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Elizabeth J. Arthur
Illinois Wesleyan University

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Running head: ATTACHMENT STYLE AND MARRIAGE TIMING

Adult Attachment Style and Attitudinal Assessment of
Preferred Timing of First Marriage

Elizabeth J. Arthur

Illinois Wesleyan University

Abstract

The study assessed the factors contributing to expected ages of marriage in two student populations that are presumed to differ in academic achievement and goals. A primarily goal of this study was to describe the influence that adult attachment style has upon a person's expected age at marriage. A secondary goal was to explore other social and goal-oriented influences on timing of marriage in the two populations. There were no significant differences in attachment style for men and women. The more Avoidantly a person ranked, the later the age at which they expected to get married. University students' ideas about marriage were more influenced by educational goals than the community college sample. There were significant differences between men and women in expected age at marriage and the degree of influence of certain goals. It was found that the community college students considered themselves to be adults at a younger age than the university group and ideally wanted to start a family at an earlier age.

Adult Attachment Style and Attitudinal

Assessment of Preferred Timing of First Marriage

Marriage is one factor which clearly marks the transition from adolescence into adulthood in most cultures (Hogan, 1978). Because it is such a defining developmental event, it is an important topic to study. Particularly meaningful is the age at which people choose to marry. The timing of marriage varies by sex, culture, and across generations and is dependent on many factors. Theoretically, there is a right time and a wrong time to marry; societal norms dictate that there is a preferable age range during which marriage should take place, as well as an ideal place for marriage in the grand scheme of transitional ordering. "The regularity with which many life-course transitions are patterned suggests the existence of norms or preferences concerning the times when particular events should occur and how they should be sequenced with respect to other events" (Teachman, 1984, p 245).

Consequently, Hogan (1985) has found that when people complete transitions such as marriage and starting a family out of sequence, they experience negative socio-economic outcomes. Therefore, the current study investigates various influences upon and attitudes towards marriage. Researching what motivates or influences the timing of marriage may help to explain the origins of expectations and ideals concerning marriage and why people marry when they do. By studying these variables, we might discover more about the role of marriage as a transition into adulthood.

This study will focus on the attitudes regarding the expected timing of this transition, and the various influences upon these transitions. One such hypothesized influence is attachment style. This paper will review its impact on a person's personality and then explore its influence upon their relationships and marriage. We will next address the relationship between attachment style and parental influences upon marriage, which will lead to a review of the literature on social and goal-oriented influences upon marriage timing. These influences include parents, peers,

financial, educational, and career goals, and attitudes towards the sequencing of transition timing. And finally, the study will explain how these other influences on marriage might then relate to attachment style and what implications these findings may have on our knowledge of why people marry and wish to marry when they do. The history of marriage timing will first be detailed.

Timing of Marriage

When we study marriage, it is important to realize that there is an expected social order and time range during which marriage and starting a family are meant to occur. This is referred to as a social clock or normative transition sequence (George, 1993). The sequence has a natural order which the populace may be judged by if they do not conform to the established pattern (Hogan, 1978). Society determines the norms of timing and order for various life events. The disorderly timing of these transitions correlates with negative socio-economic outcomes. An important aspect of the study of normative transitions is found in Dennis Hogan's research. Hogan (1978) has observed that people who complete major life transitions (leaving school, getting a full time job, getting married, having children) out of the conventional order tend to experience problems in life. These people earn less money, hold less prestigious jobs, and are more likely to get divorced (George, 1993). Determining what influences the timing of marriage is important, then, because the timing of transitions is associated with the quality of a person's life.

Over the course of the century, the average age at which people have chosen to begin a first marriage has fluctuated significantly (Modell, 1980). At the turn of the century, the median age at first marriage was around 26 years for men, which then decreased to 21 between the 1930's and 1950's, and has since gone up again to around 24 years (George, 1993). The most recent statistics show that in 1970 the median age was at 22.5, but by 1990 it had risen to 25.6 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996). Women are not well represented in the data, but it is thought that the ages at which they have chosen to marry have followed a similar fluctuation over the century. In 1970, the

median age for women at first marriage was 20.6, which went up to 24 in 1990 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996). Another trend is that there has been a decline in marriages for those under 18. This is likely due to an increased importance being placed on completion of high school. Overall, there has been a recent trend towards later marriages (George, 1993).

At the same time that the actual age of marriage has fluctuated, so too has the perceived ideal age of marriage changed slightly. John Modell found that male college students answered that their desired age at marriage was 25.1 in 1940 and 24.9 in 1958 surveys. Women's changes have been more significant with a change of 24.0 years to 22.9 years over the same time period. The ages dropped again in a subsequent 1967 study (Modell, 1980). By 1974, the ideal ages had increased again by about 1 year. This brought the scores closer to those of the 1958 surveys for both sexes. While studying the expectations about marriage cannot predict the actual time of marriage, it does provide important information about the differences between our ideal and actual ages at marriage. The challenge is to discover what might produce the discrepancy. It would be very helpful to find influences behind the variance. Many variables factor into this historically inconsistent age fluctuation, but it is the individual's attitudes toward marriage which strongly determine marriage timing (Mischel, 1973). Studying attachment style may provide information about the ideas that people acquire about marriage.

Attachment Style

The relatively young field of attachment theory has greatly expanded since Bowlby's (1969) theoretical work on the evolutionary significance of an infant's bond to its primary caregiver. Ainsworth (1978) further classified the different types of attachments observable in infants and children. This pioneering research has led to much expanded study addressing the connections between infant attachment and adult attachment, the links of adult attachment to aspects of personality, and the impact that attachment style may have upon marriage timing.

Attachment theory maintains that infants possess an attachment behavioral system which includes dependence on and reactions to the primary caregiver. The goal of the infant is to keep the caregiver nearby and available for whatever protection or care is needed (Ainsworth, 1989). Bowlby (1969) observed that infants from a variety of species reacted with protest, despair, and detachment when separated from their primary caregiver. Because of the consistency of these reactions and their universality, he developed a biologically-based attachment theory about the bond between infants and their primary caregivers. Bowlby posited that this attachment operates as an evolutionary survival strategy to keep infants in close proximity to those who would protect them from harm. Therefore, infants who exhibit this behavioral and emotional response strategy are able to seek proximity to and protest separation from their primary caregivers. This behavioral attachment system ensures their survival and the survival of future generations through natural selection for those who might inherit these response mechanisms. The infant develops one of three systems of responses to the mother-figure dependent upon the type of attention they receive from their caregiver (Ainsworth, 1978). This same infant attachment style is then carried over into adulthood where it is applied in our romantic relationships and may even serve as a predictor to them (Feeney & Noller, 1990).

