the findings from Hypothesis 2 are reported along with the results from the univariate analyses for degree of attachment style.

In the multiple regression analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction as a function of partner's affection behavior, secure attachment, and their interaction, the set of predictors significantly predicted the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction; $R=.50$, $R^2=.25$, $F(3,79)=8.73$, $p < .001$. Degree of secure attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from affection behaviors, however, was significant, $r=.25$, $p=.012$.

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction as a function of partner's affection behavior, secure attachment, and their interaction, the set of predictors significantly predicted the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction; $R=.44$, $R^2=.19$, $F(3,78)=6.08$, $p=.001$. Degree of secure attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for

the simple effect of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from instrumental behaviors, however, was significant, $r = .19, p = .047$.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's instrumental behaviors, secure attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R = .32, R^2 = .10, F(3,79) = 2.98, p = .036$. Degree of secure attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from instrumental behaviors, however, was significant, $r = .25, p = .012$.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, secure attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R = .50, R^2 = .25, F(3,79) = 8.95, p < .001$. Degree of secure attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from nurturing behaviors, however, was significant, $r = .25, p = .012$.

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, secure attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R = .38, R^2 = .14, F(3,78) = 4.37, p = .007$. Degree of secure attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of secure attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from nurturing behaviors, however, was significant, $r = .19, p = .047$.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 7: Although none of the analyses indicated that attachment style significantly predicted overall relationships satisfaction, the results

of Pearson analyses indicate that secure attachment style is correlated with overall relationship satisfaction for males who receive positive affection, instrumental, and nurturing behaviors, and females who receive affection and nurturing behaviors.

Hypothesis 8: The more that recipients have insecure/preoccupied attachment styles, they will experience lower overall relationship satisfaction.

For the variables tested below, the findings from Hypothesis 2 are reported along with the results from the univariate analyses for degree of attachment style.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's affection behaviors, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R=.49$, $R^2=.24$, $F(3,79)=8.51$, $p<.001$. Degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/preoccupied attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from affection behaviors was not significant.

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's affection behaviors, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.43$, $R^2=.18$, $F(3,79)=5.83$, $p=.001$. Degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/preoccupied attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from affection behaviors was not significant.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's instrumental behaviors, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction,

the overall model was significant; $R=.26$, $R^2=.06$, $F(3,79)=1.84$, $p=.147$. Degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/preoccupied attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from instrumental behaviors was not significant.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.52$, $R^2=.27$, $F(3,79)=9.92$, $p<.001$. Degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/preoccupied attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from nurturing behaviors was not significant.

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.37$, $R^2=.13$, $F(3,79)=4.09$, $p=.009$. Degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/preoccupied attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from nurturing behaviors was not significant.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 8: Hypothesis 8 was not supported by any of the findings.

Hypothesis 9: The more that recipients have insecure/fearful or insecure/dismissive attachment styles, they will experience lower overall relationship satisfaction.

For the variables tested below, the findings from Hypothesis 2 are reported along with the results from the univariate analyses for degree of attachment style.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's affection behaviors, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.49$, $R^2=.24$, $F(3,79)=8.51$, $p<.001$. Degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from affection behaviors, however, was significant, $r= -.23$, $p=.018$.

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's affection behaviors, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.42$, $R^2=.18$, $F(3,79)=5.79$, $p=.001$. Degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's instrumental behaviors, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R=.30$, $R^2=.09$, $F(3,79)=2.66$, $p=.054$. Degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect

of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from instrumental behaviors, however, was significant, $r = -.23$, $p = .018$.

In the analysis predicting males' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R = .53$, $R^2 = .28$, $F(3,79) = 10.11$, $p < .001$. Degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction. The Pearson correlation for the simple effect of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment and overall relationship satisfaction from nurturing behaviors, however, was significant, $r = -.23$, $p = .018$.

In the analysis predicting females' overall relationship satisfaction from degree of partner's nurturing behaviors, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R = .38$, $R^2 = .14$, $F(3,79) = 4.45$, $p = .006$. Degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was not a significant predictor of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 9: The significant Pearson correlations for male pleasure experienced from affection behavior and male pleasure experienced from instrumental behavior indicate that the direction of the hypothesis was correct in that the higher the insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment style, the lower the overall relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 10: Degrees of recipients' attachment styles will interact with the degree of the partner's positive behavior in influencing the recipient's pleasure received from the approach behavior such that

a. For recipients with greater secure attachment styles there will be less difference in pleasure from higher versus lower levels of partners' positive behavior compared with recipients with lower levels of secure attachment.

No significant results were found.

b. For recipients with greater insecure/preoccupied attachment styles there will be more pleasure from higher levels of positive approach behaviors than from lower levels of positive behavior, whereas those with lower insecure/preoccupied attachment styles will show less difference in pleasure as a function of degree of positive partner behaviors.

