

May 2007

Family structures and adult romantic relationships

Abigail E. Katowitz
akatowitz@macalester.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/psychology_honors

Recommended Citation

Katowitz, Abigail E., "Family structures and adult romantic relationships" (2007). *Psychology Honors Projects*. Paper 3.
http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/psychology_honors/3

This Honors Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Psychology Department at DigitalCommons@Macalester College. It has been accepted for inclusion in Psychology Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Macalester College. For more information, please contact scholarpub@macalester.edu.

Running head: FAMILY STRUCTURES

Family structures and adult romantic relationships

Abigail E. Katowitz

Joan M. Ostrove, Macalester College Psychology Department

May 1, 2007

Abstract

This study addressed the relations between childhood family structures and adult children's romantic relationships. Research indicates that experiencing a parental divorce in itself does not cause strained romantic relationships. However, experiencing parental conflict, and lower levels of maternal and paternal involvement influence attachment style, which influences the quality of the romantic relationship regardless of parental marital status. Among 174 liberal arts-college students, parental conflict, paternal involvement, and maternal involvement were related to attachment style, which was related to the quality of the romantic relationship. Overall, there was no difference between adult children from divorced homes and adult children from non-divorced homes on relationship quality. However, there was a gender difference among adult children from both divorced and non-divorced homes, as women from divorced homes and men from non-divorced homes had lower relationship quality and men from divorced homes and women from non-divorced homes had higher relationship quality.

Family structures and adult romantic relationships

In the United States, the current marriage rate is estimated to be 7.5 per 1,000 and the divorce rate is almost half that at 3.6 per 1,000 (www.cdc.gov, 2006). Hayashi and Strickland (1998) refer to the current estimates reported by Ahlberg and DeVita (1992), who state that half of the children in families will experience a parental divorce. Hayashi and Strickland note that when these children become adults, they may wonder about their own abilities to love, be loved and have successful marriages or committed relationships. Considering that the majority of research about divorce and its impact on children's well-being focuses on the short-term effects and consequences, it is necessary to explore the longer-term impact of parental marital status on adult children's romantic relationship quality.

Effects of divorce on children and adult children

Numerous studies have explored the general effects of divorce on children and adult children in terms of emotional and psychological well-being (e.g. Amato & Keith, 1991; Evans & Bloom, 1996; Gabardi & Rosen, 1992; Short, 2002.). Amato and Keith (1991) conducted a meta-analysis focusing on parental divorce and the well-being of children using 92 studies and over 13,000 children. The meta-analysis confirmed that parental absence plays a role in the well-being of children and compared academic achievement and conduct across three groups: children whose parents were married, children who had experienced a parental death, and children who had experienced a parental divorce. Results demonstrated that children whose parents were married had significantly greater well-being than children who had experienced a parental death, and children who had experienced a parental death had significantly greater well-being than children who had experienced a parental divorce.

Zill, Morrison and Coiro (1993) found that young adults from divorced homes were twice as likely as young adults from non-divorced homes to have poor relationships with their parents, have received psychological help, to drop out of high school and to exhibit high levels of problem behavior and emotional distress. Short (2002) found that adult children of divorced parents were more likely to report more anxiety, antisocial behavior and depression than the adult children of non-divorced parents and the adult children of deceased parents. One possible explanation for the prevalence of these psychological conditions is that adult children of divorced parents were more likely to have experienced family conflict and life stress than their peers.

This explanation is consistent with the findings of Richardson and McCabe (2001), which demonstrated that the amount of parental conflict experienced was a more significant predictor of adult offspring's psychological adjustment and well-being than parental marital status. Results revealed that college students from both non-divorced and divorced homes who had experienced a high level of parental conflict were more likely to have higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress and lower levels of life satisfaction and global self-concept.

There is evidence that there is a gender difference with respect to long-term effects of and reactions to divorce (e.g. Evans & Bloom, 1996; Gabardi & Rosen, 1992; McCabe, 1997). Evans and Bloom (1996) found that females of divorced parents had significantly lower self-esteem and significantly less secure attachment styles than females of married parents. McCabe (1997) found that females from divorced homes were more likely to report depression than females from non-divorced homes. Gabardi and Rosen (1992) found college students of both genders from divorced homes were more sexually active, had more sexual partners and experienced more sexual involvement

Family structures 5

in monogamous relationships than their peers from non-divorced homes. However, gender was the strongest predictor of total number of sexual partners and males on average had a greater number of sexual partners than females had. Similarly, Jonsson, Njardvik, Olafsdottir and Gretarsson (2000) found that college students from divorced homes were more likely to have a greater number of sexual partners, experience frequent short love affairs, and experiment with sexual intercourse and love affairs at an earlier age than college students from non-divorced homes. There was a gender difference between participants from divorced homes such that males were found to report a higher number of sexual partners and more frequent short love affairs than females. The findings of Kinnaird and Gerrard (1986) are similar to the findings of Gabardi et al. (1992) and Jonsson et al. (2000). Results demonstrated that women from divorced homes were more likely to report more sexual experience and have an earlier first intercourse than women from non-divorced homes.

Another predictor of effects of divorce on adult offspring is timing of the divorce (e.g. Shulman, Scharf, Lumer & Maurer, 2001; Zill, Morrison, Coiro, 1993). Zill, Morrison and Coiro (1993) found that earlier parental divorce resulted in greater detrimental effects on children. For example, results demonstrated that the early disrupted group was more likely to show more behavior problems, increased receipt of psychological help and a greater risk for dropping out of high school than the later disrupted group. Shulman, Scharf, Lumer and Maurer (2001) found that young adults who experienced a parental divorce before 12 years old reported an increased sense of loss in the past and present than those who had experienced a parental divorce after 12 years.

Effects of Parental Divorce on Adult Offspring's Romantic Relationships

Numerous studies have focused on parental divorce as a possible predictor of the quality of adult offspring's romantic relationships (Conway, Christensen & Herlihy, 2003; McCabe, 1997; Sinclair & Nelson, 1998; Wallerstein, 2005). These studies typically stratify participants based on parental marital status and compare the results of those from divorced homes to those from non-divorced homes. Results generally show that those from divorced homes are more likely to have strained adult romantic relationships as a byproduct of experiencing parental divorce and that adult children of divorce are more likely to hold negative or unrealistic beliefs and attitudes about relationships. For example, Franklin, Janoff-Bulman and Roberts (1990) found that adult children of divorce reported a belief that they would have less successful marriages. Results showed that an assumption about the benevolence of other people was the most significant factor in marital optimism for children of divorce, which suggests that children of divorce recognize the role of both partners for a successful marriage. Results also demonstrated that for adult children of divorce, a negative relationship with one's mother and decreased contact with one's father were predictors of a negative view of other people, which in turn was related to marital optimism.

Wallerstein (2005) found that experiencing a parental divorce significantly affects adult children's capacity to love and be loved in a serious romantic relationship. Results also revealed a gender difference in the approaches of adult children from divorced homes to romantic relationships. Men tended to withdraw from becoming involved in a relationship, whereas women tended to “jump into relationships...often with men they hardly knew, or with men in need of rescue” (p. 412).

McCabe (1997) found that females from divorced homes were more likely to

report relationship difficulties than females from non-divorced homes. Similarly, Jacquet and Surra (2001) found that females from divorced homes were more likely to report increased negativity and conflict in their romantic relationships than females from non-divorced homes. Additionally, Sinclair and Nelson (1998) found that college students from divorced homes were more likely to hold a dysfunctional relationship belief about partner disagreement than college students from non-divorced homes. For example, students from divorced homes were more likely to become upset when their partners did not agree with their perspective. These results suggest that students from divorced homes have inaccurate and idealistic beliefs in terms of disagreement in relationships as a function of witnessing disagreement between their parents and believing that disagreement is destructive. Similarly, Conway, Christensen and Herlihy (2003) found that adult children of divorced families place a greater importance on relationship ideals than adult children of non-divorced families, which suggests that adult children of divorce may hold unrealistic relationship expectations as a function of experiencing a parental divorce. Results demonstrated that adult children of divorced homes placed a higher importance on both intimacy/loyalty and passion ideals than adult children of non-divorced homes. Intimacy/loyalty ideals included trust, caring, support and affection; passion ideals included fun, independence, romance and confronting conflict. Of the intimacy/loyalty ideals, the most important to adult children of divorce were acceptance, affection, commitment, stability and support. Ross and Mirowsky (1999) found that adult children from divorced homes are more likely to have a history of divorce and remarriage, marry early, have an unhappy relationship and harbor greater mistrust for other people than adult children from non-divorced homes.

It has been assumed that parental marital status is a significant predictor for the

quality of offspring's adult romantic relationships. However, there is evidence that suggests that parental marital status is not the sole predictor of the quality of the relationship and that there are several other important factors which all play a role in predicting the quality of adult children's romantic relationships (Amato & Keith, 1991; Gabardi & Rosen, 1992; Hayashi & Strickland, 1998).

Some research, for example, suggests that level of parental and family conflict is a stronger predictor of adult children's romantic relationship quality than parental marital status. Several studies have demonstrated that this applies to students from non-divorced homes as well as divorced homes. Gabardi and Rosen (1992) found that level of parental conflict was a stronger predictor of the quality of adult offspring's romantic relationships than parental marital status alone in a sample of college students. Findings showed that students from both divorced and non-divorced homes were more likely to express negative and doubtful attitudes towards marriage as a function of the level of parental conflict exposure. In addition, parental conflict was a predictor of number of sexual partners in both sets of participants. Booth, Brinkerhoff and White (1984) found that the amount of conflict during the divorce was a predictor of higher heterosexual dating and courtship activity and although the participants were less likely to have been in a relationship with their current partner for over a year, they were more likely to be cohabitating with their partner. Additionally, results demonstrated that post divorce conflict was a predictor of females cohabitating with their partners but was not a predictor for males.

