THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEGATIVE EMOTIONS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES UPON EXPOSURE TO INTIMATE COUPLE CONFLICTS: AN INVESTIGATION USING THE ARTICULATED THOUGHTS DURING SIMULATED SITUATIONS PARADIGM

by

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ABSTRACT

Jealousy induces behavioural, cognitive, and emotional responses when a person suspects that his or her partner is interested in another person. While jealousy is not a new phenomenon to the 21st century, there is little empirical evidence providing support for a theoretical model to explain the various ways individuals react when jealous. Most of the literature on jealousy emotions has focused on anger and its effects; however, jealousy is a composite of negative emotions. The main emotions associated with jealousy are anger, anxiety, fear, and sadness; however, the fear, anxiety, and sadness emotions have not been teased apart from anger and thoroughly studied in regards to jealousy conflicts. Understanding jealousy is important since it has been found to be a common cause of conflict among intimate partners in every culture. In this study, we analyzed ninety-six participants’ articulated thoughts of negative emotions and conflict resolution strategies, in response to two intimate relationship conflicts. Their verbal articulations were coded for anger, fear/anxiety/sadness, and conflict resolution strategy according to the Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Situations (ATSS) paradigm and were analyzed. The ATSS measures the cognitions present in participants during intimate partner conflicts.

It was found that participants articulated more fear/anxiety/sadness emotions and fewer conflict resolution strategies in the jealousy condition, compared to the power condition. There were no differences in anger articulation scores between the two scenarios. In addition, relationships were found between rational and violent conflict tactics used in the participant’s previous relationships and the ATSS conflict resolution strategy thought
articulation. The findings of the present study indicate the potential importance of the relationship between fear, anxiety, and sadness emotions, and conflict resolution strategies, more so than anger, in understand jealousy. They also may help to clarify the relationship between jealousy and aggression.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract........................................................................................................ii  
Table of Contents............................................................................................iv  
List of Tables..................................................................................................vi  
List of Figures................................................................................................vii  
Acknowledgments.............................................................................................viii  
Dedication..........................................................................................................ix  

1. Introduction..................................................................................................1  
1.1 Jealousy, Aggressive Behaviour, and Conflict Resolution Strategies..........2  
1.2 Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations..............................................4  
1.5 Objectives and Hypotheses...........................................................................7  

2. Methods......................................................................................................10  
2.1 Participants..................................................................................................10  
2.2 Materials.....................................................................................................10  
2.2.1 Audiotapes...............................................................................................10  
2.3 Measures.....................................................................................................13  
2.3.1 Conflict Tactics Scale..............................................................................13  
2.3.2 Emotional Quotient Inventory.................................................................13  
2.3.3 Propensity for Abusiveness Scale..............................................................13  
2.3.4 Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Situations Coding......................14  
2.4 Procedure...................................................................................................15  
2.4.1 Online Survey..........................................................................................16  
2.4.2 Laboratory.................................................................................................17
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Statistical Analysis</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Results</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Propensity for Abusiveness Scale (PAS)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>CTS and PAS</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>CTS and EQ-i</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>EQ-i and PAS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Situations (ATSS)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1</td>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2</td>
<td>Jealousy and Power Conditions</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Conflict Resolution Strategies and CTS</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>ATSS</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>CTS, PAS, and EQ-i</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Future Directions</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>ATSS Coding sheet</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>UBC Research Ethics Board’s Certificates of Approval</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1  Means and Standard Deviations for CTS, PAS, EQ-i.................................32
Table 2  Means and Standard Deviations for ATSS Variables across conditions.................................................................33
Table 3  Correlations among the ATSS articulated thoughts within the jealousy condition........................................................................34
Table 4  Correlations among the ATSS articulated thoughts within the power condition........................................................................35
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1    ATSS Thought Segments for Anger Articulations during the Jealousy and Power Conditions. 36
Figure 2    ATSS Thought Segments for Fear/Anxiety/Sadness Articulations during the Jealousy and Power Conditions 37
Figure 3    ATSS Thought Segments for Conflict Resolution Strategies Articulations during the Jealousy and Power Conditions 38
Figure 4    ATSS Mean Articulations during the Jealousy and Power Conditions 39
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DEDICATION

To my mom
Introduction

Jealousy induces behavioural, cognitive, and emotional responses "to a partner's real, imagined, or potential attraction for a third person" (Bringle & Buunk, 1986, p. 226; DeSteno & Salovey, 1995; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989; White & Mullen, 1989). The prototypical jealousy-inducing situation involves a romantic triad such that an individual becomes jealous when he or she suspects that his or her partner is interested in another (Salovey, 1991). While jealousy is not a new phenomenon to the 21st century, there is little empirical evidence providing support for a theoretical model to explain the various ways individuals react when jealous. Most of the literature on jealousy emotions has focused on anger and its effects; however, jealousy is a composite of negative emotions. The main emotions associated with jealousy are anger, anxiety, fear, and sadness (Buck, 1999; Sharpsteen & Kirkpatrick, 1997; White & Mullen, 1989). However, the fear, anxiety, and sadness emotions have not been teased apart from anger and thoroughly studied in relation to jealousy conflicts. Understanding jealousy is important since it has been found to be a common cause of conflict among intimate partners (Daly & Wilson, 1988; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980) in every culture (Daly, Wilson, & Weghorst, 1982). In this study, we analyzed participants' articulated thoughts of negative emotions and conflict resolution strategies, in response to two intimate relationship conflicts, in order to investigate the relationship between them using the Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Situations paradigm.
1.1 Jealousy, Aggressive Behaviour, and Conflict Resolution Strategies

