ATTACHMENT STYLE, AFFECT AND CONSTRUAL OF INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTERS OF ARTS
in
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standards

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

September 1993

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Abstract

The relationships between attachment style, negative affect, and attribution were examined. Male undergraduates (n=72) were asked to report on their style in intimate relationships, anger and attributions about negative behavior by an actual girlfriend. Results indicated that those with an Avoidant attachment style tended to be more angry in general temperament than Secure participants, and that their anger was involved with the explanations adopted to account for negative girlfriend behavior. Participants with Anxious attachment resembled both the Secure and Avoidant groups in their trait anger and attribution profiles. Experimental analysis of emotional and cognitive differences in response to audiotapes of three conflicts indicated that anger and anxiety were important in reactions of Avoidant participants. Anxiety was notably absent as part of the Secure participants' reactions. The Anxious group demonstrated anger and anxiety responses to conflict consistent with theoretical predictions. Anger and anxiety responses were predicted from attachment style, trait anger, and attributions. Little evidence was noted for the assumption that attachment styles are activated primarily in the context of intimate relationships.

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I extend thanks to my committee members, Darrin Lehman and Bob Hare, for their time and interest in this project. I am of course especially grateful to my advisor, Don Dutton, for his guidance and insight at all stages of this research.

I was fortunate to have friends and associates who were very accommodating and helpful from the study's beginning to end. Larry Axelrod was always willing to discuss the project and was a pillar of encouragement. The composed and thoughtful suggestions of Adam DiPaula, in addition to his graphic wisdom, were particularly helpful as the final draft took shape. Steve Heine's example and enthusiasm were also appreciated. Barbara McGregor's literate assistance and interest was always encouraging. The moral support of Russ Pitts, John and Linda McNally, Monica Salvatella, and my family served me faithfully at critical points in my work, and for their backing I am truly thankful.

Most people would agree that intimate relationships, such as those between mothers and their children, and between wives and husbands, encompass some of life's most positive experiences. But in addition to providing a context for joy and fulfillment, intimacy can also spark such emotions as anger and anxiety. This thesis is an exploration of the ways in which people experience negative affect in close relationships. Its theoretical basis is attachment theory, a popular theory of close relationships. Attachment theory seeks to describe the patterns of behavior, emotions, and needs observed in close relationships. Recent findings have identified three relationship styles: Secure, Avoidant and Anxious. These styles vary in such ways as one's comfort with closeness, need to have an attachment figure present, and anxiety about relationship dissolution (Hazan and Shaver, 1987; Simpson, Rholes and Nelligan, 1992). The present research was intended to explore the possibility that attachment style could influence perceptions of, and emotional reactions to, interpersonal conflict, as suggested in recent studies by Dutton, Saunders and Bartholomew (1992), and Dutton, Starzomski and Bartholomew (1992).

An important element of attachment theory is that the features differentiating each style emerge primarily under conditions of perceived anxiety (Simpson, Rholes, and Nelligan, 1992). These identifying features include attempts to increase or decrease emotional distance in relation to one's partner, as well emotional expressions. Interpersonal conflicts can be anxious situations where attachment styles are activated, and manifested in emotional states, thoughts and behavior. Recent studies describing how anger is associated with attachment styles (Bowlby, 1973; Dutton, Starzomski and Bartholomew, 1992) lead to the theory that attachment style may influence the manner in which individuals perceive conflict.

On the basis of attachment research, individuals with insecure attachment styles should respond to intimate conflict differently from those more secure in their attachment style. For example, people insecure in their relationship style should feel greater anger and anxiety than secure individuals, as well as exhibit distress-maintaining beliefs about the role of the intimate other (e.g., she never thinks of how I feel). Those with a secure attachment style should experience less anger and anxiety in these situations, as well as a tendency to explain negative behavior by the intimate other in a way which minimizes interpersonal distress (e.g., it was an isolated event).

It appears that attachment styles are differentially activated according to the nature of the conflict with an intimate. Collins (1992) has shown that attachment style is predictive of emotional responses to stress related to intimacy concerns (i.e., your partner failing to comfort you when you feel depressed), but not to non-intimacy matters (i.e., partner fails to pay back borrowed money). However, as of yet there exists little in the way of an empirically-backed understanding of the nexus between attachment styles and the interpersonal context of conflict (i.e., husband-wife versus co-worker conflict). It may be the case that interpersonal context may differentially trigger attachment styles and hence individuals' construal of, and reaction to, conflict. Howe (1987) suggested that people form different attributions for conflicts between intimates and strangers. Recent work linking attachment, cognition, and affect (Collins, 1992; Kobak and Sceery, 1988) has suggested that attributional and affective responses to conflict could vary with both attachment style and the interpersonal context of the conflict.

Attachment Theory: Past and Present

Attachment has occupied a place of special importance in the heritage of psychology. It has also become the subject of renewed interest based on recent theoretical and empirical advances. Acknowledgement and awareness of the importance of parent/child attachment dates back to the work of Freud (1926), Sullivan (1953) and Erikson (1963). Each theorist recognized the influence of early attachment on the development of behavior and personality. The comprehensive theoretical contribution of Bowlby (1969; 1973; 1980) has served as the basis for the resurgence of the study of human attachment.

John Bowlby's attachment theory is aimed at explaining the variety of infant responses to affection, separation, and loss, in addition to suggesting consequences of (dys)functional responses to these relationship events. His theory integrated key scientific advances of the past 150 years, such as evolutionary biology, ethology, psychoanalysis, behaviorism, and cognitive science. Although Bowlby focussed on infancy and childhood events, recent research has applied his theory's principles to adult behavior.

One of Bowlby's primary contributions was connecting the development of attachment with evolutionary success by drawing on the ethological research of Harry Harlow. Harlow and Harlow's (1971) study of attachment in monkeys provided evidence for the survival factor associated with attachment. The hypothesis that attachment is caused by drive reduction (i.e., meeting needs for food) was undermined by Harlow, who also demonstrated that emotional security is necessary, but not sufficient, for healthy development.

Bowlby conceived of attachment as a process of emotional development grounded in the affection, separation, and loss experiences of an infant's first relationships.

Learning adaptive emotional responses to anxiety in intimate relationships, as well as managing maladaptive ones, are important parts of early infant relationships with parents. A crucial component of attachment is the development of the infant's perception of the caregiver as a secure base, a source of emotional and physical comfort and support during distress (Hazan and Shaver, in press). The development of the secure base was studied by Bowlby during his investigation of intimate separations in infancy.

Through his observations of infant behavior Bowlby identified a sequential response to separation comprised of protest, despair and detachment. Protest involves searching for the missing attachment figure while fighting off the soothing attempts of others. Despair follows protest, and is a state of passive sadness in the absence of the caregiver. Detachment is the carry-over of negative affect upon reunion, seen as avoidance and disregard for the attachment figure.

Managing these emotional responses to separation has survival value for the infant. According to Bowlby, infants who respond emotionally to separation in adaptive ways are better able to ensure their needs are met effectively by caretakers. Infants who cannot readily terminate the detachment phase upon reunion may risk driving the parent away. The ways in which people deal with separation, loss, and reunion form the basis for discriminating among different attachment styles. Studies have shown that the insecure attachment styles are associated with responses to separation which chronically maintain emotional distance, rather than bridge it.

Experimental Attachment Research

As patterns of relationship needs which form the basis for differences between attachment styles are most clearly observed under conditions of anxiety and uncertainty in

intimate interpersonal relationships, experimental situations which elicit anxiety have been the methodology of choice in empirical studies of attachment. Such research has resulted in a parsimonious classification system of attachment of styles based on temperament and conduct observed in anxious situations.

Studies of infants in the "strange situation" have been the precedent in experimental discriminations between attachment groups (Ainsworth, Blehar, and Waters, 1978). The strange situation is a laboratory scenario involving the infant's separation from, and subsequent reunion with, his/her mother or father. Three patterns of infant responses to this situation have been systematically described by Ainsworth, Blehar and Waters (1978), and have also been demonstrated in adult versions of the same scenario (Simpson, Rholes, and Nelligan, 1992).

Secure attachment is characterized by welcoming the attachment figure upon return from separation, and seeking proximity to the attachment figure in the event of a distressing situation. Security is the capacity to disengage the turbulent protest and despair emotions upon reunion with the mother. The detachment response to reunion, which is the defining feature of the next attachment style, is relatively absent in the secure attachment style. About 55% of adults who have been studied fall into this category (Hazan and Shaver, 1987; Feeney and Noller, 1990).

Avoidant attachment is identified by the absence of approach behavior upon return of the attachment figure. In terms of Bowlby's account of attachment behavior as displays of affect, these people have a tendency to detach from caregiving situations. Upon reunion, it is characteristic for those with this attachment style to reject the caregivers' attempts to provide comfort. Those with avoidant attachment styles tend to have had repeated experiences in

which efforts to establish contact with attachment figures have met with rejection. As a result, people with this attachment pattern associate the need for proximity with frustration and unmet needs (Simpson, Rholes and Nelligan, 1992). A key consequence of this frustration over unmet needs is hostility and anger directed towards intimates. About 25-30% of adult research samples have avoidant attachment styles (Hazan and Shaver, 1987; Feeney and Noller, 1990).

Anxious-ambivalent attachment emerges from childhoods underscored by inconsistently or unpredictably successful contact attempts (Crittendon and Ainsworth, 1989). The protest element of Bowlby's affect sequence, and the relentless pursuit of attachment figures, are integral features of this relationship pattern. Individuals with this style yearning for substantial emotional support from their romantic partners. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) suggested that people with this style are preoccupied with attaining self-worth by gaining the acceptance of valued others. It has also been reported that there are overtones of resentment and hostility directed towards intimates as part of this attachment style due to the perceived inability of those significant others to meet emotional needs (Simpson, Rholes and Nelligan, 1992). The incidence of this relationship style has ranged from 15-20% of adult samples (Hazan and Shaver, 1987; Feeney and Noller, 1990).

Refinement of this tripartite model of styles was recently proposed by Kim Bartholomew. Bartholomew (1990) reconstructed the three-dimensional model of attachment (secure, avoidant, anxious) in order to accommodate the theoretical importance of the avoidant style. She developed a four-dimensional scheme that catalogues attachment patterns as illustrative of positive or negative representations of self and other. Retaining the secure and

anxious attachment categories of earlier work, Bartholomew's contribution is of particular relevance to the present research because of its further delineation of the avoidant style.

Bartholomew broke the avoidant style into two dimensions: fearful and dismissing. The fearful attachment pattern resembles a hybrid of anxiety and avoidance -- a sense of the relationship being needed to meet personal shortcomings, but apprehension that the intimate other will fail to meet these needs. The dismissing dimension develops when attachment systems are chronically deactivated -- the stereotype of "compulsive self-reliance" applies here.

The bulk of the research on differences between attachment styles has been directed at how attachment influences relationship satisfaction. Men with more secure attachment styles tend to be less emotionally abusive to their spouses than insecure men (Dutton, Saunders and Bartholomew, 1992; Dutton, Starzomski and Bartholomew, 1992). It has been noted that Secure individuals are higher in personal and interpersonal self esteem, and that people classified as Avoidant are less likely to have experienced love as deeply as those with Secure or Anxious styles (Feeney and Noller, 1990). It has also been shown that those with Secure styles of attachment seek out more support from their partners as situations become progressively more anxious, and that Secure partners offer more support to their distraught intimates (Simpson, Rholes and Nelligan, 1992).