For the variables tested below, the findings from Hypothesis 1 are reported along with the results from the univariate analyses for the interaction between positive behavior and degree of attachment style.

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure from degree of partner's affection behavior, insecure/preoccupied attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant; $R = .39$, $R^2 = .16$, $F(3,74) = 4.53$, $p = .006$. There was a trend for degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment to be a significant predictor of pleasure experienced ($\beta = .08$, $p = .064$). In order to investigate the pattern of the interaction, cell means were determined by conducting a median split for both degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment and affection behavior, dividing each into high and low categories. A 2 X 2 ANOVA was then conducted to determine the cell means (see Table 2). The results show that those males with high insecure/preoccupied attachment experience high levels of affection behavior as more pleasurable than low levels of affection behavior. Those males with low insecure/preoccupied attachment do not report much difference in pleasure

experienced between high levels and low levels of positive affection behavior. This pattern is consistent with the hypothesis that those individuals with higher levels on insecure/preoccupied attachment will experience higher levels of affection behavior as more pleasurable than lower levels of affection behavior, and that those individuals with lower levels of insecure/preoccupied attachment will not experience much difference in pleasure experienced from higher or lower levels of affection behavior.

Table 2. Cell Means for Interaction between Male Insecure/Preoccupied Attachment and Affection Behavior

		Degree of Insecure/Preoccupied Attachment	
		High	Low
Affection Behavior	High	8.18	7.83
	Low	6.67	7.57

c. For recipients with greater insecure/fearful and insecure/dismissive attachment styles will experience lower levels of pleasure from higher levels of partners' positive behaviors than from lower levels of positive behavior.

For the variables tested below, the findings from Hypothesis 1 are reported along with the results from the univariate analyses for the interaction between positive behavior and degree of attachment style.

In the analysis predicting males' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's instrumental behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was significant: $R = .45$, $R^2 = .20$, $F(3,77) = 6.36$, $p = .001$. The interaction of

degree of partner's instrumental behavior and recipient's insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was significant in predicting pleasure experienced from positive instrumental behaviors ($\beta = -.17, p = .017$). In order to investigate the pattern of interaction, cell means were determined by conducting a median split for both degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment and instrumental behavior, dividing each into high and low categories. A 2 X 2 ANOVA was then conducted to determine the cell means (See Table 3). The results show that there is not much difference in pleasure experienced between high or low levels of instrumental behaviors by those males with high levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles. Males with low levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles experienced high levels of instrumental behaviors as more pleasurable than low levels of instrumental behaviors. This pattern is somewhat consistent with the hypothesis in that those with high levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles did not experience much difference between high and low levels of instrumental behaviors, but those with lower levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment did experience higher levels of instrumental behaviors as more pleasurable.

Table 3. Cell Means for Interaction between Male Insecure/Fearful or Dismissive Attachment and Instrumental Behavior

		Degree of Insecure/fearful or dismissive Attachment	
		High	Low
Instrumental Behavior	High	6.75	7.79
	Low	6.33	6.39

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's instrumental behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, there was a non-significant trend for the overall model: $R = .29$, $R^2 = .08$, $F(3,71) = 2.14$, $p = .103$. There was also a trend for the interaction of degree of partner's instrumental behavior and recipient's insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment style to be significant in predicting pleasure experienced from positive instrumental behaviors ($\beta = .13$, $p = .066$). In order to investigate the pattern of interaction, cell means were determined by conducting a median split for both degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment and instrumental behavior, dividing each into high and low categories. A 2 X 2 ANOVA was then conducted to determine the cell means (See Table 4). The results show that those females with higher levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles experienced more pleasure from higher levels of instrumental behaviors than they did from lower levels of behaviors. Those females with lower levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles experienced little difference in the pleasure experienced from high and low levels of instrumental behavior. These results are not consistent with

the hypothesis in that higher levels of instrumental behavior were not associated with lower levels of pleasure experienced in those with higher levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles.

Table 4. Cell Means for Interaction between Female Insecure/Fearful or Dismissive Attachment and Instrumental Behavior

		Degree of Insecure/fearful or dismissive Attachment	
		High	Low
Instrumental Behavior	High	7.12	7.22
	Low	6.59	6.94

In the analysis predicting females' pleasure experienced from degree of partner's nurturing behavior, insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, and their interaction, the overall model was not significant. There was, however, a trend for the interaction of degree of partner's nurturing behavior and insecure/fearful attachment to be significant in predicting pleasure experienced from positive nurturing behaviors ($\beta = .07, p = .089$). In order to investigate the pattern of interaction, cell means were determined by conducting a median split for both degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment and nurturing behavior, dividing each into high and low categories. A 2 X 2 ANOVA was then conducted to determine the cell means (See Table 5). The results show that those females with higher levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment experienced higher levels of nurturing behavior as more pleasurable than lower levels of nurturing behaviors.