Jealousy can lead to abusive behaviour and violence between romantic partners (De Weerth & Kalma, 1993; Mullen, 1995; Mullen, 1996; Paul, Foss, & Galloway, 1993; White, 1991). Numerous studies on domestic violence have found jealousy to be a precipitant of violence (Brisson, 1983; Daly & Wilson, 1988; Dobash & Dobash, 1980; Gayford, 1975; Gayford, 1979; Hilberman & Manson, 1977; Rounsaville, 1978). Mullen and Martin (1994) found that 15% of their community sample of men and women had been physically assaulted as a result of a partner's jealousy. In a study of forty-four women in a battered women's shelter, 55% reported that jealousy was the key motive behind their husband's abusive behaviour (Miller, 1980). One explanation of the relationship between jealousy and aggressive behaviours is anger. Anger has been linked to verbally and physically abusive behaviours in intimate relationships (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989). However, some researchers argue that anger, itself, does not necessarily lead to violence (Canary, Spitzberg, & Semic, 1998).

Another explanation of the relationship between jealousy and aggressive behaviours is that jealous individuals who do not have effective conflict resolution strategies, which are necessary to solve arguments peacefully, will resort to physical aggression when confronted with a conflict. Conflict resolution strategies are crucial to healthy relationships. Gottman (1994) has consistently found that without effective conflict resolution strategies, relationships are more likely to end. Conflict responses are methods of handling the conflict of interest. There are three broad categories of conflict responses identified in the literature: verbal aggression, avoidance/withdraw, and problem solving.
Research on verbal aggression has found that maritally violent individuals, compared to nonviolent individuals, had: (1) a greater frequency of verbal aggression between the partners; and (2) stronger and longer lasting feelings of anger, contempt, and frustration during arguments (Jacobson, Gottman, Waltz, Rushe, Babcock, & Holtzworth-Munroe, 1994; Feldman & Ridley, 2000; Sabourin, 1995; Sabourin, Infante, & Rudd, 1993). When investigating withdraw responses, it was found that withdraw responses among violent/distressed were significantly higher than the nonviolent/non-distressed couples (Berns, Jacobson, & Gottman, 1999; Feldman & Ridley, 2000; Lloyd, 1990). The empirical literature on the association between problem solving and domestic violence is sparse. Research has shown that both violent/distressed couples reported significantly less conflict resolutions/compromises than nonviolent/non-distressed couples (Feldman & Ridley, 2000; Gottman, 1994; Lloyd, 1990) found; Tilley & Brackley, 2005). This is demonstrated in studies that found maritally violent men have social and communication skill deficits in the context of intimate relationships (Holtzworth-Munroe, 1992; Holtzworth-Munroe, Bates, Smulzler, & Sandin, 1997). These deficits may result in lower conflict resolution strategies, and as a consequence, lead to violence during a conflict because they do not have the ability to think of peaceful alternatives when enraged.

A third explanation of why jealousy may lead to aggressive behaviour encompasses both previous explanations using negative emotions and conflict resolution strategies. Some researchers postulate that the probability of using aggressive conflict-resolution tactics is increased with heightened anger (Eckhardt, Barbour, & Davidson, 1998; Dodge, Petit,
Bates, & Valente, 1995; Konecni, 1975; Rule & Nesdale, 1976). Dutton and Strachan (1987) found that abusive males have fewer conflict resolution tactics and respond with increased anger when observing male-female conflict scenarios. Thus, strong emotional reactions may inhibit one’s ability to use a variety of conflict-resolution strategies (Novaco, 1976). Unfortunately, the only emotion studied in this context was anger, and therefore, the relationship between the jealousy emotions (anger, fear, anxiety, sadness), conflict resolution strategies, and aggressive behaviour has not yet been fully studied.

1.4 Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Situations

The Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Situations (ATSS) paradigm was used to measure the jealousy emotions and conflict resolution strategies. It utilizes a think-aloud cognitive assessment technique to measure people’s thoughts during emotional arousal that was developed by Davison and colleagues (Davison, Feldman, & Osborn, 1984; Davison, Robins, & Johnson, 1983) as an alternative to paper-and-pencil assessments. It asks participants to listen to an emotion-eliciting audiotaped scenario and tune into their thoughts and feelings. Throughout each scenario at several crucial junction points, the conflict stops and the participant verbalizes his or her thoughts and feelings for 30 seconds. After this pause, the scenario resumes. The recorded open-ended thoughts and feelings are transcribed and coded for specific emotional thought articulations. A coding manual is developed specifically for each study using the ATSS coding manual blueprint. This paradigm is unlike paper-and-pencil cognitive assessments, which assess participants either before and/or after the experiment but fail to provide information about
automatic cognitive activity that occurs, without conscious filtering, during the experiment.

