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The role of attachment-related factors in understanding male physical violence toward a female intimate

Kesner, John Edward, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University, 1994
THE ROLE OF ATTACHMENT-RELATED FACTORS IN UNDERSTANDING
MALE PHYSICAL VIOLENCE TOWARD A FEMALE INTIMATE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Doctor of Philosophy Degree in the Graduate School
of The Ohio State University

By

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1994

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To My Family
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Incidence of Male Physical Violence Toward Female Intimates

Violence perpetrated against a sexual intimate seems paradoxical. Yet, national statistics reveal that violence against family members is far more common than violence among strangers (Dobash, & Dobash, 1979; Gelles 1994; McLeer 1988; Steinmetz, 1987). In a landmark study of domestic violence, Strauss, Gelles, and Steinmetz (1980) surveyed over 2100 intact couples and found that 7 out of 100 had experienced some form of minor violence such as throwing something at the other partner. Strauss et al. (1980) found that between 50-60% of the couples interviewed in their national sample reported physical violence at some point during their marriage. For one out of five women, this abuse is not an isolated incident, and for one out of 15-20 women, severe battering is a chronic condition. The U.S. Department of Justice reports that about 680 males are killed each year by their intimates, but approximately 1300 females are killed by their intimate partner (U.S. Department of Justice, 1991).
Research indicates that violence against an intimate partner usually involves male physical violence toward a female intimate (Stets & Strauss 1989). F.B.I. statistics for a one-month period indicate a ratio of 12 females to every one male that reports a violent attack by a spouse, and that as many as 13% of all homicides in the United States are husband to wife (Van Hasselt et al. 1988). In a national survey of over six thousand couples, Strauss and Gelles (1986) found that 16% of the homes they surveyed had experienced some type of marital violence in the year preceding the survey. They also found that 28% of couples surveyed reported marital violence at some point in their marriage (Strauss & Gelles, 1986).

Although child abuse has been recognized as a problem by legal and medical professionals for many years, the condition of wife battering (which usually covaries with child abuse) has been largely ignored. Even though a high incidence of marital violence has characterized American society throughout history, only recently has it been acknowledged as a problem by the legal, medical and therapeutic communities. In the medical community, it was not until the ninth revision of the International Classification of Diseases: Clinical Modification (US Dept. of Health and Human Services, 1989) that "battered woman" and "battered spouse" were included as diagnoses (Margolin, Sibner, & Gleberman, 1988). Traditional therapeutic
approaches that focused on the woman who remained in the abusive relationship treated her as having certain pathologies along with her abusing husband (Dutton & Browning 1988). Only recently has the focus on the victim changed to include non-pathological reasons for remaining in an abusive relationship. Law enforcement officials and the legal community have also given little recognition to the problems of domestic violence. In fact, Margolin et al. (1988) contends that the police may even have contributed to the escalation of violence against the woman. Rather than treating the abusive incident in the usual criminal manner, police historically have been trained to mediate the situation and often have discouraged women from charging their husbands with the crime. The legal system is designed to operate and maintain an objective perspective, and because of the emotional nature of domestic violence, it does not lend itself well to legal adjudication. Domestic violence has, in fact, been described as the pariah of the legal system. Until recently, the research community virtually ignored spousal abuse (Micklow 1988). The Journal of Marriage and the Family failed to publish a single article dealing with the topic of domestic violence until 1970 (Steinmetz, 1978).

Epidemiology of Intimate Abuse

Researchers generally agree that family violence involves a unique set of variables that makes it
fundamentally different from other forms of violent behavior (O'Leary, 1988). Some studies indicate that such aggression may be limited to the intimate relationship and not a general personality trait of an individual (Dutton, 1988).

Studies of the age of the individuals involved in domestic violence indicate that the majority of domestic violence incidents occur within young marriages, i.e., among individuals aged 30 or younger. Similarly, violence primarily occurs in marriages of two and one-half to five years duration (Fagan, Stewart, & Stewart, 1983; Strauss et al. 1980).

The comparative rate of male and female intimate violence has been the source of much controversy. Strauss and Gelles (1986) report that male and female intimate partners equally participate in violent behavior within the relationship. Yet, other researchers claim that women are more often the victim of violence rather than having a role in the violence directed against them (Dobash and Dobash, 1979; Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992).

While the phenomenon of marital violence cuts across all socio-economic classes lower-income couples are more likely to be identified as abusive because they are more likely to seek help at clinics or emergency rooms (Gelles & Cornell, 1990). They also face an increase number of risk factors for marital violence. The rate of violence in couples below the poverty line is twice that of couples.
above (Gelles, 1994). Gelles (1994) depicts the abusive family as one where its members live in an urban setting, have low levels of education, and either are blue-collar workers or unemployed.

Although occupational status, income, and education have been found to be highly associated with domestic violence, these variables may mask underlying dynamics. It has been suggested that SES factors may be proxies for economic stress in the family, i.e., the lack of resources to ameliorate the violent situation (Steinmetz, 1987). Therefore, it may not be any of these descriptors of SES per se that are related to domestic violence, but instead the stress associated with them.

Race, based on early findings, seemed to be a valid predictor of marital violence, but when income is considered, race loses predictive power. In fact, Strauss et al. (1980) reported that when income was controlled, Blacks at the two highest income categories reported less wife battering than Whites. The incidence of spousal abuse seems to be better predicted by the stability of income level and related stresses, rather than the race (Gelles, & Cornell, 1990; Steinmetz, 1987).

In an attempt to understand domestic violence, researchers have tried to assemble a batterer profile. Drawing from the Strauss et al. (1980) study on domestic violence, Gelles and Cornell (1990) depicted the male
batterer as non-White, unemployed or employed part-time or full-time in a low paying blue-collar job, with two or more children, experiencing high levels of stress and marital conflict, getting drunk often, and with a wife not employed outside of the home. Other researchers have developed categorical profiles of batterers, emphasizing that there is not just one profile of a batterer, but rather different types (Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz, 1987; Sonkin, 1988).

Research Issues and Trends

Most studies of domestic violence are atheoretical, focusing on theoretically unrelated individual factors such as alcohol, age, stage in life cycle, life stress, and social class—often in isolation from one another. These factors have been dominant in the research because of their prominence in the therapeutic setting where much of the research has been done.

There are a variety of problems involved in assessing the intensity and frequency of domestic violence. The first difficulty lies in defining what acts constitute violence against a female intimate. Gelles and Cornell (1990) defines violence as "an act carried out with the intention, or perceived intention of causing physical pain or injury to another person" (p. 22). Gelles and Cornell further divide violent acts into two categories: normal violence and abusive violence. Normal violence involves the "ordinary"
slaps, shoves, pushes, etc. that are considered normal or acceptable within the society in interacting with a spouse.

The second, abusive violence, involves more serious behaviors that would result in more serious injuries, such as punching, kicking, biting, choking, stabbing or shooting or attempting to choke or shoot.

The lack of a common theoretical approach to domestic violence has led to varying definitions of domestic violence. Researchers either fail to define it, or define it according to the instrument they are using (Geffner, Rosenbaum, & Hughes 1988). Aside from these differences in how they determine whether a male is violent or not, studies have dealt with various forms of violence. For example, Shields and her colleagues questioned participants about their violent behavior toward their intimate partner as well as others (Shields, McCall, & Hanneke, 1988).

Another issue in assessing domestic violence is chronicity of violence. One violent incident is different from a sustained history of violent incidents. The latter may describe the "battered wife syndrome, which is qualitatively different in terms of the dynamics of the relationship from one with an isolated incident of violent behavior (Gelles, & Cornell, 1990; Steinmetz, 1987). Violence within a relationship should be measured as a continuous variable. The severity of violence in an intimate relationship varies along with the strength of
certain variables which would be missed by simply assessing the presence or absence of violence in the relationship.

Much of the research on domestic violence involves married couples; however the research on courtship violence reveals similar rates of incidence. Sugarman and Hoatling (1989) report an incidence of violence between 10%-67% in dating relationships. The authors found that in the majority of these relationships, the violence does not end the relationship, but rather it is perceived either as a sign of love by the partner and partially the fault of the female partner, or leading to improvement in the relationship. In essence the research on courtship violence suggests that the violence that begins while the couple is dating often continues into the relationship (Sugarman & Hoatling, 1989).

Until relatively recently, much of the research literature on domestic violence consisted of case studies and clinical reports. These studies rely on small captive populations in treatment, and thus generalizations can not be made to the larger population. Many studies have relied on descriptive statistics, which lack the inferential value of studies using control or comparison groups. Although increasingly child abuse studies are using comparison groups, researchers of marital violence have generally failed to utilize these (Geffner et al., 1988).
In contrast to small-scale clinical studies, in recent years there has been an over-reliance on aggregate data, collected for a variety of purposes, focusing on structural/demographic variables rather than relationship factors (Sonkin, 1988). Data obtained from law enforcement and other government agencies have been the primary source for many of these data. Increasingly, however, researchers of domestic violence have turned towards more complex and sophisticated methodologies, including surveys, quasi-experimental designs and interviews, using multivariate analyses (Geffner et al. 1988; Steinmetz, 1987).

Regardless of methodology employed, studies of domestic violence continue to rely on the victim as the unit of analysis. The practice of collecting data from the victim's perspective alone presents a report bias that can only be remedied by including the male batter's point of view. What is needed are data collected from both participants in the violent relationship to fully understand the dynamics and functions of violence in an intimate relationship (Geffner et al. 1988; Steinmetz, 1987). Additionally, domestic violence has been conceptualized as a phenomenon with a single configuration. The assumption is that violence is a uniform phenomenon (i.e., violent husband, non-violent wife). However, Strauss et al. (1980) describe three configurations of domestic violence: (a) husband violent-wife nonviolent, (b) husband nonviolent-wife violent, and
(c) husband violent—wife violent. However the majority of researchers do not differentiate among these types and simply register the presence or absence of violence within the relationship. This lack of a delineation of the direction of abuse has resulted in contradictory findings.

Mediators of Male Physical Violence Toward Female Intimates

Life Stress

Life stressors have been a prominent variable in the research on domestic violence and life events theory constitutes the major theoretical approach. It has been suggested that there is a relationship between life event stress and psychological problems, including domestic violence (Boss, 1987). Event stressors that an individual experiences in his/her everyday life, whether they are perceived as positive or negative, can influence the individual's behavior (Sarason, Johnson, & Siegel, 1978). According to Brown (1980) a stressor is a stimulus that may or may not produce stress, depending on how the individual interprets the event, the context in which the event occurs, and the adequacy of individual coping mechanisms.

Farrington (1986) has devised a general stress model in which he describes components that differentiate the subjective and objective demands of a stressor as compared to the coping skills present in the individual. Stress has been described as one of the primary etiological factors
underlying domestic violence (Farrington, 1986), and, in general, strong associations have been found between stress and violent behavior (Gelles & Cornell, 1990). However, there has been some controversy as to the exact nature of stressors and their effects (Marshall & Rose, 1987).

Although research has indicated stress can explain a great deal of domestic violence, some inconsistencies have been found when stress is broken down into positive and negative effects (Makepeace 1983; Marshall & Rose 1987, 1990). It is generally believed that stress is not a causal agent in the incidence of domestic violence, but that it may trigger other characteristics in the individual's personality that may be more directly responsible for the violence. For example, Mason and Blakenship (1987) reported that a high need for power was significantly associated with violent behavior in males when stressed. An better understanding of what makes an individual perceive an event as stressful and how the individual copes with the stressful event is critical. Coping responses have been studied as a critical element in the process of adaptation to stressful events. Researchers have highlighted two primary coping categories: (a) direct actions and (b) use of thought or actions to relieve the emotional impact of stress (Lazarus, 1966). Coping strategies that are situation specific and the ability to access a wide range of responses seems to be the most effective (McKenry & Price, 1994)
**Family of Origin Violence**

A strong mediator of domestic violence, and one of the most commonly studied phenomena in domestic violence research, is the effect of the family of origin on violence in current intimate relationships (O'Leary, 1988). Observing marital abuse and/or receiving abusive or harsh discipline as a child has been correlated to the incidence of domestic violence (O'Leary, 1988; Strauss et al., 1980). Generally a learning approach is proposed as the mechanism of perpetuating family violence. The individual learns to cope with stress in the same manner as his/her parents, by using physical violence. However, the conclusion that witnessing violence or being the victim of violence increases the likelihood of an individual perpetrating or becoming the victim of violence has been questioned (Stark, & Flitcraft, 1988). Stark and Flitcraft point out that many adults that have witnessed or have been the victim of violence are not abusive to either their intimate partners or children.

Drawing from two studies (i.e., Rosenbaum, & O'Leary 1981; Telch & Lindquist, 1984). Stark and Flitcraft (1988) report no significant relationship between violence in the family of origin and later victimization. These researchers state that in all of the studies that looked at this issue, the definition of "witnessing parental violence" widely varied. Also, violence in the family of origin may have several configurations, i.e., father abuses mother, mother abuses
father, father abuse mother and children, father abuses mother, and mother abuses children etc. It seems logical that different configurations of violence in the family of origin may yield different effects.

Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1980) developed a theory whereby interpersonal relationships were seen as mediators in stressful situations. Attachment theory describes how the quality of early relationships become the foundation for coping with stressful life events.

An Attachment Theoretical Perspective

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) is an ethological theory of interpersonal relationships that emphasizes the evolutionary significance of intimate relationships, especially those in early childhood. According to attachment theory, these early relationships form the basis for all future relationships (Bowlby, 1988).

Bowlby postulated that certain behaviors were innate in that they promoted the survival of the individual and consequently the species. The attachment behavioral system is comprised of such behaviors, with behaviors that fulfill the infant's protection needs by eliciting the caregiver's attention and thus provide protection and nurturance (Bowlby, 1988). Therefore, Bowlby proposed that humans are genetically predisposed to seek out and form intimate attachments.
An individual forms an internal mental model of his attachment relationship in childhood and this model serves as a lens for perceiving and behaving in relationships in the future (Bowlby, 1969). The internal working model of attachment is generated through the experiences an individual has with his attachment figures. The quality of this caregiving has a direct impact on how this model is constructed (Bretherton, 1987).

According to attachment theory, as the individual matures the physical proximity and separation that is critical in early childhood is replaced by a psychological security. That is, with the advent of higher cognitive abilities the individual is able to maintain a mental picture of the attachment figure along with a generalized model of that person's availability.

Bowlby further believed that these models inform each other and an insecure attachment model informs the model of the self, other relationships etc. As the individual matures generalized models of how the world operates are formed out of the discrete models of childhood. As these models slip out of conscious reality, the individual behaves based on perceptions that are not consciously processed.

**Adult Attachment**

Ainsworth (1989) theorizes that in adult relationships each partner has the potential of serving as the primary attachment figure for the other, not replacing the original,
but still remaining vitally important. The attachment behavioral system is operating in adult relationships in much the same way as it did in infancy, but with some important differences. The individual still looks to the attachment figure as a safe haven, a source of nurturance and support in times of stress as they did to the primary caregiver in childhood (Weiss, 1982). A major difference, however, between infancy and adult attachments is that one partner is looking for the same security and support from the other partner, which makes these attachment relationships much more reciprocal. This is different from mother-infant attachments which are much more vertical and unidirectional. The behavioral system of caregiving is operating in both individuals along with the attachment system as opposed to only one operating in each member of the mother-child dyad.

Another major difference between attachments in early childhood and later adulthood is the degree to which the internal model is malleable. The adult internal model of attachment relationships are much more rigid than in childhood, and significant change is possible only through therapeutic means (Bowlby, 1988). Also, the attachment figure in the adult relationship is perceived and reacted to using the internal model developed the early mother and child relationship (Ainsworth, 1989). As a new internal model of the adult relationship forms, it is influenced by
the relatively stable generalized attachment model which has been constructed based on the previous mother-child history. The individual with a dysfunctional model, may be misinterpreting behaviors and communications from the partner.

**Attachments in Violent Relationships**

Within the attachment behavioral system, there are certain behaviors which are designed to elicit caregiving from the adult attachment figure (Bowlby, 1969, 1988). Bowlby (1973) describes stages that a child goes through when separated from his attachment figure for an extended period of time. Most notable of these stages is anger at the person that the individual is separated from and which is expressed towards the attachment figure upon reunion. Bowlby (1973, 1988) hypothesizes that this anger serves to alert the attachment figure of the seriousness of separation and discourage further separations. Attachment theory suggests that in the adult violent relationship, the male batterer, because of an internal model that perceives the partners behaviors as rejection and/or insensitivity, fears the loss of the attachment figure (again) and activates the anger attachment behavior. Even the avoidant individual may display anger toward the attachment figure when the attachment system is activated (Bartholomew 1990). This anger may then escalate into violence if the individual is unable to control or prevent "separation" from the
attachment figure (Mayseless, 1991).

Separation in adulthood may or may not involve actual physical separation as in childhood. The increasing independence of the attachment figure may threaten the individual's perception of accessibility of the attachment figure, thus creating the illusion of separation and activating the attachment system.