It is worth noting the findings of Amato and Keith (1991), which suggest that level of family conflict was the most significant predictor of psychological adjustment and emotional well-being. Results demonstrated that children in high-conflict non-

divorced families scored significantly lower in psychological adjustment and self-esteem than the overall sample of children from divorced homes. These results suggest that levels of family conflict have a great influence on the emotional and psychological well-being of children, which may then adversely affect future romantic relationships. Sprague and Kinney (1997) found that levels of parental conflict and family cohesion predicted love styles and trust levels in the current relationship of adult children of divorce. Results suggested that higher parental conflict contributed to lower altruistic love, or the Agape love style as defined by Hendrick and Hendrick (1986). Additionally, lower family cohesion contributed to lower trust levels in the relationship. Doucet and Aseltine (2003) found that family conflict during childhood was a strong predictor of the quality of adult children's romantic relationships. In particular, childhood family conflict was correlated with high levels of marital dissatisfaction, more frequent disagreements with one's spouse and lower levels of marital support in adult children of divorce's relationships. Similarly, Hayashi and Strickland (1998) found that students from divorced homes who experienced higher levels of parental marital conflict and who were in romantic relationships were more likely to report feelings of jealousy and fears of abandonment. Similarly, Turner and Kopiec (2006) found that adult children of divorce who experienced parental marital conflict were more likely to model the behavior of their parents and therefore are more likely to be in an unsupportive relationship characterized by chronic strain. Short (2002) suggests that exposure to family conflict may contribute to adverse psychological symptoms in adult children, including depression, antisocial behavior and anxiety. These particular symptoms may influence the quality of the relationship.

Although the majority of the evidence suggests that family conflict plays a negative role as a predictor of romantic relationship quality, there is some evidence that

suggests that parental conflict may play a positive role in the quality of adult children's romantic relationships. Shulman, Scharf, Lumer and Maurer (2001) found that there was a correlation between high levels of family conflict during a divorce and high levels of intimacy and passion in adulthood. Shulman et al (2001) suggested that high family conflict acts as a catalyst for leaving an unhappy marriage. Amato, Loomis and Booth (1995) offer a slightly different perspective on the role of parental conflict on adult offspring's general well-being, which can be applied to romantic relationships. Their results demonstrated that if parental conflict prior to the divorce was high, the children were more likely to report greater emotional well-being because of the divorce. However, if parental conflict prior to divorce is relatively low, adult offspring fare worse emotionally if their parents divorce. Amato et al. (1995) explain that in a high conflict situation, divorce provides an escape from exposure to family conflict and offers a gain for the child, whereas in a low conflict situation, the divorce may seem unexpected and the child does not gain from the situation, but rather perceives divorce as a loss. Tayler, Parker and Roy (1995) found that although participants who experienced a parental divorce were more likely to report parental conflict than participants who did not experience a parental divorce, participants from the "divorced" group did not differ from the "non-divorced" group on current partner conflict, positive or negative partner attachment. In addition, Tayler et al. (1995) found that although participants from the "divorced" group experienced greater parental conflict and more neglect from their fathers than those from the "non-divorced" group, both groups experienced similar levels of maternal care and therefore, the presence of a caring mother may have affected the quality of current adult relationships. Similarly, Richardson and McCabe (2001) found that there were differences between college students who reported a poor relationship

with both parents and college students who reported a good relationship with at least one parent on depression, stress and life satisfaction. These results suggest that a positive relationship with at least one parent helps ameliorate the negative impact of the divorce and parental conflict. This finding is similar to those of Hayashi and Strickland (1998), who suggested that the presence of at least one accepting parent, regardless of gender, was critical to the development of secure attachment styles.

There is also evidence which suggests that there is a gender difference in the impact of parental divorce on adult children. For example, Mullett and Stolberg (2002) found that both partners in heterosexual couples in which the female had experienced parental divorce were more likely to report lower levels of intimacy and constructive criticism and higher levels of conflict avoidance and demand-withdrawal patterns. However, among couples in which the male had experienced parental divorce, divorce did not seem to be a factor in levels of intimacy and communication. Similarly, Sanders, Halford and Behrens (1999) found that there were significantly more incidents of negative nonverbal and verbal communication, significantly lower rates of positive problem-focused behavior and higher rates of negative self-referent cognitive self-statements in couples in which the female had experienced parental divorce. Additionally, both partners were more likely to show greater negativity. Conversely, couples in which the male had experienced parental divorce did not report negative communication patterns or negative cognitions related to problem-solving behaviors. Similarly, Jacquet and Surra (2001) found that the parental marital status of the male alone was not a significant predictor of the quality of the relationship but rather the parental marital status of the female in the relationship with the male from a divorced home was the significant predictor. For example, males from divorced homes in

relationships with females from divorced homes reported an increased wariness about trusting women who appeared to be ambivalent and wary about trust themselves. However, males from divorced homes in relationships with females from non-divorced homes were the most likely to report benevolent trust compared with the other groups (e.g. Male who experienced parental divorce with female who experienced a parental divorce, male who did not experience a parental divorce with a female who experienced a parental divorce, etc.). Also, men from both divorced and non-divorced homes were more likely to report less conflict in relationships with women from non-divorced homes than those in relationships with women from divorced homes.

Hayashi and Strickland (1998) found that there were no gender differences with respect to whether adult male or female children of divorce were more likely to experience insecurity in romantic relationships. Both genders reported insecurity in romantic relationships but men were more likely to report ambivalence, dissatisfaction and distrust whereas women were more likely to report fears of abandonment and jealousy.

Paternal Involvement as a Predictor of the Quality of Adult Children's Romantic Relationships

Numerous studies have explored the role of fathers and the importance of paternal involvement as a predictor of the quality of romantic relationships and as a predictor of psychological and social functioning in adult children of divorce (e.g. Clark & Kanoy, 1998; Guttman & Rosenberg, 2003; Van Schaick & Stolberg, 2001). Van Schaick and Stolberg (2001) found that paternal involvement had an impact on adult children's romantic relationships regardless of gender. A high level of paternal involvement was found to be a predictor of high levels of commitment, intimacy and trust in the adult

offspring's romantic relationships. Conversely, a low level of paternal involvement was found to be a predictor of high levels of insecure (avoidant, anxious, or anxious-avoidant) attachment styles in these relationships. These findings suggest that the quality of adult children's intimate relationships is related to the level of paternal involvement.

Although the findings of Guttman and Rosenberg (2003), Booth, Brinkerhoff and White (1984), Richardson and McCabe (2001), and Clark and Kanoy (1998) are not specifically related to paternal involvement as a predictor of the quality of adult children's romantic relationships, they are worth noting because the findings suggest that adult children of divorce experience less intimacy with their fathers. Guttman and Rosenberg (2003) found that the child-father relationship is the most powerful predictor of social, psychological and academic functioning and that children of divorced families feel far more emotionally distant from their fathers than children of non-divorced families do. Therefore, because the father-child relationship is so important, a lack of father-child intimacy may adversely affect the offspring's future romantic relationships. Booth, Brinkerhoff and White (1984) found that college students from divorced homes who reported feeling less close to their fathers tended to view their relationship with their partner as less happy than college students who felt closer to their fathers. Similarly, Clark and Kanoy (1998) found that women with divorced parents experienced less intimacy with their fathers. Finally, Richardson and McCabe (2001) found that young adult children of divorce were more likely to report lower levels of intimacy with their fathers than with their mothers. Results demonstrated that father-child intimacy was a strong predictor of psychological adjustment and that the father-child relationship is particularly important during the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

It is worth noting the findings of Booth and Amato (1994) which suggest that

marital unhappiness and instability, or low parental marital quality, contributed to the weakening of parent-child relationships and, if a divorce occurs, the child-parent relationship worsens. The father-daughter relationship is particularly vulnerable to the effects of low parental marital quality, more so than any other parent-child relationship. Results demonstrated that low parental marital quality meant that sons were somewhat less close to both parents but daughters, although they were only slightly less close to mothers, were significantly less close to fathers. Additionally, parental divorce did not affect closeness or the level of contact between fathers and sons, but this finding did not hold for fathers and daughters. This deterioration of the father-daughter relationship may consequently affect the quality of the daughter's adult romantic relationship, although Booth and Amato (1994) did not explore this possibility.

Attachment Style as a Predictor of the Quality of Adult Children's Romantic Relationships

Because of attachment's implications for adult romantic relationships, it is worth exploring the foundations of attachment theory as presented by Bowlby and later expanded upon by Ainsworth (1978) and Hazan and Shaver (1987). According to Bowlby (1969), understanding a child's response to the loss or separation from his or her mother-figure requires an understanding of the bond between the mother-figure and child. Bowlby explained the bond as "attachment behavior" and defined attachment behavior as "seeking and maintaining proximity to another individual" (1969, p. 194). Attachment is relatively static and Bowlby notes that the attachment behavior in adulthood is a continuation of the attachment behavior seen in childhood. More importantly, it is worth noting that "for most individuals, the bond to parents continues into adult life and affects behavior in countless ways" (Bowlby, 1969, p. 207). This is important when considering

the influence of parent-child attachment on the child's future romantic relationships, which will be discussed later.