Attachment and Cognition

Bowlby's theory is a developmental one emphasizing structural psychological change with maturity. Bowlby calls this developing mental structure a *working model*. The working model can be conceptualized as the psychological appraisal of need-meeting relationships. Infants construe

attachment figures (parents) as resources for meeting their needs. The working model governs our expectations and interpersonal perceptions as we come to understand those who care for us. In effect, it is through these working models that we come to understand our place in the social world.

The working model is comprised of information about who one's attachment figures are, their accessibility, and the likelihood that they will respond to our emotional needs in supportive ways. Our sense of worth in the both our own eyes and the eyes of our attachment figures is also part of the working model. This cognitive component of attachment style is important because it governs our expectations about closeness. Explanations about the motivations of others in close relationships are also part of this cognitive framework. In short, the cognitive component of attachment styles influence what we attend to in our relationships with others and how we think about them.

An important part of current attachment research involves identifying the attributional tendencies of each attachment group. For example, the working models of the Avoidant and Anxious styles tend to dwell more on the negative impacts of relationship events than does the Secure working model (Collins, 1992). Threads of this cognitive pattern of dealing with aversive events have been picked up by researchers studying marital discord. For example, Fincham and Bradbury (1992) reported strong positive correlations between anger with one's romantic partner and attribution. Partners were more angry with their partner when they attributed cause for a negative event to their partner (i.e.: criticism, disinterest).

Essentially, it has been noted that couples in conflict tend to think about negative relationship events in ways that maintain or even exaggerate the discord. Attachment theory may proved insight into why some people tend to

explain negative events in these ways. The present research knits together these different courses of research on conflict in intimate relationships.

Attachment, Conflict and Anger

Throughout the preceding sections it has been noted that attachment styles explain the different ways of behaving in, and thinking and feeling about, intimate relationships. It is important to delineate how attachment can come to bear on the experience of interpersonal conflict. Much has been written on the ways in which anger and attachment are related.

Work on attachment has suggested that anger is of prime importance in the way some people develop and maintain close relationships with others (Bowlby, 1973). It is clear in Bowlby's (1973) theory that anger is part of the experience of being in most intimate relationships. Importantly, anger can serve both beneficial and harmful ends. Displaying anger to a child who runs carelessly into the street, or to an adulterous intimate partner, can be meant to serve the desirable ends of education and deterring additional disloyalty, respectively. Expressing anger can convey to the intimate other the value one places on the relationship. It can also plague a relationship and ultimately destroy it through power abuse and/or estrangement. Anger can become a persistent part of the interpersonal relationship, potentially culminating in aggressive thoughts and actions. One can readily see how a child who is initially exposed to turbulent relationships consisting of noncontingent, persistent and aggressive outbursts of anger could develop an insecure working model. For example, a child may develop the belief that "caring" relationships work from a foundation of aggressive anger and hostility. Support for this idea was reported by Cummings, Zahn-Waxler, and Radke-Yarrow (1981), who found that children frequently exposed to

harsh anger between parents displayed more emotional distress than children who weren't privy to such outbursts.

Main and Weston (1982) suggested that Avoidant individuals feel angry with attachment figures, but fear that expressing their anger will result in decreased affection and withdrawal by the caregiver. As a result, anger is suppressed and replaced with cool, detached avoidance. Chronically rejected people experience particularly strong angry impulses with even stronger avoidance of displaying that anger. These people are not as likely to vent their anger during moments of acute arousal, choosing instead to express anger in circumstances that do not risk decreased proximity from the attachment figure (Bowlby, 1984).

Bartholomew (1990) argued that a strong and unresolvable approach-avoidance dynamic may underlie the behavior of chronically fearful people: perceived threats of abandonment lead to tendencies to approach an attachment figure who rejects contact, subsequently generating withdrawal and an even stronger need for attachment. A self-perpetuating feedback loop ensues that leads to chronic avoidance, frustration of attachment needs, and dysfunctional experiences of anger.

The conceptual associations between anger and attachment as outlined by Bowlby (1973; 1984) and Bartholomew (1990) have been supported empirically. Kobak and Sceery (1988) reported that avoidant individuals had higher levels of hostility (measured through both peer ratings and interviews) than either securely or anxiously attached people. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) reported that Avoidant attachment was congruent with a cold and hostile interpersonal style. Shaver and Brennan (1992) noted that hostile components of the "Big Five" personality dimensions were positively correlated with anxious and

avoidant attachment, and negatively associated with secure attachment. Additional support for the link between attachment and anger was recently provided by Mikulincer, Florian and Weller (1993), who found that hostility was a strong emotional reaction to Iraqi missile attacks among Anxious and Avoidant Israeli individuals.

Attachment and Abuse in Intimate Relationships

The possible link between adult attachment, anger, and aggression has been suggested by studies of the psychological profiles of men convicted of wife assault (Dutton, Saunders & Bartholomew 1992; Dutton, Starzomski, & Bartholomew, 1992). Relationships between Bartholomew's attachment dimensions and anger, personality disturbance, and violence led Dutton, Saunders and Bartholomew (1992) to propose the existence of a psychological structure, dubbed the anger/anxiety template, which makes the very experience of intimacy generate anger for men with an avoidant attachment style. This anger is then projected onto their female partner and serves as a basis for interpersonal rage and aggression directed toward her.

Dutton and Starzomski (1992) reported that women's reports of emotional abuse and dominance by their physically abusive partners were significantly and positively correlated with their partners' Avoidant attachment style. On the other hand, assaultive men with secure attachment styles were much less likely to have inflicted high levels of psychological abuse on their partners, suggesting that the nature of abuse in close relationships may differ in accordance with one's attachment style.

The Present Research:
Attachment, Emotion and Attribution.

Research combining developmental psychology, social psychology, and psychiatry has resulted in a new theoretical orientation toward the possible processes underlying some

patterns of male aggression in intimate relationships. Specifically, links between early childhood trauma, attachment styles, adult personality disturbance and intimate violence have been proposed by Dutton and his colleagues (Dutton, 1988; Dutton, in press; Dutton, Saunders, and Barthomew, 1992; Dutton, Starzomski and Bartholomew, 1992). The preliminary empirical support for these associations is based almost exclusively on correlational analyses. The present study has endeavoured to apply experimental methods to further explore these theoretical potentials.

The techniques used in this thesis were based on a long line of similar experimental paradigms. Researchers examining how people interpret and react to conflict have adopted methods aimed at increasing participants' emotional involvement by various conflict simulations (Bandura, Ross, and Ross, 1961; Browning, 1983, Davis et al, 1987; Dutton, Webb and Ryan, 1992; Harvey et al, 1980; Strachan and Dutton, 1993). Audiotapes of interpersonal scenarios have proven to be particularly effective as a way to present realistic stimuli (Strachan and Dutton, 1992). It has been found, for example, that listening to audiotapes of interpersonal conflict, accompanied by appropriate instructions, can result in changes in mood (Dutton, Webb and Ryan, 1992; Strachan and Dutton, 1992).

This study was designed to examine how males respond cognitively and emotionally to conflict and if these reactions are related to attachment styles. Varying the nature of the relationship between individuals in conflict (romantic partners versus co-workers) allowed for the investigation of how situational factors could affect the elicitation of attachment styles in interpersonal disputes. Specifically, six research questions were explored.

First, how does one's everyday experience of anger relate to attachment styles and dimensions? This question considered the possibility that people who vary from one another in attachment patterns could experience different intensities, expressions and frequencies of anger as part of their lifestyles. Second, how do attributions of the cause of, and responsibility for, an intimate other's negative behavior relate to experiences anger? Here the issue was to determine if one's proclivity for anger was associated with patterns of perception. Third, do the theoretical and empirical distinctions of different working models translate into differences in attributions about behavior of one's intimate other? In other words, are there explanations for negative partner behaviors that people with certain attachment styles use but others do not? Fourth, do attachment dimensions affect how people handle uncertainty in situations unrelated to interpersonal conflict? This question was addressed by looking at mood states before conflict vignettes were heard. Fifth, are various attachment styles and dimensions activated by experimental conflict vignettes which are situations of acute interpersonal duress? As a second part to this question, it was also of interest to determine if attachment styles were differentially activated according to interpersonal context (whether a dating couple or co-workers are in dispute). Sixth, is it possible to predict affective responses to conflict using measures of attachment, lifestyle anger, and attribution?

A brief discussion of how this study links with, and expands upon, previous attachment and conflict work is warranted. This thesis is unique among other studies of attachment, emotion, cognition and conflict for many reasons. The questions asked and the methodological properties set this work apart are worthy of consideration.

One of the most important properties of the present research was its attempt to see if attachment styles were involved in events outside intimate relationships. By looking at how attachment styles related to pre-tape affect, in addition to conflict between non-intimates, this study addressed previous claims of attachment specificity within intimate relationships. Previous studies have implied that it made little sense to consider possible attachment influences in non-intimate situations. Signs of attachment outside the domain of intimate relationships has begun to appear in studies of peer-ratings of personality and temperament (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991; Mikulincer, Florian, and Weller, 1993). These studies have suggested that the influences of attachment may transcend the intimate dyad. The present study asked directly if the influence of attachment styles extends beyond the intimate situation.

The present research also attempts to articulate the connections between attachment and anger. Previous experimental work on attachment with adult samples has primarily addressed relationship quality and support in times of distress (Feeney and Noller, 1990; Simpson, Rholes and Nelligan, 1992). As a result, findings of how anger's relationship to attachment in these studies have been nested in more general discussions of negative affect in the insecure avoidant or anxious styles. The present study is unique in its primary concern with the delineation of angry responses to conflict as part of attachment styles.

The present study tries for a more systematic analysis of the attribution/anger link in close relationships than previous research. By looking at the connection between particular anger dimensions (i.e.: hostile outlook, anger magnitude) and facets of attribution described by Holtzworth-Monroe and Jacobson (1985), including blame, cause, stability, and responsibility, greater awareness of

the cognitive-emotional experience of intimacy is anticipated.

This thesis is also unique in its choice of sample. Being investigated here is the process of male violence in intimate relationships. In keeping with this focus, the decision was made to include only male participants in this study. Previous studies on the links between attachment, anger and aggression have been based on studies with men convicted of wife assault. By using a non-clinical sample of university undergrads this thesis has begun to provide some normative information about continuities and discontinuities between samples.

Finally these studies of attachment, anger and abuse have relied on correlational methods, as opposed to experimental manipulations in controlled settings. The experimental control exercised in this study has attempted to provide firmer support for relationships uncovered in previous correlational work (Dutton, Saunders and Bartholomew, 1992).

Hypotheses

Five hypotheses were generated upon review of the literature on how attachment, anger and affect relate to conflict. First, it was predicted that self-reports of lifestyle anger would be a less central emotion in the lives of Secure individuals than Avoidant individuals. It was anticipated that Avoidant attachment would be associated with a tendency to experience anger more often, more intensely, and for longer periods of time than for Secure individuals. The Anxious style was also expected to have an anger component similar in nature to the Avoidant pattern, but not as strong.

Second, it was predicted that attributions of cause and responsibility for negative behaviors by one's current or past intimate partner would be related to attachment style.

The pattern of attributional outcomes was predicted to be such that those with secure attachment would be less likely than those with Avoidant styles to explain negative events in distressful ways. Put somewhat differently, it was anticipated that the tendency among Avoidantly attached men to see one's partner as responsible for, and causing, negative relationship events would be more common than for Securely attached individuals. It was foreseen that the Anxious style could also be associated with perceptions of the other as responsible for negative events. This was in keeping with the tendency for Anxiously attached people to see the other as unable to fulfill their intimate needs.