The validity of the ATSS procedure has been demonstrated using various populations, including college students (Dye & Eckhardt, 2000; Eckhardt, Jamison, & Watts, 2002), maritally violent men (Eckhardt, Barbour, & Davison, 1998; Eckhardt & Kassinove, 1998), socially anxious participants (Bates, Campbell, & Burgess, 1990), among others (Davison, Feldman, & Osborn, 1984; Davison, Navarre, & Vogel, 1995; Davison, Vogel, & Coffman, 1997). Eckhardt, Barbour, and Davison (1998) studied a community sample of married men to assess for anger-related cognitive distortions in response to marital conflict scenarios. Participants were divided up into three groups based upon the completion of a variety of scales: (1) maritally violent; (2) maritally distressed-nonviolent; and (3) maritally satisfied-nonviolent. They found that all three groups of men reported significant increases in anger after listening to the anger-arousing scenarios. However, maritally violent husbands articulated more cognitive distortions and cognitive deficiencies compared with the other two groups. Maritally satisfied-nonviolent husbands articulated more anger-controlling statements than the other two groups, consistent with Dutton and Browning’s findings (1988). Therefore, they suggested that the combination of distortions in information processing and the inability to generate conflict resolution strategies increases the likelihood of aggression in an intimate relationship. These findings were replicated in a study assessing the articulated anger thoughts of male undergraduate psychology students currently in dating relationships (Eckhardt, Jamison, & Watts, 2002). The participants were broken into two groups based
upon the completion of a variety of scales: (1) men who reported committing at least one incident of physical aggression against their current girlfriend within the past 12 months; and (2) men who reported committing no incidents of physical aggression in the relationship. They found that men who had been violent towards their girlfriends had more irrational beliefs and fewer articulated anger control tactics than men who had not. Dye and Eckhardt (2000) also found that violent individuals have trouble controlling their anger, which leads to an increase in the likelihood of aggressive anger expression strategies. Therefore, if heightened emotional responses occur among men and women who display intimate abusive behaviour while engaging in conflict (due to lowered conflict resolution strategies), it may be possible to elicit these same reactions while listening to recorded conflict scenarios, and study their cognition during this time.

The benefit of using the ATSS paradigm is that it measures automatic cognitive activity that occurs, without conscious filtering, during the experiment. This addresses several of the main problems in past jealousy research. It is inherently challenging to invoke authentic feelings of jealousy within the laboratory. In an effort to overcome this problem, much of the previous research has relied on participant’s predictions of how they would feel if their partner were to hypothetically behave in a jealousy-invoking manner regarding the frequency and intensity of emotions (DeSteno, 2004; Salovey, 1991). Unfortunately, forecasts of emotional intensity resulting from hypothetical events have been shown to be inaccurate (Gilbert, Pinel, Wilson, Blumberg, & Wheatley, 1998; Wilson, Wheatley, Meyers, Gilbert, & Axom, 2000). Participant’s predictions of how they will feel do not necessarily reflect how they would feel in reality because of the
unlikelihood of fully inducing jealousy based upon hypothetical situations. As a result, researchers have looked to retrospective reports. Unfortunately, these have been shown to be problematic due to memory biases, such as under- or over-reporting the intensity of jealousy felt during past jealousy-inducing situations (DeSteno, Valdesolo, & Barlett, 2006). While these previous studies may facilitate some understanding of jealousy, they do not tell us what the participants were thinking and feeling during the conflict. Therefore, focusing the research on participants' thoughts during a conflict is crucial to understanding jealousy.

1.3 Objectives and Hypotheses

The main objectives of the present study were to examine the relationships between the jealousy emotions (anger, fear, anxiety, sadness), and conflict resolution strategies upon exposure to jealousy and power conflict scenarios involving a romantic dyad using the ATSS paradigm. The jealousy emotions were divided into two groups: (1) anger; and (2) fear, anxiety, and sadness. The purpose of measuring anger separately from fear/anxiety/sadness was to assess if and how anger, the most studied jealousy emotion, differed from fear/anxiety/sadness. The jealousy and power scenarios were used because the literature has shown that both are extremely common emotion-inducing conflicts in relationships. The ATSS was used to measure participants' articulated thoughts and feelings while they listened to the intimate conflicts. If cognitions are consistent across different situations, it can be assumed that those individuals who experience increased emotional arousal in their lives will also experience increased emotional arousal within the laboratory setting. Their verbal articulations were coded and analyzed for anger,
The Propensity for Abusiveness Scale (PAS; Dutton, 1995) and the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i; Bar-On, 1997) have been shown to correlate with abusiveness in college dating populations (the PAS: Dutton, Landolt, Starzomski & Bodnarchuk, 2001; Dutton, 1995; and EQ-I: Bar-On, 1997; Winters, Clift, & Dutton, 2004) and appear to have a theoretical relationship to the ATSS. The PAS assesses an individual’s proclivity to become abusive in intimate relationships. It has been found that domestically violent individuals score higher on the propensity for abusiveness. The EQ-i assesses emotional intelligence and provides a global appraisal of social functioning, such as problem solving abilities. It has been found that domestically violent men score lower on emotional intelligence. A significant negative correlation has been found between the EQ-I and PAS. Therefore, individuals with a greater propensity for abusiveness have lower emotional intelligence. We attempted to determine if an individual's propensity for abusiveness (Propensity for Abusiveness Scale; Dutton, 1995) and their emotional intelligence (Emotional Quotient Inventory: Bar-On, 1997) were related to the ATSS variables.

Four primary hypotheses were tested. First, we predicted that individuals would articulate more anger thoughts during the jealousy condition compared with the power condition. Second, we expected that individuals who articulated more anger thoughts would articulate fewer conflict resolution strategies. Third, we hypothesized that individuals with more anger and fear/anxiety/sadness, and fewer conflict resolution strategies.
strategy thought articulations in response to the conflict scenarios would have a higher propensity for abusiveness and a lower emotional intelligence. Finally, we predicted that individuals who articulated fewer conflict resolution strategies would report more violent and less rational discussion tactics used in their previous relationship.
2. Methods

2.1 Participants

An advertisement was placed on the University of British Columbia’s Psychology Human Subject Pool website that contained all the current Psychology experiments that needed participants. Ninety-six undergraduate psychology students (43 male, 53 female) participated in the study in exchange for course credit. Ninety-eight percent of the participants were heterosexual, and 89% ranged in age from 18-22. Participants identified themselves ethnically as Asian (45%), Caucasian/White (37%), East Indian (8%), Hispanic (1%), and other (9%). Forty percent identified themselves as Christian and 41% reported no religious affiliation. The majority of the participants’ parents were married or common law (84%). Most of the participants have had a romantic relationship longer than one month (76%). There was no significant difference between participants who had prior relationship experience and participants who had no romantic relationships lasting longer than one month. Therefore, participants with no relationship experience were not excluded from the analyses. The majority of participants were currently in a relationship (51%).