Bowlby (1969) defines the presence or absence of protest and the strength of protest that a child exhibits when a mother leaves for a short period of time as an obvious criterion for describing attachment behavior (p. 333). Ainsworth (1978) developed a model for testing and measuring the attachment behavior of children using what she described as the “strange situation.” In the strange situation, researchers observed how a baby reacted when he/she was with his/her mother in an unfamiliar but nonthreatening situation and monitored how readily he moved away to explore the toys in the room. A stranger would gradually approach the baby, the mother would leave the room for a few minutes, then would return while the stranger left. Researchers monitored how readily the baby returned to the baseline behavior of exploring the toys once the mother had returned (1978, p. 33). Hazan and Shaver (1994) summarize the findings of Ainsworth into three categories of attachment behavior: secure, anxious-ambivalent, and anxious-avoidant. Hazan and Shaver described securely attached infants as comfort seeking, maintaining proximity and using the caregiver as a secure base for exploration. Caregivers, when observed in the home, were described as consistently available and responsive. In the strange situation, a securely attached infant was “distressed when the mother left the room, was comforted by her return and engaged in active exploration as long as she was present” (Hazan & Shaver, 1994, p. 6). Hazan and Shaver described the caregivers of anxious-ambivalently attached infants as “exhibiting inconsistent responsiveness to the infant's signals, being sometimes unavailable or unresponsive and at other times intrusive” (1994, p. 6). In the strange situation, anxious-ambivalently attached infants were both angry and anxious and were so focused on their caregivers that their

exploration was limited (Hazan & Shaver, 1994, p. 6). Finally, Hazan and Shaver described the caregivers of anxious-avoidantly attached infants as ignoring or rebuffing their infants' plea for comfort. In the strange situation, anxious-avoidantly attached infants were not upset when the mother left, avoided contact with their mother and focused primarily on the toys (Hazan & Shaver, 1994, p. 6).

There is evidence that attachment style is a predictor of certain personality traits and characteristics (e.g. Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Collins & Read, 1990). Collins and Read (1990) found that individuals with a more secure attachment style had greater social self-confidence and an increased sense of self-worth, and were more expressive. Additionally, securely attached individuals were more likely to hold positive beliefs about the social world such as believing that people are generally trustworthy, altruistic, dependable and that people have control over the events and outcomes in their lives and an ability and willingness to stand up for their beliefs. Conversely, their results demonstrated that individuals who had an anxious attachment style were more likely to report a lower sense of self-worth, control, social self-confidence and assertiveness. Their perceptions of the social world were negative: believing people to be less altruistic, difficult to understand and unable to control the events and outcomes in their lives. Brennan and Shaver (1995) found that individuals who had an anxious-ambivalent attachment style tended to be more jealous, "clingy," or emotionally needy and overly dependent on their partner. Individuals who had an avoidant attachment style tended to report the lowest amount of trust among all of the groups.

Several studies have examined the relationship between attachment style and romantic relationships (e.g. Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Scott & Cordova, 2002; Simpson, 1990). Feeney and Noller (1990) found

that securely attached participants were more likely to report positive family relationships and high levels of self-esteem. Participants who had an anxious-ambivalent adult attachment style were more likely to report a perceived lack of paternal supportiveness and participants who had an avoidant adult attachment style were more likely to report feelings of mistrust and distance from others. Feeney and Noller suggested that securely attached individuals would be more successful in romantic relationships than either anxiously-ambivalently or avoidantly attached individuals. Similarly, Simpson (1990) found that securely attached individuals tend to be involved in relationships characterized by higher levels of satisfaction, trust, commitment, interdependence and positive emotion. In general, avoidant and anxious attached individuals were more likely to report the opposite of what securely attached individuals reported, with highly anxious people reporting less trust in their relationship and highly avoidant people reporting less commitment and interdependence. Hazan and Shaver (1987) found that securely attached individuals were more likely to report their relationship as friendly, trusting, and happy; they accepted and supported their partner. Results also demonstrated that avoidantly attached individuals tended to exhibit jealousy, fear of intimacy, and emotional highs and lows. Anxiously-ambivalently attached individuals tended to exhibit emotional highs and lows, extreme jealousy and sexual attraction, a desire for reciprocation and union and obsessive love. Scott and Cordova (2002) established a link between marital dysfunction, depressive symptoms and adult attachment styles. Results demonstrated that overall there were no associations between marital adjustment and depressive symptoms for both wives and husbands who identified as being securely attached. However, there was an association between marital adjustment and depressive systems for both spouses who identified as insecurely attached.

Several studies have explored the relationship between divorce and adult attachment style and have suggested that parental divorce itself is not a primary predictor in determining the quality of adult children's romantic relationships. Rather parental involvement and acceptance were more important as predictors of secure attachment, which in turn is a predictor of the quality of the relationship (e.g., Hayashi & Strickland, 1998; Van Schaick & Stolberg, 2001). There is evidence that adult offspring of divorced parents are not as securely attached as adult offspring of non-divorced parents and, in accordance with the findings of Feeney and Noller (1990), the quality of their relationships is not as great as those who are securely attached and from non-divorced families. For example, Mickelson, Kessler and Shaver (1997) found parental divorce was positively related to anxious attachment and negatively related to secure attachment style. Although parental divorce was associated with anxious attachment, it was not associated with avoidant attachment, which suggests that experiencing parental divorce leads one to believe that attachment figures are inconsistent rather than rejecting or cold.

Evans and Bloom (1996) found that women from divorced homes were more likely to report significantly less secure attachment styles than women from non-divorced homes. Sprecher, Cate and Levin (1998) found that females from divorced homes were more likely to have an avoidant attachment style than females from non-divorced homes, who were more likely to have a secure attachment style. Similarly, Kilmann, Carranza and Vendemia (2005) found that females from non-divorced homes were more likely to report a secure attachment style than females from divorced homes. Additionally, insecurely attached women were more likely to report their parents as distant, demanding and absent than securely attached women.

The findings of Brennan and Shaver (1993) relate to the aforementioned theory

that parental marital status alone is not the primary cause of adverse effects in adult children, but secondary factors such as level of parental conflict and remarriage play a greater role in determining adult attachment. Brennan and Shaver (1993) found that parental marital quality in non-divorced families and remarriage in divorced families had an effect on adult attachment and relationship quality. Their results demonstrated that participants from non-divorced families who described their parents as “unhappily married” were more likely to exhibit insecure attachment styles, especially the avoidant style. Participants whose mother, but not father, remarried were more likely to report a secure attachment style and participants whose father, but not mother, remarried were more likely to report either an avoidant or an anxious-ambivalent attachment style. If both parents remarried, there was a greater discrepancy in the results, with participants reporting either a secure or an avoidant attachment style. Participants whose parents did not remarry were more likely to exhibit anxious-ambivalent or avoidant attachment styles.

Hayashi and Strickland (1998), Hazelton, Lancee and O'Neill (1998), Hazan and Shaver (1987) and Van Schaick and Stolberg (2001) link the role of the parents to the development of attachment styles but differ on the importance of a particular parent's presence in the formation of attachment style. Hayashi and Strickland (1998) found that at least one accepting parent, regardless of gender, fostered a secure attachment style and that a secure attachment style was a predictor of feeling secure in romantic relationships. Additionally, Hazelton et al. (1998) found that participants from both divorced and non-divorced homes with accepting parents were more likely to have secure current relationships. Hazan and Shaver (1987) explored the quality of the parental relationship and the quality of the parent-child relationship as functions of attachment style. Results

demonstrated that securely attached individuals were more likely to report certain qualities in one of three categories: parental relationship, relationship with mother and relationship with father. In the parental relationship category, securely attached individuals described their parents' marriage as "affectionate," "caring" and "not unhappy." In the mother-child relationship category, participants described their mothers as "respectful," "responsible," "confident," "not demanding" and "not intrusive." In the father-child relationship category, participants described their fathers as "humorous," "affectionate," "caring" and "loving." It is worth noting that avoidant participants were more likely to describe their mothers as "cold and rejecting" whereas anxious-ambivalent participants were more likely to describe their fathers as "unfair." These negative characterizations of one's parents may help explain the role of the parent in the development of a secure or insecure attachment style. For example, Collins and Read (1990) found that individuals, regardless of parental marital status, who were characterized by an anxious attachment style reported that their parents were cold or inconsistent. In addition, the relationship the individual had with his or her parents appeared to affect his or her self-image and world view. Participants who described their parents as warm and responsive held positive views of themselves and of the world. Participants who described their parents as rejecting held negative views of the world and were more likely to have lower self-esteem than participants who did not report their parents as rejecting. These findings suggest that there is a link between parental characteristics and development of positive or negative self-image and world view, which in turn may affect the quality of offspring's future relationships.

Van Schaick and Stolberg (2001) suggested that paternal involvement was an important predictor of attachment style and that a low level of paternal involvement was a

predictor of insecure attachment styles regardless of parental marital status. Additionally, high levels of paternal involvement were linked with high levels of intimacy, commitment and trust in the adult offspring's romantic relationships. Hazelton et al. (1998) offered a different perspective on the role of the parents to the formation of attachment style. Their results suggested that rejecting parents from both divorced and non-divorced families were more likely to foster an insecure attachment style and that participants from divorced families were more likely to have rejecting parents. However, it is interesting to note that a rejecting parent in divorced families, particularly the father, did not have an effect on the security of the adult offspring's current attachments. Hazelton et al. (1998) suggested that divorce contributes to reduced exposure to a rejecting father which neutralizes negative effects on the offspring's attachment, whereas in a non-divorced home, the rejecting father is still present and the offspring is negatively affected by his rejecting style.