As Shaver and Hazan (1993) detail, all infants presumably need a secure attachment to a caregiver and will be distressed, as shown through attachment behaviors, when the caregiver is not present for the optimal amount of time--the "set goal". The expected response when the caregiver is there is that the infant should securely explore and show independence, but when he/she is absent, the child or infant will cry, call, or cling to the caregiver upon return. But with prolonged separation, the child will exhibit anxious behavior. Repeated absences of the caregiver when the infant needs security will result in avoidant behavior, where the child grows aloof and the attachment bond begins to wear away. The level of attention

that the infant or child receives will influence the child's attachment styles later in life.

The infant styles of secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant attachment were classified by Ainsworth (1978) through her Strange Situation which was designed to provoke these behaviors through the infant's controlled separation from the caregiver. The Strange Situation involved variations on the child being left in the room alone or with the caregiver, and with a stranger walking in and out. Shaver and Hazan (1993) illustrate that secure infants are "distressed by separation, seek comfort upon reunion, and explore freely in their caregiver's presence." In contrast, an anxious/ambivalent infant is not attended to regularly by the caregiver, and so may not always be comforted by the mother-figure's presence. Plus, the infant is less inclined to exploration, if at all. The avoidant infants are rejected by their parents, which causes hidden distress. They focus their attention upon toys and other stimuli rather than the caregiver. These patterns of behavior persist over time as outward and inner neurophysiological responses (Ainsworth 1989).

Bowlby describes this attachment behavior continuity as being based on "internal working models" that are developed and maintained over time. The infant develops expectations about the caregiving it receives, and these become internally organized into working models--or mental models--of attachment figures, the environment, and self (Ainsworth 1989). Mental models are pervasive and persistent. They organize the development of our personalities, guide our behavior, and allow us to interpret or explain the behaviors of others (Ainsworth, 1978; Shaver & Hazan, 1987; Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Simpson, 1990). Attachment styles are significantly related to mental models (Hazan and Shaver 1987). People with secure attachment styles develop more positive mental models of themselves and others. However, people with anxious attachment styles evolve models of themselves as being "misunderstood, unconfident, and underappreciated" and their significant others as being "typically unreliable and either unwilling or unable to commit themselves to

permanent relationships.” Those with avoidant styles see themselves as “suspicious, aloof, and skeptical” and of others as “basically unreliable, or overly eager to commit themselves to relationships” (Simpson, 1990). This consistency between mental models and attachment styles explains the continuity of attachment styles over time and across generations.

It has been found that children shift the focus of their attachment as they develop from childhood to adolescence and into adulthood, and that these attachment styles persist from infancy to adulthood (Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985; Ainsworth, 1989; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Simpson, 1990). There is the capacity for change of attachment style, but they are predominately self-perpetuating (Shaver & Hazan, 1993). In adulthood, these attachment styles manifest themselves in a different way from infant styles because adult romantic relationships are different from infant-caregiver relationships. Adult attachments differ from infant attachments in several ways; they involve reciprocal caregiving, they do not affect the exploration/independence system as strongly, and they involve a sexual/mating aspect (Hazan & Shaver, 1993). Despite these differences, attachment styles can be traced from infancy to adulthood (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Bowlby (1979) has claimed that attachment is a part of human behavior “from the cradle to the grave” for which he has found support through studies on loss. Loss and separation from the attachment figure- be it an adult romantic partner or a parent- evokes the same responses of protest, despair, and then detachment (Hazan & Shaver, 1993).

The most reliable evidence for continuity of attachment styles from infant to adulthood can be found through observation and testing. For example, Shaver, Hazan, and Bradshaw (1988) detailed 18 different parallel features of adult romantic love and infant attachment. One of the first measures attempting to classify adult attachment was the lengthy clinical Adult Attachment Interview (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1984). Just five years later, studies were reporting strong evidence for continuity of patterns of attachment over time through such tests as the AAI (Ainsworth, 1989). Another

salient illustration of this consistency is that the relative frequencies of attachment style distribution are very similar between infancy and adulthood (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Hazan and Shaver's 1987 single item self-report measure was developed to assess attachment styles in adult romantic relationships and is regarded as a hallmark in testing. (See Table 1). It was created using Ainsworth's 1978 categorizations of infant attachment style as a basis. This measure has since been expanded and its results replicated in dozens of subsequent internationally-reaching studies (e.g. Simpson, 1990; Collins & Read, 1990).

Hazan & Shaver (1987) found that participants with different attachment styles also differed in how they viewed an important love relationship. Secure types described that relationship as "essentially happy, friendly, and trusting." Their relationships lasted longer, and they were more able to support their partner and accept faults in the person. Avoidant types were characterized by jealousy, emotional highs and lows, and a fear of intimacy. Anxious/Ambivalent types shared the latter two traits to an even greater degree, as well as exhibiting obsession, extreme sexual attraction, and a strong desire for reciprocation and union. The study also found that participants' views of their relationships with their parents matched what would be expected from Ainsworth's infant-caregiver attachment study (1978).

Hazan and Shaver (1987) also discovered that attachment styles were compatible with mental images (or models). In this measure, secure types classified themselves as easy to get to know and well liked, with a humanistic view of people in general. Anxious/ambivalent types tended to the other extreme and characterized themselves as suffering from more self-doubt, being misunderstood, and unable to find a partner equally as committed to a relationship as themselves. These findings have been replicated or supported by all subsequent studies (e.g. Feeney & Noller, 1990; Simpson, 1990).

Most later studies (e.g. Collins & Read, 1990; Simpson, 1990) altered the measure given by Hazan and Shaver so that it measures participants along a dimension rather

than as discreet types. These studies still found the same percentages of the frequencies of types, and also succeeded in broadening the descriptions of participants. Dimensional measures provide greater insight into attachment types and are less likely to mis-categorize participants who do not easily fit into one discreet category. Also, most persons exhibit both avoidant and anxious tendencies to some degree, and therefore a dimensional measure more accurately describes individual styles (Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Senchak & Leonard, 1992; Collins & Read, 1990; Simpson, 1990). For these reasons, a dimensional scale of attachment was used in this study.