The third hypothesis concerned pre-experimental affect and attachment. It was predicted that attachment would not be related to participants' emotional patterns before the tapes were heard. One would not expect that emotional states in the experimentally constant setting, very different from a situation of inter-partner distress, to be associated with attachment style.

Fourth, it was proposed that reactions to audiotapes of intimate conflict would differ between attachment styles. Generally, it was projected that less negative affect would be present in participants with Secure attachment than those with Anxious or Avoidant styles after hearing the tapes. It was also anticipated that patterns of attribution would be elicited by the tapes, such that explanations maximizing the impact of negative events would be associated with negative affect. These between-style differences were predicted in keeping with the theoretical underpinnings of the anger/anxiety template (Dutton, Saunders, and Bartholomew, 1992), observations of stylistic differences in interpersonal behavior (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991), and displays of behavior in response to anxious situations (Simpson, Rholes and Nelligan, 1992).

The specific nature of the predicted reactions by participants with insecure attachment styles to the tapes merits attention. Because those with marked Avoidant attachment are apprehensive about closeness in relationships, conflict involving a female partner's desire to increase intimacy (Engulfment) could be powerful in eliciting negative affect. Additionally, depicting a partner desiring a decrease in closeness (Abandonment) could activate negative affect by mapping onto working models emphasizing the unreliability of attachment figures to remain close. On the basis of previous studies (Shaver and Brennan, 1992; Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991), it was anticipated that anger would be an especially notable part of emotional responses to conflict for Avoidant participants.

Strong affective responses to conflict over intimacy were anticipated for those with an Anxious attachment style. It was predicted that Anxious participants would experience particularly strong reactions to the Abandonment scenario. Intimate conflict caused by a partner's pursuit of an unwanted deeper level of closeness was not expected to be particularly stressful for those with an Anxious style -- the possibility of becoming more immersed in a relationship is probably seen as desirable by this group.

The fifth and final hypothesis was again aimed at testing the specificity of attachment to intimate conflict. Reactions to co-worker conflict was contrasted with reactions to the intimate disputes in order to see if attachment was uniquely implicated in the intimate domain. As with the earlier hypothesis anticipating no pre-experimental affective differences between attachment styles, it was postulated that the attachment differences in reactions to non-intimate conflict would be minimal or nonexistent.

Data collected in the present study were analyzed in terms of the four-part typology of Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), as well as the tripartite model of Hazan and Shaver (1987). In effect, analyses involved looking at Bartholomew's four *dimensions* (Assured, Fearful, Dismissing, Preoccupied) as a within-subjects factor and Ainsworth's attachment *groups* (Secure, Avoidant, Anxious) as a between-subjects factor.

Method

Participants

Seventy-two male students (mean age = 20.82 years) from Psychology 100 classes at the University of British Columbia participated in the study. Participants received 1.5 credits toward their final grade as remuneration for their participation in the study.

The relationship history of this sample is of particular relevance to the results of the study. Twenty-six men (36.6%) in the sample were currently in relationships, but sixty-six (93%) of the participants reported having been in at least one relationship (Mode = 2, Modal length = 2 months). On a Likert scale from 1 to 7, with 1 representing dissatisfaction and 7 indicating level of satisfaction with these relationships, the average score was 4.2.

One of the initial tasks of this research was to use the attachment dimensions to classify participants into attachment categories. A cluster analysis using Ward's method used participants' profiles on Bartholomew's four attachment dimensions (Assured, Fearful, Preoccupied, Dismissing) to determine the attachment category (Secure, Avoidant, Anxious) in which they were placed. The choice of clustering method was based on previous research with this measure (Collins, 1992; Collins and Read, 1990).

The sample was separated into three attachment categories which corresponded to Ainsworth's types discussed previously. In addition, this tripartite typology explained the present data more parsimoniously than a four-category model. Figure 1 shows that as a result of the cluster analysis 32% of participants (n = 22) were classified as Secure, 44% of the sample (n = 31) were clustered into the Avoidant group, and 24% (n = 17) were grouped together in the Anxious group. Possible explanations for the fact that the Secure group comprised only 32% of the sample as opposed to the 50-60% expected, and that the Avoidant group was about 15% higher than expected can be offered. It may be the case that the low internal consistency of the sub-scales (see below) contributed to this. It may also be an accurate reflection of the sample itself, as the sample was self-selected (i.e., they decided to participate for credit in the final month of classes). Nonetheless, the different profiles for attachment groups on attachment dimensions are consistent with theory and research.

All between-groups differences on attachment dimensions were determined using one-way ANOVA's with Tukey contrasts. The three attachment groups differed on all attachment dimensions, with the exception being that the Secure and Anxious groups were not significantly different in their Assured scores. Although high on the Assured dimension, the Anxious group was also the highest of the three groups on the Preoccupied scale, F (2,69) = 25.94, $p < .001$. The Anxious group also had low scores on the Dismissing scale, indicating that relationships, as opposed to self-reliance, were priorities for this group, F (2,69) = 10.52, $p < .001$. The fact that the Avoidant group had the highest scores on the Dismissing dimension is consistent with this group being wary of intimate relationships. One could consider the Secure group's high score on the Dismissing dimension to

reflect a level of contentment in being without a relationship.

For the purposes of clarity in the present work Bartholomew's secure *dimension* will be called "Assured" to avoid confusion with the Secure attachment *group* classification. Within-subject correlations dealing with attachment report on the four Bartholomew sub-scales operating simultaneously at any given time (Assured, Fearful, Dismissing, Preoccupied), regardless of the individuals' attachment group (Secure, Anxious, Avoidant) as determined by cluster analysis.

Measures

Participants in the study completed a number of psychometric scales. Measures of attachment style, attributions in past relationships, attributional response to conflict, anger style, and affect were completed during the study. A brief description of these measures is presented below.

1.) Attachment: *The Relationship Style Questionnaire (RSQ)*

Self-report measures of attachment style have been developed in recent years by Hazan and Shaver (1987) and Collins and Read (1990). Thirty items from each of these tests were combined by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) to identify the four attachment dimensions which have emerged from theoretical and empirical work on attachment: Assured, Fearful, Dismissing and Preoccupied. Scoring of the RSQ yields scores on each of the four attachment factors for each participant. The Cronbach's alpha levels on these sub-scales for the present sample were: Assured (alpha = .40), Fearful (alpha = .45), Preoccupied (alpha = .38), and Dismissing (alpha = .59).

2.) Anger: *Multidimensional Anger Inventory (MAI)*

The Multidimensional Anger Inventory (Seigel, 1986) is a 38-item self-report assessing the behaviors and thoughts

which comprise the experience of anger. The six subscales and Cronbach's alpha levels of the MAI are: anger frequency (alpha = .87), hostile outlook (alpha = .66), self-directed or suppressed anger (alpha = .49), anger magnitude (alpha = .64), outwardly-directed or expression of anger (alpha = .17), and anger duration (alpha = .45).

3.) Attributions: *The Relationship Attribution Measure (RAM)*

The RAM (Fincham and Bradbury, 1992) asks participants to report on causality and responsibility for negative behaviors by one's intimate other (i.e.: criticism, inattention, aloofness, intolerance, compliments). Correlations of subscales with anger and marital satisfaction suggest that there is some discriminating power in the RAM's capacity to identify angry and dissatisfied couples. Cronbach's alpha's for the RAM subscales were consistently at about the .80 level and greater.

4.) Emotional State: *Affect Adjective Checklist (AACL)*

The Affect Adjective Checklist (AACL; Russell and Mehrabian, 1974) is a 16-item self-report of one's emotional state in the moment. This scale consists of bipolar affect adjective pairs (i.e., sad/not sad). Higher scores on the AACL indicate more intense emotional states. This measure was used to gauge affective states elicited by the conflict audiotapes. These composite scales were comprised of items which clustered together in factor analysis of AACL responses. Factor analysis revealed clusters of anger and anxiety items on the AACL. Depending on the type of conflict, the Composite Anger cluster accounted for 29-40% of the variance, and the Composite Anxiety scale accounted for 11-14% of the variance in AACL scores. The Composite Anger measure was comprised of the following items: tense, angry, aggressive, hostile, irritated, and annoyed. Cronbach's alpha for these composite scales ranged from .70 to .93.

5.) Attributions about Conflict Scenarios

A series of questions intending to ascertain participants' construal of the audiotapes of conflict were assembled based on the work of Holtzworth-Monroe and Jacobson (1985) and Fincham and Bradbury (1992). Items on this questionnaire sought out how participants explained the motivations and culpabilities of the conflicting parties.

6.) Relationship Satisfaction: *Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS)*

The administration of 32-item Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976) is a measure of contentment and satisfaction with one's romantic relationship. This measure served as a manipulation check between attachment groups, as well as predictor of emotional response to conflict.

Stimuli.

Audiotapes of 3-4 minute vignettes of conflict were created by theater students under the guidance of the author. Conflicts were geared to the age group of the participants involved in the study, with the actors taking the roles of either university students in dating or working relationships. Three conflict situations, all involving a male and female, were generated to test the hypotheses in question; Abandonment and Engulfment scenarios (both with dating couples) and co-worker conflicts were simulated.

The Abandonment conflict involved the female actor asserting a desire to reclaim some of her lost autonomy and be less involved in the relationship. The Engulfment tape consisted of the female actor becoming angry that the male was not willing to move to a deeper relationship of greater closeness. Finally, the co-worker tape concerned the difficulties in working together on a university course project. The actors were asked to make the conflicts heated and emotionally intense by raising their voices and becoming verbally abusive where appropriate.

As a precautionary measure, the tapes were rated on affective intensity by a pilot sample. Vignettes were judged to be similar in their affective intensity, and hence this stimulus-bound variable was not a confound in the interpretation of effects.

Procedure

Participants were initially asked to take a package of measures home with them which consisted of the RSQ, MAI, RAM and others not used in the present study. Participants then returned within a few days to do the experimental part of the study which involved the conflict audiotapes. To enhance the attention participants paid to audiotape events they were asked to try to empathize with the male actor in each vignette, to try to imagine how they would be feeling if they were in that situation. Harvey et al (1980) reported achieving greater participant involvement using this approach, in the form of more attributional statements about conflict vignettes.

All experimentation was done individually. Participants completed a measure of emotional state (AACL) before the tapes began. Three conflicts were then heard with headphones on a portable stereo, one at a time, with participants completing measures of emotional state and attribution after each vignette. Total time for this audiotape portion of the study was about 30 minutes. The order in which participants heard the conflicts was counterbalanced to ensure that differences due to sequence of conflict presentation would not emerge.

The study looked at differences both within- and between-subjects. The within-subject variables were the affective and attributional responses to the three audiotapes. The AACL and attributional measures were the dependent measures for these within-subject variables. The between-groups variable of interest was attachment style.

The RSQ was the measure used to establish the attachment groups, and the RAM, MAI, and AACL were compared at the between-groups level.