2.2 Materials

2.2.1 Audiotapes

Audio was chosen over a video format since research has suggested that audio generates more emotional responses (Franche, 1987). The audio clips featured professional actors engaged in two different arguments between dating heterosexual couples. The experimenter created the scenarios specifically for the current study. The actors were
given descriptions of the scenarios and character sketches. The actors were instructed to begin each scenario by discussing the issue in calm voices. As the discussion quickly proceeded to a heated argument, the actors were asked to increase the intensity of it by raising their voices and becoming verbally abusive, if necessary. The actors practiced these scenarios together in order to keep the emotional intensity the same between the male and female actors and the two conditions, as well as, conflict content the same between the two conditions.

The audio clips were sex-specific in order to increase the participants' identification with the initiator of the argument, which would generate more authentic emotional arousal. Therefore, female participants listened to scenarios where the girlfriend initiated the argument, and the males listened to scenarios where the boyfriend initiated the argument. Abusive males have been found to become angrier, in comparison to non-abusive controls, when the conflict's theme involved the abandonment of the male at the end of the scenario (Browning & Dutton, 1986). Therefore, at the end of each scenario in the present study, the actor who did not initiate the argument left and slammed the door behind him or her.

The experimental condition was a jealousy-inducing situation. The actors were instructed to discuss what had occurred during a party the night before. The female participants listened to a scenario in which the girlfriend confronted her boyfriend regarding his flirtatious behaviour with another woman at the party. The male participants listened to the same argument, except the boyfriend was jealous of the girlfriends' behaviour.
The control condition's central theme was a power struggle between the partners. The actors were instructed to discuss the plans for that evening, which developed into a heated argument regarding who makes the ultimate decisions in the relationship. The female participants listened to an argument in which the girlfriend wanted to go out to see a movie and her boyfriend wanted to stay home and watch a hockey game. The male participants listened to the same argument in which the boyfriend initiated the argument. This scenario was used as a control because it was equally as intense as the jealousy scenario, thereby, inducing emotional reactions; however, these emotions would theoretically be different. Therefore, we could compare emotionally arousing conflicts for anger, and fear/anxiety/sadness, and their effect on conflict resolution strategies.

After the conflicts were recorded, the audio files were divided into six approximately equal segments (~35 seconds each). A tone cued the beginning and ending of each 30-second thought articulation pause in which the participant spoke into the microphone connected to the digital recorder. These blank intervals were directly inserted into the audio clips so the participants would not need to turn the CD player on or off. A CD contained the two conflict scenarios, including the blank intervals, and a 30 second blank space between the two scenarios. Four CD's were created: (1) jealousy condition then power condition for female participants; (2) power condition then jealousy condition for female participants; (3) jealousy condition then power condition for male participants; and (4) power condition then jealousy condition for male participants.
2.3 Measures

2.3.1 Conflict Tactics Scale

The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS; Straus, 1979; Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz, 1980) is a standardized scale used to measure the frequency and intensity of 19 conflict-resolution tactics. The scale includes rational resolution tactics, verbal aggression, and physical violence strategies. Participants reported both their own use and their partners use of the conflict resolution tactics within their past relationship. It has good psychometric properties.

2.3.2 Emotional Quotient Inventory

The Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i: Bar-On, 1997) assesses a person’s emotional intelligence. It yields a total emotional intelligence score and five subscale scores (Intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management, and general mood). It was created based on 17 years of data collection. It has good psychometric properties with a Cronbach’s alpha of .76.

2.3.3 Propensity for Abusiveness Scale

The Propensity for Abusiveness Scale (PAS; Dutton, 1995) assesses a person’s proclivity to become abusive in intimate relationships. The scale was constructed by selecting items from different existing scales that significantly correlated with spousal abuse reports. These scales were the Multidimensional Anger Inventory (MAI; Seigel, 1986), the Trauma Symptom Checklist (TSC-33; Briere & Runtz, 1989), the Egna Minnen Betraffande Uppfostran (EMBU; Perris, Jacobsson, Lindstrom, von Knorring, & Perris,
the Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994), and the Borderline Personality Organization scale (BPO; Oldham et al., 1985). The validity of the PAS procedure has been demonstrated using various populations (Dutton, Landolt, Starzomski, & Bodnarchuk, 2001; Thomas & Dutton, 2004) It has good psychometric properties with a Cronbach's alpha of .91.

2.3.4 Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Situations Coding

Scoring System. Each subject provided twelve articulated thoughts: six in response to the experimental condition, and six in response to the control condition. Undergraduate research assistants, according to the constructed transcribing manual, transcribed all segments. The raters received training according to our modified ATSS coding manual based upon the coding manual developed by Eckhardt. After the training, the raters read the transcriptions of the participants' thoughts while listening to the audio recording and scoring each segment for the presence of specific variables on a specialized coding sheet (Appendix A).