Simpson (1990) summarizes the traits for the three dimensions in terms of their effects on interactions with others. Securely attached people do not have any problems getting close to others, can depend on others, and do not worry about abandonment or over-attachment. Avoidantly attached people are uncomfortable being close to other people, have a hard time depending on or trusting others, and are made nervous by people becoming too close. Anxiously attached adults often want to be very close to their partners, think that others are not willing to get close enough, and worry that their partners do not really love them or that they will abandon them.

Simpson (1990) found that these attachment style traits (described above) manifest themselves in specific behavioral tendencies in relationships within each classification. Securely attached people will have greater interdependence, commitment, trust, and satisfaction with their partners. Anxiously attached people will have less trust, commitment, and satisfaction with their partners. Avoidantly attached people will also have much less interdependence, commitment, trust, and satisfaction with partners.

People are not necessarily mired in these attachment styles, however. Attachment theory accommodates the possibility for change through new learning; the styles are mostly stable, but can be modified (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Brennan & Shaver, 1995). Hazan and Shaver (1987) note that continuity between childhood and

adult attachment styles decreases as we age. College age participants still have a strong correlation between their adult attachment styles and with their retrospective early attachment styles, but as we reach our 30's, experience in relationships changes our attachment style. It is important to point out that attachment styles are very pervasive. In fact, researchers vacillate between referring to attachment styles as specific to relationships or to the people themselves (Simpson, 1990). Through correlations with mental models, there is ample evidence for the suitability of the latter.

Different attachment styles affect not only behavior in relationships, but also have a significant impact on other aspects of our social interactions and personality. People with different attachment styles hold differing beliefs and mental models about themselves and their social relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). This finding has important implications for behavior (Collins & Read, 1990). In fact, Koback (1985) found that peers of avoidant and anxious/ambivalent people rated them as less socially competent than secure subjects, showing that attachment styles are related to more than just relationships. People with different attachment styles also differed significantly in their levels of self-esteem. Secure subjects consistently hold a more positive view of themselves than the other two types (Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney & Noller, 1990). Brennan and Shaver (1995) also found that attachment style is associated with relationship satisfaction, eating disorders, and motives for drinking. That attachment styles extend to more than just a current relationship suggests the degree to which they penetrate our lives and how they may be intergenerationally transmitted.

Brennan and Shaver (1993) found that the quality of a parents' marriage is the result of attachment behavior which affects the marriage stability and therefore their children's attachment style and future relationships. The status of the parents' marriage is not important, however. Divorce does not significantly predict a child's attachment style, but conflict within the marriage does (Brennan & Shaver, 1993). It

is the quality of the parent relationship which has an impact because parents are likely to apply that same attachment style when with their children. Also, children learn about relationships from observing their parents.

Research has found that the attachment style a person exhibits correlates with timing of marriage. This is only logical since it consistently has been found that there is a direct correlation between the age at which parents marry and when their children will marry (Hogan, 1985; Hogan, 1978; Otto, 1970). When the categorization is altered to secure or nonsecure attachment style (avoidant and anxious/ambivalent styles are collapsed to make up this latter category), it was found that nonsecure people will begin marriages at a younger age than securely attached participants (Hill, Young, and Nord, 1994). Additionally, ambivalently attached people are characterized as being more preoccupied with relationships and may be motivated to marry at an earlier age than people classified as belonging to the other two types of attachment style. Also, regardless of age of marriage, securely attached people may be more likely overall to marry than the insecurely attached (Senchak & Leonard, 1992; Hill, Young, & Nord, 1994). However, these studies do not address expected age at marriage compared with ideals or other influences upon its timing, as this study will attempt to do. The present study will address not only attachment style, but also its connection to expectations and beliefs about ideal ages of marriage, as well as other influences upon the decision to marry. Also, the Anxious/Ambivalent and Avoidant rankings will not be collapsed to form an insecure rating, as was done in previous studies (Hill, Young, & Nord, 1994) because this attachment measurement allows for dimensional degrees of description instead of simple discreet, categorical ratings. Therefore we may form separate hypotheses about the Avoidant and Anxious/Ambivalent scales.

I hypothesize that those who are classified as more secure on attachment scales will be more likely to want to marry, but anxious/ambivalent people will want to marry earlier due to a preoccupation with relationships (Senchak & Leonard, 1992).

Avoidant participants will be the least likely to want to marry, and will desire later marriages because of their fear of intimacy (Brennan & Shaver, 1993). Attachment style should also have some bearing on the willingness to marry and have children when conditions are not ideal (i.e. starting a family without being married or having a job). Attachment styles may also be related to influences upon marriage timing. Finally, more anxious or avoidant participants who are currently in relationships should have a lower desire to marry than more secure participants.

Social and Goal-Oriented Influences

The purpose of the second half of the study is to examine the differences in marriage expectancies and ideals for men and women and to discuss possible social and goal-oriented influences. For these purposes, I will compare students attending a small, private midwestern liberal arts university and a local community college in the same area to search for differences in ideal and expected ages of marriage and starting a family and how they relate to attachment style and social and goal-oriented influences. Some important variables to consider as possibly different between the schools are socio-economic group, educational and career goals, desire for financial security, and the degree of influence of parents and peers. The literature has shown that these influences are important because they have an impact upon the sequence in which transitions take place and this sequence influences a person's quality of life.

There is much conflicting data on the influences affecting the timing of marriage. Strongly implicated are socio-economic background, parents, peers, education, and career aspirations, (Hogan, 1978) as well as attachment style (Hill et al., 1994 ; Senchak & Leonard, 1992). We expect to find a difference in its correlates of the attitudes towards marriage of young adults from different backgrounds but similar geography. It has been found that those from more rural areas and lower socio-economic classes will marry earlier (Hogan, 1985). The survey for this study will determine which populations we are dealing with and if this correlation persists.

Also meaningful is the preferred age at first marriage. The study is being conducted to see if there is consensus between the populations. The most recent trend found consistently in the past 30 years is that marriages are increasingly occurring during a preferred age range in which most people tend to marry in their 20's, and fewer enter first marriages above the age of 30 or below the age of 18 (Carter & Glick, 1970; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996). We would like to see if this trend is due more to parental or peer influence, since it has also been observed that the age at which one's peers decide to marry and when one's parents married has a very strong correlation with preferred marriage timing (Hogan, 1985; Hogan, 1978; Otto, 1970).