Further, there was little difference in the amount of pleasure experienced from high and low levels of nurturing behavior by those with low levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles. These findings do not support the hypothesis because those with higher levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles did experience more pleasure from higher levels of nurturing behavior.

Table 5. Cell Means for Interaction between Female Insecure/Fearful or Dismissive Attachment and Affection Behavior

		Degree of Insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment	
		High	Low
Nurturing Behavior	High	7.28	7.06
	Low	6.78	7.15

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 10: The findings indicate that the interaction of secure patterns of attachment with positive behavior has little influence on how much pleasure is experienced. For those with insecure/preoccupied attachment styles, results were only significant for males. The results show that those males with high insecure/preoccupied attachment experience high levels of affection behavior as more pleasurable than low levels of affection behavior, and males with low insecure/preoccupied attachment experience little difference in pleasure experienced from high or low levels of positive affection behavior. These findings are consistent with the hypothesis in that those males with higher levels of insecure/preoccupied attachment experienced higher positive affection behavior as more pleasurable than those males with

low levels of insecure/preoccupied attachment. The results for males and females with insecure/preoccupied or dismissive styles varied in that males with low levels of insecure/fearful or preoccupied attachment experienced high levels of positive instrumental behavior as more pleasurable than those with high levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment. The opposite was true for females in that those with high levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment experienced more pleasure from high levels of positive instrumental behaviors than those with low insecure/preoccupied attachment. Further, it was found that females with high insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment experience higher levels of nurturing behavior as more pleasurable than those with low insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment. Although the findings for males were consistent with the hypothesis, the findings for females were not.

Hypothesis 11: Recipients' attachment styles will interact with the degree of the partner's approach behavior in influencing the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction, such that

a. For recipients with secure attachment styles there will be no difference in overall relationship satisfaction from higher versus lower levels of partners' positive behavior.

No significant results were found.

b. Recipients with insecure/preoccupied attachment styles will experience greater overall relationship satisfaction when they receive higher levels of positive partner behaviors than when they receive lower levels of positive partner behavior.

No significant results were found in the multiple regression analysis.

c. Recipients with insecure/fearful and insecure/dismissive attachment styles will experience less overall relationship satisfaction when they receive higher levels of partners' positive behavior than when they receive lower levels of positive partner behavior.

No significant results were found in the multiple regression analysis.

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 11: There were no significant findings for hypothesis 11, indicating no relationship between the interaction of attachment style and positive behavior and overall relationship satisfaction.

Table 6. Summary Table of Results

	Supported		Not Supported	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Hypothesis 1	Sec-Aff Sec-Inst Ins/Pre-Aff Ins/Pre-Nur Ins/FD-Aff Ins/FD-Inst	Sec-Aff Ins/Pre-Aff Ins/Pre-Inst		
Hypothesis 2	Sec-Aff Sec-Inst Sec-Nur Ins/Pre-Nur Ins/FD-Aff Ins/FD-Inst Ins/FD-Nur	Ins/Pre-Aff Ins/Pre-Nur		
Hypothesis 3	Yes	Yes		
Hypothesis 4	Sec-Aff Sec-Inst	Sec-Aff		
Hypothesis 5			Ins/Pre-Aff	Ins/Pre-Aff Ins/Pre-Inst
Hypothesis 6	Ins/FD-Nur	Ins/FD-Aff Ins/FD-Inst	Ins/FD-Inst	
Hypothesis 7	Sec-Aff Sec-Inst Sec-Nur	Sec-Aff Sec-Nur		
Hypothesis 8				
Hypothesis 9	Ins/FD-Aff Ins/FD-Ins			
Hypothesis 10 a				
Hypothesis 10 b	Ins/Pre-Aff			
Hypothesis 10 c	Ins/FD-Inst			Ins/FD-Inst Ins/FD-Nur
Hypothesis 11 a				
Hypothesis 11 b				
Hypothesis 11 c				
<p>Key: Sec = Secure attachment Ins/Pre = Insecure/preoccupied attachment Ins/FD = Insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment Aff = Affection behaviors received Inst = Instrumental behaviors received Nur = Nurturing behaviors received</p>				

Test of Research Question Regarding Gender Differences

Hypothesis 1: Members of couples who receive higher levels of positive partner behavior from their partners will experience more pleasure from those behaviors than members of couples who receive lower levels of positive behaviors.

The hypothesis was supported for both males and females with secure attachment styles who received affection behaviors, and males and females with insecure/preoccupied attachment who received affection behavior. Males with secure attachment styles who received instrumental behavior, males with insecure/preoccupied attachment who received nurturing behaviors, males with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles who received affection and instrumental behaviors were all found to experience higher levels of pleasure from higher levels of positive behaviors, whereas females with the same patterns of attachment who received the same kind of behaviors did not. Female with insecure/preoccupied attachment styles who received instrumental behavior did experience higher levels of pleasure from higher levels of the positive behavior whereas males did not.

