

Summer 2009

## Relationships Between Black Female College Students' Relationships with Their Fathers and Adult Romantic Attachment

Nicole A. Dock  
*Old Dominion University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/psychology\\_etds](https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/psychology_etds)



Part of the [African American Studies Commons](#), [Clinical Psychology Commons](#), [Social Psychology Commons](#), and the [Women's Studies Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Dock, Nicole A.. "Relationships Between Black Female College Students' Relationships with Their Fathers and Adult Romantic Attachment" (2009). Doctor of Psychology (PsyD), Dissertation, Psychology, Old Dominion University, DOI: 10.25777/b2xd-j673  
[https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/psychology\\_etds/198](https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/psychology_etds/198)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Psychology at ODU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Psychology Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ODU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@odu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@odu.edu).

**RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BLACK FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS'  
RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR FATHERS AND ADULT ROMANTIC  
ATTACHMENT**

by

Nicole A. Dock  
B.A. December 2002, Hampton University  
M.A. May 2004, Norfolk State University

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculties of

The College of William and Mary  
Eastern Virginia Medical School  
Norfolk State University  
Old Dominion University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

THE VIRGINIA CONSORTIUM PROGRAM IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY  
August 2009

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle L. Kelley (Director)  
Old Dominion University

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joy A. Cooley (Member)  
Norfolk State University

\_\_\_\_\_  
Delanyard P. Robinson (Member)  
Norfolk State University

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jahis Sanchez-Hucles (Member)  
Old Dominion University

\_\_\_\_\_  
Barbara Winstead (Member)  
Old Dominion University

## **ABSTRACT**

### **RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BLACK FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS' RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR FATHERS AND ADULT ROMANTIC ATTACHMENT**

Nicole A. Dock

The Virginia Consortium Program in Clinical Psychology, 2009

Director: Dr. Michelle L. Kelley

The current study examined the relationships between the quality and quantity of time that young Black female college students spent with their fathers during high school as related to romantic attachment and fear of intimacy. Although researchers have investigated the impact that early attachment bonds to mothers have for later psychosocial development, much less research has examined how attachment to fathers may be associated with psychosocial adjustment in young adulthood. In particular, there is a lack of information on how relationships to one's father or father figure may be associated with adjustment in young women from culturally diverse populations.

To address this issue, a college student sample of Black women ( $N = 185$ ) completed an online survey that assessed paternal attachment, the quality and quantity of time fathers' spent with respondents during high school, general attachment, romantic attachment, and fear of intimacy. Specifically, participants completed the Parental Attachment Questionnaire (PAQ; Kenny, 1987), the Father-Daughter Scale (FDS; Brown, Thompson, & Traffimow, 2002), the Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ, Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994), Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R; Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000), and the Fear of Intimacy Scale (Descutner & Thelen, 1991).

It was hypothesized that women who reported better relationships with and spent more time with their fathers during high school would report more secure overall attachment, less anxious and avoidant attachment behaviors in their romantic relationships, and less fear of intimacy. As predicted, relationship to their fathers in high school significantly predicted anxiety

and avoidance in romantic relationship; however, the only significant predictor of anxiety and avoidant romantic behaviors was respondents' reports of the affective quality of their relationships with their fathers. Specifically, higher affective quality predicted lower anxiety and avoidant behaviors in romantic relationships. However, results of the overall multiple regression did not yield support for the prediction that college student women who reported better relationships with their fathers would report less fear of intimacy in their romantic relationships. These results indicate that the affective quality of young Black women's relationships with their fathers is associated with the degree of anxiety and avoidant behaviors they report in their romantic relationships.

This thesis is dedicated to The Black Woman.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost thanks goes to God for giving me the fortitude and support necessary to complete this journey. Additional thanks are extended to my outstanding committee members who have afforded me with their patience, support, and expertise in completing this work. Special and immense thanks go to my Chair, Dr. Kelley, whose patience and guidance have absolutely made this project possible.

I would be remiss if I did not thank my mother, Joanne, whose emotional and financial support have allowed me to complete this scholastic and emotional journey. Your endless sacrifices and struggles have been noticed and are appreciated beyond words. It is because of you that I can be “independent.” The Dock, Hanks, and Lewis families have also been incredible sources of support that have provided me with the emotional sustenance needed to reach this point. All of your words, thoughts, prayers, and hugs have meant more to me than you could imagine. Aunt Gloria, you have no idea how much our constant talks and laughs near the end gave me strength... To my best friend forever, Jamilah, I love you and couldn’t have made it (sanity intact) without you! You have seen me through Everything and for that, I thank you. Farrah, you have been an immeasurable source of strength and companionship navigating through this maze called grad school and this maze called life. I couldn’t possibly have dreamed of anyone better to have accompanied me in not only enduring, but also triumphing over this hurdle. You are brilliant and amazing! To my other VCP family and mentors (Anthony, Pat, Angie, and Kim), I am forever grateful for your wisdom, talks, and nights of ridiculousness! Thanks to Pache who has known me since I was twelve sitting on the steps of N.A.! Our talks and your constant cheerleading for me have given me strength and encouragement. Tenia, you are my VA sister whose friendship has meant so much! I share this with you. Many thanks also go to Dr. Brown for inspiring me and guiding me to this program and field of study. Of course, I thank my Sorors of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, whose sisterhood has gotten me through the good as well as the bad