Results

Descriptive Attachment Group Differences

It was earlier noted that attachment groups (Secure, Avoidant, Anxious) varied in theoretically predicted ways in their attachment dimension (Assured, Fearful, Dismissing, Preoccupied) profiles. Further to the validity of relationship differences between attachment groups, they also varied in their satisfaction with past relationships. One-way ANOVA's with Tukey contrasts revealed differences between attachment groups in their level of satisfaction in close relationships. The Secure group was more satisfied with their past romantic relationships than the Avoidant group, but not the Anxious group, $F(2,68) = 3.45$, $p < .05$. Avoidant individuals also reported that their childhoods were less satisfying than the Secure group, but not different from the Anxious group, $F(2,68) = 5.79$, $p < .01$. These differences in satisfaction with past relationships lend validity to the distinctions between attachment groups, as they are consistent with past research (Simpson, 1990).

A Note on the Presented Data

As a preliminary aside, it should be noted that some of the tables in this thesis contain a large number of comparisons, resulting in the inflation of Type 1 error. In many instances where tables are presented which contain a large number of comparisons or results the intention is merely to provide descriptive information as to observed effects. Every effort was made to exclude non-significant findings from the tables, but in those instances where such data is presented, please be advised that the author is aware of concerns around Type 1 error and carefully

considered inclusion of outcomes based on the need to balance descriptive information while minimizing false postive errors.

Attachment and Lifestyle Anger

This study's initial set of hypotheses were concerned with the possible relationships between attachment style and experiences of anger in everyday life (as opposed to experimentally-elicited anger). The relationships between Bartholomew's attachment dimensions and total anger scores on the MAI are presented in Table 1. The focus in this table is on the extent to which different elements of attachment in each participant are correlated with anger patterns. This is a within-subjects analysis, as opposed to an examination of differences in anger between the three attachment groups.

The correlations strongly suggested that a greater sense of Assuredness in close relationships was associated with less anger as part of one's lifestyle, $r(72) = -.38$, $p < .01$. In contrast, the greater one's avoidant Fearfulness that close others are unlikely to meet intimacy needs, the greater one's tendency to have a robust lifestyle anger, $r(72) = .58$, $p < .01$. Anxious Preoccupation with intimacy issues was associated with the tendency to have a discernible level of trait anger as part of one's experience, $r(72) = .24$, $p < .05$. Dismissing attachment was unrelated to one's trait anger.

A MANOVA conducted to detect possible differences between attachment groups on anger was significant, $F(14,128) = 1.82$, $p < .05$. Anger scores of the attachment groups were considered in further detail using a series of oneway ANOVA's. Table 2 presents differences between groups on anger scores. It can been seen that the Avoidant group had higher scores than the Secure group on anger frequency, $F(2,69) = 5.29$, $p < .01$, magnitude $F(2,69) = 5.16$, $p < .01$, hostility, $F(2,69) = 5.94$, $p < .01$, and total anger $F(2,69)$

= 6.91, $p < .01$. The Anxious group was not significantly different from the Secure group on any of the anger dimensions, although this group did differ from the Avoidant group in their level of hostility, $F(2,69) = 5.94$, $p < .05$. In short, the Secure group reported anger had less of a role in their experiences than the Avoidant group, with the exception of anger expression and duration where the groups did not differ.

Attachment and Attribution

The second cluster of analyses sought to examine the manner in which attribution about negative behavior by a past or present girlfriend could be related to anger and attachment style. The correlations between total anger score and attributions are reported in Table 3. These analyses revealed a tendency for lifestyle anger to be associated with the presence of distress-maintaining attributions in one's previous relationships. This tendency was strongest for attributions of responsibility to the intimate other for the behavior (intentional, selfish reasons, blameworthy). Attributing cause for negative events to one's partner (her fault, stability, generalizing) were less robust than responsibility, with the exception of the stability item.

The observed pattern of correlations between anger and attribution suggests that an angry temperament is closely involved with the tendency to hold one's girlfriend responsible for aversive behavior and to construe her behavior as malicious and negative. For example, participants high in trait anger tended to see their partner's negative behavior as unlikely to change in the future, $r(72) = .28$, $p < .05$, intentional as opposed to caused by an oversight or forgetfulness, $r(72) = .33$, $p < .01$, motivated by selfish reasons, $r(72) = .34$, $p < .01$, and cause for blame, $r(72) = .43$, $p < .01$.

The correlations between attachment dimensions and distress-maintaining attributions are reported in Table 4. It can be seen that one's level of Assured attachment did not appear to be associated with a tendency to attribute behavior in particular ways. For example, Assured attachment was unrelated to believing that negative behaviors were intended to spite or hurt, $r(72) = -.16$, $p > .05$, or that the negative behavior warranted blame, $r(72) = -.18$, $p > .05$. The exception to this trend was that Assuredness was correlated with believing that negative partner behavior would not persist, trustful instead that positive change could occur, $r(72) = -.31$, $p < .01$. This lack of relationship between attribution and the Assured dimension was not anticipated; it was predicted that this attachment component would be associated with a lack of distress-maintaining attributions in the form of significant negative correlations.

The link between attribution and attachment styles was more apparent with the insecure dimensions. High Fearfulness was associated with the belief that negative partner behavior would remain unchanged in the future, $r(72) = .36$, $p < .05$, was done on purpose to hurt or spite them, $r(72) = .30$, $p < .05$, and was done with selfish motivations, $r(72) = .25$, $p < .05$. Men with a strong Fearful attachment component were also inclined to believe that their partners deserved to be blamed for what they had done, $r(72) = .32$, $p < .05$.

The Preoccupied and Dismissing attachment dimensions had less robust ties to relationship attributions than the Fearful measure. Those with a strong Preoccupied element to their attachment tended to view their partner's negative behavior as stemming from selfish motivations, $r(72) = .25$, $p < .05$, and saw their partners as deserving blame for their conduct, $r(72) = .27$, $p < .05$. The only attributional statement significantly related to Dismissing attachment was

the belief that aversive behavior by one's partner was unlikely to change in the future, $r(72) = .33$, $p < .01$.

A MANOVA contrasting attributions between attachment groups approached, but failed to reach significance, $F(12,126) = 1.54$, $p = .11$. In light of the fact that the MANOVA was close to being significant, further analysis of between-group differences using one-way ANOVA's were conducted.

Attachment and Pre-Experimental Mood

The third hypothesis addressed the specificity assumption of attachment activation by examining the links between attachment styles and pre-stimulus affective state. Tables 5 and 6 report, among other results, the links between attachment dimensions and pre-test anger and anxiety respectively. Composite Anger was negatively correlated with the Assured attachment dimension, $r(72) = -.42$, $p < .01$, and positively associated with the Fearful, $r(72) = .51$, $p < .01$ and Dismissing dimensions, $r(72) = .24$, $p < .05$. In terms of Composite Anxiety, individuals with a strong Assured dimension tended to be less anxious at the beginning of the study, $r(72) = -.26$, $p < .05$, whereas those high in Fearful attachment exhibited pre-participation anxiety, $r(72) = .51$, $p < .01$, as did those with high Preoccupied scores, $r(72) = .29$, $p < .05$. These differences in how attachment dimensions were related to affect outside of the intimate interpersonal context ran against the hypothesized relationship. It had been anticipated that affective state in this situation would not be linked to attachment.

Attachment Style and Negative Affective Responses

Investigation of the relationship between attachment and anger responses are presented in Table 5. Correlations between attachment dimensions and Composite Anger responses to the conflict audiotapes are presented. High levels of Fearful attachment were associated with greater Composite

Anger to the Engulfment relationship conflict, $r(72) = .29$, $p < .05$, and to the working conflict, $r(72) = .28$, $p < .05$. Those with escalated Preoccupied attachment had marked Anger responses only to the Abandonment relationship tape, $r(72) = .30$, $p < .05$. Assured and Dismissing attachment dimensions were unrelated to Anger responses to any of the audiotaped conflicts. The Assured dimension failed to meet significance, but the trend was suggestive of an absence of anger in response to the conflicts.

Table 6 outlines the relationships between post-tape Composite Anxiety and attachment dimensions. Assured attachment was associated with lower levels of Composite Anxiety after listening to the Engulfment relationship conflict, $r(72) = -.29$, $p < .05$ and the work conflict, $r(72) = -.26$, $p < .05$. On the other hand, a prominent Fearful relationship style was linked to elevated Composite Anxiety responses to the Engulfment conflict, $r(72) = .31$, $p < .05$ and work conflict, $r(72) = .32$, $p < .05$. A robust link was observed between Composite Anxiety and Preoccupied attachment for the Abandonment conflict, $r(72) = .39$, $p < .01$, and also for the work conflict, $r(72) = .24$, $p < .05$. The observation that all attachment dimensions (except Dismissing) were linked with the Composite Anxiety responses to the Work conflict was not predicted by the fifth hypothesis, which suggested that specificity of attachment processes to intimate relationships would mean absence of a connection between attachment styles and affect in non-intimate conflict.

Effect of Conflict Type on Mood

A repeated measures ANOVA found a main effect for type of conflict in both Composite Anger reactions, $F(3,65) = 46.40$, $p < .001$, and Composite Anxiety reactions, $F(3,65) = 11.49$, $p < .001$. In other words, the conflict vignettes in themselves affected mood in different ways. The means and

standard deviations for Composite Anger and Anxiety elicited by each tape are presented in Table 7. The table provides descriptive information as to the ways that the conlict vignettes differentially effected mood. Three planned orthogonal contrasts were performed on the Composite Anger and Anxiety scores as part of repeated-measures univariate MANOVA's in order to examine the effects of the vignettes. Results of the planned orthogonal contrasts will be discussed first for Composite Anger, and then for Composite Anxiety.

The first contrast served as a manipulation check which verified that pre-tape levels of Composite Anger, $\underline{F}(1,69) = 144.62$, $\underline{p} < .001$, were less than levels reported after the tapes were heard. The second contrasts determined that anger differed as a function of whether the tapes involved dating or working relationship conflict. More Composite Anger was observed in response to the work than the dating conflicts, $\underline{F}(1,67) = 13.76$, $\underline{p} < .001$. The finding that anger was greater in response to the working conflict than the intimate conflicts was not anticipated by the fifth hypothesis, which predicted that less anger would be elicited by the work conflict than the intimate conflicts. The final set of planned orthogonal contrasts compared Composite Anger elicited by the two dating conflicts. The Abandonment and Engulfment tapes did not differ on level of Composite Anger elicited, $\underline{F}(1,69) = 2.0$, $\underline{p} > .05$.

The same contrasts were also conducted for the Composite Anxiety responses. The manipulation check contrast revealed significantly less Composite Anxiety at pre-test than following the tapes, $\underline{F}(1,69) = 19.61$, $\underline{p} < .001$. In comparing intimate with work conflict, Composite Anxiety was greater in response to the dating conflicts, $\underline{F}(1,69) = 18.06$, $\underline{p} < .001$. Contrasting the intimate conflicts showed that Composite Anxiety was higher in response to the

Abandonment tape than the Engulfment tape, $F(1,69) = 20.11$, $p < .001$.

It is also noteworthy that paired t-tests revealed significantly more Composite Anger than Composite Anxiety in response to the Engulfment, $t(71) = 7.47$, $p < .001$, and Work tapes, $t(71) = 8.68$, $p < .001$. On the other hand, participants reported more pre-experimental Composite Anxiety than Composite Anger, $t(69) = 3.88$, $p < .001$. Composite Anger and Composite Anxiety did not differ in response to the Engulfment scenario.