Ratings for each segment were made in three variable categories: anger, fear/anxiety/sadness, and conflict resolution strategies. Each was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (0 not present–4 extremely present) that assessed the degree to which each variable was present in each segment regardless of the actual length of the segment. If a segment is very short with only one or two articulated thought(s), scores will be higher because the entire segment has a higher degree of one or more variable(s). Likewise, if the segment is very long with only one or two articulated thought(s), scores will be lower.
because the entire segment has a lower degree of one or more variable(s). Therefore, the entire segment is considered, not just each individual thought. Scores were calculated by averaging the two raters’ ratings on each variable for each segment.

**Angry verbalizations:** responses that refer to intense levels of anger. Examples of these anger-related emotion words were: angry, enraged, pissed off, mad, furious, upset, fuming, etcetera.

**Fear/Anxiety/Sadness:** responses that refer to these emotions, as well as, jealousy. Jealousy is a combination of these emotions, excluding anger, (Buck, 1999; Sharpsteen & Kirkpatrick, 1997), and therefore, all jealous statements were coded in this section.

**Conflict Resolution Strategies:** responses that could decrease anger, annoyance, other negative emotions, or resolve the conflict. These are positive statements with a temporal component about how to resolve the conflict presently or in the future. Examples of these conflict resolution strategy words were: should, have to, ought, must, etcetera.

### 2.4 Procedure

In the advertisement, participants were informed that participation in the study would last approximately one hour in total and would be rewarded with a credit towards an undergraduate Psychology course. Participation involved two parts; (1) completing a 30-minute survey online, and (2) coming to the laboratory in order to listen and articulate their thoughts regarding two taped conflict scenarios while being recorded (30 minutes).
Participants came to the laboratory approximately a week after they had completed the survey.

2.4.1 Online Survey

Four questionnaires were completed online using an online survey website (http://www.surveymonkey.com/). These four questionnaires were a demographics form, the CTS, the PAS, and the EQ-i. For a variety of reasons, the online survey method was used: (1) participants would only have to come to the lab once compared to twice (pick up the questionnaires and complete the lab component), therefore, reducing the attrition rate; (2) reducing data entry errors; and (3) prevention of missing data. Missing data is a problem in survey research and there is no one agreed upon method to deal with the missing items. Therefore, rather than dealing with this problem post hoc, precautions were implemented to eliminate it. The questionnaires were set up so the participants would have to answer everything on the page before continuing to the next questionnaire. Items were included, such as Not Applicable or Never, to give the participants the option if the question did not apply to them.

The online survey included a cover letter that gave a brief description of the study. The potential risk of experiencing negative emotions that may be uncomfortable or painful was explained. It was explained in the cover letter that by completing the questionnaires, participants had given their consent.
2.4.2 Laboratory

Upon entering the laboratory, participants signed a consent form and were taken to a private room to encourage open and honest thought responses. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two conditions. In the first group, participants listened to the jealousy audio clip first (time 1), followed by the power audio clip (time 2). In the second group, the order was counter-balanced to control for potential order effects. The experimenter explained that they were going to be listening to real conflicts between couples that were recorded during therapy sessions. The experimenter left the room, which was locked on the outside, until the end of the ATSS procedure to give the participant privacy. The participant put on the large cup headphones and pressed play on the CD player. In order to heighten arousal, the volume was set at approximately ¾ of the maximum. The first conflict scenario started. When prompted by a tone, the participants reported their current thoughts and feelings out loud into a microphone connected to a digital recorder. After 30 seconds, another tone sounded indicating the resumption of the conflict. At the end, the participants were given an oral and written debriefing, and the experimenter answered any questions regarding the study.

2.5 Statistical Analysis

Pearson’s $r$ was used to examine bivariate correlations among the study variables and questionnaires. A series of analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests and $t$-tests were conducted to assess group differences.
3 Results

3.1 Conflict Tactics Scale

The participant's conflict tactics used in their past relationship were assessed. The CTS discussion subscale ($M = 8.04$ $SD = 6.13$), CTS verbal aggression subscale ($M = 5.51$ $SD = 6.66$), and CTS violence subscale ($M = .89$ $SD = 3.08$), scores were consistent with normative data. The CTS, PAS, and EQ-i scores are also shown in Table 1.

3.2 Propensity for Abusiveness Scale

The participant's propensity for abusiveness was assessed. The mean PAS score ($M = 50.36$ $SD = 12.27$) was consistent with normative data. Cronbach's alpha was .60.

Next, participants reporting a greater propensity for abusiveness were compared to participants reporting a lesser propensity for abusiveness. Participants were divided into high and low groups based on a median split of the PAS scores. The mean scores for the high and low PAS groups were significantly different (high, $M = 60.60$ $SD = 7.83$; low, $M = 40.13$ $SD = 5.37$; $t(94) = -14.94$; $p < .001$). The high PAS groups mean score was consistent with domestically abusive populations.

3.3 Emotional Quotient Inventory

The participant's emotional intelligence was assessed. The mean EQ-i score ($M = 88.82$ $SD = 13.52$) was consistent with normative data. Cronbach's alpha was .84.
Next, participants with a higher emotional intelligence were compared to participants with a lower intelligence. Participants were divided into high and low groups based on a median split of their EQ-i total score. The mean scores for the high and low EQ-i groups were significantly different (high, \( M = 99.31 \) \( SD = 8.98 \); low, \( M = 78.33 \) \( SD = 7.99 \); \( t(94) = -12.09, p < .001 \)). The low EQ-i groups’ mean score was consistent with domestically abusive populations.