Gender Roles and Attachment

Some researchers propose that an individual develops his/her sense of gender identity between 12-36 months (Benjamin, 1988). This period is also a critical period in the development of early attachments; however, the interaction of the two has rarely been examined. The consensus among researchers has generally been that in our society, males are socialized to be independent, self-sufficient, and place intimate relationships at a lower priority than females. On the other hand, females in our society are generally socialized to emphasize their need for intimate relationships often becoming dependent on others (Gilligan, 1982). These socialization practices present a unique conflict within the individual. Specifically in the male, the need for attachments is in conflict with the socialization messages that he has received. Such male conflict highlights an early psychological separation that occurs between a mother and her son. Separation is a highly salient issue in terms of attachments, and the son begins to
develop his self-identity in terms of how he is different from his mother. In other words, he can only develop his identity at the expense of attachment needs. At a time when his need to form close attachments is in a critical period, he is forced to separate himself from his mother to achieve his gender identity. Therefore the male may be more likely to receive "insensitive, inappropriate" caregiving and develop internal models accordingly. The adult carries internal models built up from a lifetime of experiences, and in certain cases may be built up from a lifetime of misperception. These models play a substantial role in the adult intimate relationship as the individual seeks to form an intimate bond with another (Bretherton, 1987, 1992).

When a male is socialized in the traditional pattern, the internal model that develops will reflect this conflict—need for attachments, but a suppression of them as well. It may be that the establishment of this conflict in early childhood permeates all future relationships even into adulthood (Bretherton, 1987).

Feminist theory posits that socialization pressures may lead the male to perceive a loss of power whenever his intimate partner becomes more independent (Bograd, 1988) and thus to reassert his power and dominance through violence against his female intimate. Attachment theory would partially support this contention but with important distinctions. The insecurely attached male has experienced
the conflict between gender expectations and his inborn need for intimate attachments. This serves to amplify stresses being experienced and may lead to violent behavior, not to reassert his dominance but to express and fulfill his need for the intimate attachment relationship with his partner. In other words, when the male feels threatened with "separation" from his attachment figure, he exhibits violence in order to express his need for her. The adaptive anger that under normal circumstances would communicate attachment needs to the female become distorted and magnified leading to violence. An intimate partner who holds less traditional sex role views will present an even greater threat of "separation" to the individual who has an insecure model of intimate relationships. This contention is partially supported by research that reports males with traditional attitudes toward women than those with less traditional views (Bernard & Bernard, 1983).

**Stress and Attachment**

A healthy attachment relationship should provide the individual with a secure base where life stressors can be ameliorated by sensitive caregiving by the attachment figure. That the attachment relationship acts as a mediator for stressful events, and the quality of the relationship influences how well one copes with life stressors.
Attachment relationships are, by their very nature, unique to each dyad, therefore, it is not as important whether life stress is positive or negative, but rather how the attachment figure reacts to the individual's stress related needs. An individual that continues to ignore his/her partner's attachment behaviors evoked by stress may be promoting a maladaptive internal model attachment relationships present in the individual. If an individual has a secure model, insensitive behaviors by the attachment figure will be perceived with the perspective of attachment figures being supportive and sensitive and will have low salience. This secure model of intimate relationship, coupled with a positive self model, allows the securely attached individual to "weather the storm" An individual using an insecure model will already have the perception that intimate relations provide little or no support and will easily perceive insensitive behaviors accordingly. This individual has a tendency to perceive other behaviors by the partner in a manner which sees them as non-supporting, thus truly insensitive behaviors will further reinforce the maladaptive model. With no easing of attachment needs, the individual's attachment behaviors (most notably anger) may continue or even escalate.

As mentioned earlier, family of origin violence has been a controversial variable in domestic violence research. When taking a perspective (attachment theory) that examines
the earliest relationships a more thorough examination of the history of family of origin violence is necessary to highlight how that violence may have impacted early relationships.

Violence in the family of origin may be interpreted by attachment theory in terms of who was violent to whom. A mother being abused by her husband may not be able to provide a secure base for her child within the attachment relationship, but a child being abused by his father may not directly impact the attachment relationship between mother and child. Therefore, there may be a difference in whether the child witnesses violence or is the victim of it.

Statement of the Problem

As noted above, the majority of studies that have been conducted in the area of domestic violence consist of small-scale, univariate investigations often drawing on clinical samples. Current research also has relied on theoretically unrelated demographic and structural variables for explanations of domestic violence. More sophisticated studies involving multivariate models have yielded inconsistent and contradictory findings on the etiology of domestic violence. The inconsistency in these findings is partially the result of the lack of disciplinary integration in the studies that have addressed domestic violence. Terms have been variably and inconsistently defined leading to contradictory results.
Life stress models have been used in explaining the incidence of domestic violence, yet a systematic approach focusing on relationship dynamics in domestic violence is needed. Attachment theory is thought to provide a unique perspective that could facilitate the study of interpersonal relationships as mediators of stress. Attachment theory explains violent interactions in terms of the early attachment process with the primary caregiver, and how those early relationships can influence the all future relationships.

Gender identity interacts with attachment models and influences its development. However gender identity has been generally limited to a description of masculine and feminine values present in the abusing male. A more complex examination of the conflicts that may be present in the interaction of gender identity and attachment needs is essential. Traditionally males are socialized to be more independent, and not place importance on intimate relationships, whereas females are socialized to be overly dependent on intimate relationships. Given that all individuals are biologically programmed to seek out intimate relationships, this predisposition and gender role socialization can create conflicts within the individual. This conflict may play a part in the violent male when his intimacy needs and gender identity conflict.
The presence of violence in the family of origin has been traditionally viewed from a social learning perspective. The male that observed his father abuse his mother will grow up and abuse his wife because he has learned that response to stress. However, studies have shown a significant proportion of males that witness violence in the family of origin are not violent. A more psychodynamic perspective, including attachment theory, may be needed in order to investigate more fully what is occurring in these non-violent relationships.

Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between attachment style in adulthood, and attachment history and violence in the intimate relationship. The research focused on perceived levels of stress in the current life situation, attachment style, mismatch in attachment style, attachment history, masculinity/femininity characteristic endorsement, and the structure of violence in the family of origin. The dependent variable was male physical violence toward a female intimate. Independent variables were (a) perceived life stress, (b) endorsement of four attachment styles, (c) quality of attachment history, (d) mismatch in attachment styles between male and intimate partner, (e) endorsement of masculine and/or feminine characteristics, and (f) level of mother to father violence, father to mother violence, and parent to child violence in the family of origin.
Hypotheses

Specifically it was hypothesized that:

1. Stress levels in males will be positively related to relationship violence in males.

2. Males level of insecure attachment style will be positively related to relationship violence.
   
   (a) Male's endorsement of the insecure-preoccupied attachment style will be positively related to male physical violence toward his female intimate.
   
   (b) Male's endorsement of the insecure-dismissing attachment style will be positively related to male physical violence toward his female intimate.
   
   (c) Male's endorsement of the insecure-fearful attachment style will be positively related to male physical violence toward his female intimate.
   
   (d) Male's endorsement of the secure attachment style will be negatively related to male violence toward his female intimate.

3. Males fear of separation will be positively related to male violence toward his female intimate.

4. A mismatch in attachment styles between males and their female intimates will be positively related
To male physical violence toward his female intimate.

5. Males witnessing violence in the family of origin will be positively related to male violence toward his female intimate.

6. The experience of physical abuse by the male from parents will be positively related to male violence toward his intimate partner.

7. Masculinity scores in males will be positively related to male violence toward his female intimate.

8. Femininity scores in males will be negatively related to male violence toward his female intimate.

9. The inclusion of attachment variables to a regression model of male physical violence toward a female intimate will significantly increase the variance accounted for by the model with just the inclusion of variables that traditional are associated with male violence toward a female intimate.

Definitions

Secure Attachment Style: A style of interacting that stems from warm and responsive parenting. This will give rise to positive models of both the self and other, resulting in secure and fulfilling adult relationships. This is measured
by Bartholomew's (1990) attachment styles measure.

**Preoccupied Attachment Style:** A style of interacting which stems from inconsistent responsivity by parents during childhood. The individual may conclude that their unworthiness explains the inconsistency on the part of the parents. This individual is overly dependent, with an insatiable desire to gain other's approval along with a deep seated feeling of unworthiness. This is measured by Bartholomew's attachment style measure (Bartholomew, 1990).

**Fearful Attachment Style:** A style stemming from experiences of consistent rejection of their attachment needs during childhood. Although desiring social intimacy, feelings of interpersonal distrust and fear of rejection are pervasive. This is measured by Bartholomew's (1990) attachment style measure.

**Dismissing Attachment Style:** A style of interacting stemming from an individual's experience of rejection by his attachment figure in childhood and having coped with that rejection by deactivating his attachment system. This individual maintains a positive self-image in the face of rejection by attachment figures by distancing oneself and developing a model of oneself as fully capable and independent. This is measured by Bartholomew's attachment style measure (Bartholomew, 1990).

**Secure Attachment Base:** The degree to which the subjects parents provided a secure attachment base during childhood
as measured by the secure base subscale of the Attachment History Questionnaire (Pottharst & Kessler, 1990).

Parental Discipline: The type of parental discipline style used in childhood measured by the discipline subscale of the Attachment History Questionnaire (Pottharst & Kessler, 1990).

Threats of Separation: The degree to which threats of separation were used by parents in childhood as measured by the separation subscale of the Attachment History Questionnaire (Pottharst & Kessler, 1990).

Domestic Violence: Any act carried out with the intention, or perceived intention, of causing physical pain or injury to another person (Strauss, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980) as measured by Strauss' (1979) Conflict Tactics Scale.

Masculinity The level of masculine values and attitudes held by the male subject as measured by the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (Bem, 1981).

Femininity: The level of feminine values and attitudes held by the male subject as measured by the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (Bem, 1981).

Life Events Stress: The level of negative, positive, and total life changes in a subject's life over the past year as measured by the Sarason Life Events Scale (Sarason et al., 1978).

Family of Origin Violence: The degree to which the subject experienced or witnessed violence by his mother and/or
father during childhood as measured by the modified form of the Conflict Tactics Scale (Strauss, 1979).
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Historical Context of Intimate Abuse

Violence against one's partner has characterized intimate relationships throughout history, and in many ways has been implicitly and explicitly sanctioned by society (Finkelhor, Gelles, Hotaling, & Strauss, 1983). Since earliest recorded history, a man typically has had the right to chastise physically, and in some cases to kill his wife for certain transgressions (Gelles, & Cornell, 1990; Steinmetz, 1987). For example, the well known phrase "a rule of thumb" owes its origin to a law that indicated the diameter of a stick that a husband in eighteenth century England was allowed to use in beating his wife (Gelles, & Cornell, 1990). Wife beating was incorporated into United States law and was not until 1883 that it was made illegal. Even after laws were put in place to control spousal abuse violence against wives continues (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Although not officially sanctioning men's violence against women, society and the courts seemed to tacitly condone spousal abuse as is evidenced in this 1874 ruling by a North
If no permanent injury has been inflicted, no malice, cruelty, or dangerous violence shown by the husband, it is better to draw the curtains, shut out the public gaze, and leave the parties to forget and forgive. (p. 726)

Although child abuse has been recognized as a problem by legal and medical professionals for many years, the condition of wife battering (which usually covaries with child abuse) was largely ignored until recently (Margolin, Sibner, & Gleberman, 1988). In the medical community, it was not until the ninth revision of the International Classification of Diseases: Clinical Modification that "battered woman" and "battered spouse" were included as diagnoses. Law enforcement officials and the legal community have also given little recognition to the problems of domestic violence. Law enforcement officers may even have contributed to the escalation of violence against the woman. Rather than treating the abusive incident in the usual criminal manner, police have been trained to mediate the situation and often have discouraged women from charging their husbands with the crime. The predominant feeling has been that domestic violence is a personal family matter and that it should be dealt with in the family (Steinmetz, 1987).
The Study of Intimate Abuse

Domestic violence thus remains a poorly understood phenomena. Domestic violence is virtually unmentioned in the research literature prior to 1970 (Gelles & Strauss, 1979). The early literature describes violence against a family member in terms of psychopathologically extreme behavior (Gelles & Cornell, 1990). This characterization of family violence led many researchers to shun this area of research because it was believed that it affected very few families. However, current researchers consider violent behavior a "normal" part of family life. Normal here refers to violence being statistically frequent, and culturally approved (Gelles & Strauss, 1979).

A review of several large surveys of domestic violence that used Strauss' Conflict Tactic Scale (Strauss, 1979) as the measure of violent behavior within the marital relationship indicates that 8-12% of marriages surveyed indicated at least some form of physical aggression within the past year. About 3-4% reported severe aggression that would likely produce physical injury. (Dutton, 1988a, Dutton, 1988b).

Methodological Problems

The study of domestic violence has largely been descriptive. Whether based on clinical reports or case studies, or aggregate data, the data has focused on structural variables that describe characteristics of the
male batterer, the victim, or the environment in which the abuse occurs. Although presenting numerous relationships among variables, the literature has done little to describe the etiology of domestic violence.

The literature to date has been plagued by several methodological problems which has limited its general applicability. The research has focused on either small scale clinical populations. These studies rarely used control or comparison groups which made generalization to the larger population difficult. On the other hand, researchers have also relied on aggregate data collected by law enforcement or mental health agencies. These data essentially describe the violence and associated characteristics of the abuser, victim and setting. Non-theoretically related variables such as alcohol abuse, violence in the family of origin, stress, and others have been reported in these studies, but not integrated. Generally researchers have only considered male physical violence toward a female intimate and have not considered other violent configurations. The inclusion of other possible configurations of violence within the family lends itself to a systems approach to examining domestic violence. The systems approach considers how violent behavior is occurring and not simply why (Giles-Sims, 1983). A consideration of how individuals react and interact with others in their family has been largely missing in domestic
violence research. Gelles, (1994) asserts that, because of the different methodologies employed and varying definitions of violence, there is no definitive data on the extent of family violence.

Theoretical Perspectives

Psychoanalytic Perspective

Among the numerous theoretical perspectives that have been advanced for understanding domestic violence, the psychoanalytic perspective was the earliest, and one of the few that has explored intra-psychic factors involved in aggression. This perspective conceptualizes aggression as a normal part of an individual's "psyche. However, violent behavior is the result of a pathological condition within the individual and is not considered "healthy".

Classical Freudian theory posits that there are two basic instincts "eros" (libidinal drive) and "the destructive instinct" (aggressive drive). The function of the former is to bring together and the latter to destroy connections (Freud, 1940/1949). These forces are mediated by the psychical structures of the mind,—the id, ego and superego.

Freud described the "id" as the oldest part of the mind (Freud, 1940/1949). Within it are the endowments of genetics, the primal basic instincts that have developed in man to safeguard his continued existence, among these are the aforementioned drives. The "ego" develops from, and is
in constant battle with, the id and acts as a mediator between it and the external reality. The id is constantly trying to assert its dominance through manifestations of the two drives while the ego seeks to find acceptable avenues for satisfying these manifestations or outright suppressing them (Erdelyi, 1985; Freud, 1940/1949).

Providing information about what means are acceptable is the "superego". A properly integrated superego completes the psyche of an individual. This structure is an internalization of the values and ideals of significant others in the life of the individual. When the ego is able to satisfactorily accommodate both the id and superego, the individual feels "pleasure". "Unpleasure" results whenever there is tension between these structures. Freud believed that the individual is motivated by the "pleasure principle", i.e., to seek pleasure and avoid unpleasure at all costs (Erdelyi, 1985).

The process of differentiation of the self from the other is seen as critical for healthy psychological development in psychoanalytic theory. In order to achieve this differentiation the individual must to some degree negate the self to recognize the other. However, the id seeks to negate the outside world and recapture the omnipotent feeling of the early childhood years or reachieve a complete narcissism (Sjoback, 1988). According to Freud, this desire for mastery over the self and world motivates
aggressive behavior. Aggression then, according to Freud, is a necessary derivative of the destructive instinct and a natural part of human behavior (Benjamin, 1988). Whenever society condones aggressive behavior, either implicitly or explicitly, the individual seeks to dominate the other using aggression in order to achieve this mastery. Freud has been criticized for focusing too heavily on aggression and ignoring the other drive in his theory, eros (Benjamin, 1988). In any discussion of violence among intimates, one must examine the emotional bond that forms between the two individuals and understand the dynamics of this love when the relationship becomes violent.

When discussing relationships classical psychoanalysts have little to say in regards to love. However, while admitting that Freud was hesitant to discuss love, Bergman (1987), maintains that Freud influenced our current understanding of intimate relationships in which love is a major component. Bergman suggests that Freud proposed three theories of love which, with some modification, can still be applied today.

Essentially the psychoanalytic perspective posits that underlying every love relationship is an unconscious desire to engage in a sexual relationship with the parent. In infancy every individual goes through a period of sexual love toward the parent. This sexual love splits off and is repressed during latency from the tender nurturing aspect of
love and under optimal conditions is recombined during adolescence (Bergman, 1987).