Hypothesis 2: Members of couples who receive higher levels of positive partner behavior from their partners will report greater overall relationship satisfaction than members of couples who receive lower levels of positive behaviors from their partners.

The gender differences in the findings for this hypothesis were great. Only males and females with insecure/preoccupied patterns of attachment who received higher levels of affection behavior reported higher overall relationship satisfaction. Females with insecure/preoccupied patterns of attachment who received higher levels of nurturing behavior also reported higher levels of relationship satisfaction, whereas men with the

same attachment style who received nurturing behavior did not. Males with secure attachment who received affection, instrumental, and nurturing behavior, insecure/preoccupied attachment who received nurturing behavior, and insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment who received affection, instrumental, or nurturing behavior did, however, report higher levels of relationship satisfaction from higher levels of positive behavior, whereas women with the same attachment styles who received the same kind of positive behavior did not.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a positive association between level of pleasure experienced from positive partner and level of the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction.

No gender differences to report.

Hypothesis 4: The more that recipients have secure attachment styles, the more they will experience positive behaviors from a partner as pleasurable.

This hypothesis was supported for both males and females with secure attachment styles who received affection behaviors. It was also supported by the findings for males with secure attachment styles who received instrumental behaviors, but not for females who received instrumental behaviors.

Hypothesis 5: The more that recipients have insecure/preoccupied attachment styles, the more they will experience positive behaviors from a partner as pleasurable.

The opposite of this hypothesis was found for both males and females with insecure/preoccupied patterns of attachment who received affection behaviors, and also for females with insecure/preoccupied attachment who received instrumental behaviors.

Hypothesis 6: The more that recipients have insecure/fearful or insecure/dismissive attachment styles, the less they will experience positive behaviors from a partner as pleasurable.

No gender similarities were found in the analysis for this hypothesis. It was supported by males with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles who received nurturing behavior, and by females with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles who received affection, and instrumental behaviors. In contrast, the opposite was found for males with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles who received instrumental behaviors in that the more they received the instrumental behaviors, the more they experienced them as pleasurable, whereas women with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles who received higher levels of instrumental behaviors from their partners experienced lower levels of pleasure from these behaviors.

Hypothesis 7: The more that recipients have secure attachment styles, they will experience greater overall relationship satisfaction.

This hypothesis was supported by both males and females with secure patterns of attachment who received affection and nurturing behaviors. Males with secure attachment who received instrumental behaviors also reported higher relationship satisfaction, whereas women with secure attachment who received instrumental behaviors did not.

Hypothesis 8: The more that recipients have insecure/preoccupied attachment styles, they will experience lower overall relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis was not supported by either gender.

Hypothesis 9: The more that recipients have insecure/fearful or insecure/dismissive attachment styles, they will experience lower overall relationship satisfaction.

This hypothesis was supported by the findings for males with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles who received affection and instrumental behaviors, but was not supported by any of the findings for females.

Hypothesis 10: Degrees of recipients' attachment styles will interact with the degree of the partner's positive behavior in influencing the recipient's pleasure received from the approach behavior such that

a. For recipients with greater secure attachment styles there will be less difference in pleasure from higher versus lower levels of partners' positive behavior compared with recipients with lower levels of secure attachment.

Hypothesis was not supported by either gender.

b. For recipients with greater insecure/preoccupied attachment styles there will be more pleasure from higher levels of positive approach behaviors than from lower levels of positive behavior, whereas those with lower insecure/preoccupied attachment styles will show less difference in pleasure as a function of degree of positive partner behaviors.

This hypothesis was supported only for males with insecure/preoccupied attachment who received affection behavior.

c. For recipients with greater insecure/fearful and insecure/dismissive attachment styles will experience lower levels of pleasure from higher levels of partners' positive behaviors than from lower levels of positive behavior.

This hypothesis was supported by the analysis for males with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles who received instrumental behaviors. The opposite of the hypothesis was found for females with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment who received instrumental and nurturing behaviors.

Hypothesis 11: Recipients' attachment styles will interact with the degree of the partner's approach behavior in influencing the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction, such that

a. For recipients with secure attachment styles there will be no difference in overall relationship satisfaction from higher versus lower levels of partners' positive behavior.

Hypothesis was not supported by either gender.

b. Recipients with insecure/preoccupied attachment styles will experience greater overall relationship satisfaction when they receive higher levels of positive partner behaviors than when they receive lower levels of positive partner behavior.

Hypothesis was not supported by either gender.

c. Recipients with insecure/fearful and insecure/dismissive attachment styles will experience less overall relationship satisfaction when they receive higher levels of partners' positive behavior than when they receive lower levels of positive partner behavior.

Hypothesis was not supported by either gender.