Birth cohorts influence marriage timing through a type of passive peer pressure. People feel left behind when most others their age have married or completed other transitions while they have not. There is a felt pressure to catch up with the rest of the peer group and complete transitions within the desired and popular age range (Hogan, 1985). Parents are also an important influence. Not only do people's ages at marriage resemble those of their parents', but parents can also be directly influential. Parents may provide information, feedback, and the circumstances necessary to hasten or delay timing of marriage (Hogan, 1985).

Much material has shown the importance of a person's educational and career goals on marriage timing (Hogan, 1985). An early marriage has a negative impact on career in terms of earnings and position, and continuing one's education will delay marriage (Hogan, 1985; Modell, 1980). Modell (1980) also notes the influence of financial independence on marriage timing. People simply do not wish to get married until they have something to live on. This leads to the question of the relative importance of achieving certain transitions before undertaking others. Marriage and parenthood are two transitions that are used to measure this, and the findings differ by social class (Hogan, 1985). This study will explore more sequencing contingencies of transitions- adding the completion of schooling and acquirement of a full-time job to the previously mentioned transitions.

The differences between men's and women's attitudes towards marriage has not been well-documented, though it has been found that the average age at first marriage differs by sex (Hogan, 1985; Otto, 1970). As was detailed earlier, females have a younger age at marriage and childbirth than males. Another sex difference is that women's marriage timing is more influenced by their parents than men's (Hogan, 1985). He also found that not only the actual, but also the preferred ages of marriage and childbirth differs by sex. Even educational and career plans differ by sex (Hogan, 1985). In the same study, Hogan found that educational plans have no influence on men's marriage timing, while Marini (1978) found that educational attainment has a strong impact on women's marriage timing. This finding may persist in the present study. The current study will explore the differences in the way that men and women view some aspects of marriage which may explain their differences in age at marriage.

Marriage and starting a family are important transitions into adulthood. Researching when they occur and when people believe they should ideally occur can help us to answer culturally determined markers of 'adulthood.' The label 'adult' is generally granted to those who have completed the transitions of marriage, getting a full-time job, living apart from parents, and possibly becoming a parent. In absence of this information, we generally rely on age as a determinant of adulthood (Hogan, 1985). Though it is difficult to define adulthood, the study will attempt to find the average age at which students believe that they may be considered adults. I hypothesize that community college students will consider themselves to be adults at a younger age than the university students, and therefore hold differing ideas about marriage.

What is missing in the literature is a recent and clear comparison between college students at different schools and their attitudes towards marriage in conjunction with attachment style. This review has presented studies assessing attachment style after marriage and studies on other influences on marriage, but

there are few studies which integrate attachment style with social and goal-directed influences upon marriage and with marriage expectancies. The focus in this study is upon how attachment style and other influences impact attitudes and expectancies about marriage and its timing. Therefore, while previous studies focused upon actual behavior, the current study will look at plans for the future. This may demonstrate how pervasive the influences upon marriage timing are. In addition, this study is unique in that it integrates two sets of influences for a common focus on marriage. Therefore, a clearer picture of the spectrum of contributing factors in marriage timing is presented here in one study.

Based on previous literature and new hypotheses, the study proposes that men and women from two populations will differ in their attitudes toward preferred and expected marriage timing. Because we know that continuing one's education tends to delay marriage, it is expected that the university students will, on average, expect to marry later than will community college students. The university students are more likely to continue their education in graduate school than the community college students who have a lower percentage of the population going on to postgraduate education (personal communication with college representative, Feb. 1997). We predict that there will also be a smaller difference in ages between men and women regarding ideal age at first marriage than has been found in previous studies because of the changing roles and expectations for women. However, sex differences regarding social and goal-directed influences are still expected. Examining both attachment style and social and goal-oriented influences upon marriage will help us to better understand what influences marriage timing.

Methods

Participants

Twenty men and thirty women from Illinois Wesleyan University and six men and twenty-two women from Heartland Community College between the ages of 18 and 25 were recruited. The total sample was 78 participants. The IWU students were drawn

from a pre-established subject pool of students in introductory Psychology classes. These students were offered the option of participating in several experiments that semester, or writing a review of journal articles. The researcher went to the classes to announce the opportunity to participate in the survey during four evening hours on two separate days. Anyone was welcome to take the survey, and signs were posted in the building as a reminder. The Heartland students were also introductory psychology students who were given credit in class as compensation. These students were recruited through notes delivered to their professors requesting participants for the current study. The notes were given to eight professors, and all responded. The professors contacted the researcher by phone to indicate their interest in participating in the study. Only those who taught lower level psychology classes were recruited, and four classes were visited. The classes were not informed ahead of time which day they would take the survey. Most classes only had about 50% attendance on the day the survey was distributed. One professor attributed this to a virus circulating around the school. Due to this participant attrition, the study has a small number of community college students.

A total of forty-eight Heartland students took the survey. Data from those participants over the age of 25 or who were already married were not included. Married participants were excluded because the goal of the study was to assess marriage expectations. Since the university students were all between the ages of 18 - 22, the community college students over 25 were not included in the study so that the age range could be kept fairly similar between the two schools. Also, it has been found that ages older than the average college level report attachment styles that do not correlate reliably with their early attachment styles (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). The small number of males reporting from Heartland college restricted the range of analyses and the types of statistics that could be conducted.

Materials

The data collection survey is included in the appendix. The questionnaire consisted of 72 items. The first page was an informed consent tear-off sheet that briefly introduced the study and asked for the name and signature of the participant. The survey then began with self-prediction questions to determine the participant's preference for age at first marriage and beginning a family. Following this section were questions asking the participant's perception of the ideal age for men and women at first marriage and for starting a family. These questions were based upon previously used opinion poll items (Modell, 1980). Participants were asked to list the age at which their parents were married and began their family, and their opinions of their parent's marriage.

A Likert scale with a range from 1-10 for describing the set as "very influential", "somewhat influential", and "not at all influential" was used to assess the degree of influence that parents, peers, education, financial independence, and career aspirations have upon the decision of age at first marriage. Participants were asked to self-report the degree to which these things influence their decisions about when to marry. They were also asked if they consider themselves to be adults and were asked to rank a list of choices of what they think makes a person an adult. They were then asked to rank the ideal chronological order of transitions to occur in life.