Narcissistic love, or the love of the self plays an important role in the psychoanalytic perspective. This love of the self is predominant in early childhood, and was postulated by Freud that the self can be seen as the model for the "love object" along with the parent (Bergman, 1987). An inherent conflict is present in the child—the love of the self and the object are in competition with each other. However, the child can project his/her own "ego ideal" onto the parental love object and the tension between love of the self and the object is eased (Sjoback, 1988). Modern psycho-analytic theory believes that narcissism and object relations are not necessarily antagonistic forces. Kernberg (1980) suggests that harmonious couples find ways to meet each other's narcissistic needs and that both narcissistic and object love will increase in a mature relationship.

Libido, or sexual energy that, according to psychoanalytic theory, drives all individuals, matures into genital object love. This can only take place if the sexuality repressed during latency is recombined with the tender nurturing love that has predominated during latency.

Kernberg, (1976) proposed a hierarchy of love in which successful integration of their genital sexuality and object love is achieved. The hierarchy ranges from a complete narcissistic personality incapable of loving any object but
the self to those capable of mature love. Mature love in Kernberg's view involves each partner establishing a sense of identification with the other where ego ideals are not merely projected onto the other, rather they are shared. The self must be firmly established in order for mature love to occur (Kernberg, 1980).

Freud, (1940/1949) states "that a surplus of sexual aggressiveness will turn a lover into a sex-murderer, while a sharp diminution in the aggressive factor will make him bashful or impotent." Human behavior, including violent behavior, was heavily influenced by one's basic instincts according to Freud. Object relations theorists have expanded somewhat on these views.

**Object Relations Theory**

Object relations theory (Klein, 1921) deals with the recombination of these two components of mature love (genital sexuality and object love) and speaks directly about relationships and aggression. Klein maintains Freud's dual drive perspective, but focuses on relations between an individual and "objects". Objects are defined as persons or parts of persons that the individual interacts with and develops strong emotional ties to. There are complementary self-representations associated with the objects as well. Initially the individual "splits" the objects into either good or bad, holding distinctly separate positive and negative representations of the same object. An individual
may have several good or bad object representations associated with the same individual which later, under normal circumstances, will be joined into one total object. This is what is referred to as total object relations. The person has obtained object constancy. That is, they are the same person whether perceived as good or bad by the individual (Kernberg, 1975, 1980). Klein believed that children's emotional problems are primarily a result of fantasies engendered by internal conflicts between these positive and negative images (Bretherton, 1992). The actual experiences of children had little to do with the intrapsychic workings of children.

Early ego functions involve two primary tasks according to object relations theory. The first task involves the differentiation of the self from other objects which helps shape the boundaries of the ego, and the second involves the integration of images of the object and the self built up under the influence of the aggressive drive (bad object images) and the libidinal drive (good object images). The very immature ego of the young individual is unable to deal with conflicting good and bad characteristics of one object therefore the object is split. "Splitting" of objects into good and bad is a normal phase of development, and occurs until the ego is capable of, and has integrated the conflicting images of the self and the object (Mitchell 1986).
This ego defense mechanism becomes dysfunctional, and is considered psychopathological if it persists beyond early childhood (Manfield, 1992). The violent individual may be experiencing an ego weakness in which he is unable to integrate these images and projects his own aggression onto the external bad object. The individual feels the need to protect himself from the object whom he feels is a danger to him.

This inability to integrate conflicting images of the self and objects is manifested in borderline personality disorders. This characteristic has been linked to either a constitutionally determined lack of anxiety tolerance or extreme frustration in early childhood (Benjamin, 1988). Thus ego weakness, where the individual has dual images of a loved object in which one is loved and perhaps idealized and the other feared may explain how violence can occur in an intimate relationship. The individual may fear and want to aggressively control the bad object and simultaneously be drawn to the idealized good object. This conflict increases the frustration that an individual feels and violent behavior may be the result depending upon which force is dominant. An individual who manifests this personality disorder has a distorted view of reality. This disorder "limits and distorts his experience of himself and his emotions, making his experience of the world very different than that of other people" (Manfield, 1992).
This theory highlights the influence of early childhood experiences on adult behavior. The child that receives constant frustration in relation to expressed needs may not achieve sufficient ego strength to integrate conflicting images and attain total object relations. Mutual denial is common in individuals with this personality disorder. Totally opposite and conflicting thoughts and feelings about one individual can be found in an individual at different points in time. The individual has memory of these opposite states, but she/he has no emotional ties with the conflicted state. This may explain how a violent male can inflict tremendous abuse upon an intimate partner and later express tenderness.

Modern object relations theorists posit that a lack of integration of good and bad images of the love object in childhood result in aggressive behavior against one that is loved (Kernberg, 1980). Both of Psychoanalytic and Object Relations theories rely heavily on intrapsychic structures as the mechanism explaining aggressive behaviors. Domestic violence researchers have traditionally relied on more sociological factors in their research.

Social Learning Theory

A prominent theoretical orientation present in the research literature on domestic violence relates to factors that involve the individual's family history. The literature on domestic violence has either implicitly or
explicitly contended that learned behaviors are a causal factor in the incidence of marital violence. Researchers have clarified this role by examining whether violence was experienced in the family of origin. An "intergenerational cycle" of violence has been proposed in which learned behaviors are passed on to succeeding generations (Van Ijzendoorn 1992; Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Wu, 1991).

The Social Learning perspective on domestic violence has focuses on learned behaviors in regards to aggression. Social learning views aggressive behavior as developing from learning experiences in the family of origin. Bandura (1979) outlined origins, instigators, and regulators of aggression as the major determinants of aggressive behavior. According to Bandura behaviors are reinforced when the achieve a desired goal. In order for something to become reinforcing, the individual must be consciously aware of its rewarding aspects. This reward must be substantial enough to override any punishments that may occur due to the behavior (O'Leary, 1988).

Bandura also defined the role of modeling in the acquisition and reproduction of observed behaviors. Essentially the strength of modeled behavior depends on whether the individual observing the model is able to attend to, remember, be physically able to reproduce and have sufficient motivation to perform the observed behavior. The difference between acquiring a behavior and engaging in
it is highlighted in social learning theory. An individual must not observe or perceive disastrous consequences to the observed behavior or performance of the learned behavior will never occur (Bandura, 1977). The product of experiences also play a role in determining whether a learned behavior will be performed. Stimuli produce a predictive force rather than a simple cause effect process, or in Bandura's (1973) words: "Contrary to claims that behavior is controlled by its immediate consequences, behavior is related to its outcomes at the level of aggregate consequences." (p. 13).

Aggressive learned behaviors are triggered by aversive stimuli in the current family milieu and maintained by appropriate reinforcements and attainment of desired goals (Dutton, 1988a). Social learning theory proposes a maintenance of power and authority over the situation as the impetus for aggressive behavior. Aversive stimuli are cognitively appraised with the resultant arousal similarly appraised leading to an emotional and behavioral response. The individual must deal with the aversive stimuli using the learned strategies that have been successful in the past.

One of the most commonly studied phenomena in domestic violence research is the effect of the family of origin on violence in current intimate relationships (O'Leary, 1988). Observing marital abuse and/or receiving abusive or harsh discipline as a child has been correlated to the incidence
of domestic violence (Strauss et al 1980; O'Leary, 1988). There does seem to be a relationship between violence in the family of origin and violence in the current family setting (Johnston, 1988). Strauss et al (1980) reports that men that witnessed their father abusing their mother were three times more likely to have committed an aggressive act against their wives. However some researchers have found only limited support for an association between either witnessing or experiencing violence as a child and intimate violence (Marshall & Rose, 1987). A more rigorous research methodology has diminished the strength of this relationship, i.e., the inclusion of control groups, yet some association remains (Marshall, & Rose, 1990). Yet, the conclusion that witnessing violence or being the victim of violence increases the likelihood of an individual perpetrating or becoming the victim of violence has been questioned (Stark, & Flitcraft, 1988). Stark and Flitcraft point out that many adults that have witnessed or have been the victim of violence are not abusive to either their intimate partners or children. Drawing from two studies (i.e., Rosenbaum, & O'Leary 1981; Telch & Lindquist, 1984), Stark and Flitcraft (1988) report no significant relationship between violence in the family of origin and later victimization. These researchers state that in all of the studies that looked at this issue, the definition of "witnessing parental violence" varied widely. Also,
violence in the family of origin may have several configurations, i.e., father abuses mother, mother abuses father, father abuse mother and children, father abuses mother and mother abuses children etc. It seems logical that different configurations of violence in the family of origin may yield different effects.

Gender

Gender has been an often overlooked and sometimes intentionally left out of many studies (Ptacek, 1988). The assumption that men are the sole perpetrators of violence and women are willing victims may belie the true influence of gender in domestic violence.

Gender issues permeate the intimate relationship to such an extent that their omission as a variable renders findings incomplete. Gender differences in expressed and received violence has been examined by researchers. Received and/or expressed violence rates by each gender have varied according to various researchers. Strauss et al (1980) and Makepeace (1983) report similar rates of expressed and received violence among males and females. Makepeace (1983) also reports that generally subjects, male and female, report more received violence than expressed. Some studies have even found that women engage in more violence than their male partners (Bernard, & Bernard, 1983; Lane, & Gwartney-Gibbs, 1985). It is generally believed that although women may engage in similar or even higher
rates of relationship violence the impact of these acts differ radically according to gender. (Benjamin, 1988; Saunders 1988). The differences in severity of acts perpetrated also differentiate the genders. As reported in Marshall and Rose (1987) Makepeace (1983) found that men reported more violent acts expressed more frequently and women reported less violent acts expressed more frequently. Yet, Marshall and Rose (1987) reported more women reporting expressing more severe violent acts than men. In general however, if one relies on a strict quantitative count of violent acts, women may seem to be more violent than men. However, by taking into account the severity of the act and the power differences between men and women a different picture emerges as to gender differences. The over-reliance on women to provide the information regarding the incidence of violent behavior within the intimate relationship has become problematic in determining the etiology of violence within the relationship (Geffner et al. 1988).

Dutton, (1988a) describes the role of sex-role expectations in the incidence of violent behavior. Power and intimacy issues frequently arise in the therapeutic setting as men communicate their fears over their loss of power and the simultaneous fear of loss of intimacy. Gondolf (1985) proposes that a wide range of male emotions are "funneled" into anger. The continual misidentification of emotions lead men to violence. Sex role expectations are
blamed for this affective narrowing of male emotional responses. The social learning perspective proposes that men react to these threats to their traditional male roles as dominator with violent learned behaviors (Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz 1987).

Many researchers have examined gender issues from a societal perspective in which males are socialized to be aggressive and dominate women (Adams, & McCormick, 1982). The literature on wife abuse generally supports the contention that males with more traditional attitudes towards women are generally more violent than those that hold more liberal views (Bernard, Bernard & Bernard, 1985; Bernard, & Bernard, 1983). There is also some support for the contention that women who are less traditional in their sex roles are at greater risk for abuse than those that hold more traditional views (Bernard et al., 1985).

Feminist researchers generally hold to the latter contention regarding domestic violence. Although there is some variety in feminist theory (Bograd, 1988) generally the feminist perspective assumes a larger societal position proposing that in our patriarchal society men use violence in order to repress women and maintain a male dominated order. Therefore, male physical violence toward women is not only a learned behavior, but a purposeful act for the repression of women (Bograd 1988). Feminist theory views the family as the mediator between oppression of women at
the social level and at the level of personal intimate relationships. The historical development of the nuclear family, the development of appropriate male and female family roles and the legal and moral obligation of wives to their husbands as contributing to violence against women (Dobash & Dobash, 1979).

Stress

Life stressors have been a prominent variable in the research on domestic violence. Research on family stress dates back to the 1930's when the family was viewed as "an organization in the constant process of adaptation to changing conditions" (Boss 1987). It has been suggested that there is a relationship between life event stress and psychiatric problems. Event stressors that an individuals experience in everyday life, whether they are perceived as positive or negative, influence an individuals behavior (Sarason, Johnson, & Siegel 1978). Event stressors are defined as events that one experiences and require adaptation, causing stress. Farrington (1986) has devised a general stress model in which he describes components that differentiate the subjective and objective demands of a stressor as compared to the coping skills present in an individual. Koos (1946) described the roller-coaster model of family stress adjustment. The family experiences crisis and goes through a period of disorganization. Then, depending on the family's coping resources, they enter the
period of recovery and begin to reorganize. Finally the family reaches a new level of reorganization which may be the same, higher, or even lower than the one before the crisis.

Hill (1949) further contributes to the understanding of families and stress with the ABC-X model of family stress. This model defines family stress as the stressor (A), the resources the family has for coping with the event at the time it occurs (B), the meaning the family attaches to the event (C), and the stress that is produced (X).

McCubbin and Patterson (1982) expand Hill's model by adding how the "X" factor is a midpoint in the stress model. Their Double ABC-X model details how the presence of the crisis (X) causes a pileup of stressors (Aa) those that would have occurred naturally and those caused by the crisis. This puts new pressures on the coping resources of the family, including those that have been created by the new crisis (Bb). However the interpretation of the crisis now includes the perception of the initial stressor and the crisis (Cc). The double X now includes the initial crisis, the family's response and adaptation. The adaptation can produce new stress/crisis or be "healthy" adaptation (McKenry, & Price 1994).

Violence in families as a reaction to stress can be broken down into two types instrumental, and expressive (Gelles & Strauss 1979). Instrumental aggression serves the
purpose of meeting the demands of a particular stressor stimulus. Expressive violence is an irrational behavior that is the result of being unable to cope with the stressor event. Thus, stress has been described as one of the primary etiological factors underlying domestic violence (Farrington, 1986), and in general strong associations have been found between stress and violent behavior (Gelles, & Cornell, 1990).

What exactly is the nature of stressor events that precipitate domestic violence? Holmes and Rahe (1967) contend that all stressors have basically the same effect causing change, disruption and need for adjustment (Farrington, 1986). The other position argues that it is how the stressor event is perceived and how relevant it is to current life situation is what is important.

Makepeace (1983) found that undesirable life event stress was related to relationship violence in males only. He differentiated between health related and non-health related stress and found only non-health related undesirable stress was associated with violence. Strauss (1980a, 1980b) has found support for both sides of this argument leaving only the vaguest generalizations about stress and violence.

Other contradictory findings have emerged in regards to stress and violence. Marshall and Rose (1987) reported only limited violence predictability by examining stress factors. Strauss et al (1980) examined the interaction of
stress and violence in the family of origin and reported even higher frequencies of violence. Marshall and Rose (1987) found that experiencing violence in childhood and stress together was a better predictor of violence than viewing violence between parents and stress.

It is generally believed that stress is not a causal agent in the incidence of domestic violence, but that it may trigger other characteristics in the individual's personality that may be more directly responsible for the violence. For example, Mason and Blakenship (1987) reported that a high need for power was significantly associated with violent behavior in males when stressed. What is missing is an understanding of what makes an individual perceive an event as stressful and how does that affect other psychological processes?

**Attachment Theory**

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) is an ethological theory of interpersonal relationships that emphasizes the evolutionary significance of intimate relationships, especially those in early childhood. These early relationships form the basis for all future relationships (Bowlby, 1973, 1988). As described by Sroufe and Waters (1977), attachment is "an affective tie between an individual and caregiver" and refers to "a behavioral system flexibly operating in terms of set goals, mediated by feeling and in interaction with other behavioral systems".
Bowlby (1973) postulated that certain behaviors were innate in that they promoted the survival of the individual and consequently the species. His theory arose based on observations of children in institutional settings. These children were affectionless and prone to stealing. In each case he was able to link their conditions to a history of maternal deprivation and separation (Bretherton, 1992). Subsequent studies on maternal deprivation using non-human primates has confirmed Bowlby's observations that humans non-human primates go through a predictable series of stages: (a) protest, (b) despair, and (c) detachment.

Bowlby hypothesized that an attachment need is present in all individuals and is critical to the survival of the individual. He contended that an individual has many control systems that act consciously and unconsciously to achieve basic human needs (i.e., feeding, caregiving, reproduction, exploration, attachment). All of these systems operate in such a way as to promote the survival of the individual and the species in general (Bowlby, 1973). Each system is made up of behaviors that are directed to achieve the goals of the system. Bowlby (1973) advanced three propositions that summarize his theory:

The first (proposition) is that when an individual is confident that an attachment figure will be available to him whenever he desires it, that person will be much less prone to either intense or chronic fear than will an individual who for any reason has no such confidence. The second proposition concerns the sensitive period during which such confidence develops. It postulates that confidence in the availability of
attachment figures, or lack of it, is built up slowly during the years of immaturity—infancy, childhood, and adolescence—and that whatever expectations are developed during those years tend to persist relatively unchanged throughout the rest of life. The third proposition concern the role of actual experience. It postulates that the varied expectations of the accessibility and responsiveness of attachment figures that individuals develop during the years of immaturity are tolerably accurate reflections of the experiences those individuals have actually had (p.235).