CHAPTER 4

Discussion

Findings

The results of this study indicate that as positive behaviors accumulate in couple interactions they incrementally influence pleasure experienced and overall relationship satisfaction in the recipient of these behaviors. Further, there was some support for the notion that individuals with different attachment styles will find positive behaviors more or less pleasurable. Overall, however, it was determined that the amount of positive behavior had a more consistent impact than attachment styles on the recipient's pleasure and relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, the amount of pleasure experienced from affectionate, instrumental, and nurturing partner behavior was associated with the recipient's overall relationship satisfaction.

Consistency of the Findings with the Hypotheses and Research Literature

The following are summaries of the specific findings for each hypothesis:

The hypothesis that the more positive partner behavior an individual receives the more pleasure they will experience was specifically supported by the relationship between pleasure experienced by males and the degrees of affection, instrumental, and nurturant behavior received by the males, as well as by the relation between pleasure experienced by females and the degrees to which the females received affection behavior, and instrumental behavior. The more of these forms of positive behavior received, the higher the pleasure experienced. Thus, the positive impact of the behavior appears to accumulate.

The hypothesis that the more positive behavior an individual receives the more they will report overall relationship satisfaction was specifically supported by the relationship between overall relationship satisfaction for females and the degrees of affection and nurturing behavior that the females received from their partners, as well as by the relationship between overall satisfaction for males and the degrees of affection, instrumental, and nurturing behavior received from their partners.

The hypothesis that the more pleasure that males and females experience from positive behavior (affection, instrumental or nurturing) the more they report higher overall relationship satisfaction was supported.

The hypothesis that the higher the degree of secure attachment the more they will experience pleasure was supported by the relationship between secure attachment and pleasure from positive partner behavior for males who received affection and instrumental behaviors, and for females who received affection behaviors. This finding demonstrates that those with secure attachment experience positive behaviors as significant to their pleasure experienced. This finding is consistent with much of the literature that states that individuals with secure patterns of attachment are more likely to experience pleasure or happiness from positive behaviors (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005; Koski & Shaver, 1997; Simpson, 1990).

The hypothesis that the higher the degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment, the more pleasure will be experienced from positive behaviors was supported by the findings for males with insecure/preoccupied attachment who received nurturing behaviors in that the higher the degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment, the more pleasure experienced from nurturing behaviors. The hypothesis was not supported by the findings for males

with insecure/preoccupied attachment who received affection or instrumental behaviors, or the findings for females with insecure/preoccupied attachment who received affection or instrumental behaviors in that the higher the degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment, the lower the pleasure experienced from positive behaviors. These results are somewhat surprising in that it is believed that those with insecure/preoccupied attachment crave positive attention from their partners in any form. It is particularly interesting that affection behavior did not elicit higher levels of pleasure. A possible explanation is that the individuals included in the study reported distress and mild to moderate levels of abuse in their relationships. Collins (1996) reports that individuals with insecure/preoccupied attachment reported events more negatively than those with other attachment styles. Given this, it is possible that those with insecure/preoccupied attachment styles were not generally perceiving that they were receiving the amount of intimate attention they desired.

This finding is of particular interest when considering the fact that the sample is one that has experienced some level of psychological or physical abuse. Given what is known about the common cycle of violence, in which periods between abusive incidents often are characterized by a “honeymoon” period during which the abuser behaves positively, an individual who has been abused previously by a partner might interpret his or her current positive behaviors as a sign that the abuse is about to resume. If this is the case, it follows that individuals who receive abuse from their partners might experience lower levels of pleasure and overall relationship satisfaction when their partner behaves in a positive way. In this sense, the results of this study may be unique to the particular type of sample used, in that the findings may indicate that those with

insecure/preoccupied attachment who are involved in abusive relationships have shattered assumptions about safety and security in their relationships. The hypotheses for this study were based on literature that investigated parent-child attachment relationships, and non-violent couple attachment relationships. The present finding may indicate that attachment styles manifest themselves differently in abusive relationships.

The hypothesis that the higher the degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment the less pleasure will be experienced from positive behaviors was supported by the Pearson correlation for females' pleasure experienced from affection behaviors indicated that higher insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment was related to lower pleasure experienced from affection behaviors. The hypothesis was also supported by the analyses for females who receive instrumental behavior and males who receive nurturing behaviors in that the higher the insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment style, the lower the pleasure experienced from positive behaviors. The hypothesis was not supported by the analysis for males who receive instrumental behaviors as it was found that those males with higher levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment who receive higher levels of instrumental behaviors experience more pleasure from these behaviors. Males with higher levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment perceive instrumental behaviors as pleasant, where as those behaviors that are affectionate or nurturing are not experienced as pleasant. This finding is consistent with the notion that intimacy is intimidating to those with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles, and indicates that instrumental behaviors may not be perceived as intimate behaviors.