Attachment Style, Type of Conflict and Mood

Differences between attachment groups in response to the tapes were of prime importance in hypothesis four. Between-groups repeated measures ANOVA's were conducted on Composite Anger and Anxiety responses to conflicts; attachment style was the between-groups variable while Composite Anger and Anxiety were the within-subjects repeated measures. These results are presented in Table 8. Figures 2 and 3 present the relationships between attachment styles and Composite Anger and Anxiety respectively, and prove helpful in reference to the following discussions. Those results pertaining to Composite Anger will be discussed first, followed by those dealing with Composite Anxiety.

The attachment style by conflict type interaction was significant for Composite Anger, $F(6,128) = 2.44$, $p < .05$. Responses of the Anxious group to the intimate conflicts were responsible for this interaction. Whereas the Secure and Avoidant groups were angrier after the Engulfment than Abandonment tapes, the Anxious group was angrier following the Abandonment tape, $F(2,67) = 5.05$, $p < .01$. Attachment style approached significance as a main effect in Composite Anger responses, $F(2,67) = 2.52$, $p = .088$.

A repeated-measures ANOVA on the Composite Anxiety scale, however, did register differences between attachment groups in the form of a main effect, $F(2,67) = 6.37$, $p < .01$. The Secure group was significantly lower than the Avoidant group in Composite Anxiety. The Anxious group had levels of Composite Anxiety which did not differ from the Avoidant group, but were significantly higher than the Secure group for the Abandonment and Engulfment conflicts. The fact that attachment groups varied in the level of Composite Anxiety generated by the Work conflict was not anticipated; the principle of attachment specificity would argue that differences in emotional states should arise primarily in conflict between intimates. The attachment style by conflict interaction was not significant for Composite Anxiety, $F(6,132) = 1.54$, $p = .17$. Unlike anger, then, the Engulfment tape tended to elicit the most anxiety for all attachment styles, while the Work and Abandonment tapes generated much less anxiety.

Predicting Affective Reactions

A final way in which attachment, anger and attribution were brought together was by examining how they combined in the responses to conflict. A series of multiple regression equations were constructed which sought to identify the variables most predictive of Composite Anger and Anxiety responses to the experimental stimuli. Included as predictor variables were measures of attachment (RSQ dimensions), relationship contentment (DAS), attributions from past relationships (RAM), and attributions about events on the tape. A stepwise regression method was employed which identified predictor variables beginning with those accounting for the most variance and proceeding until all those variables making significant predictive contributions were included.

Those variables predicting Composite Anger responses to the tapes are presented in Table 9. The key variables associated with one's level of Composite Anger reaction to the Engulfment tape were: 1.) the extent of one's positive/negative feelings towards the female on the tape, 2.) whether or not it was believed that the female behaved as she did in the vignette in many other situations, 3.) believing that negative behavior by one's girlfriend would persist into the future (RAM item), and 4.) whether one believed that similar conflicts would be common to the relationship in the future. These four factors accounted for 37%, $\underline{F}(4,66) = 11.48$, $\underline{p} < .001$, of the variance in Composite Anger responses to the Engulfment tape.

One's level of Preoccupied attachment was the primary predictor of Composite Anger response to the Abandonment tape. Preoccupied attachment accounted for 10%, $\underline{F}(1,68) = 8.22$, $\underline{p} < .01$, of the variance in Composite Anger responses to the Abandonment tape.

Composite Anger responses to the Work tape were best predicted by one's levels of Preoccupied and Secure attachment. These variables explained 12%, $\underline{F}(2,68) = 5.91$, $\underline{p} < .01$, of the variance in the anger responses. The fact that attachment styles were predictive of Composite Anger was not anticipated given the theoretical specificity of attachment to intimacy anxiety; it had been anticipated that attachment indices would be predictive solely of affective responses in intimate conflicts.

The predictors of Composite Anxiety responses to the tapes are presented in Table 10. The Engulfment tape's Anxiety responses were predictable from: 1.) the extent to which the woman's behavior was felt to be similar in other situations, 2.) believing that negative behavior by one's girlfriend would persist into the future (RAM item) and 3.) degree to which her behavior was seen to be situation-driven

rather than trait-driven. These three variables accounted for 27%, $F(3,67) = 9.27$, $p < .001$, of the variance in Composite Anxiety scores following the Engulfment tape.

Composite Anxiety responses to the Abandonment tape were predicted by Preoccupied attachment and dissatisfaction with past relationships according to the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. These factors accounted for 29%, $F(2,67) = 9.28$, $p < .001$, of the variance in Composite anxiety responses to the Abandonment tape. The fact that the anxious Preoccupied dimension contributed the most predictive power to Composite Anxiety reactions to a scenario involving potential loss of intimacy is a strong statement about validity and consistency in the experimental measures and stimuli.

Fearful attachment was the primary predictor of Composite Anxiety responses to the Work conflict tape. This variable explained 10%, $F(1,69) = 7.81$, $p < .01$, of the variance in the Composite Anxiety responses to the Work tape.

Discussion

The present research has focussed on how attachment processes relate to the experience of negative affect and conflict in close relationships. The findings further validate the distinctions between attachment groups in the experience of interpersonal discord. Results were generally supportive of the hypothesized relationships between attachment, attribution and mood. Figure 4 provides an overview of the major findings of the study, outlining differences between attachment categories.

Attachment Style Differences

Analysis of the relationship between attachment and lifestyle anger indicated that the Secure group had a much weaker profile than the Avoidant group on a variety of lifestyle anger dimensions. Unexpectedly, however, the

Anxious group failed to differ from either the Secure or Avoidant groups on almost all of these lifestyle anger measures. This absence of significant differences between the Anxious and Secure groups could reflect the possibility that anger for Anxious men is not so much a trait-like structure mapped onto many situations as it is an emotion elicited by particular situational contexts. The plausibility of this argument is strengthened by the Anxious group's affective responses to the audiotapes, to be addressed later in this section. High scores on the Preoccupied attachment dimension (a defining characteristic of the Anxious group) were positively correlated with lifestyle anger, however, suggesting that Anxious attachment is linked with trait anger, though not as robustly as for the Avoidant group.

Investigation of the relationship between attachment and attributions in close relationships found that the Avoidant group was more likely than the Secure group to view their girlfriends as causing, and responsible for, negative relationship events. On the other hand, the lack of association between emotional Assuredness and distress-maintaining attributions had not been anticipated. In evaluating this unexpected finding, perusal of the literature on marital attributions reveals that the presence of an attributional style, namely the tendency to explain diverse negative relationship events in similar ways that maintain or maximize distress, is associated with unhappy relationships (Bradbury and Fincham, 1990). Additional implications of the present findings regarding attachment and an attributional style emphasizing and exaggerating aversive events will be discussed later in this section.

In terms of how attachment groups were anticipated to differ in their affective responses to the tapes, support was found for between-group differences on anxiety. However,

results for anger responses failed to completely support the anticipated outcomes. It had been predicted that the Avoidant group would experience significantly more anger than the Secure group in response to the intimate conflict. Although the data trended in this direction, differences between attachment groups on anger responses failed to reach significance. In trying to understand this result, one can consider studies of expression of negative affect by Avoidant individuals. Specifically, research has recently demonstrated that those with an Avoidant psychological profile lack awareness of their emotional state more than the other attachment groups, and distance themselves from perceptions of their negative mood states (Kobak and Sceery, 1988; Mikulincer, Florian, and Weller, 1993). Lower anger responses to the tapes from Avoidant individuals than expected could perhaps be attributed to this group's decreased awareness of their emotional state.

Anxiety responses to the conflict tapes bore more favourably on hypothesized attachment group differences. It was found that the Secure group had significantly less anxiety in response to the intimate conflicts than the Avoidant group. The Secure group did not differ from the Anxious group in anxiety responses to conflict over increased closeness, but had less anxiety than this group in response to loss of intimacy. Furthermore, anxiety responses supported the construct validity of the Anxious group: their low anxiety over greater relationship closeness, but great fear in the face of increased emotional distance is in keeping with previous research (Simpson, Rholes and Nelligan, 1992). This finding about the Anxious group's reactions was also borne out by the predictive regression models, which found the Preoccupied dimension to be particularly useful in the determination of both anger and anxiety levels in response to conflict over intimacy loss.

Exploration of the specificity of attachment turned up unexpected results. Theoretically, attachment styles are activated by situations of acute distress in the context of close interpersonal relationships. On this basis it had been anticipated that attachment groups would not differ in their emotional state at pre-test. Instead it was clear that the tendency to have prominent insecure dimensions (i.e., Fearful, Preoccupied, Dismissing) was linked to high levels of negative affect. Meanwhile, the higher one's Assuredness the lower one's level of pre-tape negative affect. This is especially important when considered along with inquiry into the notion that attachment exerts its greatest influence in situations of *intimate* distress.

Partial support was noted for the prediction that attachment groups would not differ in their emotional reactions to work conflicts on the grounds of attachment's specificity element. The groups did not differ in the intensity of their anger response to the co-worker conflict. Despite this, however, the Preoccupied attachment dimension proved to be a significant predictor of anger responses to the co-worker conflict. Also unexpectedly, the Avoidant and Anxious groups were significantly higher than the Secure group on anxiety responses to the Work tape. Specificity would suggest that the groups would not differ in their anxiety responses. Additionally, correlational analyses showed that all dimensions except Dismissing were significantly correlated with anxiety responses to the Work conflict.

Attachment and Anger

Both anger and attachment are emotional ways of relating to the social world, and both claim roots in early development (Bowlby, 1973). The fact that such strong connections were observed between attachment and anger was somewhat surprising. Previous research only tangentially

dealt with the attachment-anger link (Bartholomew and Horwitz, 1991). The results of the present research offer information about important ways in which those with different attachment styles diverge in their interpersonal experience of anger.

The Avoidant group reported anger was a common ingredient of their everyday experience, but when they listened to the audiotapes they reported no more anger than either the Secure or Anxious groups. Suggesting that the tapes failed to elicit emotional reactions does not hold: anger responses to the tapes were significanty greater than pre-test anger. The interaction between attachment and type of conflict, wherein the Anxious group displayed more anger to Abandonment than Engulfment conflict, also weakens this possible explanation for the unprojected reactions of the Avoidant group. A stronger explanation for Avoidant anger responses to the tapes draws on previous attachment studies showing that Avoidantly attached individuals tend to deny negative affect and inhibit emotional expressions in response to distress (Kobak and Sceery, 1988; Mikulincer, Florian, and Tolmatz, 1990). When the responses of the Avoidant group are viewed in this light their low levels of reported anger may reflect that they were less in tune with their emotional state than the other groups, and therefore provided reports of their mood which were less than accurate. In essence, it may be possible that the Avoidant group had prominent trait anger due to items tapping behavioral and cognitive elements of anger on the MAI (i.e., "I tend to get angry more frequently than other people."), but when responses to conflict were called for they were able to only partially tap into their emotional experience of anger. The present study indicates that further research on how attachment groups differ in awareness of their affective states during distress requires further attention.

A second notable finding in terms of anger and attachment involved the responses of the Anxious group to the audiotapes. The significant attachment style by conflict type interaction for anger was caused by the Anxious group's report of significantly more anger in response to a loss than an increase in intimacy. The Secure and Avoidant groups were more angry over an increase, than a loss, of intimacy. It was consistent with attachment theory that the Anxious group would become more aroused to a threat of being left than the threat of being "swamped" with greater closeness. The emotional reactivity of the Anxious group was also consistent with research which has shown that these individuals tend to respond to distress at an emotional level (Kobak and Sceery, 1988; Mikulincer, Florian and Tolmatz, 1990). In this study it was found that those with Anxious attachment demonstrated reactivity in their anger, as well as anxiety, responses to conflict.