The attachment behavioral system is comprised of behaviors that fulfill the infant's protection needs by eliciting the caregiver's attention and thus provide protection and nurturance (Bowlby, 1988). The goal of the attachment behavior system is to promote proximity to the attachment figure in times of danger and in general maintain a relatively steady state between the individual and his environment (Bowlby, 1973).

Bretherton, (1987) described this system in terms of a homeostatic control system which maintains this steady state. The conservative attachment system, that is one that is activated and motivating behaviors that maintain proximity to the attachment figure is antithetical to other behavioral systems. A proper balance must be struck between the individual feeling enough confidence in the attachment figure to lower the salience of attachment needs and allow exploration and social interactions with others (Bretherton, & Ainsworth 1974). The optimal level of caregiving, where one's attachment needs are met, allows the individual to explore and learn about the environment. The individual
uses the attachment figure as a "secure base" for exploration (Bowlby, 1988). Without this base from which to explore the world the individual lacks the opportunity to learn social skills among other things.

Attachment researchers have tended to focus investigations on relationships between young children and their attachment figures. The research of Ainsworth has helped shape and operationally define many of the attachment concepts that Bowlby proposed (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wahl 1978). Ainsworth contributed a critical component to Bowlby's theory that the notion of a "secure base" (Ainsworth, 1968). Based on the theories of Blatz (1940; 1966), which contend that infants need to form a secure dependence on parents before being able to explore their world, Ainsworth developed her secure base ideas. In her earliest work she described how a lack of familial security denies an infant the chance to work (i.e., explore) from a secure base (Bretherton, 1992).

Another of Ainsworth's contributions was the development of attachment classifications that reflected the unique histories of the dyads. Based on research findings, Ainsworth proposed three attachment classifications: (a) secure, (b) insecure-avoidant, and (c) insecure-ambivalent. A consistent and unique pattern of behavior of infants reunited with their mothers following a short separation defined each of the three categories. Ainsworth et al.
(1978) described how each attachment category indicated the infant's expectations of their mother's accessibility and availability to meet their attachment needs. Other researchers have contributed much to the data base concerning early attachments. The findings have shown definite links between the quality of care received and subsequently the security of the attachment relationship and later social functioning (Erickson, Sroufe & Egeland, 1985; Main Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985; Lutkenhaus, Grossman, & Grossman, 1985; Lieberman 1977; Pastor, 1981, Thompson 1983; Waters, Wippman, & Sroufe, 1979). Research also indicates a relationship between an adult's earlier childhood attachment experience and treatment of their own children (Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985; Eichberg, 1987).

Internal working models of attachment

Bowlby (1969, 1988) believed that mental models was an important part of the intrapsychic mechanism. Bowlby argued that an individual constructs many internal working models (IWM) of their world. He was strongly influenced by the writings of Craik (1943) in his book The Nature of Explanations. Craik believed that thought "models, or parallels reality" and an individual tries out various possible alternatives in his head before deciding which is the right one (Craik, 1943).
Many other researchers have postulated the "internal model" that Bowlby described. Byng-Hall (1985) described how individuals internalize "beliefs" and "scripts" in their relationships with significant others. Heard and Lake (1986) discuss "internal representational models of experiences in relationships". Object relationship theorists advance the idea of the internalized love object (Klein, 1921; Winnicott, 1971). Isralestam (1989) describes how individuals develop "individual belief systems" (IBS) which guide interpretation and therefore behavior of the individual. Israelstam presents a balanced picture of human interactions. He posits that IBS help individuals in intimate relationships sustain a balance between sufficient closeness and sufficient separateness.

These IBS are created based on early interactions with significant others and, like Bowlby's internal models, are resistant to change as the individual matures. The idea that what is perceived is "right" is pivotal in the thinking of the constructivist philosophers. The belief that there is no objective truth and that everything that is perceived is subjective and therefore observer dependent is central to constructivist thinking (Israelstam, 1989). Maturana and Varela (1980) assert that the external world cannot inform the internal world, rather our internal world determines what and how we perceive (Isralestam, 1989). Israelstam contends that IBS (or other internal models) define what
individual's perceive as objective truth. Although internal models are a largely cognitive domain according to Bateson's Circular Epistemology (Bateson, 1979) cognitive, affective, behavioral, and physiological responses are interconnected and interdependent.

Internal working models need not be completely accurate to be useful. They are based on what an individual perceives and are therefore subject to the process of selective exclusion (Bowlby, 1980). Bowlby describes how in the course of ordinary interaction with the world an individual receives, sorts, perceives and ignores a vast amount of incoming stimuli. One selectively attends to relevant information and selectively excludes the irrelevant. Under some circumstances selective exclusion, a defensive process, becomes distorted and certain critical relevant information is ignored perpetuating an ill informed model. However, the absence of this dysfunction does not imply that models are malleable or in a state of constant flux. Bowlby asserted that in early childhood incoming information from experiences has more of an impact on the developing models. Over a period of time and with a certain degree of continuity, these ways of thinking and acting become unconscious and more resistant to change. Only when the incoming information is discordant enough to the model is change possible. However, as discussed previously change does not always occur.
An individual forms a model of his attachment relationship in childhood and this model serves as a lens for perceiving and behaving in relationships in the future. Bowlby believed that this model and the behavior patterns that influenced them form the basis for the individual's personality (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). In attachment terms an internal working model is defined as "a set of conscious or unconscious rules for the organization of information relevant to attachment and for obtaining or limiting access to that information, that is, to information regarding attachment related experiences, feelings, and ideations" (Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985).

Of particular importance to attachment theory are the model of the relationship and the model of the self. Bowlby described these models as having critical importance in intimate relationships. The crucial issues with these models are how worthy is the self to receive the attention of the attachment figure, and how available and willing is the attachment figure to provide necessary support (Bretherton, 1987). These models develop in close complementarity to each other. The securely attached individual develops a model of the relationship in which the figure is perceived as being available and willing the provide the necessary nurturance and support to placate attachment needs. Concurrently the model of the self that forms in the securely attached individual is one in which
the individual views themself as worthy of such care and subsequently confident in their ability to control their environment. Conversely the insecurely attached individual can create models that reflect the nature of their relationship with their attachment figure. An individual that has received rejecting care from his attachment figure will perceive attachment figures as unable to meet their needs and subsequently learn to suppress and ignore their attachment needs. The insecurely attached individual's self model appears confident in that they seem to be independent and self-assured, but their confidence is based on a rejection of intimate relationships. The individual that receives inconsistent care develops a model of the attachment relationship as one in which attachment figures are unreliable in meeting the needs of the individual, but instead of suppressing attachment needs, it causes an over-stimulation of the attachment system (Bretherton, 1987; 1992).

Bowlby further believed that these models inform each other and an attachment model informs the model of the self, the model of the self in other relationships etc. As the individual matures generalized models of how the world operates are formed out of the discrete models of childhood. As these models slip out of conscious reality, the individual interprets events and the behaviors of others and genuinely believe that what he is perceiving is "right"
(Bowlby, 1988). More recently attachment researchers have begun to examine the lifelong effects of the early attachment relationship.

**Adult attachment**

Bowlby (1969) characterized the attachment behavioral system as operating in the individual from "cradle to grave". Ainsworth (1989) theorizes that in adult relationships each partner has the potential of serving as the primary attachment figure for the other, not replacing the original, but still vitally important. The attachment behavioral system is operating in adult relationships in much the same way as it did in infancy, but with some important differences. The individual still looks to the attachment figure as a safe haven, a source of nurturance and support in times of stress as they did to the primary caregiver in childhood (Weiss, 1982). A major difference, however, between infancy and adult attachments is that one partner is looking for the same security and support from the other partner, which makes these attachment relationships much more reciprocal. The attachment system is no longer able to overwhelm other behavioral systems when it is activated. Adults are capable of tolerating separations from the attachment figure. Sophisticated mental models of relationships that have developed since childhood significantly changing the conditions that elicit the attachment response. Thus, the manifestation of the
attachment system may change over time, but the emotional system itself remains unchanged (Weiss, 1991). According to attachment theory, as the individual matures the physical proximity and separation that is critical in early childhood is replaced by a psychological security. That is, with the advent of higher cognitive abilities the individual is able to maintain a mental picture of the attachment figure along with a generalized model of that person's availability (Bretherton, 1987).

Another major difference between attachments in early childhood and later adulthood is the degree to which the internal model is malleable. The adult internal model of attachment relationships are much more rigid than in childhood, and significant change is possible only through therapeutic means (Bowlby, 1988). The tendency of these models to operate out of conscious reach does not lend them susceptible to easy change. As an intimate adult relationship forms, it's model is influenced by the relatively stable generalized attachment model which has been constructed based on the previous mother-child history yet the individual is probably unaware of this process (Ainsworth, 1989). This model serves the individual much as it did in childhood. Selectively excluding or altering incoming information that does not match its preconceived notions about intimate relationships.
There is support, outside of attachment theory, for the contention that a maladaptive model (i.e., one that does not accommodate new information concerning intimate relationships) may be partly responsible for intimate violence. Research examining cognitive styles has shown that male batterers hold significantly higher levels of irrational beliefs than non-batterers. Lohr, Hamberger & Bonge (1988) assert that:

The depressed, anger prone batterer struggles with dire needs for unconditional love, approval and respect by everyone, especially by his spouse or partner. At the same time, he shows an acute fear of, and extreme sensitivity, to subtle (and often misinterpreted) signs of rejection by her (p261-262).

Eisikovits, Edleson, Guttman, and Sela-Amit (1991) found that the extent to which a male intensified his level of violence was related to lower levels of rational beliefs, fewer self-control skills, and an external locus of control orientation.

Main et al (1985) has also studied attachment in adulthood. The Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), developed by Main and her associates (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1984; Main & Goldwyn, 1992) examines adult attachment in terms of how the adult has organized thoughts and ideas about attachment issues based on memories from childhood. This measure yielded classifications equivalent to Ainsworth's infant classifications. Three distinct patterns of responding were distinguished: (a) autonomous-secure
respondents gave clear, concise and coherent responses in regard to childhood attachment experiences, and these experiences need not always been satisfying; (b) preoccupied respondents described many conflicting childhood memories and was unable to organized them into a consistent image of childhood; and (c) dismissing respondents were typified by an inability to recall childhood attachment experiences although these respondents sometimes recalled an idealized image of their parents, but had no specific memories to support this conception.

Researchers using the AAI have found relationships between its attachment classifications and observations of parent-child interaction, and reports of treatment in childhood that would suggest similar childhood classifications, and attachment classifications of the interviewee's children (Fongay, Moran, & Target; Main et al., 1985).

Weiss (1982, 1991) has suggested that many types of relationships in adulthood can be considered attachment relationships. These may include husband-wife, patient-therapist, parent-child, and even relationships between coworkers. As discussed previously, there are differences between adult-adult attachment relationships and child-adult attachment relationships. There would also be important difference between different adult-adult attachment relationships. These can differ in the extent to which each
partner perceives the other as wiser, stronger, and more powerful. Adult relationships are more reciprocal than those of child-adult. The conditions that elicit the attachment system vary according to the relationships. However, threats to the self, other, or the relationship invoke the attachment system in all types of relationships (Weiss, 1991).

The marital relationships has begun to receive considerable attention from attachment researchers. A number of inquiries have scrutinized the impact of attachments and divorce. Generally relationships have been found between positive ideations of the ex-spouse (attachment), separation distress, and adjustment following divorce (Brown, Felton, Whiteman, and Manela, 1980; Weiss, 1975, 1976). Separation distress following a divorce has been characterized by recurrent thoughts and images of the ex-spouse, attempts to contact the ex-spouse, feelings of emptiness, loneliness, and sudden panic (Berman, 1988) measured as continued positive feelings, the greater the difficulty in post-divorce adjustment, although not all research has supported this association (Spanier & Casto 1979; Goetting, 1980; Nelson, 1981). These studies did not differentiate between the attachment types that have been developed (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1984). In one study Berman (1988) found that subjects that intentionally thought of their ex-spouse as positive, loving, and caring
experienced more intrusive thoughts of their spouse in an experiment done with newly divorced females. Berman also found that the female subjects that were in the group that thought positively of their former husband experienced higher levels of "coping" thoughts. Bowlby hypothesized that the internal model of the attachment relationship uses two types of memory storage (Bretherton, 1987). Episodic memory stores actual experienced events, and semantic memory stores generic propositions often supplied by others (Bowlby, 1980, Tulving, 1972). Severe psychic conflict is likely to occur when the types of information supplied by these two storage mediums are contradictory. In Berman's study the women were being given information that was likely contradictory to their actual experiences (they may have experienced their husbands being unloving and uncaring), hence they experienced more distress in the experimental condition. They would also need greater "coping" thoughts in order to deal with this disparity which the researchers also found.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) have done much research in the area of adult relationships and attachments. Essentially they contend that romantic love is an attachment process whereby a person develops intimate bonds with another in much the same way as they did in childhood with their parents. Hazan and Shaver were the first to apply Bowlby's typology of attachment to adult romantic love. They
identified three attachment styles that adults use which correspond to infant attachment classifications. This typology supports the notion that the style of adult romantic love has its roots in early childhood attachments further supporting Bowlby's mental model hypothesis for continuity in relationship style. Because of this continuity, Hazan and Shaver contend that adult classifications should be influenced by those of childhood.

Hazan and Shaver (1987), in two separate studies, used a measure of adult attachment style in which the respondent selects one of three prototypical statements of attachment style that best describes themselves. This self-selection was compared to responses on measures of self characteristics and attributes of their intimate relationships. They found the proportions of individuals endorsing each style closely approximated the propositions found by infant attachment researchers (secure=56%, avoidant=25%, anxious/ambivalent=19%). They also found that individuals that endorsed the secure attachment style characterized their most important love experience as happy, friendly, and trusting. They also had longer relationships than either of the insecure styles. Avoidant individuals described their intimate relationships as characterized by fear of intimacy, and extreme jealousy. Anxious/ambivalent individuals were characterized by emotional highs and lows, obsessive thoughts concerning the other and a strong desire
for union with the other (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). They also found support for differences in mental models, secure individuals described realistic expectations for intimate relationships and the romantic love accompanies it. Avoidant individuals deny both that (a) head over heels romantic love does not exist and (b) one rarely finds true love. Anxious/Ambivalent individuals claim that it is easy to fall in love although they maintain that they rarely find true love.

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) have reconceptualized Hazan and Shaver's model of adult attachment style. They contend that four categories better describe adult attachments. There styles are (a) secure, (b) preoccupied, (c) dismissing, (d) fearful. They divided Hazan and Shaver's avoidant category into (a) dismissing and (b) fearful. They argue that some individuals have an avoidant style because they genuinely dismiss intimate needs, but some are classified as avoidant because they are fearful of intimate relationships and avoid them. They also proposed that individuals are characterized by varying degrees of all four attachment styles. Therefore, in Hazan and Shaver's research on adult attachment they had respondents endorse each style in terms of how much like them each is. They found support for the contention that attachment style is linked conceptually to the sense of self. Hazan and Shaver found that the more secure an individual was, the more
positive a sense of self and others they expressed. The more a respondent endorsed preoccupied the more negative their sense of self, but held a more positive sense of others. Dismissing individuals had a positive sense of self, but a negative sense of others. Finally fearful subjects had negative models of self and others (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

Using a more detailed measure of attachment style characteristics, Collins and Read (1990) have also examined the relationships between attachment style and beliefs about the self, others and intimate relationships. Their findings confirmed and supported those of other researchers. Individuals who expressed a more secure attachment style were comfortable with closeness and felt sufficiently able to depend on others. They had a higher sense of self-worth, were more expressive and had greater social self-confidence. They generally had a more positive view of others, seeing them as dependable, and trustworthy. Secure individuals also felt more in control of outcomes in their lives. The individuals that expressed more anxious characteristics (insecure-anxious attachment style) had negative views of themself and others. They reported greater anxiety about intimate relationships, a lower sense of self, low assertiveness and they felt less in control of their lives. They also were more obsessive and dependent in their love style (Collins & Read, 1990). These findings support the
findings of Levy and Davis (1988) who compared attachment styles and styles of love, finding a strong positive relationship between anxious attachment and a manic love style. Attachment style characteristics and childhood attachment history have also been examined by Collins and Read. Generally respondents who remembered parents as warm and supportive scored higher on characteristics that describe secure attachment style. Other respondents that recalled parents who were rejecting or inconsistent in their caregiving endorsed insecure attachment style characteristics.

Hazan and Shaver (1990) also explored the premise that adult attachments and work was conceptually close to childhood attachments and exploration. According to childhood attachment theory, the more secure a child feels the less the attachment system is activated and the more other behavioral systems can operate, namely exploration. Hazan and Shaver (1990) did two studies exploring this contention and both yielded similar findings. Essentially they found that security of attachment style was positively related to job satisfaction, and relationships with co-workers. Insecure-ambivalent and insecure-avoidant characterized their work experiences and relationships with co-workers that closely mirrored experiences of children with similar attachment classifications. That is both described difficulties with co-workers, and in the case of
insecure-ambivalent adult, feeling unsure of their work competence. Insecure-avoidant adults described feeling confident about their abilities at work, again similar to childhood characteristics of avoidant individuals (Hazan & Shaver, 1990).