It is worth noting the findings of Collins and Read (1990) which suggest that, regardless of parental marital status, the characteristics of the opposite-sex parent served as a predictor for the attachment style demonstrated by the offspring's future romantic partner. These findings suggest that the opposite-sex parent serves as a model for what the offspring should expect in a relationship. It is also worth noting that for women, the ratings of their father predicted whether their partner was comfortable with closeness and intimacy. This is particularly important in light of the findings of Guttman and Rosenberg (2003), Richardson and McCabe (2001), Clark and Kanoy (1998), and Booth, Brinkerhoff and White (1984), who all suggest that adult children from divorced homes, particularly women, experience less intimacy with their fathers than adult children from non-divorced homes. Therefore, if women from divorced homes are more likely to report

a lack of intimacy with their fathers, and if the opposite-sex parent serves a model for offspring's adult romantic relationships, women may be selecting partners who resemble their fathers. This could explain why women from divorced homes experience more relationship strain than women from non-divorced homes or men from both divorced and non-divorced homes (e.g. McCabe, 1997; Sanders, Halford & Behrens, 1999; Mullett & Stolberg, 2002).

The Present Study

Past research confirms that, overall, adult children of divorced families are more likely to have strained romantic relationships than adult children of non-divorced families. Further analysis of adult children of divorced families indicates that it is not solely parental divorce that contributes to the quality of the relationship; other secondary factors, such as level of parental conflict, amount of parental involvement with particular respect to paternal involvement, and attachment style, are all contributors. Because past research confirms that parental divorce is not the sole predictor of the quality of adult romantic relationships, other factors that are applicable to both adult children from divorced homes and non-divorced homes will be explored in addition to examining group differences between adult children of divorced home and non-divorced homes. This study will explore nine hypotheses, with the first four hypotheses exploring issues in family structures and adult romantic relationships that are applicable to both adult children of non-divorced homes and children of divorced homes. The second five hypotheses will explore group differences between adult children from divorced homes and non-divorced homes.

Attachment, Parental Conflict, Parental Care and Quality of Adult Romantic Relationships Regardless of Parental Marital Status

Hypotheses: 1.) Regardless of parental marital status, increased levels of parental conflict will be associated with insecure adult attachment styles. 2.) Regardless of parental marital status, the presence of at least one accepting and caring parent will be associated with a secure attachment style. 3.) High levels of paternal involvement, regardless of gender and parental marital status, will be associated with increased quality of adult romantic relationships. 4.) Regardless of parental marital status, an insecure attachment style (either avoidant or anxious) will be associated with lower levels of adult romantic relationship quality.

The Relationships of Parental Marital Status and Quality of Romantic Relationships, Level of Parental Conflict, Adult Attachment Style, and Level of Paternal Involvement

Hypotheses: 1.) Overall, the quality of the romantic relationships of adult children of divorced homes will be lower than those of adult children of non-divorced homes. 2.) Females from divorced homes will be more likely than both females from non-divorced homes and males from divorced homes or non-divorced homes to report strained romantic relationships. 3.) Adult children from divorced homes will have experienced greater levels of parental conflict than adult children from non-divorced homes. 4.) Females from divorced homes will be more likely to have an insecure attachment style than females from non-divorced homes. 5.) Adult children from divorced homes will be more likely to have experienced decreased levels of paternal involvement than adult children from non-divorced homes.

In addition to these nine hypotheses, a theoretical model will be explored that will help explain the reasons that children of divorced parents generally have more strained romantic relationships than children of married parents. The proposed model, or pathway, suggests that higher levels of parental conflict and decreased paternal and maternal

involvement contribute to the development of an insecure adult attachment style which in turn negatively affects the quality of the romantic relationship. However, it is important to note that levels of parental conflict and levels of paternal and maternal involvement are not mutually exclusive and that the presence or absence of one factor does not necessarily indicate the presence or absence of the other. This pathway does not necessarily only apply to children of divorce but has more global applications to help explain a distressed romantic relationship. In order to suggest the relevance of this model to relationships in general, the model will include participants from both divorced families and non-divorced families. Please see Figure 1 for a visual representation of the pathway.

Methods

Participants

One hundred and seventy-four Macalester students participated in this study. Sixty-six (37.9%) participants were male, 107 (61.5%) were female and 1 (.6%) identified as “other.” Participants ranged from age 17 to age 22, with a mean age of 19.64. One hundred and thirty-nine (79.9%) participants identified as Caucasian/European, 9 (5.2%) identified as Black/African-American/African, 3 (1.7%) identified as Latino/a, 11 (6.3%) identified as Asian/Asian-American, and 12 (6.9%) identified as “other” or “multi-racial.” One hundred and forty-eight (85.1%) participants identified as heterosexual, 9 (5.2%) identified as homosexual, 14 (8%) identified as bisexual, and 3 (1.7%) identified as “other.” One hundred and forty-eight (85.1%) participants identified as “domestic students” and 26 (14.9%) identified as “international students.” One hundred and twenty-seven (73%) participants described their parental marital status as married or partnered, 38 (21.9%) as divorced/separated and 9 (5.1%) as “other” (e.g. Mother deceased, father deceased, etc.). The proportion of students with

divorced parents is representative of Macalester College; approximately 20% of each entering class has divorced parents (Macalester College Center for Institutional Research, 2007). All participants were either in a current romantic relationship or had been in one previously. Participants were either drawn from the Introduction to Psychology participation pool, in which case they received course credit, or through e-mail contact and convenience sampling for entrance into a lottery for prizes. Please see Table 1 for demographic data.

Measures

Participants completed five questionnaires in this study. The questionnaires assessed levels of parental care and involvement, adult attachment style, interparental conflict, quality of adult romantic relationships and demographic data such as parental marital status, gender and age.

Parental Care and Involvement

The Parental Bonding Instrument (Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979) consists of two identical 25 question scales designed to measure the quality and level of parental care and involvement for both mother and father. There are two subscales, one measures parental care and the other measures parental overprotection. Examples for the care subscale included “Appeared to understand my problems and worries” or “Seemed emotionally cold to me.” Examples for the overprotection subscale included “Tried to control everything I did” or “Gave me as much freedom as I wanted.” Participants indicated the most appropriate answer to describe their mother and their father on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from “Very Like” to “Very Unlike.” Due to a technical error, Question 9, which was “Tried to control everything I did” was omitted. The Parental Bonding Instrument has demonstrated good reliability (see Parker et al., 1979). In this

study, reliability was assessed for both the maternal care and autonomy subscales and the paternal care and autonomy subscales. Good reliability was demonstrated for the maternal care subscale (Cronbach's alpha = .91); the maternal autonomy subscale (Cronbach's alpha = .81); the paternal care subscale (Cronbach's alpha = .94); and the paternal autonomy subscale (Cronbach's alpha = .86).

Adult Attachment Styles

The Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment was used to assess adult attachment style with respect to romantic relationships (Brennan, Clark & Shaver, 1998). The measure consists of 36 questions that measure the level of attachment participants generally feel in romantic relationships. The scale consists of two subscales, which measure avoidant attachment and anxious attachment. An example of an item on the avoidant subscale is “I try to avoid getting too close to my partner.” An example of an item on the anxiety subscale is “I worry about being abandoned.” Participants are expected to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a statement on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from “Disagree strongly” to “Agree strongly.” Good reliability has been demonstrated for both the anxiety subscale (Cronbach's alpha = .91) and the avoidance subscale (Cronbach's alpha = .94; see Brennan, Clark & Shaver, 1998). In the present study, both subscales showed good reliability: avoidance subscale (Cronbach's alpha = .95) and anxiety subscale (Cronbach's alpha = .93).

Interparental Conflict

The Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (Grych, Seid & Fincham, 1992) consists of 28 statements categorized into five subscales: Frequency, Intensity, Resolution, Triangulation and Stability. Three additional subscales, Self-Blame, Content and Perceived Threat, were not used in the current study. The original

scale was designed to assess children's perceptions of current interparental conflict and for the purposes of this study, which assessed an adult's reflection of childhood interparental conflict, those subscales were omitted. Additionally, the original scale was written in the present tense and for the purposes of this study was modified to be written in the past tense. Examples include: "I often saw my parents arguing" (Frequency); "When my parents had an argument, they said mean things to each other" (Intensity); "When my parents had an argument, they usually worked it out" (Resolution); "I felt caught in the middle when my parents argued" (Triangulation); and "The reasons my parents argued never changed" (Stability). Participants indicated their level of agreement with each statement by using a 3-point Likert scale, ranging from "True" to "Not True." Good reliability was demonstrated for each subscale (see Grych, Seid & Fincham, 1992). In the present study, good reliability has been established for each subscale: Frequency (Cronbach's alpha = .89); Intensity (Cronbach's alpha = .90); Resolution (Cronbach's alpha = .94); Triangulation (Cronbach's alpha = .87); and Stability (Cronbach's alpha = .84).

Quality of Adult Romantic Relationships

The Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (Schaefer & Olson, 1981) was used to assess the quality of adult romantic relationships. The Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships consists of 35 questions and six subscales. The six subscales are Emotional Intimacy, Social Intimacy, Sexual Intimacy, Intellectual Intimacy, Recreational Intimacy and Conventuality Scale. In the present study, one confusing question was omitted from the Recreational Intimacy scale.

Examples include "My partner can really understand my hurts and joys" (Emotional Intimacy); "We enjoy spending time with other couples" (Social Intimacy); "I

Family structures 28
feel our sexual activity is just routine” (Sexual Intimacy, reversed); “My partner frequently tries to change my ideas” (Intellectual Intimacy, reversed); “We enjoy the same recreational activities” (Recreational Intimacy); and “My partner has all the qualities I've ever wanted in a mate” (Conventionality Scale). Participants indicate their level of agreement with statements using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from “Not true” to “Almost always true.”

Good reliability has been established for all six subscales, with coefficients of at least .70 (see Schaefer & Olson, 1981). In the present study, good reliability was established for five of the six subscales: Emotional Intimacy (Cronbach's alpha = .81), Sexual Intimacy (Cronbach's alpha = .78), Intellectual Intimacy (Cronbach's alpha = .76), Recreational Intimacy (Cronbach's alpha = .81), and Conventionality Scale (Cronbach's alpha = .87). The Social Intimacy subscale had a coefficient alpha of .66 and therefore was omitted from the analyses.