The fact that anger was such a prominent part of the Anxious group's responses to the vignettes in the absence of a robust lifestyle anger pattern underscores an important research consideration. Namely, self reports may not tell the whole story about peoples' anger: how angry they become, or what conditions fuel their anger. Experimental examination of how individual differences and situations interact require attention as well.

Elicitation of Anger to Conflict

One of the experimental outcomes which warranted special attention was the finding that the co-worker conflict elicited more anger than the the intimate conflicts. On the basis of attachment research it was projected that anger would be more salient in situations of intimate than non-intimate conflict for all attachment groups. The results, on the other hand, would indicate at first face that anger was more readily elicted in the

context of non-intimate relationships. Four other alternative explanations for this result deserve mention. First, it could be that it was easier for men in the study to identify with the angry male in the co-worker vignette in dispute over the academic issue of course grades. Perhaps it was easier for students to relate to conflict over grades than conflict over relationships issues. Second and in a similar vein, the sample's lack of experience in close relationships could have contributed to intimacy matters being more difficult to relate to than a more common issue of academic scope. Third, perhaps it was safer or more socially acceptable to get angry with a co-worker than a romantic partner. This could have resulted in either the denial of anger towards the intimate other, or the reluctance to report it. A fourth alternative suggests that anger may be more readily expressed toward a partner than a co-worker. Therefore, if participants felt their anger would not be expressed as part of conflict with a co-worker they may have been more aware of anger brewing within them which would not be vented. Our understanding of the how the meaningfulness of relationships influences our emotional reactions to discord could benefit from further research.

A concluding remark on negative affect (and awareness thereof), attachment and intimacy could be fused draws on classic work in conflict. Dollard and Miller (1950) suggested that anger/anxiety conditions in early development could influence the development of personality dispositions. Of significance here is the way parents deal with their child's expression of anger. Punishing a child's anger response to distress out of existance could be particularly dangerous, as it could rob them of the tools necessary to develop assertiveness and confidence. On the basis of work in attachment it could also result in producing a child out of touch with their emotional state, a lack of awareness

which often goes uncorrected for years, if not permanently (Miller, 1990). The influence of early family experience in the development of how we come to experience and value negative emotional states is crucial, and the present research suggests that attachment has a role to play in our understanding of how these childhood patterns relate to adulthood.

Attachment and Development of Attributional Style

Research in attribution has addressed the issue of *attributional style*, namely the tendency to diverse negative relationship events and outcomes in ways that consistently maintain or maximize distress (see Bradbury and Fincham, 1990 for a review). It has been found that people in distressed relationships tend to routinely perceive negative events in ways that maintain discord. People with such an attributional style tend to explain a wide range of negative events with the same core thoughts, such as their partner meant to upset them, will continue to to cause problems, and will cause difficulties in many areas of the relationship (Baucom, Sayers and Duhe, 1989). Studies have differed in their reports of how attributions are made by people satisfied with their relationships. On the one hand, people in non-distressed relationships have been shown to react to negative relationship events in ways "that explained the behavior as being due to outside circumstances or to the partner's temporary state, involuntary, unintentional" (Holtzworth-Monroe and Jacobson, 1985, p. 1403). Baucom, Sayers, and Duhe (1989), on the other hand, found that those in satisfied relationships did not have a tendency to view negative events in a "minimizing" described by Holtzworth-Monroe and Jacobson (1985), but instead demonstrated wide variablility in the ways negative events were explained.

Findings in the present study more were consistent with Baucom, Sayers, and Duhe's (1989) study of relationship

satisfaction and attributional style than the work of Holtzworth-Monroe and Jacobson (1985). Insecure attachment working models tended to describe unfavorable events in ways that maximized the aversive impact of such events. Secure attachment was essentially unrelated to attribution patterns. However, some evidence in support of a "minimizing" tendency for satisfied participants did emerge. It was found that Assuredness was associated with believing the negative behavior of one's partner could change in the future. Also, regression equations suggested that minimizing the cause and responsiblity of the woman in the vignettes was associated with responses of less anger and anxiety. In sum, the present research is in keeping with past findings where evidence both supporting and disconfirming the associations between cognition and relationship adjustment have been found. It is clear as well that these attributional styles are part of the fabric of the experience of interpersonal discord.

Importantly, research on marital attributions has failed to consider the role of ontogenetic etiological factors which could contribute to the rise of the distress for which explanations are sought. In other words, although it has been noted that reports of dissatisfaction are associated with the particular patterns of explanation for problems, explanations for how those attributional styles arise have been sparse. One of the few commentaries on the development of attributional styles was offered by Bradbury and Fincham (1990). They proposed that a predisposition may lead those in distressed relationships to view the other's behavior as negative, unexpected or self-relevant. They labelled this predisposition the *primary process*, a system of selective attention guiding the types of interpersonal events people notice, or look for, which operates at a non-conscious level. The primary process, comprised of elements

propelling attribution, overlaps neatly with the tenets of the attachment working models studied in the present research.

The differences observed between attachment groups in their emotional and cognitive responses to aversive relationship events speaks to the possible role of attachment in the rise of primary process. It is reasonable to consider the primary process as constituted or shaped by one's working model of attachment, which influences patterns of attending to events in intimate relationships and explaining attachment figure behavior. In addition, Pipp and Harmon (1987) provided an account of how cognition and attachment could be connected in the interpersonal domain. They elaborated on the notion that attachment is incorporated at visceral and emotional (in addition to cognitive) levels of the person. They also noted that attachment begins with the physical synchronization of biological rhythms in infancy which remain entrenched throughout the lifetime as a component of sensorimotor equilibrium. Across the lifespan our bodies seek to maintain a familiar form of attachment at visceral and sensorimotor levels as part of our interpersonal experience. In short, the body's maintenance of these personal homeostatic norms could be a part of the primary process and its cognitive assessment of intimacy. Further research on links between attributional style, primary process and attachment could greatly facilitate our understanding of intimate experience. Also worthy of investigation would be the study of attributional style differences between attachment groups for positive relationship events in close relationships. Such explorations would be of great assistance in the integration of research on attachment, attributional styles and marital satisfaction.

Attachment and Attributional Style: Links to Anger

The present research has introduced attachment as an additional consideration in the study of anger and conflict in close relationships. Research exploring the connections between anger, attribution and aggression has resulted in findings relevant to the results of the present study. Research on an attributional style which tends to hold others responsible for negative events is particularly useful in contextualizing the present research. Weiner, Graham and Chandler (1982) found that when participants held another person responsible for negative events they were more likely to become angry. Fondacaro and Heller (1990) noted that aggressive boys were more likely than non-aggressive boys to make external person-centered blame for ambiguous problem situations. In a similar vein, Dodge and Tomlin (1987) found that aggressive adolescents were more likely than non-aggressive teens to construe the intentions of others as hostile in ambiguous problem situations. Attributional style, then, seems to be accompanied not only by relationship dissatisfaction, but by anger and aggression as well.

Comparable findings were noted in the present study. It was observed that Avoidant men attributed high levels of responsibility for unfavorable outcomes to their partners. These men also reported having anger as a strong component of their lifestyle. The present research indicated that insecurely attached men seem to have the attributional style elements, namely other-focussed loci of cause and responsibility, which other have shown are linked with anger and aggressiveness. Experimental work with audiotapes in the current research suggested that for both Avoidant and Anxious men, to a greater extent than Secure men, there was something operating which contributed to pronounced levels of negative affect, in the forms of anger and anxiety, when

faced with some distressful situations. To go beyond these findings in trying to ascertain the role of attachment in the sequence of psychological events culminating in abuse requires consideration of models of attempting to describe how agggression could be generated.

Implications for the Study of Aggression and Abuse

The present study has found that attachment, trait anger, and attributional style all play a role in the generation of anger and anxiety in close relationships. So if attachment, trait anger and attribution are involved in the intensity of negative affect experienced in response to interpersonal conflict, how would these dynamics be associated with aggression? Fondacaro and Heller (1990) proposed that attributing blame and hostile motivations to others could serve to enhance feelings of personal control by placing the source of anger in the social environment. Specifically, if something or someone in the environment is held accountable for negative events, one can take action towards preventing aversive events in the future: striking at the source to demonstrate the consequences of creating aversive situations. An externalizing attributional style facilitates a retaliatory response to dealing with interpersonal problems by suppressing the perceived source of the problem with threats and acts of aggression. Studies of psychological abuse by men in intimate relationships has suggested that the more prominent one's insecure attachment styles, and accompanying tendency to attribute externally, the greater the likelihood of being dominant with one's partner and also to isolate her from social ties (Dutton and Starzomski, 1992).

In applying this line of thinking to the present research, it should be noted that the attributional styles of insecure attachment working models attributed cause and responsibility for negative events out to their partners.

These men also had the most negative affect in their responses to conflict audiotapes, suggesting that they do indeed react more strongly to intimate distress. A case could be made that the propensity of insecurely attached men to attribute cause and responsibility to their partners would put them at risk for adopting aggressive solutions to resolve interpersonal disputes. These men would feel empowered by these options, a central motivation in the perpetration of intimate violence (Dutton and Browning, 1988). This theory is consistent with the anger/anxiety template theory advanced by Dutton, Saunders and Bartholomew (1992). The ways in which the present study's findings about the insecure styles relate to the anger/anxiety template deserves further attention.

The present study raised the possiblity that those with Anxious styles may be at risk for becoming emotionally explosive in particular situations, namely abandonment. If the men believe that venting that emotional state in the form of violence is condonable they would seem to be at risk to aggress against the person they construe as responsible for their aversive state. Exploring the situational role of anger and the emotional ways in which this group deals with distressing situations calls out for further consideration.

Another important issue with respect to emotional responses and insecure attachment was concern over the extent to which men were aware of their emotional state. If Avoidant men distance themselves from the negative emotions of distress in a close relationship, that emotional state may go unchecked until a violent boiling point is reached. Further research is needed in order to determine the ways in which attachment styles are associated with the awareness of one's emotional state. If Avoidant men are out of touch with their emotional state, possibly predisposing them to surprisingly reach anger boiling points, then research could

begin exploring ways to prevent this cycle from occuring. It would seem that exploring empathic awareness and communication skills as a way of enhancing attention paid to emotional states could prove useful in redressing the denial of emotion in personal experience.

By addressing interpersonal process through experimental stimuli, in addition to questionnaires, this research has cast a broader net than many studies exploring the psychology of abuse. Studies of aggression have often relied primarily on self report questionnaires which provide information biased in self-perception and self-disclosure (Dutton and Starzomski, in press). On the other hand, experimental work yields information to be reconciled with questionnaire data. For example, the fact that the Avoidant group had lower levels of situational anger responses than one would expect given the strong questionnaire findings about their trait anger may be important, but wouldn't have been detected in an epistemology consisting solely of questionnaire methods. Experimental simulation of conflict can provide a testing ground for theories of how the chain of command operates in the perpetration of abuse.

At a broader level, examining this study's outcomes has not proven to be a simple task. The picture which has emerged from this study is not totally clear. What has become apparent is these attachment styles do not have indubitable claims to unique forms of emotional experience in a trait-like form. There is a tendency for those with different attachment styles to react in similar to ways to one distressing matter, and then to react very differently to another issue. Therefore, caution is advised in attempts to map attachment categories and their "stereotypical" responses onto real-world events, including abuse. Attachment theory, as this study shows, is not able to account for even most of the diversity in how people manage

intimate distress. But that by no means implies that there is no place for attachment in the study of abusive relationships.