Attachments in Violent Relationships

There is a dearth of research focusing on adult attachments and violence in the intimate relationship. Bowlby (1988) held that violence in adult intimate relationships could at least partly be explained by a dysfunctional attachment history.

Within the attachment behavioral system, there are certain behaviors which are designed to elicit caregiving from the adult attachment figure (Bowlby, 1969, 1988). Bowlby (1973) describes stages that a child goes through when separated from his attachment figure for an extended period of time. Most notable of these stages is anger at the person that the individual is separated from and which is expressed towards the attachment figure upon reunion. Bowlby (1973, 1988) hypothesizes that this anger serves to alert the attachment figure of the seriousness of separation and discourage further separations. Attachment theory suggests that in the adult violent relationship, the male batterer, because of an internal model that perceives the partners behaviors as rejection and/or insensitivity, fears the loss of the attachment figure (again) and activates the
anger attachment behavior. Even the avoidant individual may display anger toward the attachment figure when the attachment system is activated (Bartholomew 1990). This anger may then escalate into violence if the individual is unable to control or prevent "separation" from the attachment figure (Mayseless, 1991). Separation in adulthood may or may not involve actual physical separation as in childhood. The increasing independence of the attachment figure may threaten the individual's perception of accessibility of the attachment figure, thus creating the illusion of separation and activating the attachment system.

The research on domestic violence generates many varied explanations of violence perpetrated against an intimate. Yet, the inclusion of Bowlby's Attachment theory offers an increasingly comprehensive understanding of why one commits violent acts against a loved one.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study was part of a larger study entitled "A Comparison of Violent and Non-violent Males and Their Female Intimate, under the direction of Professor Teresa Julian and Professor Patrick C. McKenry, funded by the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center and the Ohio Department of Mental Health. The larger study was designed to study the relationship between psychosocial and physiological variables and domestic violence.

The purpose of this phase of the study was to examine the relationship between attachment history and style, and male physical violence toward female intimates. The independent variables were attachment style, attachment history, the structure of violence in the family of origin, perceived levels of current stress, and masculinity/femininity. The dependent variable was the extent of violence in the intimate relationship. A retrospective design was used to examine the relationship between violence and the independent variables.
Subjects

The subjects for this study consisted of a convenience sample of 102 heterosexual couples (married or cohabitating). Both cohabitating and married couples were used because research suggests similar patterns of intimate violence in these lifestyles. In order to participate in this study, cohabitating couples had to be living together for more than 7 years. The sample was recruited within a 75 mile radius of the research site. Standard demographic measures were utilized in this study.

The demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 1. Subjects ranged in age from 20-67 years with the mean age of the sample being 36.2 (sd=9.7) for males and 34.4 (sd=8.3) for females.

The majority of male respondents were Caucasian (83%, n=85) as were the female respondents (85%, n=87). However 11% (n=11) of the male and 12% (n=12) of the female respondents were of African-American descent. Thirteen percent (n=12) of the couples were mixed race (African American married to Caucasian).

The mean educational level was 15 years for males and 14 years for females. Thirty-five percent (n=36) of the males in the sample had a college degree, yet nearly 25% (n=29) had only a high school diploma. Females in the sample had similar educational levels.
### Table 1
**Sample Demographics**

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<th>Variables</th>
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<th>SD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Female's Age (years)</td>
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<td>Male's Education (years)</td>
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<td>Female's Education (years)</td>
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<td>Time in Relationship (years)</td>
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<th>Race</th>
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<td>Black</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<th>Race</th>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>Black</td>
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<td>Graduate Professional</td>
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<td>Standard College or</td>
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<td>University Graduate</td>
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<td>Partial College Training</td>
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<td>Junior High School</td>
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<td>Less Than 7 Years School</td>
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<table>
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<th>Educational Level</th>
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<td>Standard College or</td>
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<td>Partial College Training</td>
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<th>Occupational Category</th>
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<td>Higher Executives etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Managers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative Personnel</td>
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<td>Clerical, Sales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skilled Manual Employee</td>
<td>10% n=10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semi-Skilled Employee</td>
<td>17% n=17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unskilled Employee</td>
<td>10% n=10</td>
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Table 1 (Con't)

**Occupational Category**
- Higher Executives etc.: 8% n=7
- Business Managers: 20% n=18
- Administrative Personnel: 14% n=13
- Clerical, Sales: 25% n=23
- Skilled Manual Employee: 10% n=9
- Semi-Skilled Employee: 12% n=11
- Unskilled Employee: 11% n=10

**Religious Affiliation**

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<td>Jewish</td>
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<td>Atheist</td>
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<td>Agnostic</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>11% n=11</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>13% n=13</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Religious Affiliation</th>
<th>% Female</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Protestant</td>
<td>46% n=46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>20% n=20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moslem</td>
<td>0% n=0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>4% n=4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atheist</td>
<td>0% n=0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnostic</td>
<td>2% n=2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>24% n=24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>5% n=5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Occupational status also widely varied with about 52% (n=51) of males holding traditional white collar occupations and approximately 37% (n=37) being employed in blue collar jobs. Female respondents were employed at lower levels with 42% (n=38) employed in white-collar occupations and 33% (n=30) in traditional blue collar occupations. Annual family incomes ranged from $300-$135,000 with the mean being $38,574 (sd=21,991).

In terms of religious affiliation, the majority of the couples were Protestant; 46% of both males and females (n=47 for males, n=46 for females) were affiliated with the Protestant denomination. The next largest group of males was Catholic (n=20); for females the second largest group "Other" was 24% (n=24).

Procedure

The study involved the administration of a structured interview to the 102 dyads. The minimum number of subjects was arrived at through statistical power analysis (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Subjects represented respondents to flyers, newspaper advertisements, and referrals from therapists and mental health centers in the Columbus, Ohio metropolitan area. The advertisement sought married couples to participate in a interview on physical health and the marital relationship. Subjects were told that their involvement required participation in an interview about their physical health, their marital relationship, and their
childhood. The study was approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee at The Ohio State University. The initial screening, conducted by phone, involved questions regarding marital status. The partner reached by phone answered the question regarding marital status. Other criteria were whether the couple were experiencing marital distress. If they were found to be appropriate for inclusion, an appointment was scheduled. Individuals contacted that did not qualify were asked if their names and phone numbers could be kept on file for possible future use as subjects. Each couple was paid $60 for their participation in the interview. The interviews with the spouses or partners occurred simultaneously in separate rooms at The Center for Nursing Research at The Ohio State University. Both partners' responses to specific instruments were used in determining violent vs. nonviolent and distressed vs. non distressed categorizations. After completing the semi-structured interview, each couple was placed into either violent or non-violent based on their responses to the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS). The CTS was examined and any report of a violent act expressed or received within the past year by either partner placed the couple into the violent category. Because of the widespread problem of under-reporting by males (Walker, 1984), it was important to include the female partner's report of violence as criteria for the violent category. Although the focus of this study
was male physical violence toward female intimates an admission of violent behavior by the female usually indicates male physical violence (Walker, 1984).

Interviewers were graduate students in Family Relations and Human Development and Nursing. They were trained by the principal investigator using a videotaped interview and role modeling techniques. The male interview took approximately 1 hour to administer, and the female interview required about 45 minutes.

Instrumentation

The interview schedule consisted of instruments chosen for their psychometric properties as well as their relevance to attachment theory and male physical violence toward female intimates. Also, various demographic questions were included. The standardized instruments included: the Attachment History Questionnaire (AHQ) (Pottharst & Kessler, 1990), Adult Attachment Style Questionnaire (AAS) (Bartholomew, 1990), the Life Experiences Survey (LES) (Sarason, Johnson, & Siegel, 1978), the Conflict/Tactics Scale, (CTS) (Strauss, 1979), The Family of Origin Violence Scale (FOOV) (Strauss, 1979), and the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (Bem, 1981).

The Attachment History Questionnaire (AHQ)

The AHQ (Pottharst & Kessler, 1990) was created to examine the history of the individual in regard to attachment issues. The AHQ was administered in an interview
This measure covers topics that are relevant to attachment issues, such as separations, threatened separations, and support systems. It consists of five sections. The first section includes questions covering demographic information. The second section consisted of open-ended questions covering general family background information as well as questions concerning separations between parent and child during the subject's childhood. The remaining sections consisted of a Likert-type response format and cover family interactions, and threatened separations. The responses ranged from never to always. The scores on the Likert-type format portion of the measure were analyzed according to three subscales identified by the authors: (a) secure attachment base, (b) parental discipline, (c) threats of separation. All three of these subscales were utilized in this study.

Potharst and Kessler (1990) normed the AHQ with college undergraduates ranging in age from 17-63 (mean age of 26), mostly Caucasian (72%) and female (70%). The authors of the measure subjected the items to a principal component factor analysis with iterations. The resulting matrix included 9 factors of which four had psychological merit in that they were theoretically compatible with attachment theory, and accounted for 36.2 of the variance. The authors contend that the factor analysis illustrates the construct validity of the measure. Content validity for each subscale is
illustrated by the high correlation between secure base and parental discipline subscales, \((r=.52)\). The degree to which a parent used particular discipline techniques is related to the extent the individual feels secure in the relationship. The security that an individual feels about relationships is related to the use of particularly harsh disciplinary techniques by the parent.

The internal reliability of the AHQ is reported to be very good. Potharst and Kessler (1990) report that all items positively correlated with the total AHQ score and each item's respective subscale. Cronbach alpha coefficients for each subscale were .89 for the secure base subscale and .85 for parental discipline.

In this study Cronbach alpha coefficients were .90 for the secure base subscale, .80 for the parental discipline subscale, and .66 for the separation anxiety subscale.

Adult Attachment Style (AAS)

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1990) designed the Adult Attachment Style (AAS) measure to explore the thesis that adult intimate relationships are comparable with early relationships between parent and child. These authors based their measure to a large extent on one developed by Hazan and Shaver (1987). The AAS consists of a four vignettes of distinct relationship styles. Each vignette represents a prototypic representation of one of the four adult attachment styles. These styles correspond to Ainsworth et
al. (1978) attachment classifications for infants. It is not suggested by the authors of this measure that there is a direct relationship between this measure's attachment classifications and the attachment classifications of infancy. Rather, they suggest that their classifications are the mature versions of infancy classifications given continuity in attachment relationships and experiences. These styles include: secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) questioned individuals about their most important love relationship in one portion of a larger questionnaire containing three prototypical statements of relationship style where the respondent endorsed one as best describing their own relationship style. The respondents in the first study using this measure were mostly female (66%), lower middle class, with a mean age of 36. Subjects in the second study were again mostly female (65%) college undergraduates with a mean age of 18 years. The respondents were to endorse one particular style as the one that was most appropriate for them. Proportions of respondents placing themselves in the three categories in two separate studies closely matched proportions reported in parent-child studies of attachment relationships. Hazan and Shaver contend that this self-selection was not random and may reflect similar factors influencing both adult and child relationships. They also
reported that descriptions of self and relationship characteristics, taken from other portions of the questionnaire given by the respondents, supported a theoretical description of characteristics of an individual endorsing a particular attachment style. This was found in two separate studies, thus demonstrating the criterion-related validity of this measure. Hazan and Shaver also reported that individuals selecting the secure style reported more favorable relationships with parents than those choosing insecure styles. Again, this was found in two separate studies, giving some indication of the construct validity of the measure.

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1990) essentially took this measure intact and modified it to better reflect adult attachment. They felt that the avoidant category was actually two categories—one fearful-avoidant and the other dismissing-avoidant, reflecting conceptual differences in the same avoidant style. Respondents were placed into one of the four categories by the researchers based on their taped interviews. The authors of this measure contend that individuals who endorse a particular style view themselves and others uniquely. The secure individual has a positive view of self and others. The insecure-dismissing individual has a positive sense of self but not of others. The insecure-fearful and insecure-preoccupied have negative views of self and others. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1990)
report that individuals who endorsed one particular style had self concept, sociability, and interpersonal problem scores that supported the contentions described above, thus establishing criterion-related validity.

None of the researchers reported reliability on the measures; however, Hazan and Shaver administered the measure in two separate studies and reported nearly identical groupings, thus crudely attempting to demonstrate reliability. The four categories used in this study are (a) secure; (b) insecure-ambivalent; (c) fearful-avoidant; and (d) dismissing-avoidant.

The Life Experiences Survey (LES)

Created by Sarason, Johnson, and Siegel (1978), the LES was created to identify the presence and impact of life events that may influence an individual. The LES (Sarason, 1978) is a 57-item self-report measure that allows the subjects to indicate events that they have experienced during the past year. In addition, the scale allows the respondents to rate whether they perceive events as being positive or negative. Events are scored on a scale ranging from -3 to +3 depending on how negatively or positively events were perceived. Summing the rating of those events experienced will provide for a negative change score, a positive change score, and a total change score.
Sarason et al. initially tested this measure in two studies. The first involved 34 subjects and the second 58. Both samples used undergraduate student populations. Test-retest reliability for each of the three scores derived from this measure were .19 (p < .001) and .53 (p < .001) for the positive change score; .56 (p < .001) and .88 (p < .001) for the negative scores; and .63 (p < .001) and .64 (p < .001) for the total score. Additional reliability data were obtained from a smaller sample (n=12) where test-retest occurred over an 8 week period. The reliability coefficients reported were .61 (p < .05) for negative scores; and .82 (p < .001) for total change (Sarason et al., 1978).

This measure demonstrates content validity in that all items represent life change. The LES also manifests content validity as the items seem to represent events that could create stress and are only scored if they were perceived as stressful by the individual. The additional spaces where the individual can name added events strengthen claims content validity as these items are included with the standard items. The authors report significant criterion-related validity in their initial studies. They found that high negative change scores were related to higher levels of depression, anxiety, and an external locus of control. In the current study, this measure was coded as subscore totals (negative and positive stress) and total stress; therefore reliability information was not applicable.
The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS)

The Conflict Tactics Scale, created by Strauss (1979), has become the standard measure of violent behavior in studies looking at family violence. The (CTS) is a 19-item self-report measure in which the individual reports on the tactics used in conflicts with the intimate partner during the past year, and then if these tactics have ever been used. The CTS has 19 descriptions of conflict tactics that range from less to most severe with the individual answering how many times in the past year each tactic has been used. These 19 items are broken down into three subscales: (a) Reasoning; (b) Verbal Aggression; and (c) Violence. The respondent answers in relation to himself and his intimate partner, using a 7 point scale ranging from 0 times to more than 20 times. This measure can be scored as a continuous or dichotomous variable, although the authors do not recommend dichotomizing because of the loss of measurement precision (Strauss, 1979). This measure has been used as a continuous variable in many studies because the authors feel that too much measurement precision is lost through dichotomization (Makepeace, 1983; Eisikovits et al. 1991).

Strauss (1979) developed this measure using a nationally representative sample of over twenty-one hundred couples. Inter-item reliability mean scores for husbands ranged from .74 to .87 for the three subscales respectively and from .70 to .88 for wives. Concurrent validity was
demonstrated in a study by Bulcroft and Strauss (1975) indicating a range of correlations from .19 to .64 between students' reports on the CTS of their parents behavior and the parents' actual reports. The measure also demonstrates good content validity in that all of the items that make up each subscale are acts that accurately describe each subscale. Construct validity is demonstrated in several studies that report correlations between the CTS scores and other variables such as SES and the power structures found in relationships.

In this study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient for male physical violence was .78 for male's report, and .71 for the female's report of male physical violence.

**Family of Origin Violence (FOOV)**

The CTS (Strauss, 1979) will be used in a modified form to assess violence in the family of origin. The ten most serious items from the CTS were used to measure acts of symbolic and actual violence in the family of origin. The CTS has been used in modified form in a number of studies of intra-family violence (Giles-Sims, 1983; Marshall & Rose, 1990). The participants respond to the ten most serious items of the CTS in terms of three categories: (a) how often they witnessed their father being violent toward their mother; (b) how often they witnessed their mother being violent toward their father; and (c) how often they were the recipient of these behaviors from their mother and/or their
father. The response set is the same as that used in the Conflict Tactics Scale. Cronbach alphas for each subscale are as follows, (a) .94, (b) .94, (c) .90.

**The Bern Sex Role Inventory (BSRI)**

Bem (1981) developed the Bern Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) measuring masculinity, femininity, and androgyne. A scale that assesses social desirability is also available. The BSRI is a 60-item checklist which measures sex-role identity status along two dimensions (femininity and masculinity) and can be used to classify respondents into four sex-role identity groups (feminine, androgynous, masculine, and undifferentiated). The respondents rate themselves on a scale from 1 (never) to 6 (always or almost always true). The internal consistency of the BSRI ranges from .75 to .86.