The hypothesis that the higher the degree of secure attachment the more an individual will report higher overall relationship satisfaction was supported by the results

of Pearson analyses which indicate that secure attachment style is correlated with overall relationship satisfaction for males who receive positive affection, instrumental, and nurturing behaviors, and females who receive affection and nurturing behaviors. These results are somewhat inconsistent with the finding that instrumental behaviors are more predictive of relationship satisfaction than are affectionate behaviors (Will, Weiss, & Patterson, 1974). This finding suggests that individuals in distressed relationships experience affectionate and nurturing behaviors from their partners as more pleasurable than instrumental behaviors. This could perhaps be because the distress in their relationship makes them feel uncared for and the affection, and nurturing behaviors go against that belief, thus making them feel cared for. Instrumental behaviors, however, may be perceived as doing things that have to be done, and not behaviors done specifically out of care for the partner.

The hypothesis that the higher the degree of insecure/preoccupied attachment will result in lower levels of overall relationship satisfaction was not supported by the analysis. This study suggests that those with insecure/preoccupied attachment do not report lower levels of overall relationship satisfaction. This finding could in part be due to the fact that the sample examined was a clinical sample, and all participants reported some relationship distress. Those with insecure/preoccupied attachment styles who are in distressed relationships may not experience declines in overall relationship satisfaction due to their attachment style as a non-clinical sample may.

The hypothesis that the higher the degree of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment will result in lower levels of overall relationship satisfaction was supported by the Pearson correlations for male pleasure experienced from affection behavior and male

pleasure experienced from instrumental behavior which indicated that the higher the insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment style, the lower the overall relationship satisfaction. It is interesting that this hypothesis was not supported in any of the analysis investigating females. This demonstrates that there is a difference between males and females in how positive behavior influences relationship satisfaction. Females with insecure/fearful or dismissive styles of attachment do not report lower levels of overall relationship satisfaction from positive behaviors. This finding suggests that for women, positive behaviors might have more of an influence than attachment style on overall relationship satisfaction, but for men with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment, attachment style has a more significant role than positive behaviors.

The findings for the hypothesis that positive behavior and attachment style interact in the prediction of pleasure experienced from positive behavior indicate that the interaction of secure patterns of attachment with positive behavior have little influence on how much pleasure is experienced. For those with insecure/preoccupied attachment styles, results were only significant for males. The results show that those males with high insecure/preoccupied attachment experience high levels of affection behavior as more pleasurable than low levels of affection behavior, and males with low insecure/preoccupied attachment experience little difference in pleasure experienced from high or low levels of positive affection behavior. These findings are consistent with the hypothesis in that those males with higher levels of insecure/preoccupied attachment experienced higher positive affection behavior as more pleasurable than those males with low levels of insecure/preoccupied attachment. The results for males and females with insecure/fearful or dismissive styles varied in that males with low levels of

insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment experienced high levels of positive instrumental behavior as more pleasurable than those with high levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment. The opposite was true for females in that those with high levels of insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment experienced more pleasure from high levels of positive instrumental behaviors than those with low insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment. Further, it was found that females with high insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment experience higher levels of nurturing behavior as more pleasurable than those with low insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment. Although the findings for males were significant with the hypothesis, the findings for females were not. These results indicate a gender difference in how insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment style influences how positive behaviors are perceived, and the outcome it has on pleasure experienced from the behavior.

Finally, the hypothesis that positive behavior and attachment style interact in the prediction of overall relationship satisfaction was not supported. This finding might be due to the fact that it has been found that satisfaction is most influenced by displeasing instrumental acts (Margolin, 1981), and not by positive, pleasing acts.

Perhaps the most interesting findings of this study were that in the sample studied pleasure experienced from positive behaviors had a cumulative effect, meaning that the more that someone received positive behavior the more they experienced pleasure on the average from each positive act, and that those with insecure/preoccupied attachment styles experience lower levels of pleasure from positive behavior. In order to fully consider the potential explanations of these findings, particular attention must be paid to the fact the study was conducted with a population that experienced abuse.

Attachment theory is grounded in studies of parent-child interactions. A tenet of the theory is that children form an attachment style based on their interactions with their parents, and that this style will influence how the child interacts with the world. In essence, the attachment style serves as a working model of how the child perceives the world and believes he/she is perceived by the world. The role that attachment style plays in abusive relationships, then, is interesting to consider. Does attachment style remain stable even if an individual is involved in an abusive relationship, or might his/her working model of the world change? Perhaps, the idea of an abusive environment needs to be considered when investigating how attachment style moderates that relationship between positive behaviors, pleasure received from these behaviors, and overall relationship satisfaction.