Demographics

Finally, a demographic questionnaire was created by the researcher to assess information about the participants such as age, gender and parental marital status. Participants were also expected to indicate whether they had been in an adult romantic relationship and the duration of that relationship. Participants were instructed not to continue the study if they had never been in an adult romantic relationship.

Procedure

Participants were solicited primarily via e-mail and were requested to participate in an online survey measuring family structure and adult romantic relationships. Participants accessed the survey via Sona-Systems, an internet-based participant pool management system, and upon receiving a user name and a password, participants were

transferred to the survey site, presented with a consent form and completed the survey. Upon completion, participants were either granted credit for an Introduction to Psychology course or entered into a lottery for prizes.

Results

Attachment, Parental Conflict, Parental Care and Quality of Adult Romantic Relationships Regardless of Parental Marital Status

The first set of analyses explored the relationship between several predictor variables, such as parental conflict and parental involvement, to several outcome variables such as adult attachment style and quality of adult romantic relationships regardless of parental marital status. In order to determine whether there was a relationship between these predictor variables and the outcome variables, correlations were performed.

Associations with attachment style and quality of adult romantic relationships.

Correlations were performed to determine whether insecure adult attachment styles and paternal involvement were related to the quality of adult romantic relationships. Please see Table 2 for data. There was a strong negative correlation between avoidant adult attachment style and quality of adult romantic relationships, $r = -.60$, $p < .01$. A similar trend was found between anxious adult attachment style and the quality of adult romantic relationships, $r = -.24$, $p < .01$, indicating that an insecure attachment style, either avoidant or anxious, is related to the quality of the adult romantic relationship. A bivariate correlation was performed to assess if paternal involvement was related to the quality of adult romantic relationships. Analyses demonstrated that there was no relationship between the level of paternal involvement and the quality of adult romantic relationships, $r = .14$, n.s.

Several correlations were performed to determine whether parental conflict and parental care, both maternal and paternal, were related to an insecure attachment style, which is related to decreased quality of adult romantic relationships. There was no significant relationship between parental conflict and an avoidant adult attachment style, $r = .11$, n.s. However, there was a positive correlation between parental conflict and an anxious adult attachment style, $r = .26$, $p < .01$. There was a negative correlation between the level of paternal care and an avoidant adult attachment style, $r = -.20$, $p < .01$, and the presence of an anxious adult attachment style, $r = -.24$, $p < .01$. There was also a negative correlation between the level of maternal care and an avoidant adult attachment style, $r = -.20$, $p < .01$, and an anxious adult attachment style, $r = -.17$, $p < .05$.

The Relationships of Parental Marital Status and Quality of Romantic Relationships, Level of Parental Conflict, Adult Attachment Style, and Level of Paternal Involvement.

The second set of analyses explored the relationship between parental marital status as a predictor variable to several outcome variables, such as quality of adult romantic relationships and level of parental conflict experienced. In order to determine whether there was a relationship between parental marital status and the presence of these outcome variables, independent samples t-tests and 2-way ANOVAs were performed. Please see Table 3 for data about means and standard deviations for these analyses.

Parental Conflict and Parental Involvement

Independent samples t-tests were performed to assess the relationship between parental marital status and the likelihood of experiencing increased parental conflict and decreased paternal involvement, both of which have been hypothesized as predictor variables of insecure adult attachment styles and decreased quality of adult romantic relationships. An exploratory analysis was then performed to assess the relationship

between parental marital status and level of maternal involvement.

Several independent samples t-tests were performed in order to examine the relationship between parental marital status and levels of parental conflict or levels of paternal involvement. Adult children from divorced homes ($M = 2.10$, $SD = .09$) experienced more parental conflict than adult children from non-divorced homes ($M = 1.56$, $SD = .49$), $t(163) = 5.92$, $p < .01$. Adult children from divorced homes ($M = 2.72$, $SD = .85$) experienced lower levels of paternal involvement more than adult children from non-divorced homes ($M = 3.20$, $SD = .66$), $t(51.05)$, $p < .01$. The exploratory analysis revealed a trend such that adult children from divorced homes ($M = 3.30$, $SD = .42$) reported lower levels of maternal involvement more than adult children from non-divorced homes ($M = 3.55$, $SD = .77$), $t(43.70)$, $p < .06$.

Two 2-way ANOVAs examining the relationship between gender, parental marital status, and insecure adult attachment style, either avoidant or anxious, were performed. The first of the ANOVAs analyzed the relationship between an avoidant adult attachment style, gender and parental marital status. There was no main effect for gender, $F(1, 164) = 1.07$, n.s. There was no main effect for divorce, $F(1, 164) = 2.04$, n.s. However, there was a trend for the interaction of gender and divorce, $F(1, 164) = 4.51$, $p < .10$, such that men from divorced families had lower scores on avoidant adult attachment ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 1.11$) than men from non-divorced families ($M = 3.10$, $SD = .98$), while the opposite was true for women. Women from divorced families had higher scores on avoidant adult attachment ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 1.29$) than women from non-divorced families ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 1.17$).

The second 2-way ANOVA analyzed the relationship between an anxious adult attachment style, gender and parental marital status. There was no main effect for gender,

$F(1, 164) = .21$, n.s. However, there was a main effect for divorce, $F(1, 164) = 5.29$, $p < .05$, such that participants from divorced families had higher scores on anxious adult attachment ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 1.29$) than participants from non-divorced families ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 1.08$). There was no interaction between gender and divorce, $F(1, 164) = .08$, n.s.

Gender, Parental Marital Status and Quality of Adult Romantic Relationships.

A 2-way ANOVA examining the relationship between gender, parental marital status and quality of adult romantic relationships was performed. There was no main effect of gender, $F(1, 164) = .03$, n.s. There was no main effect of divorce, $F(1, 164) = .37$, n.s. However, there was a trend for interaction of gender and divorce, $F(1, 164) = 3.42$, $p < .10$, such that men from divorced families had higher scores on relationship quality ($M = 3.69$, $SD = .74$) than men from non-divorced families ($M = 3.52$, $SD = .59$), while the opposite was true for women. Women from divorced families had lower scores on relationship quality ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .74$) than women from non-divorced families ($M = 3.80$, $SD = .71$).

Parental Marital Status and Quality of Adult Romantic Relationships.

An independent samples t-test examining the relationship between parental marital status and the level of the quality of adult children's romantic relationships was performed. The quality of the romantic relationships of adult children from divorced homes ($M = 3.53$, $SD = .74$) did not differ from the quality of adult children from non-divorced homes ($M = 3.69$, $SD = .67$), $t(163) = -1.27$, n.s.

Predicting Relationship Quality – A Model.

Linear regression analyses were performed to generate path coefficients to determine whether parental conflict and paternal and maternal involvement fostered the

development of an insecure attachment style, which in turn, would be associated with decreased quality of adult romantic relationships. In the first block, the two attachment variables (anxious and avoidant) were regressed on parental conflict, paternal involvement, and maternal involvement. Then, the quality of adult romantic relationship variable was regressed on both of the attachment variables in the second block. Results of the regression analyses indicate that a substantial portion of the variance in quality of adult romantic relationships ($R^2 = .37, p < .001$) was explained by this model. Please see Figure 2 for the results of these analyses.

Discussion

This study sought to explore the long-term relationships among family structures and adult children's romantic relationships. The results of this study demonstrated that, in accordance with the findings of past research, parental divorce alone does not have a relationship with the quality of adult romantic relationships. However, secondary factors, such as level of parental conflict, maternal and paternal involvement, and adult attachment style, all relate to the quality of the relationship either indirectly or directly.

Levels of Parental Conflict and Parental Involvement in Divorced and Non-Divorced Families

Results demonstrated that adult children from divorced homes experienced more childhood parental conflict than adult children from non-divorced homes, which is consistent with the findings of Tayler et al. (1995). Results also revealed that adult children from divorced homes experienced decreased paternal and maternal involvement relative to adult children from non-divorced homes. The findings of Guttman et al. (2003), Booth et al. (1984), Richardson et al. (2001), and Clark et al. (1998) suggested that adult children of divorced homes experience less intimacy with their fathers than

adult children of non-divorced homes. This can be attributed to the fact that in the United States, divorced mothers are typically awarded more custodial responsibilities than the father and subsequently, the father becomes less involved. Decreased maternal involvement may also be attributed to the societal trend in the United States that more women are working; without a two-person income, a single mother may be required to enter the workforce to support the family, resulting in the child experiencing decreased maternal involvement.

Levels of Parental Conflict and Parental Involvement as Predictors of Adult Attachment Style

Although there was no relationship between parental conflict and the presence of an avoidant adult attachment style, there was a relationship between parental conflict and the presence of an anxious adult attachment style regardless of parental marital status. Hayashi and Strickland (1998) found that adult children of divorced homes who experienced high levels of parental marital conflict reported feelings of jealousy and a fear of abandonment in their romantic relationships, characteristics which Brennan and Shaver (1995) attribute to an anxious attachment style. In this study, adult children from both divorced and non-divorced homes who experienced high levels of parental conflict tended to be characterized by an anxious adult attachment style. The findings of Collins and Read (1990) may help explain the relationship between experiencing parental marital conflict and the development of an anxious adult attachment style regardless of parental marital status. Collins et al. (1990) noted that individuals characterized by an anxious attachment style reported a lower sense of control of the events and outcomes in their lives. In this study, participants who experienced high levels of parental conflict may have scored higher on anxious attachment because typically, children do not have control

over their parents' behavior and could not control the occurrence of parental conflict, which may have contributed to the development of an anxious attachment style.