This measure was normed using two samples of mostly male college undergraduates (61% and 64% male). Bem (1981) reports internal reliability between the samples for the three subscales as follows: masculinity, .86 and .86; femininity, .80 and .82; and .75 and .70 on social desirability. In this study Cronbach alpha's were computed, masculinity, .90, and femininity, .82. This study used the masculine and feminine characteristic endorsement, the characteristic endorsement difference scale. Dichotomous variables that assessed undifferentiation and androgyne. The androgyne subscale is a comparison of the masculinity and femininity scale and no reliability data was reported. The
high reliability of the components (masculine and feminine items) of the androgyny scale indicate that it would be equally reliable. Test-retest reliability on a small subsample reported coefficients ranging from .89 to .93.

Once again the content validity of this measure is demonstrated by items that describe traditionally masculine and feminine characteristics. Criterion-related validity is reported to be high as Bem (1981) reports correlations on the BSRI and most other masculinity-femininity subscales taken from the administration of two other scales along with the BSRI.

Data Analysis

The dependent variable in this study was the level of violence in the intimate relationship as measured by the total score of the Conflicts Tactics Scale (Strauss, 1979). The dependent variable was continuous. Seventy-four percent of male respondents reported no violence with the remaining 26% reporting varying levels of violence. The independent variables included: perceived life stressors for males (negative, positive and total), adult attachment styles endorsement for males, history of violence in the family of origin, male sex-role attitudes (masculine, feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated), male's attachment history (secure base, separation, and parental discipline), and mismatch in attachment styles between males and females.
Correlational analyses were used to determine initial significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables. Ordinary least square regressions were then used to assess the unique influence of the attachment variables on the incidence of violent behavior. Some independent variables in this study were categorical. There is controversy over the use of regression analysis with categorical variables. Some contend that regression can only be utilized with true continuous variables. However, although controversial, regression analysis with categorical variables is an accepted practice (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

Limitations

(1) The sample used in this study will not be randomly drawn and may be over-representative of a low-income, Black population.

(2) The self-report nature of this study can lead to an under-reporting of violence by males and general socially desirable responses.

(3) This study is based upon research methodologies which may fail to allow for causal inferences.

(4) This study focuses on attachment theory's contribution to the variance associated to the incidence of domestic violence and may not include other relevant factors.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

Introduction
The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between attachment history and style, and violence in intimate relationships. The independent variables were the male's (a) attachment style, (b) attachment history, (c) the existence of violence in the family of origin, (d) perceived levels of stress in the current life situation, (e) endorsement of masculine and feminine characteristics, and (f) mismatch in attachment styles. The dependent variable was the extent of male physical violence in the intimate relationship as reported by both spouses. This score was computed by combining male reports of his own violent behavior and female reports of male violent behavior into one score. It was believed that by combining male and female reports of male violence under-reporting by male respondents would be alleviated. Male and female reports of male violence were significantly correlated with each other (r=.75; p < .001). One difficulty in this method of calculating the violence score is that male physical violence may be over-inflated. This
problem was addressed by using a log procedure (Moore & McCabe, 1989) to normalize the distribution and bring in any outliers that may occur because of this over-estimation.

One hundred and two couples were interviewed regarding the intimate relationship. The total group was utilized for purposes of statistical analyses to address the hypotheses. Correlational analyses were performed to determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The independent variables can be broken down into five categories (a) subject's attachment history's, (b) family of origin experiences; (c) current levels of stress; (d) endorsement of gender characteristics; and (e) current attachment style. The mean, standard deviation, and range of scores for all variables in this study are presented in Table 2. Pearson correlation coefficients for all variables are listed in Table 3. Correlation coefficients were in the direction predicted by the literature and attachment theory. All of the correlations reported are Pearson r's with the exception of the undifferentiated variable which is reported as a point biserial because of it's dichotomous nature.

Findings Related to Study Hypotheses

The hypotheses for this study were tested to determine the degree of relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, male physical violence in the intimate relationship.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Observed Range</th>
<th>Possible Range</th>
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<td>3.6</td>
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<td>0-48</td>
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<td>Male's Mother Violent to Father</td>
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<td>11.4</td>
<td>0-51</td>
<td>0-60</td>
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<td>2.5-5.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.70</td>
<td>2.8-6.0</td>
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<td>Total Stress</td>
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<td>Dismissing Attachment Style</td>
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Table 3
Correlation Matrix (Pearson r)

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<td>1. Mother to Father Viol.</td>
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<td>3. Parents Viol. to Child</td>
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<td>.387**</td>
<td>.478**</td>
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<td>-.338**</td>
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<td>-.054</td>
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<td>.060</td>
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<td>.032</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Total Stress</td>
<td>.189**</td>
<td>.306</td>
<td>.153</td>
<td>.170</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>.283**</td>
<td>.258**</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>.591**</td>
<td>.759**</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Secure Style</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.293**</td>
<td>.247**</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>.207**</td>
<td>.179</td>
<td>.264**</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.251**</td>
<td>.170</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Dismissing Style</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>.253**</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.162</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Preoccupied Style</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.066</td>
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<td>.035</td>
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<td>.126</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Fearful Style</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.235**</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.316**</td>
<td>.312**</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.277**</td>
<td>.223**</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.219**</td>
<td>.192**</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Attachment Style</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>-.060</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>-.033</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.097</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = p < .05  ** = p < .01  *** = p < .001

n range=99-102
Life Event Stress and Male Physical Violence Toward a Female Intimate

Hypothesis 1. Stress levels in males are positively related to relationship violence in males. To test this hypothesis, a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between negative, positive, and total life event stress, and the incidence of male physical violence toward his intimate partner. Negative life events stress ($r = .29; p < .01$), and total life events stress ($r = .19; p = .05$) were significantly related to male physical violence toward a female intimate. Positive life event stress and male physical violence toward his intimate partner ($r = .01; p > .05$), did not reach statistical significance. Thus, this hypothesis was partially supported.

Attachment Style and Male Physical Violence Toward a Female Intimate

Hypothesis 2. Males' level of insecure attachment style will be positively related to relationship violence. To test this hypothesis, a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between each male subject's endorsement of each of the four attachment styles and male physical violence toward their female intimate.
2a. **Males' endorsement of the insecure-preoccupied attachment style will be positively related to male physical violence toward his female intimate.** To test this hypothesis, a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between endorsement of the insecure-preoccupied attachment style and male physical violence toward his female intimate. The correlation coefficient obtained in this analysis was not found to be significant ($r = .07; p > .05$) This hypothesis was not supported.

2b. **Males' endorsement of the insecure-dismissing attachment style will be positively related to male physical violence toward his female intimate.** To test this hypothesis, a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between endorsement of the insecure-dismissing attachment style and male physical violence toward his female intimate. The correlation coefficient obtained in this analysis was not found to be significant ($r = .03; p > .05$) This hypothesis was not supported.

2c. **Males' endorsement of the insecure-fearful attachment style will be positively related to male physical violence toward his female intimate.** To test this hypothesis, a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between endorsement of the insecure-fearful attachment style
and male physical violence toward his female intimate. The correlation coefficient obtained in this analysis was significant ($r = .22; p < .05$) Thus, this hypothesis was supported.

2d. **Males' endorsement of the secure attachment style will be negatively related to male physical violence toward his female intimate.** To test this hypothesis, a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between endorsement of the secure attachment style and male physical violence toward his female intimate. The correlation coefficient obtained in this analysis was not significant ($r = .005; p > .05$) This hypothesis was not supported.

**Fear of Separation and Male Physical Violence Toward a Female Intimate**

**Hypothesis 3. Males' fear of separation is positively related to male physical violence toward his intimate.** To test this hypothesis, a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between fear of separation and the incidence of male physical violence toward a female intimate. The correlation coefficient obtained was non significant, and thus the hypothesis was not supported ($r = -.07; p > .05$).
Mismatch in Couple Attachment Styles and Male Physical Violence Toward Female Intimates

Hypothesis 4. A mismatch in attachment styles between male and female intimates will be positively related to male physical violence toward the female intimate. To test this hypothesis a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between attachment style mismatch and male physical violence toward the female intimate. Mismatch was measured as the absolute difference between the partners' endorsement of the secure attachment style and the other's endorsement. The correlation coefficient obtained was significant, and thus the hypothesis was supported ($r = .30; p < .01$). Approximately 12% of the dyads evidenced no difference in attachment styles. Forty-eight percent of the differences had negative values indicating less security in the male. Forty percent of the differences yielded positive values indicating that the female was less secure than the male.

Family of Origin Violence and Male Physical Violence Toward Female Intimates

Hypothesis 5. Witnessing violence by males in their family of origin will be positively related to male physical violence toward his intimate partner. To test this hypothesis a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between witnessing violence in the family of origin and male
physical violence toward the female intimate. Correlation coefficients obtained from this analysis indicated a significant relationship between witnessing mother toward father violence and male physical violence toward his female intimate ($r = .19; p < .05$). A non-significant correlation coefficient was obtained between witnessing father toward mother violence and male physical violence toward his female intimate ($r = .14; p > .05$). Thus, this hypothesis was partially supported.

**Family of Origin Abuse and Male Physical Violence Toward Female Intimates**

**Hypothesis 6.** Experiencing physical abuse by males from parents will be positively related to violence toward their intimate partner. To test this hypothesis a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between experiencing physical abuse by males in the family of origin and violence toward the female intimate. The correlation coefficient obtained from this analysis indicated a significant relationship between experiencing physical abuse from parents and male physical violence toward his female intimate ($r = .21; p < .05$). This hypothesis was supported.
Masculinity Scores and Male Physical Violence Toward Female Intimates

Hypothesis 7. Masculine characteristic endorsement will be positively related to male physical violence toward their female intimate. To test this hypothesis a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between masculine characteristic endorsement and male physical violence toward the female intimate. The correlation coefficient obtained from this analysis was not significant ($r = -.03; p > .05$), and thus this hypothesis was not supported.

Femininity Scores and Male Physical Violence Toward Female Intimates

Hypothesis 8. Feminine characteristic endorsement will be negatively related to male physical violence toward their female intimate. To test this hypothesis a Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to determine the strength of the relationship between feminine characteristic endorsement and male physical violence toward the female intimate. The correlation coefficient obtained from this analysis was not significant ($r = -.16; p > .05$). This hypothesis was not supported.

Domestic Violence Model

Hypothesis 9. The addition of attachment variables to a regression model of male physical violence toward female intimates will significantly increase the variance accounted
for by the model. A hierarchical regression analysis was utilized to test this hypothesis. The hierarchical design allows the researcher to assess the unique impact of a set of independent variables. The attachment variables secure childhood attachment base, childhood separation, childhood discipline, secure adult attachment style, fearful adult attachment style, preoccupied adult attachment style, dismissing adult attachment style, and mismatch in attachment style were added to a model containing variables traditionally associated with male physical violence toward female intimates. The traditional model included variables that measured negative stress, total stress, masculine characteristic endorsement, feminine characteristic endorsement, masculine/feminine characteristics difference score (a composite sex role characteristic score), sexual differentiation, mother toward father violence in the family of origin, father toward mother violence, and parent toward child violence. These variables were included because they each represent factors that traditionally have been highly correlated with male violence. Results of this analysis were negative due to the failure of the traditional model to reach statistical significance ($F=1.42; p > .05$).

However, the attachment only model was significant with an $R^2$ of .17 ($F= 2.43; p < .05$). In this model, mismatch in secure attachment style endorsement was the best predictor of male physical violence toward a female intimate ($F=9.34$;
p < .01). The next best predictors were fearful attachment style endorsement (F=5.61; p < .05) and parental discipline history was third (F=3.69; p < .05) (see Table 4).

A multiple regression procedure, utilizing all hypothesized variables to predict male physical violence toward a female intimate, produced a significant model which yielded an R² of .29 (F=2.01; p < .05). (see Table 5). The best predictor in this model was mismatch in secure attachment style endorsement (F=5.27; p < .05) Other significant predictors in this model included: (a) mother toward father violence (F=4.16 p < .05), (b) negative life events stress (F=4.48; p < .05), (c) fearful attachment style endorsement (F=4.74; p < .05), and (d) secure attachment history (F=3.95; p < .05).

Additional Analyses

Additional regression analyses were conducted to further explore the relationship between attachment variables and variables traditionally associated with male violence toward a female intimate. A stepwise multiple regression analysis using the attachment variables indicated that only the fearful attachment style and mismatch in attachment style proved significant (F=7.45; R²=.13 p < .01) in predicting male physical violence toward the female intimate (Table 6). When a stepwise multiple regression was carried out on the entire model, using male physical violence as the dependent variable, only two variables were
Table 4  
Multiple Regression Analysis of Male Physical Violence Toward a Female Intimate and Attachment Related Variables  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fearful Attachment Style</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mismatch in Attachment Style</td>
<td>.101</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>9.34</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Discipline History</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 = .17$

$F = 2.43 \quad p = .0196$
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother to Father Violence</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Life Events Stress</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fearful Attachment Style</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mismatch in Secure Attachment Style Endorsement</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<td>Secure Attachment History</td>
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<td>.005</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.05</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 = .30$

$F=2.01 \quad p=.0198$
### Table 6
Stepwise Regression Analysis of Male Physical Violence Toward a Female Intimate and Attachment Related Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>p Value</th>
<th>R² Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mismatch in Attachment Style</td>
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<td>.033</td>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fearful Attachment Style</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = .13

F = 4.30  p = .040
significant predictors: attachment style mismatch, and perceived level of negative stress ($F=9.65; R^2=.17 \ p < .001$) (see Table 7). A forward stepwise selection process was utilized in these analyses.

Additional investigations were also carried out to assess whether there were any interaction effects between independent variables on the dependent variable. It was hypothesized, but not supported, that masculine and feminine characteristic endorsement would be related to violence. Attachment theory maintains that the issue of separation is highly salient in the formation of early attachments. Therefore any separations physical or psychological would be significant. As has already been discussed, sex role socialization may force a psychological separation between a boy and his mother (usually the primary attachment figure). Thus, it is possible that there may be an interaction between sex role characteristics and childhood attachment history. Interaction terms were created by combining (a) feminine characteristic endorsement and attachment history, (b) feminine characteristic endorsement and fearful attachment style, (c) masculine characteristic endorsement and attachment history, and (d) masculine characteristic endorsement and fearful attachment style. Each interaction term was entered into the final regression model in order to determine if each would significantly increase the variance accounted for by the model over and above the increase found
Table 7
Stepwise Regression Analysis of Male Physical Violence Toward a Female Intimate with Traditional and Attachment Related Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p value</th>
<th>$R^2$ Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mismatch in Attachment Style</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>9.51</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Life Events Stress</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>8.85</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 = .17$

F = 9.65  p = .002
by adding the attachment variables. None of the interaction
terms appreciably changed the $R^2$ of the final model
predicting male physical violence toward a female intimate.

The current study focused on male physical violence
toward female intimates, however, domestic violence
generally involves more than physical violence. Verbal
abuse is generally concomitant with physical abuse. The CTS
has a verbal abuse subscale that is measured with the same
scale as physical violence and is used in some studies as an
additional gauge of conflict or violence.

Thus, a verbal abuse variable was entered as the
dependent variable in the previous regression analyses.
Results of the hierarchical regression analysis indicated a
nonsignificant increase in the $R^2$ ($F=1.00; p > .05$) with
the addition of the attachment variables to the model of
traditional variables. The entire model was significant
($F=1.67; p < .05$) with an $R^2$ of .26 (see Table 8). The
significant predictors of verbal abuse from this model were
mother to father violence in the family of origin ($F=3.06;
p < .05$), parents violent to child in the family of origin
($F=6.79; p < .05$), gender characteristic endorsement
composite score ($F=2.84; p < .05$), negative stress levels
($F=4.24; p < .05$), and mismatch in secure attachment style
endorsement ($F=3.08; p < .05$). The traditional model
reached statistical significance ($F=2.31; p < .05$). The
regression analysis utilizing only the traditional variables
Table 8
Multiple Regression Analysis of Male Verbal Abuse Toward a Female Intimate and Preselected Independent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother to Father Violence</td>
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<td>.150</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents Violent to Child</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>6.79</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Characteristics Composite Score</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Life Events Stress</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>.374</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mismatch in Attachment Style</td>
<td>1.166</td>
<td>.703</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = .26
F = 1.67  p = .03
yielded a significant model ($F=2.31; p < .05$). Significant predictors of male verbal abuse from this model included: mother to father violence ($F=3.08; p < .05$), parents violent to child ($F=6.82; p < .05$), gender characteristic composite score ($F=4.03; p < .05$), and negative life events stress ($F=4.26; p < .05$) (see Table 9).

The regression analysis utilizing only the attachment variables with verbal abuse as the dependent variable yielded a significant model ($F=2.35; p < .05$). This model accounted 17% of the variance in predicting male verbal abuse toward a female intimate. Significant predictors in this model were secure attachment style endorsement ($F=3.18; p < .05$), preoccupied attachment style endorsement ($F=2.92; p < .05$), mismatch in secure attachment style endorsement ($F=6.69; p < .05$), and parental discipline history in childhood ($F=2.77; p < .05$) (Table 10).