What became apparent in this study, however, was that Secure people tended to report both low levels of trait anger, as well as to remain relatively unaroused in the face of the conflict vignettes. The results with respect to the insecure groups required more attention in order to come to grips with some unexpected outcomes. Theories of violence which suggest that abuse is caused mainly by particular types of attachment styles are clearly missing the complex way in which these systems influence behavior. Researchers are a long way from being able to deal with the myriad of outcomes observable from these styles. As of yet there is no clear way of separating abusers from non-abusers on the basis of assessments of attachment. Further research is clearly needed before the practical applications of attachment theory can be foreseen, let alone employed. In short, the temptation to employ a view of attachment structures' influence in interpersonal events which clings to a reductionistic model is clearly premature.

General Conclusions and Future Directions

The focus of the present study on the processes of conflict and psychological processes in intimacy fits into a niche all of its own in terms of related work in developmental, social, and forensic psychology. A look at how other theories of intrapersonal events overlap with the present study serves to highlight unequalled elements of potential originated here. No other researchers have combined attachment theory with social cognition in the specific domain of intimate interpersonal conflict. The work of Collins (1992) consisted of linking attachment, mood, and

attribution, but she did not deal with the specific issues of conflict. Others have endeavoured to grapple with interpersonal conflict and ignored attachment (Fincham and Bradbury, 1987), focussing instead on the power of attribution. A theory put forward by Betancourt and Blair (1992) integrated emotion and Weiner's (1985, 1986) theory of attribution, the dominant one in field today, into a model for predicting aggression. Their model, however, neglects the emotional meaningfulness of interpersonal connections as addressed in attachment theory. In addition, Bradbury and Fincham (1987) pointed out that Weiner's accounts of motivation have not emphasized the attributions of cause and responsibility, which have been uncovered as the primary dimensions of concern in the dysfunctional marital attribution research.

An area of research carved out by the present study concerns attributional style, a key element of the anger/anxiety template theory. It was observed that Avoidant men tended to have an attributional style which played up the role of their partner in aversive negative relationship events, contrary to men with a Secure attachment style. This cognitive step in the template theory received some support in the results of the present study. On the other hand, there could be a lot of men who are Avoidantly attached, who have an angry and attributional style, but who do not abuse their partners.

Additional research is clearly needed in order to refine our sense of how attachment, attributional style and context influence emotional and behavioral reactions to conflict. One important topic for future research involves further exploration of the experience of anger in intimacy in the context of attachment. The present research suggests that the emotional arousal of the Anxious group is particulary noteworthy, despite the fact that previous

research has looked mainly at the Avoidant group's characteristics. Also of interest in this area would be gaining some idea as to possible differences between attachment groups in awareness of their own emotional states while in situations of intimate distress. Additionally, it also seems important to further evaluate the role of situations as triggers of attachment working models and attributional styles. Contextual cues clearly impact on the extent to which individuals become emotionally aroused in conflict situations. Incorporating a decidedly developmental approach to research in the emergence of attachment style differences in intimate relationships could also assist researchers searching for the causes and solutions to abusive adult relationships. The exploration of epistemological alternatives to questionnaire research, such as narrative studies or observations of reactions to actual interpersonal stimuli, seem to be necessary in order to assemble a more accurate understanding of the psychology of conflict than we currently have.

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Table 1.

Correlations Between Attachment and Anger Total.

	Anger Total
Attachment Dimension	
Assured	-.38**
Fearful	.58**
Preoccupied	.24*
Dismissing	.19

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 2.

Means (& Standard Deviations) of Attachment Groups on Anger Dimensions.

	Attachment Group			
	Secure (n=22)	Avoidant (n=31)	Anxious (n=17)	F
Anger (MAI) Dimension				
In	16.57 (3.7)	18.41 (3.0)	16.18 (3.7)	3.17 *
Out	10.17 (2.6)	10.34 (2.0)	11.41 (1.5)	1.91
Frequency	8.61 (3.8) a	12.13 (3.8) b	10.06 (4.7)	5.29 **
Duration	4.74 (1.7)	5.47 (1.4)	4.94 (1.9)	1.45
Magnitude	8.57 (2.4) a	11.06 (2.6) b	9.29 (4.1)	5.16 **
Hostility	14.17 (3.9) a	17.03 (3.5) b	14.02 (3.3) a	5.94 **
Total	64.35 (14.4) a	78.16 (11.4) b	69.54 (17.0)	6.91 **

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Means followed by different letters vary at $p < .05$.

Table 3.

Correlations Between Anger and Distress-Maintaining Attributions from Actual Relationships.

	Anger Total
Distress-Maintaining Attributions About Partner	
Her fault	.17
No change in future	.28 *
Generalizes to other issues	.22
Controllable	.33 **
Motivated by selfish reasons	.34 **
Blameworthy	.43 ***

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 4.

Correlations Between Attachment Styles and Distress-Maintaining Attributions from Actual Relationships.

	Distress-Maintaining Attributions					
Attachment Dimension	Her fault	No change in future	Generalizes to other issues	Intentional	Selfish Reasons	Blameworthy
Assured	-.08	-.31 **	-.05	-.16	-.15	-.18
Fearful	.14	.36 **	.18	.30 *	.25 *	.33 **
Preocc.	.21	.00	.00	.10	.25 *	.26 *
Dismiss.	.16	.33 **	.13	.19	.10	.13

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 5

Correlations Between Attachment Dimensions and Composite Anger States.

	Attachment Dimensions			
	Assured	Fearful	Dismissing	Preoccupied
Stimuli				
Pretest	-.39 **	.51 **	.24 *	.20
Engulfment	-.21	.29 *	.16	.09
Abandonment	-.08	.16	-.12	.30 *
Work	-.23	.28 *	-.04	.19

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 6.

Correlations Between Attachment Dimensions and Composite Anxiety States.

	Attachment Dimensions			
	Assured	Fearful	Dismissing	Preoccupied
Stimuli				
Pretest	-.21	.51 **	.17	.29 *
Engulfment	-.29 *	.31 *	.09	.21
Abandonment	-.23	.21	-.11	.39 **
Work	-.26 **	.32 **	-.02	.24 *

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 7.

Means Scores (& Standard Deviations) on Composite Anger and Anxiety Scales Pre- and Post-Tapes.

	1 Pre-test	2 Engulfment	3 Abandonment	4 Work
Anger	12.8 (6.6)	26.9 (12.6)	25.4 (12.4)	29.9 (13.5)

Orthogonal Contrasts:

1.) 1 v. 2,3,4 : F (1,69) = 144.62 ***

2.) 2,3 v. 4 : F (1,69) = 13.76 ***

3.) 2 v.3 : F (1,69) = 1.97

	1 Pre-test	2 Engulfment	3 Abandonment	4 Work
Anxiety	15.7 (8.9)	18.9 (9.6)	23.8 (12.1)	18.0 (7.8)

Orthogonal Constrasts

1.) 1 v. 2,3,4 : F (1,69)= 19.61 ***

2.) 2,3 v. 4 : F (1,69) = 18.06 ***

3.) 2 v.3 : F (1,69)= 20.11 ***

Note. *** $p < .001$

Table 8.

Means (& Standard Deviations) of Attachment Groups on Anger and Anxiety Responses to Conflict Tapes.

	Attachment Group			
	Secure (n=22)	Avoidant (n=31)	Anxious (n=17)	F
Anger				
1.) Engulfment	24.48 (12.9)	29.75 (11.1)	26.23 (14.3)	1.26
2.) Abandonment	22.39 (13.0)	25.91 (12.1)	30.12 (11.4)	1.96
3.) Work	25.73 (14.4)	33.16 (13.4)	30.12 (11.4)	2.08
Anxiety				
1.) Engulfment	14.82 (6.9) a	22.34 (9.8) b	19.24 (11.3)	4.30 *
2.) Abandonment	17.65 (10.7) a	26.31 (11.6) b	28.18 (11.8) b	5.38 **
3.) Work	14.04 (5.9) a	19.31 (6.9) b	20.94 (9.6) b	5.21 **

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.
Means followed by different letters vary at $p < .05$.

Table 9.

Prediction of Anger Responses to Conflict Tapes.

	B	SE B	beta	T
1.) *Engulfment*				
Negative attitude towards woman	3.23	.93	.35	3.47 ***
She often behaves like this with men	2.54	1.07	.24	2.37 *
Her negative behavior will persist	.42	.19	.21	2.21 *
Conflict occurs frequently	3.42	1.66	.20	2.07 *
Multiple R = .64		Adj. R Square = .37		
F (4,66) = 11.48 ***				
2.) *Abandonment*				
Preoccupied Attachment	1.28	.45	.33	2.87 **
Multiple R = .33		Adj. R Square = .10		
F (1,68) = 8.22 **				
3.) *Work*				
Preoccupied Attachment	1.34	.49	.31	2.74 **
Secure Attachment	-1.02	.47	-.24	-2.17 *
Multiple R = .39		Adj. R Square = .12		
F= (2,68) = 5.91 **				

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 10.

Prediction of Anxiety Responses to Conflict Tapes.

	B	SE B	beta	T
1.) *Engulfment*				
She often behaves like this with men	2.46	.91	.29	2.71 **
Her negative behavior will persist	.40	.17	.25	2.40 *
Her behavior caused by the situation, not her traits	-1.63	.77	-.23	-2.11 *
Multiple R = .54		Adj. R Square = .27		
F (3,67) = 9.27 ***				
2.) *Abandonment*				
Preoccupied Attachment	1.48	.43	.37	3.45 ***
Dyadic Adjustment (Satisfaction with Past Relationships)	-.23	.10	-.26	-2.36 *
Multiple R = .58		Adj. R Square = .29		
F (2,67) = 9.28 ***				
3.) *Work*				
Fearful Attachment	.84	.30	.32	2.80 ***
Multiple R = .32		Adj. R Square = .10		
F (1,69) = 7.81 **				