Lower levels of paternal and maternal involvement were found to be predictors of both the presence of an avoidant adult attachment and an anxious adult attachment style. These findings are in accordance with the findings of Van Schaick et al. (2001), which suggested that a low level of paternal involvement, regardless of parental marital status, was a predictor of insecure attachment styles. Additionally, the findings of Hayashi et al. (1998) suggested that an accepting parent, regardless of the parent's gender, fostered the development of a secure attachment style. If an individual reports decreased parental involvement, either paternal or maternal, the converse also must hold, that an unaccepting or uninvolved parent fosters the development of an insecure attachment style.

Adult Attachment Style Across Gender and Parental Marital Status

Results demonstrated an interesting trend for the gender distribution of avoidant adult attachment style. Women from divorced families had higher scores on avoidant adult attachment than women from non-divorced families, but men from non-divorced families had higher scores on avoidant adult attachment than men from divorced families. The findings for women are consistent with the literature, as it has been well-established that women from divorced homes are more likely to have an insecure adult attachment style than women from non-divorced homes (see Evans et al., 1996, Sprecher et al., 1998, and Kilmann et al., 2005) but the findings for men are not consistent with the literature.

There are several possible explanations for this discrepancy. One explanation is the disproportionately lower number of men in this study, as only 37.9% of the sample were men. Additionally, there was also a very small sample size of participants from divorced homes, with only 22% of the sample reporting their parents' marital status as

divorced or separated. If there were more men and more participants from divorced homes in the study, perhaps the findings for men would have been more consistent with previous literature.

Another possible reason for the inconsistency in the sample is that findings demonstrated that adult children of divorce experienced less paternal involvement, which previous research has determined is a predictor in the development of an insecure attachment style regardless of the gender of the child (e.g. Van Schaick & Stolberg, 2001; Richardson & McCabe, 2001). However, research has demonstrated that the father-daughter relationship is particularly negatively affected by low parental marital quality and closeness and contact decreases, whereas the level of closeness and contact remains relatively stable for the father-son relationship (Amato & Booth, 1994). In this study, post-hoc analyses indicate that females from divorced homes had lower levels of paternal involvement than females from non-divorced homes; however, men from divorced homes did not differ on level of paternal involvement from men from non-divorced homes. Therefore, it is possible that the men in this study from divorced homes may have maintained a close relationship with their fathers after the divorce, leading to the development of a more secure attachment style. Mickelson et al. (1997) noted that experiencing a parental divorce is typically associated with an anxious attachment style rather than an avoidant attachment style, which may help explain why men from divorced families did not have very high scores on avoidant attachment style.

Additionally, these findings for men from non-divorced families may be related to the larger concept that parental divorce is not the sole contributor to the development of an insecure attachment. Parental marital quality and the presence of an accepting parent, regardless of gender, may be more important than parental marital status for the

development of an insecure attachment style. As Brennan and Shaver (1993) mention, parental marital quality in non-divorced families plays a role in the development of adult attachment. Adult children from non-divorced but unhappily married parents tend to exhibit insecure attachment styles, in particular, the avoidant style. Therefore, in this study, it was possible that the men from non-divorced families may have experienced a continuing unhappy marriage, whereas the men from divorced families were no longer exposed to the adverse effects of an unhappy marriage. However, post-hoc analyses indicated that in fact it was men from divorced families who experienced higher levels of parental conflict. Additionally, as Tayler et al. (1995) noted, while participants from the divorced group experienced more parental conflict than those from the non-divorced group, both experienced similar levels of maternal care, which may have affected the quality of the adult children's current romantic relationships. This finding is related to the findings of Hayashi et al. (1998), which suggested that the presence of at least one accepting parent, regardless of gender, fosters a secure attachment style. In this study, post-hoc analyses indicated that there was no difference between men from divorced homes and non-divorced homes on level of maternal care. This suggests that the level of maternal care for men from divorced homes may have helped assuage the negative impact of the divorce and parental conflict, which is consistent with the findings of Richardson et al. (2001). However, the discrepancies in the results for men are still unclear and must be examined further in future research.

Results revealed that while there was no gender difference on scores for anxious adult attachment, adult children from divorced families had higher scores on anxious adult attachment than adult children from non-divorced families. These findings relate to the previous findings that adult children from divorced families experienced increased

levels of parental conflict, which was shown to be related to the development of an anxious attachment style regardless of gender.

Adult Attachment Style and Quality of Adult Romantic Relationships

Results demonstrated that there was a clear relationship between insecure adult attachment styles, either anxious or avoidant, and decreased quality of adult romantic relationships. The relationship between insecure adult attachment and lower quality of adult romantic relationships has been well-established (e.g. Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Simpson, 1990). Previous findings have shown that individuals who are characterized by an insecure attachment style tend to exhibit qualities in their relationships that are associated with lower relationship quality, such as extreme jealousy, emotional highs and lows, fear of intimacy and lack of trust (see Simpson, 1990; Hazan and Shaver, 1987). Avoidantly attached individuals tend to avoid or fear intimacy and anxiously attached individuals tend to be very dependent in their relationships and exhibit neurotic and deep desires for commitment and love (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Avoiding intimacy or demonstrating obsessive neediness both contribute to lower relationship quality. As Feeney and Noller noted, avoidantly attached individuals were the most likely to have never been in love, anxiously attached individuals had short relationships, whereas securely attached individuals had the longest lasting relationships.

Results revealed a trend that men from divorced families had higher scores on relationship quality than men from non-divorced families, whereas women from divorced families had lower scores on relationship quality than women from non-divorced families. These findings relate to the earlier findings in the current study about the distribution of insecure attachment styles across gender and parental marital status, which

demonstrated that men from divorced families had lower scores on avoidant adult attachment than men from non-divorced families. However, women from divorced families had higher scores on avoidant adult attachment than women from non-divorced families. Previous findings in the current study suggested that there was a strong relationship between an avoidant adult attachment style and decreased romantic relationship quality. Therefore, there is a direct relationship between avoidant adult attachment style for women from divorced families and men from non-divorced families and the decreased relationship quality for women from divorced families and men from non-divorced families, suggesting that an avoidant adult attachment style, regardless of parental marital status, will be associated with decreased relationship quality.

Parental Marital Status and Quality of Adult Romantic Relationships

Results demonstrated that contrary to expectations, the quality of the romantic relationships from divorced homes did not differ from the quality of the romantic relationships among adult children from non-divorced homes. These findings relate to the literature that suggests that it is not parental marital status alone that is the predictor of the quality of adult romantic relationships but secondary factors, such as level of parental conflict, parental involvement and adult attachment style, are stronger predictors of the quality of adult romantic relationships (e.g. Gabardi & Rosen, 1992; Hayashi & Strickland, 1998; Sprague & Kinney, 1997).

The results of the theoretical pathway support this theory about the importance of parental conflict, parental involvement, and adult attachment style as strong predictors of the quality of adult romantic relationships. A trend demonstrated that increased parental conflict was associated with increased anxious attachment, which was in turn related to decreased quality of adult romantic relationships. A trend demonstrated that decreased

maternal and paternal involvement was related to the presence of an avoidant adult attachment, which was strongly related to decreased quality of romantic relationships.

Therefore, the results that overall, children of divorced homes do not differ from children from non-divorced homes on relationship quality is related to the theory that it is not parental marital status alone that is the key predictor of adult romantic relationship quality. However, considering that the results of the current study demonstrated that adult children of divorce experienced increased parental conflict and decreased maternal and paternal involvement, which were shown to be predictors of insecure adult attachment styles, alternate explanations are required to interpret the findings that overall adult children of divorced homes do not differ from adult children of non-divorced homes on romantic relationship quality.

Although parental conflict has been related to insecure attachment styles, there are some theories that suggest that increased parental conflict before a divorce can contribute to increased emotional well-being after the divorce. If the child experiences high conflict before the divorce, the divorce is seen as an escape and is in the best interest of the child that the parents divorce (Amato, Loomis & Booth, 1995). Additionally, Tayler et al. (1995) found that although adult children of divorced homes reported greater childhood conflict than adult children from non-divorced homes, there was no difference between the two groups on the quality of their current adult romantic relationships.

The previous literature also suggests that paternal involvement is an important predictor of the quality of adult children's romantic relationships (eg. Booth, Brinkerhoff, & White, 1984; Van Schaick & Stolberg, 2001). However, results demonstrated from the current study that there was no relationship between paternal involvement and the quality of adult children's romantic relationship. This finding is related to the theoretical

pathway, in which paternal involvement is a predictor of adult attachment, which in turn, is a predictor of the quality of adult children's romantic relationships. Paternal involvement, like parental marital status, is not a primary predictor of quality of adult children's romantic relationships. It is more a secondary predictor, as it indirectly influences the quality of the romantic relationship through attachment style.

Although decreased paternal involvement has been related to the development of insecure attachment styles, there have been several findings that suggest that an accepting parent, regardless of gender, will foster a secure attachment style (e.g. Collins & Read, 1990; Hayashi & Strickland, 1998). Results demonstrated that although there was a trend for decreased maternal involvement among adult children of divorce, the decreased levels of involvement may be related to societal factors, such as single mothers needing to work to support the family and consequently spending less time with their children, but may not relate overall to the quality of the relationship between the mother and the child.