Summary

Data analyses indicated that the incidence of male physical violence was related to two factors traditionally associated with male physical violence—(a) stress levels and (b) violence in childhood. However, additional significant relationships were found between male physical violence and some attachment factors. Insecure-fearful adult attachment style endorsement and a mismatch in secure adult attachment style endorsement were found to be significantly related to male physical violence toward a
### Table 9
Multiple Regression Analysis of Male Verbal Abuse Toward a Female Intimate and Traditional Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother to Father Violence</td>
<td>-.096</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Violent to Child</td>
<td>.280</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>6.82</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Characteristics Composite Score</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Life Events Stress</td>
<td>.445</td>
<td>.344</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>.042</td>
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</table>

$R^2 = .19$

$F = 2.31 \quad p = .022$
Table 10
Multiple Regression Analysis of Male Verbal Abuse Toward a Female Intimate and Attachment Related Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure Attachment Style</td>
<td>-.226</td>
<td>.237</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
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<td>Preoccupied Attachment Style</td>
<td>.469</td>
<td>.302</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mismatch in Attachment Style</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>6.69</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Discipline History</td>
<td>.277</td>
<td>.166</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ R^2 = .17 \]
\[ F = 2.35 \quad p = .023 \]
female intimate. Hierarchical regression analysis were inconclusive because the traditional model did not reach statistical significance. The attachment model yielded an $R^2$ of .17. The entire model, including all study variables did reach statistical significance and yielded an $R^2$ of .30, that is, the model accounted for 30% of the variance in predicting male physical violence toward female intimates. None of the interactions terms created were found to be correlated with male physical violence or appreciably increased the final model's $R^2$.

As an additional analysis, verbal abuse scores were computed and entered into regression analyses as the dependent variable. The attachment variables produced no significant increase in $R^2$ over what traditional variables accounted for in predicting male verbal abuse toward a female intimate, although the traditional, attachment, and entire model reached statistical significance. The entire model including all hypothesized variables accounted for 26% of the variance in predicting verbal abuse of a female intimate, whereas the same variables accounted for 30% of the variance in accounting for male physical violence toward a female intimate.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS,

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of attachment history and style and violence in intimate relationships. The independent variables were the male's (a) attachment style, (b) attachment history, (c) the extent of violence in the family of origin, (d) perceived levels of stress in the current life situation, (e) extent of endorsement of masculine and feminine characteristics, and (f) degree of mismatch in attachment styles. The dependent variable was the extent of male physical violence in the intimate relationship as reported by both spouses.

Hypotheses were tested to determine the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, male physical violence toward a female intimate. Univariate correlational analysis indicated a statistically significant relationship between two of the attachment variables (a) fearful attachment style and (b) mismatch between endorsements of the secure attachment style and male physical violence toward a female intimate. Other variables significantly related to male physical violence toward a
female intimate included: (a) negative stress levels, (b) total stress levels, (c) extent of males witnessing mother-father violence, and (d) extent of abuse from parents.

In a total model combining attachment and traditional variables, mismatch in secure attachment style endorsement and fearful attachment style endorsement remained significant predictors of the attachment variables; however, secure attachment history reached significance in this model while parental discipline fell out. Other variables that reached statistical significance in the model were the extent of mother to father violence in the family of origin and negative life events stress.

When all study variables, were entered into a regression analysis, fearful attachment style, mismatch in attachment style, mother to father violence in childhood, parent to child violence in childhood, and negative stress levels were found to be significant predictors of male physical violence toward a female intimate. A final hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to assess the relative influence of attachment variables in predicting male physical violence toward a female intimate. Results of this analysis were inconclusive because the traditional model to which the attachment variables would have been added failed to achieve statistical significance. However, the attachment variables accounted for 17% of the variance in predicting male physical violence toward a female
intimate in a statistically significant model; mismatch in secure attachment style endorsement was the best predictor of male physical violence within this model. The second best significant predictor within the attachment model was fearful attachment style endorsement, and parental discipline history was third.

A stepwise multiple regression analysis of the attachment variables indicated that fearful attachment style and mismatch in attachment style proved significant in predicting male physical violence. A stepwise multiple regression carried out on the entire model, including both traditional variables and attachment variables, indicating two significant predictors: attachment style mismatch and perceived level of negative stress. Following is a discussion of these findings.

Discussion

This sample had two salient characteristics which may have influenced the results. First, this sample was positively skewed in terms of the severity of violent behavior by the male toward his female intimate. Despite the relatively high number of violent couples, the severity of physical violence perpetrated by males in this sample was low. The mean score for male reports of physical violence toward his female intimate in this sample was 1.5 (n=102; sd=3.7), whereas female reports of male physical violence toward her had a mean of 1.1 (n=102; sd=3.6) both with a
possible range of 0-49. Examining only the violent group, the mean level of violence was 3.7 (n=34; sd=5.1) and 3.3 (n=34; sd=5.7) for female's and male's report of male's violent respectively. As a point of comparison, Browning and Dutton (1986) reported CTS mean scores (male report) of 9.7 for male physical violence in their study, although this was a clinically violent group. Claes and Rosenthal (1990) using a sample of males ordered into therapy because of an arrest for domestic violence, reported a mean of 7.8 (n=21, sd=6.5). Thus, by comparison to violent samples used in other studies, this study's violence level was less severe. The fact that utilizing a sum of both spouses scores resulted in the low CTS scores further indicates that perhaps this sample is not representative of the extent of violence seen in chronically abusive relationships. Gelles and Strauss (1988), based on their national sample of 6002 family members, reported that 16% of the families surveyed reported some kind of violence between spouses during the past year. The violent group in the present study represented one-third of the sample or almost 20% more than the national sample. However, subject recruitment in this study was deliberately aimed at couples experiencing marital difficulties, thus accounting for the higher number of violent couples.
Marital distress in this study was assessed using the Marital Comparison Level Index (MCLI). Sabatelli (1984) reported means of 144.7 for males (sd= 23.5) and 149.7 (sd=24.2) for females. MCLI scores reflect current perceived outcomes compared to expectations and the higher the score on the MCLI the more satisfied the individual is with the intimate relationship compared to expectations. Males in this sample reported slightly lower levels of marital satisfaction (mean=137.4; n=102, sd=24.02) compared to Sabatelli's (1984) initial study. Females also reported what seem to be only slightly low levels of marital quality (mean=145.5; n=102, sd=31.74). Compared to the means of Sabatelli (male=144.7; sd=23.5, female=149.7; sd=24.2), the means of this study fall within the "normal" range. Comparisons with the violent only group within this sample indicated similar findings. Although lower, males' mean of 131.7 (n=34; sd=27.9) and females' mean of 140.1 (n=34; sd=35.3) still fall within the range found by Sabatelli. These findings on the MCLI would indicate that this sample was not overly maritally distressed.

Another restrictive characteristic of this sample is the range of male responses on the Attachment History Questionnaire (AHQ). Items on the AHQ were consistently above or below the means reported by Potheast and Kessler (1990), depending on whether the item measured positive or negative aspects of attachment. In other words, the means
reported in this study consistently indicated positive attachment histories. This lack of negative attachment experiences may have minimized the influence of attachment on male physical violence toward female intimate. For a complete listing of means on the AHQ, see Table 11. However, despite the low level of violence in this sample and the rates of positive attachment histories, some attachment variables were significantly related to male physical violence.

**Stress**

The literature strongly supports a relationship between stress and relationship violence (Farrington 1986; Gelles 1994; Steinmetz 1987). The current study supports this general finding as recent life event stress were found to be a significant factor in incidence of male physical violence toward a female intimate. Strauss (1977/1978) found that as the number of stressful events increased (positive and negative), the rate of violence increased also. Makepeace (1983, 1984) found that undesirable life events was significantly correlated with male physical violence in intimate relationships. This study found that both negative and total life event stress were related to relationship violence, yet total life event stress (including both negative and positive stressors) was only marginally related to violence. Negative life events stress creates strain on the individual forcing him/her to rely on various coping
Table 11
Contrasts Between Male Respondents AHQ Scores and Normative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AHQ Variable</th>
<th>Male AHQ</th>
<th>Normative AHQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHQ1*</td>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates negatively worded items
mechanisms to deal with the stress.

Although the impact of cumulative life events on the incidence of domestic violence is well documented, generally the assessment of life stressors has been limited to the recent history of the individual utilizing such instruments as Sarason's (1978) Life Event Stress measure. Using Bowlby's attachment theory, the current study sought to examine the impact of stresses experienced during the critical early childhood period. Numerous developmental theorists (e.g., Bowlby, Erickson, Mahler, Klein) emphasize early childhood as a critical time in the development of the self and the self in relation to others. These early experiences not only produce initial and later stress in the child, but begin a pattern of perceiving which affects how other stressful events are comprehended. Several prominent stress theory models (i.e., Hill 1958; McCubbin & Patterson 1982) indicate that perception or appraisal of the stressful event is a critical element in determining if the event is stressful. Attachment theory conceptualizes how early experiences form the basis for how events will be perceived.

Attachment theory would suggest that when stressed, the individual seeks out the attachment figure for support and nurturance. If the stressed male has expectations (based on previous attachment history) that the attachment figure will not be supportive or rejecting, the individual may misinterpret the behaviors of the intimate other. This
perceived lack of support from the attachment figure only compounds the stress that was present already and violent behavior may occur.

Positive life events showed no correlation to male physical violence, whereas negative life events stress evidenced a positive correlation with male violence. Additionally, fearful attachment style endorsement (which was correlated with male physical violence) was positively associated with negative life events stress ($r = .28$; $p < .01$) and negatively associated with positive life events stress ($r = -.22$; $p < .05$). In other words, the more males endorsed the insecure-fearful attachment style, the more likely they were to experience more events as negative and less as positive. This is important for two reasons. First, it suggests that violent males interpret (experience) more events as negative, and second, it also suggests that the level of insecurity in males may influence negative perceptions. The link between negative life events stress and male physical violence may be in how a fearful attachment style influences the perception of life events.

**Fearful Attachment Style**

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) describe the fearful-avoidant individual as one who has a sense of love-unworthiness combined with an expectation that others will be rejecting and untrustworthy. This style enables these individuals to protect themselves from disappointment and
rejection. These individuals have experienced rejection in childhood but not enough to the extent that they completely reject intimate relationships (dismissing style). Fearful individuals want intimate relationships but are distrustful of intimates and expect rejection. These expectations compel the individual to perceive words and actions with the intimate in accordance with these expectations (e.g., interpret more events as negative).

The current study reveals a relationship between fearful attachment style and violent behavior by the male toward his female intimate. This relationship is important because it supports the contention that insecure attachment styles are significant factors in explaining the incidence of male physical violence toward a female intimate. Positive correlations between negative life events stress and fearful attachment style, and fearful attachment style and violence alludes to possible dynamics operating in the violent relationship. Because of an insecure attachment model, originating in childhood, the violent male may interpret more life events as stressful, thus leading to violence. The results of this study suggest that attachment factors may play a role in predicting male violence and should be included in future research. It was expected that more of the attachment styles would correlate with violence, but the low level of violent behavior and the secure nature of the sample may have limited this possibility.
Mayseless (1991) contends that the functional anger that serves to support the secure relationship becomes dysfunctional leading to violence in individuals that lack coping resources (e.g., individuals with insecure attachment histories and styles) to adequately deal with stresses in the relationship. The fearful individual wants intimacy from his partner but has the expectation that the partner will reject him. Thus, the insecurely attached individual is stressed because they are seeking support from the one person that is the source of their stress. Neutral behaviors by the intimate partner may be misinterpreted as rejection based on maladaptive perceptions based on the insecure internal working model. The anger that acts to communicate fear of separation in the secure relationship escalates into violent behavior by the fearful individual as a gross escalation of this anger. Exactly how this anger becomes amplified enough to result in violence against an intimate should be investigated further.

Mismatch in Dyad's Attachment Style

Very little of the research literature on domestic violence has examined factors that pertain to aspects of the dyad's intimate relationship (Steinmetz, 1987). Where relationships have been the subject of investigation, generally only one spouse has provided data. In the current study, data analysis included only one significant variable in the total regression model that dealt with the status of
the intimate relationship (i.e., mismatch in attachment style). However, other attachment variables assess factors that have a direct influence on how the individual thinks and behaves in an intimate relationship and thus reflect the current status of the relationship. Attachment theory emphasizes that attachment issues deal with the history of the intimate relationship.

Mismatch in attachment styles emerged as significantly and positively related to male intimate violence. The greater the mismatch between husband and wife, in terms of to what degree each endorsed the secure attachment style, the greater the level of violent behavior within the past year. The nature of the mismatches was investigated to determine which partner was more insecure. More of the mismatches occurred due to lower endorsement of the secure attachment style by males than by females (48% vs. 40%); however, it can be argued that any mismatch, regardless of its configuration, is significant. Given the significant relationship between the insecure-fearful attachment style and violence, it is likely that this attachment style endorsement by the male was the source of the mismatch. That is, more of the mismatches may have occurred due to the female being secure and the male being insecure-fearful.

The research literature typically describes the male batterer as having extreme dependency needs in intimate relationships (Hastings & Hamberger 1988). In the case of
the fearful insecure male-secure female, the male typically has expectations and worries of rejection by the female. He is apprehensive about intimate relationships. This, coupled with extreme dependency needs, may lead the fearful male batterer to interpret the female's secure behavior as rejection leading to violence.

Violence in the Family of Origin

The relationship between experiencing or witnessing violence in the family of origin and male abuse of female intimates is strongly supported in the literature (e.g., Gelles 1994; Kaufman & Zigler 1987; O'Leary, 1988; Strauss et al 1980). Gelles (1994) points out in a review of this literature that about 30% of individuals that received or witnessed violence in childhood are violent in their adult families. However, he also notes that a full 70% who witnessed or received violence, in their family of origin, were not violent in adulthood. Clearly some factor is missing in a explaining the intergenerational transmission of violent behavior, i.e., what is the mediating variable in the 70% that receive or witness abuse and are not abusive in adulthood.

Attachment theory offers a possible theoretical explanation of this phenomenon. The current study indicated that although violence in childhood was significantly related to violence in adult intimate relationships, it was also strongly related to attachment history. In the final
regression model, which included attachment and traditional variables, violence in the family of origin reached significance, but fearful attachment style was a better predictor of male physical violence in this sample. It is quite likely that with a more insecure sample attachment history, a more significant relationships would be found.

It is possible that violence in the family of origin influences the individual in two ways. First, it provides a model for violent behavior that may occur later in adulthood. The individual that witnesses violence in the family while growing up learns that violence is an acceptable way to behave. Secondly, it adversely affects the attachment relationship between the child and his/her attachment figure providing a psychological framework for using violent behavior in adulthood. The individual who has experienced or witnessed violence in childhood sees violence as an option, and the disruption in early attachment history fuels a sense of insecurity prompting the use of the violent option. The current study found that males witnessing violence from mother to father was significantly related to male physical violence. All three violence variables were significantly correlated to each other suggesting that the mother's violence may have been a response to father violence toward her. Thus, father to mother violence may have been a model for the male's future behavior, but mother to father violence was a better predictor of adult male
violent behavior. This may suggest that the mother being violent to the father may have negatively influenced the attachment relationship and increased the likelihood that violence would be used when relationship stress was experienced.

**Masculine and Feminine Characteristic Endorsement**

It is widely held that sex roles are established at an early age (Benjamin, 1988; Mussen, Conger, & Kagen, 1969; Shaffer, 1989). Although some research has examined the relationship between gender and violence (Gelles & Strauss 1988; Strauss et al. 1980; Strauss & Gelles 1986), none of the research has assessed the influence of masculine and feminine characteristics on attachment security. Although this study did not specifically hypothesize an interaction between masculine and feminine characteristic endorsement and attachment, it was examined to assess any influence of such an interaction. It was hypothesized that males holding traditionally masculine characteristics would be more violent than those with less masculine characteristics. It was thought that traditionally masculine characteristics would interfere with secure attachment formation, which in turn would be associated with more adult violence. The literature on gender, attachment and violence is scant, but Goldner, Penn, Sheinberg, and Walker (1990) suggests that traditional male socialization prematurely "separates" the male child from his mother (usually the primary attachment
This premature separation from the mother forces the male to formulate his gender identity by being different from his mother (Greenson 1968). In order to become male, the child must separate himself from the one he seeks nurturance and support from when stressed. It also means that males must reject traditionally defined feminine characteristics in order to establish his own gender identity.