days. Line sisters, you are forever in my heart. Aneesah, you have given me even more purpose in life. I pray that you encounter as many amazing people as I have on your journey. I know that you and your Dad will be one of the success stories! Dock, you are an inspiration and give hope to women who want great Black fathers for our children. Ebony, thanks for being my cheerleader in the home stretch! To all of the other people I have encountered along the way at every stage, even briefly, I thank you for making me smile and encouraging me in ways that you are not even aware. To all of the beautiful Black women who inspire me everyday, I love you and thank you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES .....	x
 Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	2
ATTACHMENT THEORY .....	2
ATTACHMENT PROCESSES IN ADULthood .....	3
NORMATIVE PATTERNS OF ATTACHMENT FORMATION .....	15
PARENTING AND ATTACHMENT PROCESSES .....	16
FATHER INVOLVEMENT AND LATER PATTERNS OF ADULT ATTACHMENT IN WOMEN .....	19
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BLACK FATHERS AND THEIR DAUGHTERS' ATTACHMENT AND INTIMACY .....	23
LIMITATIONS OF EXISTING RESEARCH .....	26
III. METHOD. ....	31
PARTICIPANTS .....	31
MEASURES .....	35
PROCEDURE .....	39
IV. RESULTS .....	41
PRELIMINARY ANALYSES .....	41
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND PROPERTIES OF STUDY MEASURES .....	41
HYPOTHESIS 1 .....	46
HYPOTHESIS 2 .....	46
HYPOTHESIS 3 .....	49
V. CONCLUSIONS .....	51
COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS RESEARCH .....	58
STUDY LIMITATIONS .....	59
STUDY STRENGTHS .....	61
SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH .....	62
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS .....	62
REFERENCES .....	64
 APPENDIXES	
A. FATHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIP SCALE .....	75
B. PARENTAL ATTACHMENT QUESTIONNAIRE .....	77



C. FEAR-OF-INTIMACY SCALE .....	80
D. RELATIONSHIP SCALES QUESTIONNAIRE .....	82
E. EXPERIENCES IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS-REVISED.....	84
F. DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE.....	86
VITA.....	88

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample.....	32
2. Relationships Characteristics of the Sample.....	33
3. Means Standard Deviations and Alphas for Study Measures .....	43
4. Table of Variable Inter-correlations.....	45
5. Results of Multiple Regression Analyses Examining Predictors of Anxious And Avoidance Behaviors .....	48
6. Results of Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Fear of Intimacy .....	50

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Intimate relationships constitute an invaluable source of connectedness with other humans that are vital to health and well-being. Romantic relationships, in particular, constitute an integral and unique form of attachment bonds in adulthood. Attachment theory provides a useful framework for understanding all close relationships because it takes into account the complexities inherent in interpersonal relationships across the lifespan. This theory is ideal for examining caregiving and social support processes in adulthood through its consideration of three interrelated elements of human nature: attachment (care seeking), caregiving, and exploration (Feeney & Collins, 2004).

Although many researchers have investigated the impact that early attachment bonds have on later development and well-being, whether attachment may be related to later adjustment has several significant limitations. One of the most significant limitations of the existing research is the lack of research on how father-daughter attachment may impact later adjustment. A second limitation is that previous studies have focused almost exclusively on White samples. Therefore, the present study examined differences in retrospective reports of father-daughter relationships as related to a global style of attachment, romantic attachment behaviors, and intimacy among African-American university students.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### *Attachment Theory*

Attachment theorists contend that early interactions with primary caregivers guide individuals' expectations of others and that expectations for others impact adult relationships and may provide insight into later romantic relationships (Parkes, Stevenson-Hinde, & Marris, 1993). The pioneering work of John Bowlby (1979) outlines the lifespan developmental nature of attachment theory. Bowlby (1982) contends that the attachment process is active "from the cradle to the grave" (p. 129). Repeated interactions with a primary attachment figure help form internal working models of self and others that function as heuristic guides to direct interactions in subsequent relationships (Bowlby, 1973). According to attachment theorists, these internalized models not only guide behaviors, but also, thoughts, feelings, and expectations that persist over time and across situations. Once developed, these models not only contain beliefs about whether caretakers will be available and responsive, but also whether the self is worthy of needed care and attention (Bowlby, 1973). Bowlby (1973), who focused his writings on the mother-infant dyad, noted that the mental representations that develop from early child-caregiver interactions can function both consciously and unconsciously and are not necessarily coherent or consistent.

The groundbreaking work of Ainsworth also provided much insight into the nature of infant-parent relationships (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). From her systematic observations of mother-infant interactions, Ainsworth developed the Strange Situation paradigm that categorized mother-infant dyads as secure, anxious-ambivalent, and avoidant. The Strange Situation procedure utilized a series of episodes that are repeated twice. Specifically, infants are exposed to a stranger both in the presence and absence of the mother, are momentarily left alone, and finally reunited with the mother. The behavior of the child when the mother returns provides insight into the nature of the attachment relationship the child has with the parent. Secure attachments are typified by assurance in the caregiver's responsiveness and availability, and

utilization of the caregiver as a secure base for exploratory behaviors. Avoidant infants easily separate from their parents, but avoid contact and conflict upon reunion. Infants with anxious-ambivalent attachment patterns are hesitant to separate from caregivers, but demonstrate ambivalence upon reunion with the caregiver (DeHart, Sroufe, & Cooper, 2000). In comparison to parents of insecure infants, parents of secure infants are more sensitive, available, and responsive to their children's needs and emotions. In contrast, parents of avoidant infants are often aloof, rejecting, and uncomfortable with their children and do not provide sufficient or adequate support during times of distress. The inconsistent and even intrusive behaviors of parents with anxious-ambivalent children are indicative of more sensitivity to their own needs rather than to the needs and anxieties of their children (Levy, Blatt, & Shaver, 1998). The majority of attachment research has demonstrated that within the first year of life, maternal sensitivity ratings are related to security in the Strange Situation paradigm in middle-class children from the United States and from Germany, and in economically-disadvantaged families and single-parent families (Belsky, 1999). Numerous studies also indicate that the distribution of infants' patterns of attachment to their fathers is roughly the same as the distribution of infants' attachment patterns to their mothers (Colin, 1996).

Research guided by attachment theory informs that the attachment behavioral system is biologically based, and therefore, has basic processes that are universal to all humans (Ainsworth, 1989). In accordance with Bowlby's tenets, Ainsworth (1989) also notes that attachment theory is not confined to infant-child applications, but also, it can be extrapolated to describe the developmental changes seen in relationships with individuals beyond infancy.