Babcock, Jacobson, Gottman, and Yerington (2000), in their investigation of the attachment style differences in violent and non-violent husbands, found that males with preoccupied attachment styles were most upset by wife withdrawal. This finding confirmed the notion that those with preoccupied attachment styles fear being left by their partners, and work to keep them in relationships. This puts the abused partner in a bind in that if they stay with the partner they are abused; however, they are abused for fear that they will leave. It follows, then, that individuals in abusive relationships would be more wary of their partner's behavior, not knowing what to expect from them next.

A useful extension of attachment theory would be to investigate if attachment style is stable in abusive relationships, or if the abuse creates an environment in which individuals develop new working models, and potentially develop different attachment styles. Furthermore, investigating the stability of attachment style across relationships

might be of interest, to see if attachment style globally influences an individual's life or influences each relationship individually, depending on particular characteristics of each relationship. Attachment theory holds that attachment style is formed in childhood according to the parent-child relationship, but is it possible to reform that attachment style later in life with a romantic partner. Perhaps individuals not only bring their own attachment style to a relationship, but the relationship also influences the individual's attachment style. This means that the notion of working models still holds; however, these internalized schemas are fairly flexible. In this flexibility more answers to what makes couple relationships happy, content, or distressed might be found.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited in that it utilized data gathered from a clinical sample, and thus the results can only be applied to individuals who present to therapy. Additionally, all of the participants in this study reported mild to moderate levels of abuse in their couple relationships. Given that the sample consists of individuals who sought services and who are in abusive relationships, their experience of positive behaviors, pleasure from these behaviors, and overall relationship satisfaction as it relates to these behaviors might be different than the experiences of those who have not sought therapy and/or are not in abusive relationships. For instance, someone who is accustomed to their partner treating them in a negative way might be suspicious of their partner when they do act positively, thus not experiencing the behavior as pleasurable, but rather as anxiety producing.

Another limitation of the study is that there were too few participants who reported degrees of insecure/fearful and insecure/dismissive attachment styles. Because

of this, the two groups were combined, thus losing the potential for investigating differences between individuals with each of these attachment styles.

The measures could be possible limitations in that the Positive Partner Behavior Scale was not specifically designed to measure affection, instrumental, and nurturing behavior as the researcher had to develop this subscale. Given this, there is no support as to whether or not these subscales are reliable across populations who have been administered the PPB. Perhaps the greatest limit of the measures is that they are self-report measures, which means that there are no objective data regarding attachment style and positive behavior. The self report data are important, however, in assessing pleasure experienced and overall relationship satisfaction.

Another limitation of this study is that it assessed overall relationship satisfaction in couples who presented to treatment with mild to moderate levels of abuse in their relationship. One might argue that one of the reasons that the couple presented for treatment is that they had low levels of overall relationship satisfaction. Given this restricted range of relationship satisfaction, an accurate representation of how positive behaviors influence couple relationship satisfaction might be attenuated. This study is limited in that it does not investigate relationship satisfaction as it pertains to couples who have high levels of relationship satisfaction. In this way, the study investigates levels of overall relationship satisfaction in mild to moderately abusive couples, rather than the full range of overall relationship satisfaction in a non-clinical community sample of couples. Distressed couples might experience positive behaviors differently than non-distressed couples. For instance, distressed couples might not be able to view their partner's behaviors as positive at all due to the belief that the relationship is in trouble. The

opposite of this, however, might also be true in that distressed couples might consider smaller acts as positive given that they are in greater contrast to the overall negativity of the relationship. So, on one hand distressed couples might perceive positive acts as minimally positive, and on the other hand, they might perceive minimally positive acts as very positive. The bottom line, however, is that it is important to consider that the sample being studied is a clinical sample of couples who sought to treatment based on their relationship distress and who had experienced some level of psychological and/or physical abuse.

The study also investigated how levels of a single attachment style influence positive partner behavior, pleasure from positive partner behavior, and overall relationship satisfaction. More information could be gathered by investigating the combination of different attachment styles by looking at levels of multiple attachment styles at once. In further studies, obtaining levels of each attachment style for each participant would allow for a clearer investigation of how attachment style interacts with how positive acts are perceived and overall relationship satisfaction.

Implications

Implications for Research

Although this study provides important information regarding how individuals with different attachment styles experience different kinds of positive behavior from his/her partner as pleasurable, and how these positive behaviors influence overall relationship satisfaction, there are several ways in which it could be improved. Objective measures of attachment style and positive behavior would serve useful as the element of self-perception would be eliminated. An objective measure of positive behaviors would

be of particular use in that it would eliminate the possibility that perceptions about overall relationship functioning influence how positive behaviors are reported. For instance, someone who perceives high levels of relationship distress might not perceive some acts of positive behavior. An objective measure of positive behavior, although more difficult to acquire, would give a study more power in controlling for quantity of positive behaviors. Further, an objective measure of attachment made by someone who is trained in attachment styles would enhance the power of the study in that there would be a more accurate, consistent representation of attachment style.