Another set of questions asked respondents if they would consider marriage if they had not moved out of the family home, finished school, or attained a full-time job. Similar questions were asked about starting a family. The survey also contained a series of demographic questions for comparison and classification of participants. These included questions about the participant's age, sex, marital or relationship status, school name, GPA, expected plans for after school, family income, and locale of upbringing.

The Shaver Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment (in press) was the final instrument in the assessment packet. It was a 36 item questionnaire

assessing the degrees of avoidant or anxious/ambivalent attachment styles. The questions asked about the participant's behaviors and feelings within their romantic relationships. The participant answered according to a Likert Scale which assessed whether they "Agree Strongly", were "Neutral/Mixed", or "Disagree Strongly" with the statements made about relationships. This was the revised, dimensional version--essentially still in development--which is more current and explanatory than the original diagnostic used in previously cited studies (See Table 1).

The Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment (Shaver, in press) measured participants' feelings about experiences in close relationships on a Likert scale of 1 to 7. The answers were then separated into components of two scales. Participant's scores for each dimension were summed and averaged so that each received an average Anxious and Avoidant rating. The lower the score on each scale, the more secure the participant ranked. This measure is a revision of the original Hazan & Shaver 1987 Single-Item Measure (See Table 1).

Shaver authored both measures and this second one was intended to be an expansion and improvement upon the first. Instead of assigning discreet scores to participants, they were assessed along a dimension which allows for more flexibility and accuracy. With the categorical measure (1987), it was "not possible to determine the degree to which a particular attachment style characterizes an individual" (Senchak & Leonard, 1992, p.62-3). And Shaver noted, "the data doesn't support the idea of discreet types or categories, which means that valuable precision is lost when one uses types rather than dimensions" (personal communication, Dec. 1996).

Procedure

The research procedures were approved by the Institutional Review Board at Illinois Wesleyan University. Initially, a small pilot study was run. Three students from each population in Psychology courses at each school were asked to take the survey. They were approached outside of class, and all consented. After completing the survey, they were asked about any problems they may have perceived, or if they

found inconsistencies or confusion in the questioning. These comments were used to make semantic modifications to the survey for two questions which were later discarded due to the high error rate that participants displayed when answering them. On separate dates, students at both colleges in introductory psychology courses were asked to complete the survey for credit or class participation. As previously mentioned, the IWU students took the survey on two separate dates at night. At Heartland, this took place at the beginning of class, and all students were given the choice to stay and complete the survey, or to decline. Once the number of participants was determined, the students at IWU and Heartland were given a brief introduction explaining the items on the survey and were thanked for their participation. They were informed that the tester would remain present in the room to answer any and all questions. Participants were informed that the survey would only take 10-20 minutes. They were assured that the study was anonymous and that they would only be referred to by participant number; their names were not connected with their answers in any way. The questionnaires were then distributed. At IWU, a list was also distributed asking participants for their name and address so that an informational debriefing sheet could be mailed to them once data collection was completed at the school. The Heartland students were given the sheet after they completed the survey in class. The debriefing sheet explained the research question and provided the investigator's name and number and the names and numbers of advisors in case anyone should wish to contact the investigators for results or questions.

Results

Six men and 22 women from the community college were compared with 20 men and 30 women from the university. This near empty cell for the community college males restricted the statistics that could be run, so that most statistics only compare schools, the women at each school, or the men and women at the university. Of the entire sample, the majority (50% - 39 out of 78) of students were from suburban homes. The most frequently reported parental income was between \$30,000 and \$50,000, and the average age at the university was 18.7, while the average age at the community college was 21.0. There were no significant demographic differences between the two schools.

The Shaver Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment (in press) was tested for reliability. Each scale was found to have acceptable internal consistency, coefficient alpha for the Anxious scale was .84, and the Avoidant scale was .92. The difference in internal consistency may be attributable to the Anxious scale only possessing one reverse coded question, while the Avoidant scale contained 8. Both scales were skewed with a higher percentage of participants scoring as securely—ranked. This corresponds to previous measures in which it was found that over 50% of participants were secure types, 25% were avoidant, and around 23% were anxious (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; etc.). The average score on the Anxious scale for university women was 3.45, compared with 3.59 for women at the community college. Just comparing women again, the average Avoidant scale score for women at the university was 2.96 compared to 2.87 at the community college. (See Figures 1 & 2). Statistically, these scores are not significantly different.

The probability of an alpha error was established at .05 for all analyses unless otherwise noted. Any p value less than .05 was considered significant, according to convention. P values between .05 and .1 were reported as trends. Unless otherwise specified, non-pooled error estimates were used because the homogeneity of variance could not be assured. Thus, the degrees of freedom were calculated.

Ideal & Expected Ages

Looking at the entire population, the mean expected age at marriage for women was 24.7 and 26.4 for men. The mean ideal age for women to marry was 24.3, and the ideal age for men was 25.9. The expected age to start a family was 29.6, while the ideal age was 26.2.

A t-test for independent samples was performed to look for differences in the expected and ideal ages at marriage and starting a family between the two schools for women. Only the ideal age to start a family was significant, $t(42.42) = -2.60$, $p = .013$. So, there was a significant difference in the ideal age for women at each school to start a family. The mean ages were 24.7 at the community college and 26.7 at the university. When the same dependent variables were used in a t-test comparing men and women at the university, only expected age at marriage was related to sex of participant, $t(36.34) = 2.05$, $p < .05$. The mean expected age at marriage for men was 26.4, compared to women with 24.9. Thus, men and women at the university expect to marry at significantly different ages.

Attachment Style

Overall, when examined with a Pearson correlation coefficient, there was a significant correlation between expected age at marriage and the Avoidant dimension, $r = .33$, $p = .004$ (See Figure 3). A high Avoidant scale rating is positively correlated with higher expected ages at marriage. The Anxious dimension was not significantly correlated with expected age at marriage, and neither dimension was correlated with the ideal ages for men and women to marry or start a family. When separated by sex and school, a trend was found for university men in expected age of marriage correlated with the Avoidant scale, $r = .40$, $p < .10$, and the relationship between women's expected ages and their Avoidant scale ratings at the university were also significant at $r = .45$, $p = .013$. Women at the university had the strongest correlation between high scores on the Avoidant scale and higher expected ages at marriage.