#### *Attachment Processes in Adulthood*

In adulthood, romantic relationships are considered the prototypical attachment bond and are the most common form of attachment relationship studied by researchers (Collins & Feeney, 2004). Although attachment is often described in relation to parent-infant/child dyads, attachment theory clearly takes into account that long-term adult romantic relationships are attachments and

that they afford both partners with significant benefits (Cassidy, 2000). Researchers have demonstrated that patterns of attachment are continuous over time and have cross-generational influences (Ainsworth, 1989). Cassidy (2000) reports that early attachment experiences may impact later romantic relationships by affecting the way individuals behave with others. Specifically, individuals who have negative attachment experiences with caregivers may behave in ways that elicit withdrawal or rejection from partners. That is, adult romantic attachments do not merely represent current treatment and interactions, but also reflect early experiences that bear upon existing relationships.

In their seminal article, Hazan and Shaver (1987) outlined a theory of romantic love as an attachment process that is comparable to that of the parent-infant dyad. Specifically, Hazan and Shaver (1987) argue that the major patterns of attachment delineated by Ainsworth parallel the relationship styles detected in adult relationships. In order to assess adults' attachment style, Hazan and Shaver developed a brief self-report measure in which respondents endorse the attachment style that most reflects themselves in romantic relationships. Overall, the central tenets of romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process include the following: 1) the emotional and behavioral dynamics within adult romantic relationships are rooted in the same biological system typified by infant-caregiver relationships; 2) individual differences observed in adult romantic relationships are comparable to those found in infant-caregiver relationships; 3) adults' internal working models of self and others are fairly stable and are likely derivatives of their attachment histories; and 4) while romantic love can constitute an attachment process, it also includes the behavioral systems of sex and caregiving (Fraley & Shaver, 2000).

Extensions of Bowlby's early work indicate that individuals tend to maintain internal attachment models that are representative of their beliefs about themselves and others that are linked to past attachment experiences. Internal working models, which include expectations of the self, significant others, and the interaction of the two, are believed to consist of content about attachment figures that is arranged within an organized structure (Pietromonaco & Barrett, 2000).

Pietromonaco and Barrett further delineate that the structure of these working models contains details (e.g., time, location) about the attachment experiences as well as affect (e.g., fear, pain) connected to these experiences. The underlying differences in individuals' attachment styles help to direct their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in environments that are attachment-laden (Collins & Feeney, 2004). In a replication and extension of the work by Hazan and Shaver (1987), Feeney and Noller (1990) found additional support that attachment groups could be differentiated based on family history and their internal working models of attachment. In addition, however, Feeney and Noller (1990) found that participants who endorse an avoidant style of attachment were more likely than others to report having an extended separation from their mothers during childhood.

Fraley and Shaver (2000) posit that individuals with secure attachments typically find it easier to develop close relations with others, are more comfortable depending on others, and express less worry about potential partner rejection or abandonment. Similarly, persons with avoidant attachment maintain difficulties in developing intimacy with others. Such individuals may prefer not to depend on others/partners, and may even feel some discomfort when others try to become more intimate with them. Furthermore, individuals with anxious-ambivalent styles tend to worry that their partners do not love them or that their partners will abandon them (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). Ultimately, behaviors exhibited by such adults may actually elicit responses that are consistent with internal attachment representations and expectations of others. Although a simple direct link between parent-child and adult romantic attachment has not been established, individuals of all ages acquire characteristic approaches for regulating attachment needs, which are at least partly attributable to their histories of regulating distress with past attachment figures (Collins & Feeney, 2004).

In 1991, Bartholomew and Horowitz introduced a four-category model of attachment that categorizes one's pattern of adult attachment based on whether one's view of self and one's view of others is positive or negative. Secure attachment is characterized by feelings of lovability and the ability and desire to become emotionally intimate with others. Individuals with secure attachment

do not have difficulty depending on others or allowing others to rely on them (i.e., positive view of self, positive view of others). Individuals with a preoccupied style of attachment believe they are unlovable; however, they evaluate others positively and may seek others to foster their needs for a positive sense of self (i.e., negative view of self, positive view of others). Although both the fearful and dismissing attachment styles characterize individuals who avoid intimacy on the basis of potential negative consequences (i.e., negative view of others), the channels for doing so vary. Dismissive persons do not require acceptance from others to maintain a sense of positive self-regard (i.e., positive view of self), whereas individuals with a fearful attachment style have low self-regard and depend on others to maintain a positive sense of self.

In describing the aforementioned prototypic attachment styles, adult attachment researchers affirm that these styles are derived from the underlying dimensions of anxiety and avoidance (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). The anxiety dimension includes one's sense of self-worth and acceptance/rejection from others, whereas the avoidance dimension entails the extent to which an individual embraces/evades intimacy and interdependence with other people (Collins & Feeney, 2004). Moreover, the anxiety dimension overlaps substantially with one's working model of self, whereas the avoidance dimension appears related to one's working models of others. Adults high in attachment anxiety possess limited ability to utilize internal resources for reassurance or validation, which may lead them to seek reassurance and validation from others. In contrast, adults with high attachment avoidance typically view others negatively and are afraid of dependence and intimacy, compelling them to rely more exclusively on internal sources of validation (Wei, Mallinckrodt, Larson, & Zakalik, 2005). Thus, secure individuals tend to be low in anxiety and avoidance; dismissing adults are low in attachment-related anxiety and high in avoidance; preoccupied adults are high in anxiety and low in avoidance; and fearful individuals are high both in anxiety and avoidance. Overall, research on adult relationships indicates that comfort with closeness is associated with trust, relationship commitment, closeness/interdependence, and supportiveness. Unique to male participants, comfort with closeness is associated with relationship



satisfaction and self-disclosure (including flexibility and reciprocity of disclosure, and involvement and satisfaction in daily interactions with partner). However, for men, relationship anxiety is associated with lack of trust, coercion, distress, and domination in response to dyadic conflict, and lack of compromise in couple problem solving. For women, relationship anxiety is associated with relationship dissatisfaction, high dyadic conflict, and low involvement and satisfaction in daily interactions with one's partner (Feeney, 1999).