It is also worth discussing the findings in the current study in which adult children from divorced families overall had higher scores on anxious adult attachment than adult children from non-divorced families but there was a gender difference for avoidant adult attachment. These findings may help explain why adult children from divorced homes do not differ from adult children from non-divorced homes overall on romantic relationship quality. Men from divorced families and women from non-divorced families had lower scores on avoidant adult attachment and men from non-divorced families and women from divorced families had higher scores on avoidant adult attachment. Although it is clear that adult children from divorced homes have higher scores on anxious attachment style and that there is a trend to suggest that an anxious attachment style would negatively affect the quality of romantic relationships, avoidant attachment style is the

more salient attachment style as a predictor of lower quality of adult romantic relationships. Results revealed that only women from divorced families and men from non-divorced families had greater scores on avoidant attachment style and results revealed that those characterized by an avoidant attachment style had decreased relationship quality, more so than those characterized by an anxious attachment style or a secure attachment style.

Considering that male and female participants from both divorced and non-divorced homes had an avoidant attachment style, gender seems to be a mediating factor on the impact of parental divorce on romantic relationships. Previous findings suggested that parental divorce is a significant factor for the quality of the romantic relationship for couples in which the female had experienced a parental divorce, but not for couples in which the male had experienced a parental divorce (see Mullett & Stolberg, 2002; Sanders, Halford & Behrens, 1999; Jacquet & Surra, 2001). Possible explanations for this inconsistency among genders include the role of paternal involvement. As noted, the father-daughter relationship tends to suffer the most as a result of parental divorce but the father-son relationship does not (Booth & Amato, 1994). In the current study, there was a trend indicating that decreased paternal involvement fostered an avoidant attachment style, which in turn was strongly related to decreased quality of adult romantic relationships. Therefore, considering that women from divorced families had lower scores on relationship quality than women from non-divorced families but men from divorced families had higher scores on relationship quality than men from non-divorced families, it is clear that there is a gender difference among children of both married and divorced parents with respect to romantic relationship quality that may be related to avoidant attachment style.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

A major limitation of this study was the small sample size of participants from divorced homes. Almost 22% of the sample had divorced parents, which is representative of the college in which the study was conducted, in which approximately 20% of each class has divorced parents. However, a larger sample of adult children from divorced homes would have yielded other possibilities for analysis, such as examining the age of the child when the parents divorced to see if there is any association between the timing of the divorce and other factors such as insecure attachment style. Data about age at divorce were collected, but were not analyzed because of insufficient power.

Another limitation is that the sample was relatively homogeneous, consisting mostly of Caucasian, heterosexual participants from non-divorced homes. Class was not assessed, but in future research, class, race and sexual orientation should be examined to see if those factors have any bearing on the level of paternal and maternal involvement, level of conflict, and attachment style.

In future research, a more comprehensive and age-appropriate conflict scale should be used. The Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (Grych et al., 1992), although it was modified from present tense to past tense, was worded in a very simple manner so that it would be accessible to children who were currently experiencing parental conflict. In the future, a scale that assesses adult children's memory of parental conflict should be administered to participants.

Future research should involve a different scale to measure maternal and paternal involvement. The current scale had no baseline measure assessing paternal involvement and maternal involvement, so it is impossible to determine if the levels of involvement changed from before the divorce to after the divorce. The scale was based on how one

remembers his or her parent, but the memories before the divorce and after the divorce may vary greatly. Therefore, in future research, participants should be able to report the level of parental involvement before and after the divorce. Participants who were very young at the time of the divorce would be unable to remember pre-divorce parental involvement, but for other participants, it may reveal interesting data.

Conclusion

This research found that parental marital status is not the key predictor of adult children's romantic relationship quality. Avoidant attachment style revealed itself as the most important factor related to the quality of the romantic relationship. Avoidant attachment style was related to lower levels of both maternal and paternal involvement, regardless of parental marital status or gender. However, avoidant attachment styles were inconsistent across gender and parental marital status. Women from divorced homes and men from non-divorced homes had higher scores on avoidant attachment style and consequently had lower scores on relationship quality, whereas the opposite was true for women from non-divorced homes and men from divorced homes. This inconsistency across gender and parental marital status implies that females may be more negatively affected by parental divorce than males. A possible explanation for this could be that after a parental divorce, the father-daughter relationship suffers more so than the father-son relationship (Booth & Amato, 1994). Therefore, the results of this study suggest that there is while there is a relationship between being female and negative consequences of parental divorce, parental divorce alone does not determine the quality of the relationship, as men from divorced homes scored higher on relationship quality than men from non-divorced homes.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the outstanding faculty members of the Macalester Psychology Department, who have helped foster my love for psychology and research. I am incredibly grateful to Professor Joan M. Ostrove for her indispensable help and consideration throughout this project. Thank you to my mother, Mary Everett, whose love and support have been essential throughout my life. Thank you to my friends for your support and to my fiancé, Alex, who is always loving and supportive.

References

- Ahlberg, D. A., & DeVita, C. F. (1992). New realities of the American family. *Population Bulletin*, 47, 12-16 (as cited in Hayashi, G. M., & Strickland, B. R. (1998). Long-term effects of parental divorce on love relationships: Divorce as attachment disruption. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 15, 23-38).
- Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Amato, P. R., & Keith, B. (1991). Parental divorce and the well-being of children: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 110(1), 26-46.
- Amato, P. R., Loomis, L. S., & Booth, A. (1995). Parental divorce, marital conflict, and offspring well-being during early adulthood. *Social Forces*, 73(3), 895-915.
- Booth, A., & Amato, P. R. (1994). Parental marital quality, parental divorce, and relations with parents. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 56, 21-34.
- Booth, A., Brinkerhoff, D. B., & White, L. K. (1984). The impact of parental divorce on courtship. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 46(1), 85-94.
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss* (Vol. 1). New York: Basic Books, Inc.
- Brennan, K. A., Clark, C. L., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Self-report measurement of adult attachment: An integrative overview. In J. Simpson & Rholes, W. S. (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 46-76). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Brennan, K., & Shaver, P. R. (1993). Attachment styles and parental divorce. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 21(1-2), 161-175.
- Brennan, K., & Shaver, P. R. (1995). Dimensions of adult attachment, affect regulation,

and romantic relationship functioning. *Personality and Social Psychology*

Bulletin, 21(3), 267-283.

- Clark, K. J., & Kanoy, K. (1998). Parents' marital status, father-daughter intimacy and young adult females' dating relationships. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 29(1/2), 167-179.
- Collins, N. L., & Read, S. J. (1990). Adult attachment, working models, and relationship quality in dating couples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58(4), 644-663.
- Conway, M. B., Christensen, T. M., & Herlihy, B. (2003). Adult children of divorce and intimate relationships: Implications for counseling. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 11(4), 364-373.
- Doucet, J., & Aseltine, R. H. (2003). Childhood family adversity and the quality of marital relationships in young adulthood. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 20(6), 818-842.
- Evans, J. J., & Bloom, B. L. (1996). Effects of parental divorce among college undergraduates. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 26(1/2), 69-91.
- Feeney, J. A., & Noller, P. (1990). Attachment style as a predictor of adult romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58(2), 281-291.
- Franklin, K. M., Janoff-Bulman, R. & Roberts, J. E. (1990). Long-term impact of parental divorce on optimism and trust: Changes in general assumptions or narrow beliefs? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59(4), 743-755.
- Gabardi, L., & Rosen, L. A. (1992). Intimate relationships: College students from divorced and intact families. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 18(3), 25-56.
- Grych, J. H., Seid, M., & Fincham, F. D. (1992). Assessing marital conflict from the

child's perspective: The children's perception of interparental conflict scale. *Child Development*, 63(3), 558-572.

Guttmann, J., & Rosenberg, M. (2003). Emotional intimacy and children's adjustment: A comparison between single-parent divorced and intact families. *Educational Psychology*, 23(4), 457-472.

Hayashi, G. M., & Strickland, B. R. (1998). Long-term effects of parental divorce on love relationships: Divorce as attachment disruption. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 15, 23-38.

Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. R. (1994). Attachment as an organizational framework for research on close relationships. *Psychological Inquiry*, 5(1), 1-22.

Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. R. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(3), 511-524.

Hazelton, R., Lancee, W., & O'Neil, M. K. (1998). The controversial long term effects of parental divorce: The role of early attachment. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 29(1/2), 1-17.

Hendrick, C., & Hendrick, S. (1986). A theory and method of love. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50(2), 392-402.

Jacquet, S. E., & Surra, C. A. (2001). Parental divorce and premarital couples: Commitment and other relationship characteristics. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(3), 627-638.

Jonsson, F. H., Njardvik, U., Olafsdottir, G., & Gretarsson, S. J. (2002). Parental divorce: Long-term effects on mental health, family relations and adult sexual behavior. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 41, 101-105.

Kilmann, P. R., Carranza, L. V., & Vendemia, J. M.C. (2006). Recollections of parent

- Family structures 49
- characteristics and attachment patterns for college women of intact vs. non-intact families. *Journal of Adolescence*, 29(1), 89-102.
- Kinnaird, K. L., & Gerrard, M. (1986). Premarital sexual behavior and attitudes toward marriage and divorce among young women as a function of their mothers' marital status. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 48(4), 757-765.
- McCabe, K. M. (1997). Sex differences in the long term effects of divorce on children: Depression and heterosexual relationship difficulties in the young adult years. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 27(1/2), 123-135.
- Mickelson, K. D., Kessler, R. C., & Shaver, P. R. (1997). Adult attachment in a nationally representative sample. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73(5), 1092-1106.
- Mullett, E., & Stolberg, A. L. (2002). Divorce and its impact on the intimate relationships of young adults. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 38(1/2), 39-59.
- National Center for Health Statistics (2006). Marriage and divorce. Retrieved March 29, 2007, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/divorce.html>.
- Parker, G., Tupling, H., & Brown, L. B. (1979). A parental bonding instrument. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 52(1), 1-10.
- Richardson, S., & McCabe, M. P. (2001). Parental divorce during adolescence and adjustment in early adulthood. *Adolescence*, 36(143), 467-488.
- Ross, C. E., & Mirowsky, J. (1999). Parental divorce, life-course disruption, and adult depression. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61(4), 1034-1045.
- Sanders, M. R., Halford, W. K., & Behrens, B. C. (1999). Parental divorce and premarital couple communication. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 13(1), 60-74.