It was also found that for those participants who were involved in a relationship, the degree to which they ranked Anxious or Avoidant was significantly related to whether or not they wished to marry their significant other. Overall, on the Anxious scale, a t-test showed the significance to be $t(54.24) = -2.40, p < .05$; while the Avoidant scale was even more significantly related at $t(68.28) = -4.43, p < .001$. The mean scale rankings for the Anxious group were 3.29 for those who wanted to marry, and 3.79 for those who did not. The Avoidant scale means were 2.31 for those who wanted to marry, and 3.24 for those who did not. In other words, the more Avoidantly or Anxiously a participant ranked, the less they wanted to marry their significant other. Separated by school, this finding became less significant for the community college students. The Anxious dimension showed no significant relationship with wanting to marry, while the Avoidant scale showed only a trend $t(24.30) = -1.86, p < .10$. For the university students, the Anxious dimension yielded a significant relationship with not wanting to marry, $t(23.26) = -2.55, p = .02$ with means of 3.11 for wanting to marry and 3.87 for not, as well as another highly significant Avoidant relationship with the same variable of wanting to marry, $t(45.32) = -4.69, p < .001$ with means of 2.12 and 3.26. Therefore, the relationship between attachment style and wanting to marry is only really significant for the university students.

Attachment Style & Social and Goal-Directed Influences

A conservative Spearman correlation coefficient was used next since the data came from two Likert scales and not conventionally interval. When run on attachment styles and influences upon marriage, it produced a few significant results. Overall, the Anxious dimension correlated most strongly with friends as influences, $r_s = .29, p = .01$, and demonstrated a relationship trend with career aspirations, $r_s = .22, p = .053$, with educational goals, $r_s = .22, p = .053$, and with financial independence, $r_s = .20, p < .10$. The more Anxiously participants ranked, the more influential friends, career aspirations, educational goals, and financial independence were. The Avoidant dimension also correlated with career aspirations, $r_s = .24, p < .05$, and showed a

relationship trend with financial independence, $r_2 = .22$, $p = .05$, and educational goals, $r_2 = .19$, $p < .10$. The amount of influence of career aspirations, financial independence, and educational goals on marriage was directly related to the degree to which the participants ranked Avoidantly.

When sex and school of participant were correlated separately with attachment style, the most significant relationship could be seen with men from the university, whose Avoidant dimension correlated with parental influence, $r = .66$, $p = .001$, and whose Anxious dimension correlated with friends as an influence, $r = .53$, $p < .02$, career aspirations, $r = .55$, $p < .02$, and educational goals, $r = .57$, $p < .01$. The more Avoidantly the men were rated, the higher they ranked parents as influences upon marriage, and the more Anxiously they ranked, the higher they reported friends, career aspirations, and educational goals as influences on marriage. Women at the university also displayed a significant directly positive relationship between the Anxious scale and friends as influences on marriage, $r = .41$, $p < .05$, while women at the community college merely showed relationship trends.

Using the same dependent variables in a t-test with attachment styles, only one significant result was found. The more Avoidantly a participant ranked, the less they would consider starting a family without having a full-time job, $t(24.10) = -2.95$, $p < .01$. The mean Avoidant ranking for needing a job before marriage was 2.35, compared with 2.98.

Social and Goal-Oriented Influences

Comparing the schools without attachment style, a t-test revealed that the only difference between the schools when looking at influences upon marriage was educational goals, which was merely a trend, $t(41.83) = -1.71$, $p < .10$. However, this was not at all significant when women at the schools were compared, $p > .10$. Therefore, there were not any real differences in what influences marriage between the schools without attachment style included in the correlation. However, within the university population, men ranked financial independence as a much stronger influence upon

marriage than women, $t(47.26) = 2.06$, $p < .05$. The mean ranking on the scale(out of 10) was 8.7 for men and 7.7 for women. There was also a slight trend for men at the university to rate career aspirations as a greater influence upon marriage than women did, $t(46.95) = 1.71$, $p < .01$. Men ranked the influence at 8.5, and 7.6 for women.

An independent samples t-test was used to assess the relationship between school of participant and which contingencies would be an obstacle to getting married or starting a family. There was a significant difference between the two schools with regards to whether or not they would start a family while still in college, $t(40.31) = -3.52$, $p < .001$, as well as whether or not they would consider getting married while still in college, $t(71.72) = -4.05$, $p < .001$. When females alone were compared from the two colleges, the results were similarly highly significant. In both cases, the university students were less likely to want to start a family or get married while still in college. Within the university, there was one sex difference. All men answered that they would not start a family without having a full-time job, while more women were willing to do so, $t(29.00) = 2.97$, $p = .006$.

A Pearson r revealed that the present study supports the previous literature in that there is a positive correlation between the ideal ages at which participants wish to marry and the ages at which their parents were married (Otto, 1970; Hogan, 1978; Hogan, 1985). Most significant were the women's responses of the ideal age for men to marry and the age at which the participant's fathers were married, $r = .48$, $p < .001$, and the age at which the female participant's mothers were married and their reported ideal ages for women to marry, $r = .38$, $p < .01$. Men also showed a correlation between their ideal age for men at marriage and their father's age at marriage, $r = .43$, $p < .05$. There was also a significant correlation between the ideal ages for men and women to marry for both sexes, $p < .001$. Overall, there was also a significant correlation between expected age at marriage and mother's age at marriage, $r = .37$, $p = .001$, and father's age at marriage, $r = .43$, $p < .001$.

Because there was a directed hypothesis, a one-tailed independent samples t-test was run which found a significant relationship between the age at which participants consider themselves adults and the school that they attend, $t(59.85) = -1.97, p < .05$. The students at the university considered themselves to be adults at a later age than the students at the community college. The mean age for the community college was 19.8 and 20.7 for the university students.

In agreement with Hazan & Shaver's findings (1987), there was no significant relationship between the status of their parent's relationship and the participants' attachment styles.

Discussion

Ideal & Expected Ages

One hypothesis that was supported was that the women have a significantly lower expected age of marriage than men. Tradition still seems to be a strong influence in this area (Hogan, 1985; Otto, 1970). The ideal ages reported for men and women to marry and start a family did not differ by the sex of the participant, however. But when women at the two schools were compared, it was found that women at the university wished to start a family significantly later than women at the community college, though they did not differ in their expected ages at marriage or ideal ages for men or women to marry. Possibly, community college students view it as more acceptable to begin a family at a younger age. Goals and influences might have something to do with this difference in marriage timing preferences. Hogan's (1985) explanation for the differences between men and women in marriage timing and educational and career goals can be applied to the women of the two schools. Perhaps since women at the university have higher educational and career aspirations, this leads to later age at parenthood.