Drawing from attachment theory, Campbell, Simpson, Boldry, and Kashy (2005) conducted a two-part study examining how perceptions of relationship-based conflict and support are associated with satisfactions/closeness and future relationship quality. Campbell et al. asked heterosexual couples to maintain a diary for two weeks about the supportive and conflictual interactions with their romantic partner during this time period. At the end of each day, each partner was instructed to complete a diary form containing questions for each of the following three components: 1) the degree of closeness they felt with their partner and their degree of satisfaction with their partners on that day as well as how they believed their partners felt on these same measures that day, 2) participants wrote a detailed description of the most notable conflict experienced that day and answered questions about their perceptions of the conflict and any potential implications for the relationship, and 3) participants wrote detailed descriptions of a supportive event that occurred that day. The aforementioned components were averaged each day to create measures of daily relationship satisfaction/closeness, perceptions of the future of the relationship, overall perceptions of the conflict and support, and perceptions of daily conflict. After the two-week period, they were videotaped discussing a problem encountered during the 14-day period.

Results revealed that more anxiously attached respondents reported less closeness/satisfaction and more pessimistic views about the future of their relationships on the days that they perceived greater relationship conflict. These anxiously attached individuals believed that their partners were less satisfied and optimistic about the future of their relationship even when

their partners denied this lack of satisfaction or optimism. Furthermore, observers' ratings of the videotaped interactions revealed that anxiously attached individuals were more distressed when discussing a problem experienced during the study period regardless of their partners' behaviors during the interactions. These results were based upon individuals' self-reports of distress as well as the trained observers' ratings on the following three categories: 1) the degree to which each partner overreacted to and escalated the severity of the conflict, 2) the degree of apparent distress displayed during the discussion, and 3) how positively each partner behaved toward the other. Researchers have specifically found that men involved in relationships with highly anxious women and women in relationships with highly avoidant men are less satisfied with their relationships (Kane, Jaremka, Guichard, Ford, Collins, & Feeney, 2007). The relationship between attachment and relationship satisfaction was mediated by both men and women's perception of their partners as poor caregivers. Overall, individuals who were more secure (i.e., low in anxiety and avoidance) reported higher levels of relationship satisfaction (Kane et al., 2007).

Trust constitutes another significant component of relationships and is vital for the development of secure attachment bonds. In a unique study exploring interaction goals and affect regulation in relationships, Mikulincer (1998) discovered that individuals with different attachment styles differed in their ability to access trust-related memories. Individuals with secure attachment were the quickest to retrieve positive trust-related memories, whereas individuals with avoidant or anxious-ambivalent individuals more rapidly accessed negative trust-related memories. As expected, participants with secure attachment were more likely to report experiences that confirmed their trust in others, whereas both insecure groups accessed more memories of situations in which trust was violated. Results also showed differences in the various attachment groups' trust-related gains (i.e., sense of trust related to the goals of intimacy, security, and control) and coping strategies for managing betrayal of trust. Secure persons, whose goals entailed intimacy seeking, reported more trust in their relationships than insecure persons. Conversely, avoidant persons emphasized acquiring control, whereas individuals with anxious-ambivalent attachment focused on security

seeking. Secure persons also reported more adaptive means of coping with trust-violation experiences (e.g., conversing with a partner), whereas individuals with avoidant attachment were inclined to distance themselves from situations of trust-violation, and anxious-ambivalent persons were more likely to report ruminative worry in situations in which trust had been violated. Furthermore, insecure persons not only reported more trust-violation events, but they also were more likely to perceive these events to be representative of their partners' personalities. Conversely, individuals with secure attachment were less likely to consider situations in which a partner had violated their trust as representative of the partner's intentions and personality (Mikulincer, 1998).

Ultimately, the existing insecurities people bring into their relationships (including negative view of self and negative perceptions of others) may hinder the expression of intimacy-promoting behaviors and the development of their confidence in their partner's commitment and love. Adults with secure attachments are comfortable with closeness and intimacy, perceive themselves worthy of care and affection, and are largely dependable and responsible (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). As a result, these individuals generally perceive the behaviors of attachment figures as well-intentioned and are not excessively concerned with potential abandonment. Their relationships are typified by strong desires for connectedness without sacrificing their needs for autonomy. Furthermore, secure persons report past relationships that are characterized by responsiveness and warmth and interpersonal interactions that are void of significant problems. Individuals with preoccupied (anxious-ambivalent) attachment, although comfortable with closeness and intimacy, generally perceive themselves as unworthy of care and affection. The mental self-models of these individuals include feelings of being underappreciated, misunderstood, and lacking in confidence. They also tend to report attachment histories typified by inconsistency, relative unsupportiveness, and unpredictability (Collins & Feeney, 2004).

Persons with preoccupied attachments tend to seek approval from others because their sense of well-being and positive self-regard often depend on receiving external acceptance.

Nonetheless, individuals with preoccupied attachment often experience significant anxiety in their interpersonal relationships because they are excessively concerned with potential abandonment and their perception of others as being unreliable, inconsistent, and unwilling to commit (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Feeney & Noller, 1990). These mental models and fears tend to culminate in extreme reliance on their intimate partners, extreme expectancies for intimacy, and highly dominating interpersonal styles (Collins & Feeney, 2004). Mashek and Sherman (2004) found that adults who were high in attachment-related anxiety reported a large gap between reported levels of closeness in their current relationships and how much closeness they actually desired.