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 1

Attachment Dimension Scores by Attachment Group

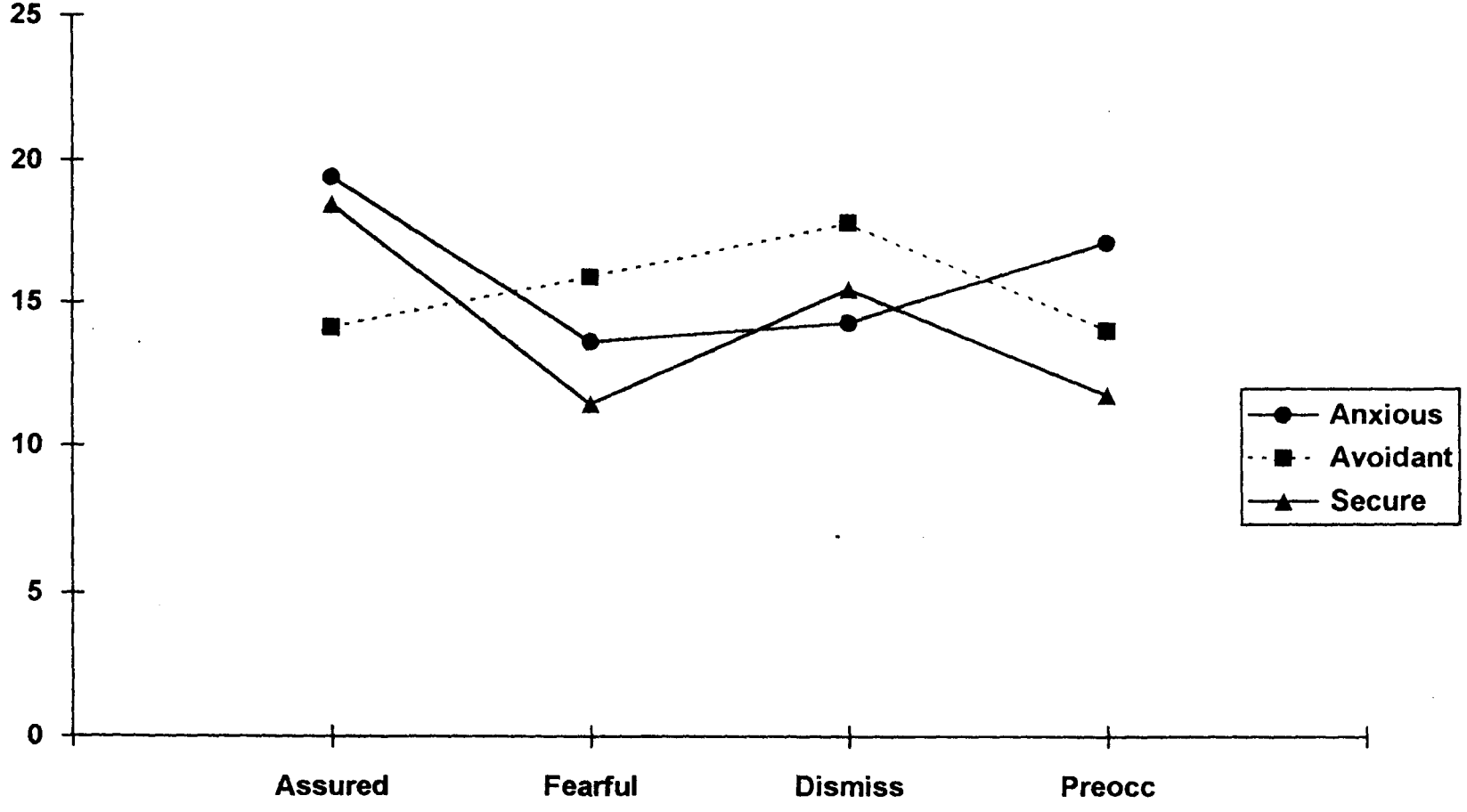

Figure 2

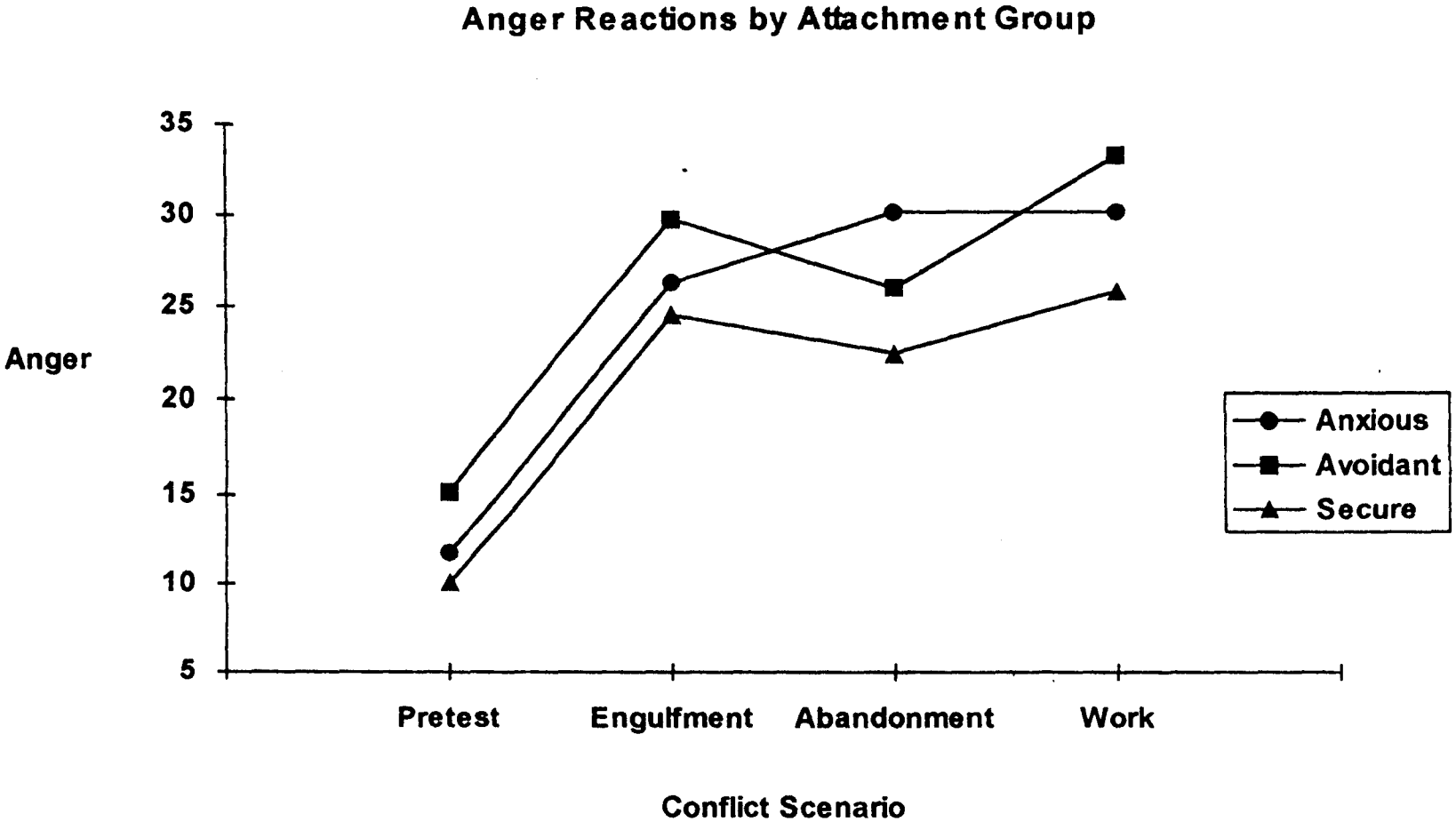
Anger Reactions by Attachment Group
Anger
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
Pretest
Engulfment
Abandonment
Work
Conflict Scenario
Anxious
Avoidant
Secure

Figure 3

Anxiety Reactions by Attachment Group

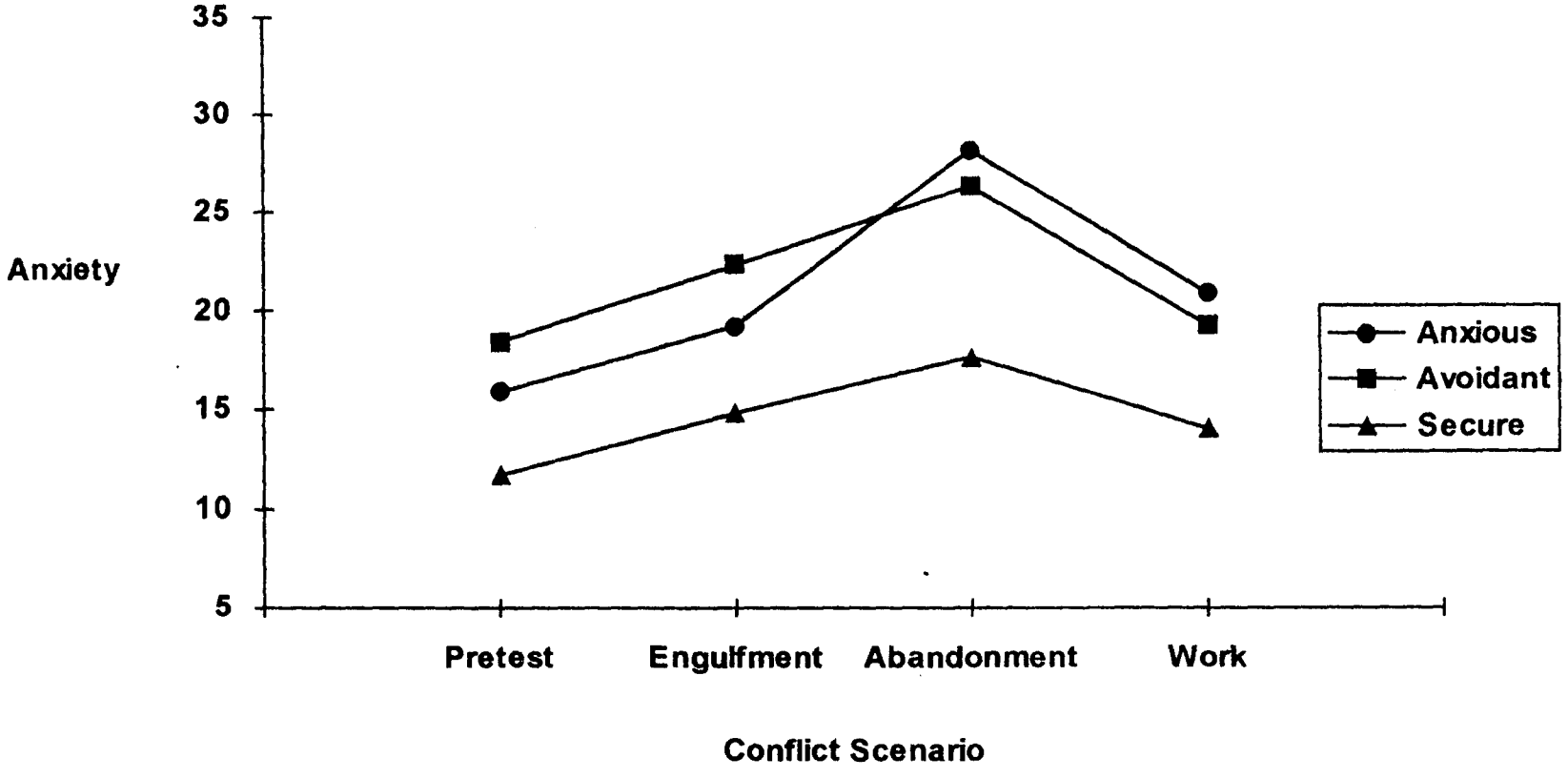

Figure 4

Aspects of Anger, Attribution and Affect for Different Attachment Styles

	Secure	Avoidant	Anxious
Description of style	comfortable with interdependence; able to trust and be trusted; absence of anxiety over relationship failure: comfort with aloneness	absence of approach behavior; rejection of others' attempts to comfort; fearful and dismissing of intimacy	constant pursuit of attachment figure fear of potential relationship loss & unmet emotional needs
Anger	anger is infrequent, neither intense nor hostile; tends not to internalize anger	frequent anger which is hostile and heated; tends to internalize and not externalize	resembles both sec. & av., but can direct anger outward & tends not to be hostile
Attribution	"negative events will be rare in the future"	"her negative behavior was intended, selfishly motivated, & will persist; I blame her"	"she was motivated by selfish reasons & I blame her"
Reactions to Stimuli	lowest anxiety to Engulf, Abandon & Work; unrelated to anger responses	high anxiety to Engulf, Abandon & Work; predictive of anxiety to Engulf; tended to get angry to Engulf and Work	average anxiety to Engulf., high to Work; predictive of anger to Abandon Engulf & Work; predictive of anxiety to Abandon