Attachment Style

I hypothesized that the more Avoidantly a participant ranked on the attachment style dimensions, the later they would expect to marry. This was found to

be true, and mainly applies to women at the university. Avoidantly attached people fear intimacy and would be expected to put off marriage until a later age because they are uncomfortable being in a close committed relationship (Senchak & Leonard, 1992). Their independence would also be compromised by marriage.

Similarly, the more Anxiously or Avoidantly participants ranked, the less likely they were to want to marry their significant other. A study found that insecure people married at a younger age than the secure types, but the Anxious and Avoidant types were collapsed in that study (Hill et al., 1994). In the present study, the scales were separated and hypotheses were based on behaviors associated with attachment styles from the literature (Shaver & Hazan, 1993). Surprisingly, the more Anxiously ranked a participant was, the less they wanted to get married. I hypothesized the opposite to be true because Anxious people are overly-preoccupied with relationships. "Ambivalent attachment is characterized by a preoccupation with relationships, which might motivate an early marriage" (Senchak & Leonard, 1992, p.61). But perhaps they are so insecure in those relationships that they do not contemplate marriage, and their goal is just to have any kind of relationship. Once they are in the relationship, they worry about commitment and levels of trust so much that they are less likely to want to pursue that relationship into marriage. Obviously, Avoidantly ranked people are uncomfortable with intimacy and avoid commitment in romantic relationships, and thus would not want to extend the commitment level beyond the relationship to marriage (Brennan & Shaver, 1995).

Attachment Style & Social and Goal-Directed Influences

Attachment styles were also significantly related to the types of influences that would affect a person's marriage decisions. Highly Anxiously rated people rated friends, educational goals, and career aspirations to be very influential. This may be related to the pervasiveness of attachment styles; anxious people are less secure in general, and may be more open to suggestions from friends. They are likely more influenced by traditional routes in life and worried about their education and careers,

while the more secure participants are more confident of their abilities and their future. The more Avoidantly a person ranked, the more financial independence, parents, and career aspirations influenced their thoughts about marriage. Again, as less secure people in general, Avoidant participants probably are more concerned with being financially secure and employed than with being married. They would want to concentrate more on the material aspects of life and put off the emotional.

Social and Goal-Directed Influences

Goal- directed and social influences on marriage matter slightly more for university students than those at the community college. The most salient difference was in the strength of educational goals as an influence on the timing of marriage. If education is a greater influence on university students than the community college students, it would explain a willingness on the part of the community college students to interrupt graduate school to start a family, since it has been found that continued education delays marriage (Hogan, 1978).

The strongest differences in influences were found within the university. Men considered financial independence and career aspirations to have a much greater influence upon marriage than women did. Perhaps men still expect that they will be the principle wage-earners in a family and want to have a secure financial base before entering into a relationship where they might have to support another person. This may not be as great a concern for women. Again, old traditions still persist. (Otto, 1970).

Being in school was also a strong determining factor between the schools as the whether they would marry or start a family. The university students were much more likely to want to wait until finishing school before completing the adult transitions of getting married and beginning a family. The university is a more structured school system than the community college- which is more likely to be a transient, less formal education. Thus, university students would not want to interrupt their education- they might see school, marriage, and having children as being more hierarchically

arranged than the community college students. Based on the academic reputations of each school, the university students were likely to be more committed to their education and thus would not be willing to risk disconformity with the established conventional order of school, then marriage. Also, the community college students' ideas about marriage were not nearly so influenced as the university students by parents, peers, or goals, so the timing of their transitions would be less regulated (Hogan, 1978). Community college students would not see school as a barrier or stepping stone to marriage and family like the university students do.

In general, most of the findings were more significant for the university group. A possible reason for this is that these students are in a more homogenous group since they all live on campus- away from home- and are exposed to less outside of the campus, and had a smaller age range than the community college students. Also, men at the university were very concerned with having a job before starting a family, while women were not. Again, this is likely due to a similar conception of the male as the primary wage-earner in the household (Otto, 1970).

It is fitting that the community college students would be more willing to marry and have children during their schooling, because this means it would also be acceptable to do so at a younger age. They also consider themselves to be adults at a younger age. Therefore, they might be more willing and likely to complete more important life decisions and transitions at an earlier age, as some respondents in the age range at the community college already had been married or begun a family. This discrepancy was not found in any of the university sample.

This could have something to do with the traditions within their families. Previous literature was supported in that the age at which their parents married correlated significantly with the ideal and expected ages of marriage for the participants (Hogan, 1985; Hogan, 1978; Otto, 1970). This may be another way in which attachment styles are transmitted intergenerationally.

One of the problems with the study is that both measures used are new. However, the Shaver Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment is thought to be very highly correlated with other measures used to assess attachment styles. Shaver is one of the pioneers in the field in terms of research and measures, and this measure was designed to improve upon his 1987 measure, while encompassing the additions made and suggested by other studies since that time. Another problem is the method of data collection. Self-report is not the most reliable method of data-collection, but it is appropriate since I am measuring attitudes and do not possess the resources to perform a longitudinal study to track the actual age at which the transitions will occur for each participant. Another problem with the self-report method used in the study, as highlighted by Hazan & Shaver (1987), is that participants might not have been able to accurately recall their behaviors and feelings in relationships, and may have been more defensive or idealistic in their responses. A different concern with the study is that the high number of statistical tests run may have resulted in an inflated alpha level. With the increased number of tests, there is the possibility that a relationship reported as significant is actually due only to chance. One last caveat is that there are many influences and factors that go into decisions about marriage and relationships. The study could not possibly account for all of them, and instead addressed those that were most frequently mentioned in the transition literature (Hogan, 1978).

Attachment styles not only influence behaviors, but also expectations for those behaviors (which was difficult to see illustrated in the literature). Expectations about marriage timing show clearly that our cognitions and plans are related to attachment styles. It is not just when we marry that is significantly related to attachment styles, it is also when we think we will marry. Further research would be helpful to determine if expectations and ideals hold up to the actual ages at which people marry. Also, a variety of age groups should be studied to see the degree to which attachment style varies with age.