3.4 Conflict Tactics Scale and Propensity for Abusiveness Scale

The relationship between past use of conflict tactics and the propensity for abusiveness was assessed. Significant positive correlations with the PAS score were observed in the CTS verbal aggression subscale (\( r = .23, p = .03 \)) and the CTS violence subscale (\( r = .21, p = .04 \)). There were no significant correlations or significant differences between the PAS high or low groups and the CTS subscales.

3.5 Conflict Tactics Scale and Emotional Quotient Inventory

The relationship between past use of conflict tactics and emotional intelligence was assessed. A significant negative correlation with the CTS verbal aggression subscale score and EQ-i score (\( r = -.20, p = .05 \)) was observed. In addition, the low EQ-i group reported significantly more violent conflict tactics on the CTS violence subscale than the high group (low, \( M = 1.50 \) \( SD = 4.0 \); high, \( M = .29 \) \( SD = 1.0 \); \( t(94) = 2.2, p = .05 \)).
3.6 Emotional Quotient Inventory and Propensity for Abusiveness Scale

The relationship between emotional intelligence and propensity for abusiveness was assessed. A significant negative correlation with the PAS score was observed in the EQ-i score ($r = -0.62, p < 0.001$). When the high/low groups on the EQ-I were compared to the high/low groups on the PAS, a significant negative correlation was found ($r = -0.54, p < .001$). The low EQ-i group scored significantly higher on the PAS (high, $M = 43.92$ $SD = 10.51$; low, $M = 56.81$ $SD = 10.44$; $t(94) = 6.03; p < .001$) and the high PAS group scored significantly lower on the EQ-i (high, $M = 81.25$ $SD = 10.92$; low, $M = 96.40$ $SD = 11.53$; $t(94) = 6.61; p < .001$).

3.7 Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Scenarios

3.7.1 Reliability

A statistical test was used to determine inter-rater reliability. The raw scores from the three raters were correlated, yielding a Pearson $r_{xy} = +0.89$. Cronbach’s alphas assessing the internal consistency for the six thought segments composing the ATSS articulated thought variables were: anger (experimental, .65; control, .70); fear/anxiety/sadness (experimental, .79; control, .81); and conflict resolution strategies (experimental, .54; control, .55).

3.7.2 Jealousy and Power Conditions

The six thought segments for each ATSS articulated thought variables for the jealousy and power conditions are shown in Figure 1 (anger), Figure 2 (fear/anxiety/sadness), and Figure 3 (conflict resolution strategies). The overall means combining all six thought
segments for the ATSS articulated thought variable for the jealousy and power conditions are shown in Figure 4. Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations for the average score for each ATSS variable in each condition. Table 3 presents the correlations for the ATSS articulated thoughts within the jealousy condition and Table 4 presents the correlations for the ATSS articulated thoughts within the power condition.

Time 1 scores were compared to time 2 scores for each condition to assess for order effect. The articulated thought variable scores in each of the six thought segments for the jealousy scenario during time 1 were compared to the jealousy scenario scores during time 2. The same was done for the power scenario on time 1 versus time 2. There were no significant differences between them. Since there were no significant differences between time 1 and 2 for the different conditions (no order effects), the scores for time 1 and 2 were compiled into a single score for each of the scenarios.

A within-subjects factors ANOVA was performed to compare the experimental condition scores for each of the four ATSS articulated thought variables to the control condition scores as shown in Figure 4.

*Anger.* On the anger variable, the ANOVA indicated no significant effects for the scenario main effect, $F(1, 92) = 15.93, p < .001$.

*Fear/Anxiety/Sadness.* The ANOVA indicated a significant scenario main effect for articulations of fear/anxiety/sadness, $F(1, 92) = 69.69, p < .001$, such that participants
articulated more fear/anxiety/sadness during the jealousy scenario than the power scenario (control, $M = 3.82\ SD = 4.19$; experimental, $M = 7.55\ SD = 4.86$). Females reported more fear/anxiety/sadness during the power condition compared to males (female, $M = 4.68,\ SD = 4.20$; male, $M = 2.77,\ SD = 3.98; F(1, 95) = 5.15,\ p = .03$).

Conflict resolution strategies. The ANOVA indicated a significant scenario main effect, $F(1, 92) = 37.99,\ p < .001$, such that more conflict resolution strategies were articulated during the power scenario than the jealousy scenario (control, $M = 8.40\ SD = 4.92$; experimental, $M = 5.31\ SD = 4.15$).

Further analyses were performed on the fear/anxiety/sadness and conflict resolution strategies. The relationship between the fear/anxiety/sadness and conflict resolution strategies regarding the change between the jealousy and power conditions was investigated. The average score for the conflict resolution strategies power condition was subtracted from the jealousy condition (difference score) and, the average score for the fear/anxiety/sadness power condition was subtracted from the jealousy condition (difference score). These scores represent the change from the jealousy condition to the control condition. A significant negative correlation was found between the conflict resolution strategies and the other negative emotions difference scores ($r = - .23,\ p = .02$).

There were no significant correlations between the PAS and ATSS or the EQ-i and ATSS.
3.8 Conflict Resolution Strategies and Conflict Tactics Scale

The relationship between the ATSS conflict resolution strategies variable in the jealousy condition and the past use of conflict tactics was examined. High and low conflict resolution strategy groups within the jealousy condition were created with a median split. It was found that individuals who articulated more conflict resolution strategies (high group) reported significantly more rational discussion tactics on the CTS (high, $M = 9.27$ $SD = 6.24$; low, $M = 6.81$ $SD = 5.83$; $t(94) = -2.0; p = .05$). In addition, it was found that individuals who articulated fewer conflict resolution strategies (low group) reported significantly more violence tactics on the CTS (low, $M = 1.59$ $SD = 4.0$; high, $M = .35$ $SD = 1.17$; $t(94) = 1.9; p = .05$).