Dismissing avoidant individuals, who are often low in anxiety and high in avoidance, generally perceive attachment figures as uncaring, unreliable, and unavailable. However, unlike anxious-ambivalent individuals, they maintain positive self-images and view themselves as adequate and worthy. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) note that dismissing persons preserve such positive self-images by mitigating the importance of close relationships and attachment needs, distancing themselves from others, highly valuing self-reliance and independence, and limiting emotional expressions. As a result, dismissing persons often employ distancing strategies when managing stressful circumstances, are less likely to use touch to express affection, and are more likely to separate sex and love (Collins & Feeney, 2004). In a review of the literature on self-reported conflict strategies, researchers found that both anxious-ambivalent and avoidant persons utilized tactics that were related to conflict avoidance, withdrawal, or conflict escalation (Pietromonaco, Greenwood, & Barrett, 2004). Although dismissing adults try to evade attachment-related emotions and are able to block such emotions from surfacing, they experience significant arousal when asked to focus on thoughts of separation and loss (Fraley, Davis, & Shaver, 1998). Collins and Feeney (2004) note that during times of low stress and low anxiety (attachment system not activated), dismissing individuals do not distance themselves from others, but instead seek and provide support and form intimate connections. Therefore, such individuals should not be viewed as generally cold, aloof, and distant.

Fearful avoidant individuals, who are high in both anxiety and avoidance, generally perceive attachment figures as unreliable and uncaring and also possess low levels of self-worth. These individuals view themselves as unworthy of love, mistrusting, and emotionally distant (Collins & Feeney, 2004). Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) note that fearful individuals yearn for intimacy and social contact, but they shy away from potentially rejecting situations. Such debilitating fear of rejection and sensitivity to external approval weakens their likelihood of establishing fulfilling, intimate relationships that might modify fearful persons' views of relationships.

In a 31-year longitudinal project that measured self-reports of working models, observer descriptions of participants' behavior and personality, and life outcomes, Klohnen and Bera (1998) found that the behavioral patterns and life experiences of securely and avoidantly attached women differed across adulthood. Compared to women who reported a secure style of attachment, women with an avoidant attachment style were less likely to be married at age 52; at age 43, they reported that their longest relationships were only two-thirds as long as respondents with secure attachment. In addition, women who reported an avoidant attachment style were more likely to be divorced at age 43. At ages 21 and 43, as compared to women who were described as having secure attachments, observers' ratings indicated that women with avoidant attachment exhibited less interpersonal closeness, more defensiveness, and more vulnerability and stress intolerance. Furthermore, when rating themselves, women who reported an avoidant style of attachment reported internal working models that were lower on interpersonal closeness and higher on distrust, self-reliance, and emotional distance.

A growing body of research has attempted to examine factors that may mediate relationships between attachment and distress or conflict. Drawing from the principles of attachment theory, Wei, Mallinckrodt et al. (2005) posed the following four hypotheses: 1) Attachment anxiety would be negatively associated with the capacity for self-reinforcement and positively associated with the need for reassurance from others; 2) both the capacity for self-

reinforcement and the need for reassurance from others would significantly mediate the link between anxiety and depression; 3) attachment avoidance would be positively associated with the capacity for self-reinforcement, but not significantly associated with the need for self-reinforcement; and 4) the capacity for self-reinforcement (but not the need for reassurance from others) would significantly mediate the relationship between avoidance and depression. The aforementioned constructs were measured using the following self-report questionnaires: Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (anxiety/avoidance), Frequency of Self-Reinforcement Questionnaire, Revised Martin-Larsen Approval Motivation Scale, Excessive Reassurance Seeking, Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation, Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale, and the Self-Rating Depression Scale. Support was found for the first two hypotheses, but not for the latter two. That is, the researchers found a negative, rather than positive, relationship between attachment avoidance and the capacity for self-reinforcement. Although the link between avoidant attachment and depressive symptoms was mediated by self-reinforcement only, it was related to a decreased (rather than the expected increase) capacity for self-reinforcement. Although the Wei, Mallinckrodt et al. study was important because it tested for mediating factors between attachment behaviors and other outcomes, there were some limitations. A significant limitation of the study was the reliance on self-report measures only. Other limitations include the correlational study design and that few participants were ethnic minorities. Specifically, of the 425 participants, over 90% were White.

Given their review of the literature, Wei, Russell, and Zakalik (2005) hypothesized the potential mediating roles of social self-efficacy and comfort with self-disclosure in the link between attachment (anxiety and avoidance) and loneliness (and subsequent depression). Social self-efficacy refers to the belief in one's social competence/belief in one's ability to initiate social contact and develop new friendships. They hypothesized that among freshmen with high attachment anxiety, social self-efficacy would mediate the relationship between anxiety and loneliness (and subsequent depression). Conversely, they expected that discomfort with self-disclosure would mediate the relationship between attachment avoidance and loneliness (and

subsequent depression). In order to assess attachment, social self-efficacy, comfort with self-disclosure, depression and loneliness, they utilized the following self-report surveys: The Experiences in Close Relationships Scale, the Social Self-Efficacy subscale from the Self-Efficacy Scale, the Distress Disclosure Index, the short version of the Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale, and the short version of the UCLA Loneliness Scale, respectively. As hypothesized, results indicated that freshmen with high levels of anxiety experienced loneliness and subsequent depression through social self-efficacy, whereas students high in attachment avoidance experienced loneliness and subsequent depression through the mediator of discomfort with self-disclosure. These effects were found after controlling for participants' initial levels of depression. Interestingly, the direct relationship between avoidance and loneliness was not statistically significant when the comfort with self-disclosure mediator was added to the model, whereas the direct relationship between anxiety and loneliness was statistically significant after controlling for the indirect effect of social self-efficacy. That is, social self-efficacy partially mediated the relationship between anxiety and loneliness, whereas discomfort with self-disclosure fully mediated the relationship between avoidance and loneliness. As with much of the previous research, findings from the Wei, Russell et al. study may not generalize to non-White samples or non-college student samples. Specifically, 92% of the sample was composed of White college freshmen.