There was no relationship found between male physical violence and either masculine or feminine characteristic endorsement; however, there was a significant negative relationship between the fearful attachment style and both masculine and feminine characteristics endorsement. This suggests an indirect path of gender through attachment style to male physical violence. As discussed previously, traditionally socialized males must psychologically separate themselves abruptly from their attachment figure. This abrupt separation not only disrupts the attachment bond, but teaches the male that to be masculine he must reject feminine characteristics. In adulthood, the traditionally masculine male has an insecure attachment model of intimate relationships and gender identity that rejects feminine characteristics. Negative correlations between fearful attachment style and both masculine and feminine characteristics may indicate that these individual's attachment history may have influenced sex role development.
The individual who endorses the fearful attachment style endorses neither masculine or feminine characteristics perhaps because of inconsistent caregiving in childhood. This suggests that lack of sexual differentiation may be related to male physical violence. To investigate this possibility, two new variable were created which defined undifferentiated as low masculine and feminine endorsement, and androgynous as high masculine and feminine endorsement. The undifferentiated and androgynous variables failed to have any significant relationship to violence.

Further analysis of gender characteristic endorsement and attachment variables using a path model also failed to find any significant direct or indirect effects of masculine and feminine characteristic endorsement on attachment history. However, significant effects were found between both masculine and feminine characteristic endorsement and fearful attachment style, which has a direct relationship to male physical violence toward female intimates. Lower masculine and feminine endorsement was predictive of higher fearful attachment style endorsement. This path model would suggest that attachment style may play an intervening role between gender characteristics and violence in intimate relationships. This avenue of research certainly bears more attention with a more violent and less secure sample.
The lack of any direct association between gender characteristic endorsement and male physical violence toward a female intimate posed the question of whether there may be some interaction effect between gender characteristic endorsement and attachment. Interaction terms were created and tested. Neither attachment history and gender characteristic endorsement or adult attachment style and sex role characteristic endorsement produced any change in the $R^2$ of the regression model. It is likely that the nature of this sample (i.e., low violence level and secure attachment history) influenced this relationship.

**Domestic Violence Models**

The final regression model indicates the relative importance of the attachment perspective vis a vis other predictors traditionally associated with male physical violence toward a female intimate. The traditionally accepted variables measured in this study failed to form a significant model in predicting male violent behavior toward his intimate partner. However, a significant model was formed using the attachment only variables. This model accounted for 17% of the variance in predicting male physical violence toward a female intimate. In additional analyses it was found that the variables traditionally associated with family violence were better than the attachment variables at predicting the incidence of male verbal abuse of a female intimate. Significant predictors
of male verbal abuse included mother to father violence, parent to child violence, gender characteristic composite score, negative life event stress and mismatch in attachment style. Only the mismatch in secure attachment style endorsement is an attachment variable.

In the model with all study variables, it should be noted that three of the five significant predictors of male physical violence toward a female intimate were attachment related. This was not surprising because it was only after the inclusion of the attachment variables that the model achieved statistical significance. It is important that mismatch in secure attachment style endorsement and fearful attachment style were the best predictors of male physical violence in the model. This relationship suggests that how the male perpetrator thinks in regard to intimate relationships is as important as factors such as life event stress experienced, and violence in childhood. The fact that mismatch, a variable that assessed the status of the current intimate relationship in regard to attachment issues, was the best predictor illustrates how important it is to consider the dyad. The total model also reveals possible underlying dynamics of the violent relationship, offering a more complete explanation of the etiology of spousal violence.
The stepwise regression model of the attachment variables showed that the fearful attachment style and the mismatch in secure attachment style endorsement were the best predictors of male physical violence toward a female intimate. In the stepwise regression of the entire model, negative stress perception and mismatch in secure attachment style endorsement were the best predictors of male physical violence. The mismatch variable reflects a significant dyadic factor in the relationship, whereas attachment style reflects only the individual's status. Attachment theory stresses the significance of relationships and contends that the internal working model reflects the history of the individual in relationships (Bowlby, 1969). Therefore, it is not surprising that an attachment relationship variable would be a better predictor of relationship violence than an individual attachment variable.

Results of tests for multicollinearity indicated a high degree of multicollinearity in the model of traditional variables only as well as the model that included all study variables. Generally, high multicollinearity dictates that one or more of the intercorrelated variables must be collapsed or deleted. However, Cohen and Cohen (1983) discuss multi-collinearity and state that hierarchical analyses of multicollinear variables is an acceptable procedure if the variables are of particular interest in their own right to the investigator. The variables in these
models that are responsible for the high multicollinearity are by their very nature highly inter-correlated (i.e., family violence variables, attachment history and adult attachment style variables). Yet, they each represent unique factors of the characteristic they measure. It was felt that each of the variables in the regression models was important enough to warrant their inclusion in the model. Also because of the exploratory nature of this study, it was felt that a higher degree of collinearity between these variables was acceptable. Future research efforts, building on these findings, should attempt to eliminate multicollinearity.

However, to determine the impact of multicollinearity on this sample new regression analyses were carried. The original models (i.e., traditional, attachment and total) were reformulated to reduce collinearity while maintaining the integrity of the hypotheses. Variables that were highly correlated were either removed or collapsed. The traditional model now included a collapsed variable of family of origin violence, the original feminine characteristic endorsement, masculine characteristic endorsement and negative life events stress. The attachment model was now comprised of the four adult attachment styles and a collapsed childhood attachment style variable. These new models were entered into the hierarchical analysis. There was no significant increase in the $R^2$ of the model
with the addition of the attachment variables ($F=2.75; p > .05$). The total model accounted for 25% of the variance ($F=3.06; p < .01$) (original model accounted for 29%). The new model also had the same predictors as the original model. Thus, the effects of multicollinearity seem to be limited with these independent variables.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of the current study support the importance of attachment factors in understanding male physical violence toward a female intimate. This study examined relationships between attachment variables and violence, and whether attachment variables could add significantly to our understanding of male physical violence along with the traditional structural variables (e.g., stress, violence in childhood etc). Although significant relationships were found between some attachment factors and violence, and the attachment variables contributed uniquely to the variance accounted for by the model, causal inferences could not be made. Future studies employing longitudinal data and utilizing path and/or structural equation models would allow for supportive causal inferences.

Future research should also focus on interactions between variables and how attachment variables might mediate stress levels which lead to violence. This study's sample size limited the number of variables, and thus it was not possibly to systematically assess interactions.
The sample of violent males was minimally violent and evidenced rather secure attachment histories, and perhaps was not ideal for testing the hypotheses of this study. The current literature on domestic violence has been criticized for focusing on clinical groups. However, the influence of attachment factors on the incidence of male physical violence might be better understood by using a clinical sample or at least a more violent sample.

The attachment measure used in this study is a questionnaire designed to gather attachment history based on recollections from childhood. Attachment theory holds that many attachment issues operate largely out of conscious awareness, thus, relying on a retrospective account may not be the best way to assess these issues. Main's Adult Attachment Interview (Main & Goldwyn, 1992) uses a more clinical approach and makes attachment related assessments based on clinical judgements and not only retrospective accounts. This clinical approach may allow for more in-depth study, although the interview's length, scoring, and the specialized training needed for administration makes this less feasible with larger samples.

Attachment theory research suggests that insecure attachments result from a prolonged history of inappropriate caregiving. This sample did not have the quality of attachment history to warrant this type of severe attachment insecurity and thus, not as potentially influential on the
incidence of violence. Utilizing a more clinical group might indicate more clearly how insecure attachment styles influence violent behavior.

Given that the level of physical violence was so low, an analysis was carried out using verbal abuse as the dependent variable to determine if these variables might better predict verbal abuse. A verbal abuse score was computed based on CTS scores and entered into regression analyses. The attachment variables did not significantly increase the $R^2$ of the model. In general, the models used in this study, although statistically significant, did not account for as much variance in predicting verbal abuse as they did for physical abuse. Perhaps, as discussed previously, the traditional variables may be better suited to explaining the dynamics of the verbally abusive male in an intimate relationships, and attachment variables are better predictors of physical abuse. Future research might examine both physical and verbal abuse with a larger sample, keeping in mind that verbal and physical abuse might involve different processes, requiring treatment as independent entities.

Another research consideration is the difficulty of using self-report measures dealing with sensitive issues. The social stigma and legal ramifications associated with being in a violent relationship may lead males to under-report their violent behavior toward their female intimate.
This study was unique in that it included husband's and wife's report of violence as this was thought to control for husband's under-reporting tendencies (Steinmetz 1987). Other measures used may be influenced by under-reporting by respondents. For example, males may over-endorse masculine characteristics to avoid appearing feminine. Although this study was unique in including male and female violence reports including additional corroborating data from the spouses would also minimize self-report bias. Similarly, parental reports of attachment history and observer ratings of attachment style would also enhance the data.

Implications for Intervention

This findings from this study yield implications in both the areas of intervention and public policy formation. The impact of attachment factors in the etiology of spouse abuse also underscores the need for a systems perspective. Thus, therapeutic approaches should include male, female, and dyadic components in order to address all issues that may be salient in the violent relationship. For example, knowledge of the spouse's attachment style and history would also be a critical component in therapy. A secure female partner may provoke intensified feelings of anxiety in the male who fears rejection. Interventions aimed at addressing attachment issues early in childhood could greatly alter the effect of these issues, perhaps providing remedial attachment experiences. Thus, the therapist broadens
his/her focus to include family history/childhood experiences, individual counseling to deal with childhood issues, and then dyadic and family counseling in order to integrate progress made on these issues into the family system. Programs and therapies designed to teach coping skills and other behavioral means of controlling violence in the family will have limited effect if the total family context of the stress is not addressed. The attachment perspective also highlights how early relationships between parent and child can influence other intimate relationships. Thus, a thorough understanding of family background is important for clinicians and policy makers working with spouse abuse clients. Strauss (1980) points out that a weakness in their national survey is that they had no "psychological makeup" of the members of the family. Understanding how an individual perceives an intimate relationship aids in understanding how best to address issues affecting the dyad. Knowing that the fearful individual wants intimate relationships, but is fearful of them would be a critical issue to address in the therapeutic setting.

This study points out that intra-psychic factors are an important component in understanding and alleviating intimate violence. Men who have had less than ideal experiences of caregiving in childhood have difficulties in functioning fully in adult relationships. They are fearful
of intimacy and lack the coping skills necessary to endure relationship stress. The violent family only perpetuates the cycle of violence by creating insecure attachment experiences for children in them, who grow up and have similar difficulties in intimate relationships. The cycle will continue until interventions designed to address these attachment issues within the violent male and within the couple are implemented.

Many intervention efforts separate male and female partners in an effort to protect the women from male attacks. These programs have met with limited success in preventing reoccurrence of violence (Gelles, 1994). Although the protection of the women is paramount, an attachment theoretical perspective contends that one source of marital dysfunction lies in the male and his views of the intimate relationship. Adopting this perspective, inclusion of both partners to some extent (along with individual counseling for the male) in therapy is essential if both partners desire reconciliation. The female needs to be educated about the husband's attachment issues, and the male needs to incorporate adjustments to thinking about their relationship in the therapeutic setting. This recommendation might alarm feminist informed individuals in that it may seem to imply a certain responsibility on the women's part for domestic violence. The inclusion of the attachment perspective in no way alleviates any
responsibility from the male for his violent behavior. Rather it points out avenues for early intervention so that males can enter more fully into intimate relationships and thus reduce or eliminate violence. Also, the adoption of an attachment perspective in no way indicts the mother for the insecurity of the attachment relationship in childhood that may have influenced adult behavior. Instead, it dramatically illustrates the plight of mothers being abused by their spouses and points out the effect it has on her children. No blame can be placed on any parent for the care they are able to give to their children when they are dealing with the economic, social, and psychological effects of being abused by an intimate.

The majority of programs designed and implemented in dealing with domestic violence place undue strain on women. Women are forced to either have the husband removed through arrest or leave herself. The husband may be the primary source of support for the family and his leaving the home may place the women and her children in financial crisis. The other option available to women is to leave the home. Shelters are, at best, a temporary solution. Gelles (1994) reports that the effects of shelters in preventing future violence lies in attributes of the woman. A woman who actively engages in taking control of her life greatly reduces her risk of being abused again. For other women, a shelter stay can at best delay the reoccurrence of abuse and
in some cases intensify it when she does return home. Attachment theory would support this finding in that the insecure male's anger will be heightened by the separation, and subsequent loss of control that has occurred between himself and his attachment figure.

Although it is controversial as to whether families of today are more violent than ever, the fact is that more and more of them are reporting violence and seeking help from social service and mental health agencies, the police, and the government. This is not a problem that will go away by itself given the levels of stress and family disruption. A carefully planned program, aided by multi-disciplinary and multi-factorial research is necessary to ensure health families. Strauss (1980) suggests 5 steps to preventing violence:

1. Eliminate the norms that legitimize and glorify violence in the society and the family.
2. Reduce violence-provoking stress created by society.
3. Integrate families into a network of kin and community.
4. Change the sexist character of society.
5. Break the cycle of violence in the family.

An attachment theoretical perspective endorses all of these proposals. Specifically, by integrating families into a network of kin and community, males will have a better chance at forming secure attachments in childhood and have more of a support structure in adulthood, via other family members. By changing the sexist nature of American society, males can more fully embrace feminine characteristics that
encourage intimacy and not have to distance themselves from the one figure in childhood that can provide support and nuturance.
APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

CONSENT TO INVESTIGATIONAL TREATMENT OR PROCEDURE

I, , hereby authorize or direct Teresa Julian and associates or assistants of her choosing, to perform the following treatment or procedure (describe in general terms).

If I am a man my blood pressure and pulse will be measured by a blood pressure cuff and stethoscope. If I am a man I will provide a urine sample. In addition, a 10 ml (one-third of an ounce) sample of blood will be drawn from me if I am a man. The blood will be analyzed for hormones. I will be asked information via an interview pertaining to family life and general well-being.

upon ____________________________ (myself or name of subject)

The experimental (research) portion of the treatment or procedure is:

Drawing a sample of blood from me, collecting a urine sample, allowing my blood pressure and pulse to be taken, (if I am a man) and an interview will be conducted in order to obtain information pertaining to family life and general well-being (i.e., stress, moods, health status, drinking habits) from both male and female participants.

This is done as part of an investigation entitled:

A study of conflict management among couples

1. Purpose of the procedure or treatment:
   To identify factors related to men's and women's ability to negotiate conflict in their relationship.

2. Possible appropriate alternative procedures or treatment (not to participate in the study is always an option):
   Not to participate

3. Discomforts and risks reasonably to be expected:
   There is a slight chance of bruising, fainting, infection, and pain anytime blood is drawn for analysis. Some interview items may be considered personal or sensitive; I have the right not to answer such questions that are personal or that are upsetting.

4. Possible benefits for subjects/society:
   Society may have a better understanding of how men and women negotiate conflict. This information could be used in planning programs for families. After I finish participating in the study, I will be paid $15.

5. Anticipated duration of subject's participation (including number of visits):
   If I am a man, my participation will be an hour (5 minutes for blood drawing and the rest for answering questions). If I am a woman, I will be interviewed for 45 minutes.

I hereby acknowledge that Dr. Teresa Julian has provided information about the procedure described above, about my rights as a subject, and he/she answered all questions to my satisfaction. I understand that I may contact him/her at Phone No. _________________

I have additional questions. He/she has explained the risks described above and I understand them: he/she has also offered to explain all possible risks or complications.
I understand that, where appropriate, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration may inspect records pertaining to this study. I understand further that records obtained during my participation in this study that may contain my name or other personal identifiers may be made available to the sponsor of this study. Beyond this, I understand that my participation will remain confidential.

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time after notifying the project director without prejudicing future care. No guarantee has been given to me concerning this treatment or procedure.

In the unlikely event of injury resulting from participation in this study, I understand that immediate medical treatment is available at University Hospital of The Ohio State University. I also understand that the costs of such treatment will be at my expense and that financial compensation is not available. Questions about this should be directed to the Human Subjects Review Office at 292-9046.

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date: _______________ Time AM PM Signed _______________ (Subject)
Witness(es) _______________________________ (Person Authorized to Consent for Subject, If Required)
If Required _______________________________

I certify that I have personally completed all blanks in this form and explained them to the subject or his/her representative before requesting the subject or his/her representative to sign it.

Signed _______________________________ (Signature of Project Director or his/her Authorized Representative)
APPENDIX B

HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL
BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES REVIEW COMMITTEE
RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

ACTION OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

With regard to the employment of human subjects in the proposed research:

92H0229  A STUDY OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AMONG COUPLES, Teresa Julian, Family
and Community

THE BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES REVIEW COMMITTEE HAS TAKEN THE FOLLOWING ACTION:

- [X] APPROVED
- [ ] APPROVED WITH STIPULATIONS*
- [ ] DISAPPROVED
- [ ] WAIVER OF WRITTEN CONSENT GRANTED

*Stipulations stated by the Committee have been met by the investigator and, therefore, the protocol is APPROVED.

It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to retain a copy of each signed consent form for at least four (4) years beyond the termination of the subject's participation in the proposed activity. Should the principal investigator leave the University, signed consent forms are to be transferred to the Human Subjects Committee for the required retention period. This application has been approved for the period of one year. You are reminded that you must promptly report any problems to the Review Committee, and that no procedural changes may be made without prior review and approval. You are also reminded that the identity of the research participants must be kept confidential.

Date:  June 21, 1993
Signed ___________________________  Chairperson

HS-025H (Rev. 8/90)
References