The same procedure was used to examine ATSS conflict resolution strategies variable in the power condition and the CTS. There was no significant difference.
4 Discussion

The present study assessed the relationship between anger, fear/anxiety/sadness, and conflict resolution strategies upon exposure to jealousy and power conflicts among intimate partners. The ATSS paradigm measured automatic cognitive activity that occurred, without conscious filtering, during the experiment. The study showed that the jealousy conflict, compared to the power conflict, led to an increase in fear/anxiety/sadness emotions, and a decrease in conflict resolution strategies, but no difference in the anger emotion. There was also a significant relationship found between conflict resolution strategies and conflict tactics used in a previous relationship. By teasing apart anger from fear/anxiety/sadness, we found that anger may not be the main emotion that effecting aggressive behaviour. The findings of the present study indicate the potential importance of the relationship between fear/anxiety/sadness emotions and conflict resolution strategies, more so than the anger emotion, during jealousy conflicts in explaining the association between jealousy and aggression.

4.1 ATSS

Interestingly, our first hypothesis that anger articulations would differ between the jealousy and power conditions was not supported by the data. There was no significant difference between them. Anger was present in equal amounts indicating that there was no direct relationship between anger and the increase or decrease in conflict resolution strategies in response to the two conflict scenarios. However, there was a significant increase in anger in both scenarios indicating that both conflicts angered the participants. The majority of empirical literature has focused on anger leading to aggression.
Husbands who possess little or no anger coping skills have been found to have a greater likelihood of becoming abusive when angry (Purdy & Nickle, 1981; Sonkin, Martin, & Walker, 1985). Furthermore, Barbour, Eckhardt, Davison, and Kassinove (1998) found maritally violent men scored significantly lower on the Anger Control Scale than nonviolent men. However, some research has not supported the anger-leads-to-aggression theory. Self-reported measures of anger between maritally violent and nonviolent men have not been significantly different (Barbour, Eckhardt, Davison, & Kassinove, 1998; Boyle & Vivian, 1996; Hasting & Hamberger, 1988; Maiuro, Cahn, Vitaliano, Wagner, & Zegree, 1988). These discrepancies could be due to anger not being the determining factor of whether or not someone will become violent during a conflict. The determining factor could be other emotions, such as fear/anxiety/sadness, influencing the person’s conflict resolution skills, which enable them to deal with the conflict. These emotions are difficult to tease apart. Therefore, while it is true that angrier people may be more aggressive, it may not be the anger emotion that causes people to become violent, rather it may be other emotions that impair effective conflict resolution strategies, which increases aggression.

One alternative possibility to explain the lack of significant differences in anger scores between conditions could be that individuals who have ineffective conflict resolution strategies also lack the ability to assert their angry feelings. As a result of their inability to articulate their emotions, they resort to aggressive forms of anger expression (Boyle & Vivian, 1996), which could not be measured during the ATSS technique.
The second hypothesis was not supported by the data. Surprisingly, it was found that individuals who articulated more fear/anxiety/sadness thoughts articulated fewer conflict resolution strategies. In the jealousy scenario, we found that the conflict resolution strategy score was significantly lower than the fear/anxiety/sadness score. In the power scenario, we found that the conflict resolution strategy score was significantly higher than the fear/anxiety/sadness score. The disparity between the two conditions on conflict resolution strategies and fear/anxiety/sadness was measured. There was a significant negative correlation between the change in the jealousy to power condition for conflict resolution strategies and the change in jealousy to power condition for the fear/anxiety/sadness. This indicated that, in the jealousy condition, individuals who articulated a lower amount of conflict resolution strategies, articulated more fear/anxiety/sadness.

The third hypothesis that individuals who articulated more anger and fear/anxiety/sadness, and fewer conflict resolution strategies would have a higher propensity for abusiveness and a lower intelligence was not supported by the data. There were no significant correlations found between the ATSS scores and the PAS or EQ-I scores. The lack of a relationship between the ATSS and paper-and-pencil measures of cognitive constructs is consistent with other studies findings (Davison et al., 1997; Eckhardt et al., 1998, Eckhardt, Jamison, & Watts, 2002). This does not necessary reflect a flaw in the ATSS paradigm, but instead, demonstrates that different methods can provide diverse information about the same construct (Davison et al., 1998).
And finally, the hypothesis that individuals with fewer conflict resolution strategy thought articulations would report more violent and less rational conflict tactics used in their previous relationship was supported. It was also found that individuals with more conflict resolution strategy thought articulations reported significantly more rational conflict tactics.

Much of the previous research on jealousy among intimate partners has focused on sex differences. Researchers have alleged that men are primarily jealous in regards to a partner's sexual infidelity, and women are primarily jealous when a partner was emotionally unfaithful (Buss, 2007; Guerrini, Spitzberg, & Yoshimura, 2004; Harris, 2003; Nelson, 2004; Russell & Harton, 2005; Shackelford, Voracek, Schmitt, Buss, Weekes-Shackelford, & Michalski, 2004). These sex differences have been discovered across different cultures (Buunk, Angleitner, Oubaid, & Buss, 1996; Buunk & Hupka, 1987; Daly, Wilson, & Weghorst, 1982). While men and women may differ regarding the trigger of their jealousy, emotional versus sexual infidelity, one aspect remains the same; both sexes become jealous to either a perceived or actual threat of infidelity. The likelihood, frequency, and intensity of reported jealousy between men and women were found to be equal (Geary, Rumsey, Bow-Thomas, & Hoard, 1995; Pines & Friedman, 1998; White, 1981). White and Mullen (1989, p. 127) stated that "most research has reported no gender differences in the level of reported jealousy, and those studies finding a difference are not consistent in finding one gender to be more jealous than the other." This is consistent with our findings. There were no significant gender differences within the ATSS thought articulations. This could have been due to the jealousy conflict
suggesting both sexual and emotional infidelity thereby eliciting emotions from both men and women.