- Schaefer, M. T., & Olson, D. H. (1981). Assessing intimacy: The pair inventory. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 7(1), 47-60.
- Scott, R. L., & Cordova, J. V. (2002). The influence of adult attachment styles on the association between marital adjustment and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 16(2), 199-208.
- Short, J. L. (2002). The effects of parental divorce during childhood on college students. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 38(1/2), 143-156.
- Shulman, S., Scharf, M., Lumer, D., & Maurer, O. (2001). Parental divorce and young adult children's romantic relationships: Resolution of the divorce experience. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 71(4), 473-478.
- Simpson, J. (1990). Influence of attachment styles on romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59(5), 971-980.
- Sinclair, S. L., & Nelson, E. S. (1998). The impact of parental divorce on college students' intimate relationships and relationship beliefs. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 29(1/2), 103-129.
- Sprague, H. E., & Kinney, J. M. (1997). The effects of interparental divorce and conflict on college students' romantic relationships. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 27(1/2), 85-104.
- Sprecher, S., Rodney, C., & Levin, L. (1998). Parental divorce and young adults' beliefs about love. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 28(3/4), 107-120.
- Taylor, L., Parker, G., & Roy, K. (1995). Parental divorce and its effects on the quality of intimate relationships in adulthood. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 24(3/4), 181-202.
- Turner, H. A. & Kopiec, K. (2006). Exposure to interparental conflict and psychological

disorder among young adults. *Journal of Family Issues*, 27(2), 131-158.

Van Schaick, K. & Stolberg, A. L. (2001) The impact of paternal involvement and parental divorce on young adults' intimate relationships. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 36(1/2), 99-122.

Wallerstein, J. S. (2005). Growing up in the divorced family. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 33(4), 401-418.

Zill, N., Morrison, D. R., & Coiro, M. J. (1993). Long-term effects of parental divorce on parent-child relationships, adjustment, and achievement in young adulthood. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 7(1), 91-103.

Table 1

Demographic Data of Sample and Macalester College

	<u>Participants</u>	<u>Macalester College</u> <i>(enrollment data from Fall 2006)</i>
	N= 174	N= 1918
<u>Gender</u>	Male= 38% Female= 61% Other= 1%	Male= 42% Female= 58% Other= <i>not available</i>
<u>Age</u>	M= 19.6	M= 19.6
<u>Race</u>	Caucasian= 80% African/African-American= 5% Latino/a= 2% Asian/Asian-American= 6% Other/Multiracial= 7%	Caucasian= 83% African/African-American= 4% Latino/a= 4% Asian/Asian-American= 8% Other/Multiracial= <i>not available</i>
<u>Sexual Orientation</u>	Heterosexual= 85% Homosexual= 5% Bisexual= 8% Other= 2%	<i>Information not available</i>
<u>Geographic Origins</u>	Domestic= 85% International= 15%	Domestic= 89% International= 11%
<u>Parental Marital Status</u>	Married/partnered= 73% Divorced/separated= 22% Other= 5%	Married/partnered= 77% Divorced/separated= 20% Other= 3%

All Macalester College data was drawn from the Center for Institutional Research (http://www.macalester.edu/ir/private/a_factbook.htm)

Table 2

Correlations between predictor variables and outcome variables

	Avoidant Attachment	Anxious Attachment	Relationship Quality
Maternal Involvement	-.20**	-.17*	.15
Paternal Involvement	-.20**	-.24**	.14
Parental Conflict	.11	.26**	-.10
Avoidant Attachment	x	.20**	-.60**
Anxious Attachment	x	x	-.24**

$p < .05$
 $p < .01$

Table 3

Comparison of Means among Participants from Divorced and Non-Divorced Families

	Divorced Families N= 38	Non-Divorced Families N= 127
<u>Level of Conflict</u>		
	$M = 2.10, SD = .09$	$M = 1.56, SD = .49$
<u>Paternal Involvement</u>		
	$M = 2.72, SD = .85$	$M = 3.20, SD = .66$
<u>Maternal Involvement</u>		
	$M = 3.30, SD = .42$	$M = 3.55, SD = .77$
<u>Relationship Quality</u>		
Overall	$M = 3.53, SD = .74$	$M = 3.69, SD = .67$
Male	$M = 3.69, SD = .74$	$M = 3.52, SD = .59$
Female	$M = 3.46, SD = .74$	$M = 3.80, SD = .71$
	$F(1, 164) = 3.42, p < .10$	
<u>Avoidant Attachment</u>		
Male	$M = 2.99, SD = 1.11$	$M = 3.10, SD = .98$
Female	$M = 3.65, SD = 1.29$	$M = 2.90, SD = 1.17$
	$F(1, 164) = 3.42, p < .10$	
<u>Anxious Attachment</u>		
	$M = 4.21, SD = 1.29$	$M = 3.66, SD = 1.08$
	$F(1, 164) = 5.29, p < .05$	

Figure 1

Predicting Relationship Quality - A Theoretical Model

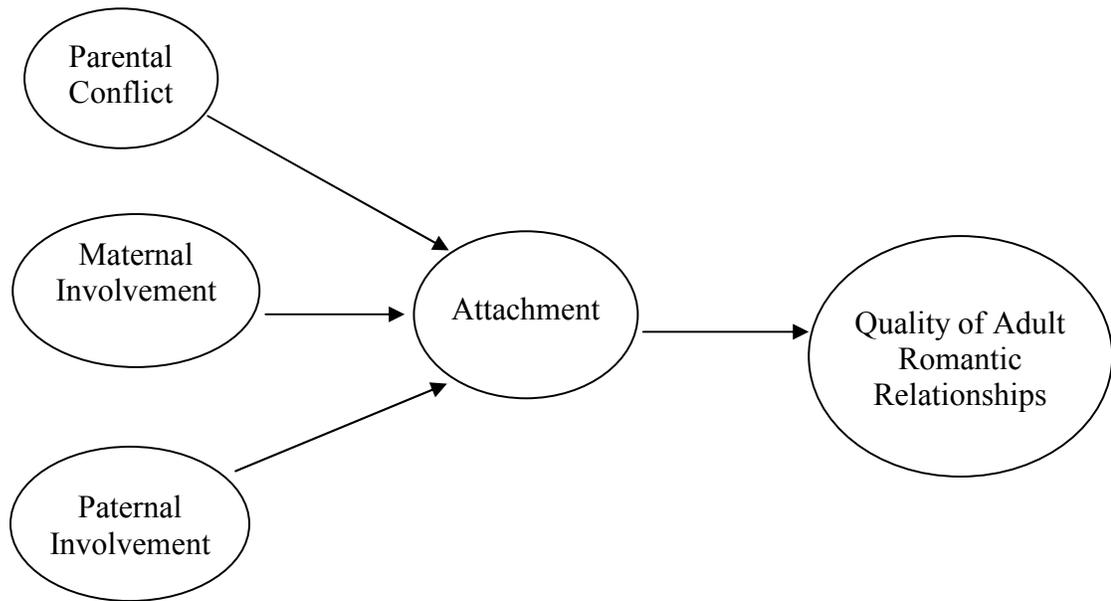
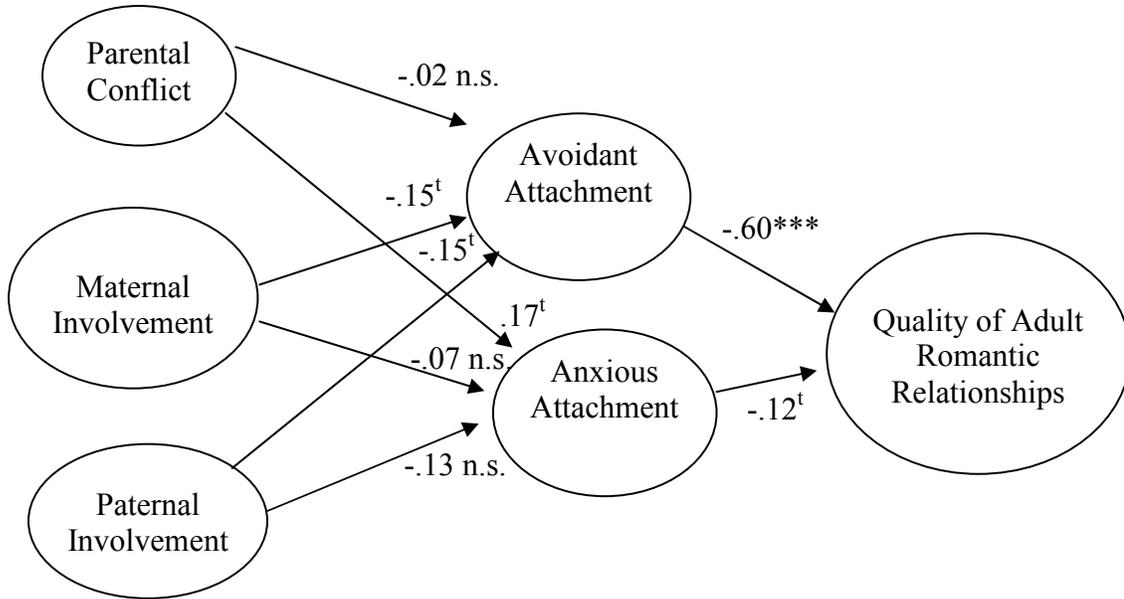


Figure 2

Predicting Relationship Quality – An Empirical Model



*** $p < .001$

^t $p < .10$