This study can be generalized to other college students from similar backgrounds who enroll in similar classes. Unfortunately, an indirect sampling bias may have been present for the community college students due to the low attendance in classes, but hopefully, this new data will update the knowledge base in this area and provide information on a new generation facing the transition into adulthood.

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Appendix

Marriage Survey

Directions: Please fill in your responses or check "yes" or "no" for your answers.

1. At what age do you expect, or want, to get married? _____
2. What do you think is the ideal age for a man to get married? _____
3. What do you think is the ideal age for a woman to get married? _____
4. At what age were your parents married?
A) Mother _____
B) Father _____
5. About how old were your parents when you were born?
A) Mother _____
B) Father _____
6. Are your parents still together?
1) Yes _____
2) No _____
7. If yes, do you believe your parents have a good marriage?
1) Yes _____
2) No _____
8. Would you want to have a similar marriage?
1) Yes _____
2) No _____
9. Have your parents told you when they think is the right age for you to be married? If yes, please write in that age.
1) Yes _____
2) No _____
10. Have your friends indicated to you at what age they think you should be married? If yes, please write in that age.
1) Yes _____
2) No _____
11. At what age do you, personally, think you will start a family? _____
12. What do you think is the ideal age to have children? _____
13. By what age can someone be considered an adult? _____

14. What makes a person an adult? Using the letters for each event, rank the following choices in the order that you feel they contribute to making a person an adult, with the most important thing at the top of the list.

(A) Finishing college	1> _____
(B) Finishing high school	2> _____
(C) Starting a family	3> _____
(D) Living on your own- not with parents	4> _____
(E) Getting your first full-time job	5> _____
(F) Getting married	6> _____

15. Using the list above, rank the ideal chronological order in which you think these events should occur in life, with number 1 as the first to happen.

1> _____
 2> _____
 3> _____
 4> _____
 5> _____
 6> _____

For the following questions, please circle the number which best fits your attitudes.

16. How influential do you consider your parents to be on your decision of when to get married?

very	influential					somewhat					not at all
	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

17. How influential do you consider your friends and peers to be on your decision of when to get married?

very	influential					somewhat					not at all
	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

18. How influential do you consider your educational goals to be upon your decision of when to get married?

very	influential					somewhat					not at all
	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

19. How influential do you consider your financial independence to be on your decision of when to get married?

very influential somewhat not at all
 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

20. How influential do you consider your career aspirations to be upon your decision of when to get married?

very influential somewhat not at all
 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

21. Would you consider marriage if you hadn't moved out of your parents' home?

1) Yes _____
 2) No _____

22. Would you consider marriage if you hadn't finished college?

1) Yes _____
 2) No _____

23. Would you consider marriage if you didn't have a full-time job?

1) Yes _____
 2) No _____

24. Would you consider having kids if you hadn't moved out of your parents' home?

1) Yes _____
 2) No _____

25. Would you consider having kids if you hadn't finished college?

1) Yes _____
 2) No _____

26. Would you consider having kids if you didn't have full-time job?

1) Yes _____
 2) No _____

27. Would you consider having kids if you weren't married?

1) Yes _____
 2) No _____

Multi-Item Measure of Adult Romantic Attachment

Experiences in Close Relationships

Instructions: The following statements concern how you feel in romantic relationships. We are interested in how you generally experience relationships, not just in what is happening in a current relationship. Respond to each statement by indicating how much you agree or disagree with it. Write the number in the space provided, using the following rating scale:

Disagree Strongly

Neutral/Mixed

Agree Strongly

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

- ___ 1. I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down.
- ___ 2. I worry about being abandoned.
- ___ 3. I am very comfortable being close to romantic partners.
- ___ 4. I worry a lot about my relationships.
- ___ 5. Just when my partner starts to get close to me I find myself pulling away.
- ___ 6. I worry that romantic partners won't care about me as much as I care about them.
- ___ 7. I get uncomfortable when a romantic partner wants to be very close.
- ___ 8. I worry a fair amount about losing my partner.
- ___ 9. I don't feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners.
- ___ 10. I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him/her.
- ___ 11. I want to get close to my partner, but I keep pulling back.
- ___ 12. I often want to merge completely with romantic partners, and this sometimes scares them away.
- ___ 13. I am nervous when partners get too close to me.
- ___ 14. I worry about being alone.
- ___ 15. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner.

Attachment & Marriage Timing

Use the following rating scale on every item:

Disagree Strongly

Neutral/Mixed

Agree Strongly

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

- ___ 16. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.
- ___ 17. I try to avoid getting too close to my partner.
- ___ 18. I need a lot of reassurance that I am loved by my partner.
- ___ 19. I find it relatively easy to get close to my partner.
- ___ 20. Sometimes I feel that I force my partners to show more feeling, more commitment.
- ___ 21. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on romantic partners.
- ___ 22. I do not often worry about being abandoned.
- ___ 23. I prefer not to be too close to romantic partners.
- ___ 24. If I can't get my partner to show interest in me, I get upset or angry.
- ___ 25. I tell my partner just about everything.
- ___ 26. I find that my partner(s) don't want to get as close as I would like.
- ___ 27. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner.
- ___ 28. When I'm not involved in a relationship, I feel somewhat anxious and insecure.
- ___ 29. I feel comfortable depending on romantic partners.
- ___ 30. I get frustrated when my partner is not around as much as I would like.
- ___ 31. I don't mind asking romantic partners for comfort, advice, or help.
- ___ 32. I get frustrated if romantic partners are not available when I need them.
- ___ 33. It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need.
- ___ 34. When romantic partners disapprove of me, I feel really bad about myself.
- ___ 35. I turn to my partner for many things, including comfort and reassurance.
- ___ 36. I resent it when my partner spends time away from me.

Table 1

Adult Attachment Types and Their Frequencies

Question: Which of the following best describes your feelings?

Secure: I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.

Avoidant: I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.

Anxious/Ambivalent: I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't want to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares other people away.

Note. From Hazan, C., & Shaver, P., (1987). Romantic Love Conceptualized as an Attachment Process. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 52, 515.

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Distribution and frequencies of scores on the Anxious scale.

Figure 2. Distribution and frequencies of scores on the Avoidant scale.

Figure 3. Avoidance scale score as a function of expected age of marriage