4.2 CTS, PAS, and EQ-i

It was found that individuals who were more likely to be abusive, as indicated by their higher PAS score, used significantly more verbally aggressive and violent conflict tactics in their past relationship. Individuals with lower emotional intelligence, as indicated by their lower EQ-i score, reported significantly more violent conflict tactics in their past relationships. Finally, it was found that those individuals who were more likely to be abusive had lower emotional intelligence.

4.3 Limitations

The main limitation in the current study is that participants' emotional reactions were in response to observed conflicts between a couple unknown to them. They were not participating in the conflicts with their own romantic partner. Due to the decrease or lack of emotional investment in the conflicts, participants may not have become as emotional as they would during an actual argument. Therefore, the scores obtained during the ATSS would be lower. In addition, the participants may have never experienced these types of conflicts in their own relationships. It is also uncertain whether the statements made during the ATSS would be similar to what they may say during a similar conflict outside the laboratory.
Finally, since the majority of our participants had been in a current dating relationship for one year or less, they may not be as emotionally attached to their partner and therefore show lower levels of emotional, cognitive, and behavioural factors related to jealousy.

4.4 Future Directions

At the beginning of this paper, we noted the disparate jealousy literature with respect to a broad theoretical model. Presently, speculations on jealousy’s causal processes have depended on sex-specific components (Buss, Larsen, Westen, & Semmelroth, 1992; Buunk, Angleitner, Oubaid, & Buss, 1996), idiographic traits (Bringle, 1991), adult attachment correlates (Sharpsteen & Kirkpatrick, 1997), and culturally-specific components (Hupka, 1991; Hupka & Ryan, 1990). In considering a theoretical model of jealousy, we must not underestimate the power of individual differences. Consequently, this model must have a high degree of flexibility. Individuals have multiple relationships with different people, such as lovers, family, friends, or coworkers, and these individuals interact in various ways. Sometimes these interactions evoke jealousy; sometimes they do not. Furthermore, some individuals are more prone to reacting jealously. Specific events or behaviours that cause jealousy among members of one culture are of no concern to other cultures. Therefore, although jealousy’s purpose is to protect the integrity of a relationship from potential or actual rivals, many other factors mediate the outcome and should be studied.

Research has shown that attachment styles are correlated with jealousy (Buunk, 1997; Sharpsteen & Kirkpatrick, 1997). Individuals with insecure attachment styles exhibit
more intense and frequent jealousy (Sharpsteen & Kirkpatrick, 1997), lowered self-esteem (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), fewer conflict resolution strategies (Kobak & Hazan, 1991), more verbal aggression and withdrawal (Senchak & Leonard, 1992), and increased aggressive behaviour towards partners (Dutton, Saunders, Starzomski, & Bartholomew, 1994). Individuals who have more anxious attachment styles may be more likely to believe that given interactions between their partner and a potential rival signal more sexual and/or emotional interest than actually present. In Marchand's (2004) study, participants who reported more anxiety also reported more attacking behaviours and fewer compromising behaviours. It is recommended that future researchers continue to study the effect of attachment styles on jealousy.

The development of more accurate measures of jealousy intensity and duration are important for future research. In the present case, we relied on self-report thought articulation measures of emotion. Although the ATSS has been demonstrated to be a beneficial tool, it is still not completely void of problems. In the present case, participants may not have fully articulated all the thoughts on their mind, leading to under-reporting of certain emotions they experience. One cause may have been that they wanted to positively portray themselves and thus not want to express as many negative emotions as they actually felt.

When jealousy is better understand and a solid theoretical model has been created, the various individual responses can be more thoroughly and accurately studied. This will lead to a better understanding of the relationship between the jealousy emotions and
conflict resolution strategies, and finally, the link between jealousy and aggression. Only through this further investigation into what jealousy is and its causes and effects, will it be possible to develop better treatments for those individuals with destructive jealousy reactions.
Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviations for the CTS, PAS, EQ-i*

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<td>CTS – Verbal Aggression subscale</td>
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<td>EQ-i – Low EQ-i group</td>
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NOTE: CTS = Conflict Tactics Scale.
PAS = Propensity for Abusiveness
EQ-i = Emotional Quotient Inventory
Table 2

*Means and Standard Deviations for the ATSS Variables across scenarios*

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NOTE: ATSS = Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Situations.

* $p < .001$
Table 3

*Correlations among the ATSS articulated thoughts within the jealousy condition*

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NOTE: ATSS = Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Situations.

* * p < .001
Table 4

Correlations among the ATSS articulated thoughts within the control condition

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NOTE: ATSS = Articulated Thoughts during Simulated Situations.

* $p < .001$
Figure 1: ATSS Thought Segments for Anger Articulations during the Jealousy and Power Conditions
Figure 2: ATSS Thought Segments for Fear/Anxiety/Sadness Articulations during the Jealousy and Power Conditions.
Figure 3: ATSS Thought Segments for Conflict Resolution Strategy Articulations during the Jealousy and Power Conditions
Figure 4: ATSS Mean Articulations during the Jealousy and Power Conditions
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