Another study by this same research team (Wei, Vogel, Ku, & Zakalik, 2005) examined whether affect regulation, defined as emotional reactivity and emotional cutoff, may mediate the relationship between attachment anxiety and avoidance and negative mood and interpersonal problems. Emotional reactivity referred to the degree to which a person responds to environmental stimuli with emotional flooding, hypersensitivity, or emotional lability to the point of being consumed by them. Emotional cutoff referred to feeling threatened by intimacy and isolating oneself from others and one's emotions when interpersonal interactions or internal emotional experiences become overwhelming or too intense. The constructs were measured with the ECRS (attachment), the Differentiation of Self Inventory (emotional reactivity and emotional cutoff

subscales), the Depression Anxiety and Stress Scales (depression and anxiety subscales), the Inventory of Interpersonal Problems, and the UCLA Loneliness Scale- Version 3. The researchers' hypotheses were supported, in that attachment anxiety and avoidance contributed to negative mood and interpersonal problems through emotional reactivity and emotional cutoff (i.e., feeling threatened by intimacy and isolating oneself and one's emotions), respectively. They concluded that participants who were high on anxiety and avoidance utilize distinct affect regulation strategies and experience interpersonal problems and negative mood through their use of emotional cutoff or emotional reactivity. More specifically, they also found that negative mood was fully mediated by the distinct regulation strategies, whereas interpersonal distress and loneliness were partially mediated by the strategies. These results suggested that other factors or potential mediators act on students' loneliness and interpersonal distress. Similar to other studies, the sample consisted predominantly of White students (84.7%). Only 4.4% of the students were African American.

In another attempt to identify possible mediators of the relationship between attachment and psychosocial outcomes, Rice, Cunningham, and Young (1997) hypothesized that social competence mediated the relationship between parental (maternal and paternal) attachment and emotional adjustment. The concept of social competence, which refers to a positive sense of self-efficacy for valued social outcomes, was assessed with two measures. Examples of this concept include comfort in social situations, the development and maintenance of peer relationships, and the ability to utilize support systems when needed. The aforementioned measures included the Social Self-Efficacy subscale of the Self-Efficacy Scale (Sherer et al., 1982) and the Social Adjustment subscale of the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (Baker & Siryk, 1984). The sample surveyed by Rice et al. was unusual in that nearly 40% of respondents were African American. Specifically, the sample included 249 African Americans. However, no significant differences were found between African American and White students in their reports of their relationship with their parents as assessed by The Parental Bonding Instrument (Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979). Overall results showed that attachment to father was a significant predictor of Social Competence



for African American and White students (both male and female). Social competence also emerged as a significant predictor of emotional well-being and mediated the relationship between parental attachment and emotional adjustment.

#### *Normative Patterns of Attachment Formation*

Although researchers typically focus on individual differences in style of attachment and outcomes associated with different styles of attachment, it is also important to describe the normative processes of attachment formation. Hazan and Zeifman (1999) outline several characteristics of an attachment bond: proximity maintenance (desiring psychological and/or physical closeness to the attachment figure); separation distress (enhanced anxiety resulting from prolonged or undesired separation); safe haven (a sense of comfort and security is experienced with the attachment figure); and secure base (the attachment figure functions as a secure base from which individuals can explore their social and physical worlds). Similar to attachment processes in childhood, adults' sense of well-being should be partly attributable to having an attachment figure that functions as a safe haven and secure base.

In general, decades of research on the nature of attachment have identified the following central principles: 1) the bonds children establish with their caregivers are molded by interpersonal experience even though the driving force for the development of attachment relationships is biologically influenced; 2) relationship experiences that occur early in life foster the development of internal working models that systematically impact attachment relationships; 3) the bonds children have with their caregivers are influenced by their caregivers' attachment orientations; and 4) although internal working models are often stable over time, they are not impermeable to change. These models not only influence and guide experiences in romantic relationships, but relationship experiences also influence individuals' working models (Feeney, 1999). That is, significant life events and/or noteworthy relationship experiences can alter the organization of individuals' internal working models. Also, in part, insecure working models and attachment styles appear associated with some types of clinical disorders and some forms of psychological maladjustment (Rholes &

Simpson, 2004). A review of the literature by Shorey and Snyder (2006) illustrates the intricate link that exists between processes of attachment and DSM-IV clinical and personality disorders.

#### *Parenting and Attachment Processes*

Clearly, one of the most influential factors for the development of secure attachment is parenting. Authoritative parents demonstrate nurturance, support, and responsiveness while also establishing firm limits. In contrast, authoritarian parents control behavior through inflexible, harsh, and unresponsive means while permissive parents neglect to establish firm limits or promote suitably mature behavior (DeHart et al., 2000).

In an investigation of the relationship between parenting styles and attachment styles, Neal and Frick-Horbury (2001) proposed that parenting styles would be associated with respondents' intimacy abilities. More specifically, they hypothesized that parenting behaviors experienced in childhood would influence individuals' beliefs about their own intimacy abilities as well as their beliefs about the trustworthiness and accessibility of others. Given their review of the literature indicating that parenting styles parallel attachment patterns, they hypothesized that individuals with authoritative parents would score higher on variables of self-intimacy as well as perceptions of others' intimacy compared to those with permissive or authoritarian parenting styles. The authors assessed relationships with others and self-relationship qualities using the Attachment and Object Relations Inventory. The former includes subscales for peers, parents, and partners while the latter included the subscales of secure, independent, and close. The Parenting Practices Survey was used to assess parenting styles (authoritative, permissive, and authoritarian). In contrast to what was expected, results of the Neal and Frick-Horbury (2001) study found adults whose parents exhibited an authoritative style did not report higher self-intimacy abilities than those with permissive or authoritarian parents. However, participants who reported their parents as authoritative reported greater positive perceptions of others' responsiveness, accessibility, and trustworthiness. Although these results must be interpreted with caution given the small sample size, they shed light that warrants further investigation. Such results suggest that parenting styles do not necessarily

influence individuals' beliefs about their own relationship abilities, but rather, they appear associated with how others are viewed in terms of relationship abilities and trustworthiness.