It would also be interesting to conduct a study to compare differences in pleasure experienced and overall relationship satisfaction as predicted by positive behaviors and moderated by attachment style in both distressed and non-distressed couples. Although this study found that positive behaviors are generally perceived as pleasurable, and lead to increased levels of relationship satisfaction, it would be interesting to see if non-distressed couples experienced the same kinds of positive behavior as pleasurable.

The next step for the current research study is to run the multiple regression analyses differently by centering each variable so that a clearer understanding of each variables input into the equation can be understood. In the analyses run for this study, the set of predictor variables were related to (correlated with) each other, making it difficult to decipher the impact of each variable individually as a predictor of pleasure and overall relationship satisfaction experienced from partner behavior. In finding a way to isolate each variable further, it would be clearer how each related to pleasure experienced from positive partner behaviors and overall relationship satisfaction. Another step is to

compare the results between those who report high levels of relationship distress and those that report low levels of relationship distress.

Implications for Clinical Practice

The results of this study are useful for clinical practice for several reasons. First, the study highlights that pleasure experienced in couple relationships does significantly relate to overall relationship satisfaction. The study highlights that there is a cumulative effect of positive behaviors in couple relationships. Perhaps too much positive behavior can lead to negative effects; however, this study found that the more positive behavior received the better. Given this finding, clinicians can work to increase positive interactions that lead to pleasure for each member of the couple. Further, this study supports the notion that individuals with different attachment styles find certain types of positive behavior more enjoyable. Clinicians, in an attempt to increase overall relationship satisfaction, should be sure to have a grasp on what each member of a couple finds pleasurable from the other so that these specific behaviors can be increased. The intensity of negative behaviors as well as the corrective effects of positive behaviors might also be perceived differently depending on the attachment style of each member of the distressed couple. It is important for clinicians to respect the individual differences between and within the couples with whom they work in order to most successfully institute change and improved relationship satisfaction.

An important piece of information from this study for a clinician regarding attachment style is that males with insecure/fearful or dismissive attachment styles had lower levels of overall relationship satisfaction when they received higher levels of positive affection and instrumental behavior. Particular attention should also be given to

how each member of the couple interprets positive acts from the other, especially when abuse is reported. One member of a couple who has been the recipient of abusive behavior might perceive positive behavior as a calm before the storm, while someone else might experience the positive behavior as reconciliation and change from abusive behavior. Clinicians need to know specific information about each member of the couple including attachment style and perception of positive behaviors received from the partner, in order to best coach couples to rebuild their relationship in a way that is positive for each member.

Appendix B
Relationship Questionnaire (RQ)

1. The following are descriptions of four general relationship styles that people often report. Please circle the letter corresponding to the style that best describes you or is closest to the way you are in your relationships with **PEOPLE IN GENERAL**.
 - A. It is relatively easy for me to be emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on others and having others depend on me. I don't worry about being alone or having others not accept me. **[Secure]**
 - B. I am somewhat uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I sometimes worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others. **[Insecure/Fearful]**
 - C. I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, and I sometimes worry that others don't value me as I value them. **[Insecure/Preoccupied]**
 - D. I am comfortable without close relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me. **[Insecure/Dismissive]**

2. Now please rate each of the relationship styles above according to the extent to which you think each description corresponds to your general relationship styles.

	Not at all like me			Somewhat like me			Very much like me
Style A. [Secure]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Style B. [Insecure/Fearful]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Style C. [Insecure/Preoccupied]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Style D. [Insecure/Dismissive]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix C
Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS)
Question #31

The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness in most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, in your relationship:

.....
Extremely Fairly A Little Happy Very Extremely Perfect
Unhappy Unhappy Unhappy Happy Happy

Appendix D
Positive Partner Behavior Subscale Items

Affection Subscale Items

1. Partner greeted me affectionately
2. Partner held, hugged, or kissed me
3. Partner cuddled close to me in bed
4. Partner held my hand
5. Partner touched or patted me affectionately
6. Partner told me he/she loves me
37. Partner initiated sexual activity
38. Partner accepted my sexual advances
39. Partner tried to please me sexually

Instrumental Subscale Items

7. Partner cleaned up after making a mess
44. Partner worked on laundry, cleaning, straightening up, or other routine household project
45. Partner worked on repairs or other non-routine project for the home
46. Partner ran an errand or went shopping
47. Partner prepared a meal
48. Partner cleaned up after a meal or snack

Nurturance Subscale Items

22. Partner was on time coming home, going out, or meeting me
23. Partner arranged to spend extra time with me
24. Partner took care of me or my chores when I wasn't feeling well or wasn't able to do them
25. Partner expressed understanding or support of my feelings or mood
26. Partner remembered and did a favor I had asked for
27. Partner complimented me on my looks, actions, or ideas
33. Partner was tolerant when I made a mistake
34. Partner comforted me when I was upset
40. Partner listened to me talk about my problems or things that were troubling me

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