In an exploration of individuals' retrospective reports of parenting, researchers discovered that secure persons not only represented their mothers as less punitive and more benevolent than anxious-ambivalent and avoidant persons, but they also found that the descriptions of these representations consisted of more features that were able to be coded (Levy et al., 1998). Conceptually, the researchers drew from Blatt's object relations theory which suggests that the affective and cognitive components of representations of self and others develop epigenetically and become increasingly articulated, accurate, and conceptually complex over time. Therefore, representations of self and others was believed to range from global, diffuse, fragmentary and inflexible to more differentiated, hierarchically organized, and flexible. Perhaps the most unique aspect of the Levy et al. study was that these researchers also examined retrospective reports of fathers' parenting as related to current attachment behaviors. In comparison to individuals who had secure attachment, participants who reported higher avoidant attachment provided descriptions of their fathers that were more punitive and relatively undifferentiated. Overall, secure individuals produced parental representations typified by benevolence, nonpunitiveness, differentiation, and elaboration; representations of anxious-ambivalent individuals included descriptions of their parents as punitive and ambivalent; individuals with a dismissing style of attachment described their parents as less differentiated and more punitive and malevolent; and individuals who indicated a fearful style of attachment reported their parents as more malevolent and punitive, but also conceptually complex and well differentiated (Levy et al., 1998). In addition, securely attached adults describe their family of origins and their current families more positively, score significantly higher on personality characteristics representative of psychological well-being, self-confidence, and functioning in interpersonal domains, and are less likely to employ immature defense styles when solving conflicts (Diehl, Elnick, Bourbeau, & Labouvie-Vief, 1998). Mattanah et al. found that secure parental attachment both to mothers and fathers was associated with positive adjustment

to college. In addition, the pathway between secure attachment to parents and positive adjustment was mediated by healthy levels of separation-individuation (Mattanah, Hancock, & Brand, 2004). However, both males and females endorsed a stronger pathway between maternal attachment and separation-individuation than paternal attachment and separation-individuation.

In an exploration of attachment among African American, White, and Mexican American adolescents and their parents, Arbona and Power (2003) found both maternal and paternal attachment were related to adolescents' self-esteem, whereas only maternal attachment was associated with antisocial behaviors. More specifically, they found higher levels of paternal anxiety and higher levels of maternal avoidance were associated with adolescents' lower self-esteem. Secure attachment both to mothers and fathers was associated with higher self-esteem; however, only secure attachment to mothers was associated with less participation in antisocial behaviors. Feeney, Noller, and Patty (1993) found that young adults who endorsed an avoidant history of attachment to their parents favored short-term romantic relationships indicative of low levels of commitment and closeness and were more willing to engage in casual sex; participants who endorsed anxious-ambivalent attachment demonstrated an obsessive need for closeness and commitment. In contrast, young adults with secure attachment histories preferred highly committed, long-term romantic relationships. Seiffge-Krenke, Shulman, and Klessinger (2000) also found early family experiences to be related to qualities of romantic relationships in young adulthood. Specifically, quality of relationships with parents (i.e., a reliable alliance) at ages 14, 15, and 17, were related to attraction and connectedness in romantic relationships at age 20.

In exploration of the impact of family characteristics and individuals' personality development upon aspects of romantic relationships in early adulthood, Donnellan, Larsen-Rife, and Conger (2005) employed longitudinal research methodologies composed of self-reports, informant reports, and videotape observations. Results demonstrated that both nurturant-involved parenting and participants' positive emotionality as measured at baseline were positively related to relationship quality at 5 and 7 year follow-ups. Moreover, observed parenting behavior significantly

predicted future competence in their children's romantic relationships when parents' negative marital interactions were controlled, but not vice versa. Thus, positive parenting practices may serve to mediate the negative impact that poor marital interactions may have on youth romantic relationships in early adulthood.

### *Father Involvement and Later Patterns of Adult Attachment in Women*

Although considerable research has focused on the impact that mothers have on children's development and functioning, much less research has explored the roles that fathers play in their children's lives. With this in mind, researchers have increasingly recognized and examined the importance of fathers for their children's development (e.g., Hofferth, 2006; Parke, 2002). In fact, research has demonstrated that fathers' attitudes and behavior are critical for children's social, emotional, and cognitive development (e.g., see Cabrera, Tamis-LeMonda, Bradley, Hofferth, & Lamb, 2000; Kelley, Smith, Green, Berndt, & Rogers, 1998; see Lamb, 2004 for a review). Moreover, Rohner and Veneziano (2001) reviewed an array of articles that demonstrated that father love (paternal acceptance-rejection) impacts a number of developmental issues that include: behavior problems, achievement, psychological adjustment, cognitive/academic/intellectual development, delinquency, social competence, and gender role development.

Although our understanding of the ways in which fathers influence their children is not always clear, in contrast to maternal love, paternal love and paternal involvement may be more strongly associated with specific types of child outcomes (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001). A limitation of existing research is the lack of examination into some of the ways in which fathers may be critical for their children's development.

Utilizing data from the National Child Development Study, Flouri and Buchanan (2003) found that for adolescents from non-intact families, early father figure involvement at age 7 protected against psychological maladjustment. In addition, for adult women, father involvement at age 16 protected against psychological distress. In a sample of female and male college students, reported levels of

childhood father support were negatively correlated with current reports of general anxiety, depression, and loneliness (Storch et al., 2003).

In a review of the literature on fathering, Lewis and Lamb (2003) delineated four major themes in the literature concerning the influences that fathers have in their children's development. These themes demonstrate that: 1) fathers seem to interact less sensitively than do mothers; 2) fathers may play specific, but significant, roles in their children's lives; 3) paternal play styles may predict later socioemotional development; and 4) paternal involvement during childhood may have stronger associations with adult adjustment than maternal involvement during childhood. Given these conclusions, Lamb and Lewis argue that it is critical that measures assessing fatherhood are not mere extrapolations from research examining motherhood (Lewis & Lamb, 2003). Moreover, it appears that relationships between mother-child and father-child interactions and involvement for later development may differ somewhat. It is also important to note that the previous conclusions regarding the importance of fathers for children's development were, in general, extrapolated from research that examined parent-child relationships in two-parent households.

Nevertheless, the following general findings were discovered. Although mothers and fathers display comparable parenting styles, mothers are often more sensitive to their children and fathers are more likely to be involved in physical play (i.e., 'preference' for physical play over care taking). However, cultural variables also play an important role as fathers from other cultures (e.g., German or Taiwanese) may not be more playful than mothers and may even be associated with more disciplinary roles (e.g., Korean fathers). Lewis and Lamb (2003) posit that observed differences between parental styles are likely attributable to paternal sensitivity, systemic family factors, and links between the family and outside influences. For example, the authors found that paternal responsiveness was related to their amount of responsibility for care taking (which is determined by factors within the family system), such that caretaking appears to facilitate paternal responsiveness. As reported elsewhere, another important component in the level of paternal

involvement entails maternal support of the father. In some cases, paternal involvement with infants and children is also related to the quality of the marital relationship.

Concerning parent-child attachments, Lewis and Lamb note the importance of examining the interplay among these attachments, marital quality, children's characteristics, and child outcomes. For example, children with negative emotionality early in the first year were reported to become more positive in the presence of sensitive and happily-married mothers, whereas some children became more negative when fathers were insensitive and unhappily-married. Their review of the longitudinal research examining parental influences indicated that earlier paternal involvement later predicted children's satisfaction in married relationships and self-reported parenting skills. Although their review of the importance of father involvement is compelling, Lewis and Lamb (2003) strongly note the need to examine cultural differences in father-child interactions and involvement for children's long-term outcomes, and the importance of understanding the potentially unique ways that fathers may influence their children's development.

Related to the need to understand the roles of fathers, and especially minority fathers, in their children's lives, Silverstein and Auerbach (1999) proposed that the "neoconservatist" position is an oversimplified interpretation of empirical research. That is, they argued against the following essentialist beliefs: 1) biological sex differences produce gender differences in parenting (with the assumption that men do not have an instinctual drive to nurture children); 2) marriage has a civilizing effect on men such that the provision of this social structure ensures that men will be responsible for their children due to certainty of paternity. Also, children and women are supposedly better protected from abuse within the confines of a married family; and 3) fathers make a unique and essential contribution to child development, especially by serving as a masculine role model for male children. In their review of the literature, Silverstein and Auerbach cited a number of studies that counter the aforementioned essentialist beliefs. Primarily, they concluded that a variety of family structures (including gay and lesbian couples) can support positive child outcomes because the most important variable seems to be the presence of at least one responsible and

consistent adult who has developed a positive emotional connection with the child. Although they encourage the involvement of both biological parents, they do not believe that fathers must be in a heterosexual marriage to benefit children's well-doing. Concerning the impact of divorce on children, they state that research indicates that it is not merely the divorce itself or the father's absence, but the disruption of the child's entire life. Also, it is important to consider that the divorce may not have a negative impact on children, but rather, the conditions/conflict in the marriage prior to the divorce that negatively impacts children's well-being.

Exploring the relationships fathers have with their daughters may offer insight into women's interactions and experiences with men in later romantic relationships. The father-daughter relationship likely serves as a model for daughters to learn how to interact with other men (Krohn & Bogan, 2001). Krohn and Bogan argue that absent fathers may impact their daughters differently depending on whether the father was absent from the home due to divorce, abandonment, or death. In addition, they argue that the age of the daughter at the time that the father was no longer in the home may influence daughters' interactions with men. Some have argued that daughters in families in which fathers have abandoned the family are more likely to seek attention from men, have more physical contact with males, and express more criticism of their fathers. Conversely, daughters of widows may actually avoid contact with males and express greater sadness over the loss. Perhaps nonexistent and/or poor father-daughter relations contribute to fear of intimacy or difficulties in establishing intimate and lasting relationships with men (Hetherington & Aratesh, 1988).

In a sample of female college students, Scheffler and Naus (1999) discovered a positive relationship between perceived fatherly affirmation and self-esteem and a negative relationship between fatherly affirmation and fear of intimacy. That is, the more a woman perceived affirmation by her father, the less fearful she appeared of intimate relationships. In an examination of young adults' interpersonal problems, researchers discovered that numerous problems, including intimacy difficulties, are correlated with parental divorce (Bolgar, Zweig-Frank, & Paris, 1995). Divorce, which typically results in children residing with mothers, may result in children's feelings of



abandonment by their fathers. Such feelings of abandonment and emotional distance experienced during childhood may lead to similar feelings in later romantic relationships. Reese-Weber and Marchand (2002) discovered that females who reported more negative father-adolescent conflict resolution behaviors were more likely to exhibit negative conflict resolution behaviors in their romantic relationships. Women who had poor relationships with their fathers may be more likely to project a fear of abandonment onto romantic partners and may attempt to protect themselves by behaving in a defensive manner in their romantic relationships. It is likely that behaving in such ways may hinder the development of appropriate intimacy with romantic partners.

Early family experiences have also been linked to marital satisfaction. Flouri and Buchanan (2002) discovered a relationship between level of father involvement during childhood and marital satisfaction during adulthood, a relationship that was even stronger for females. In addition, the quality of romantic relationships was predicted by perceptions of past parental relationships.

*Relationships between Black Fathers and their Daughters' Attachment and Intimacy*

Given the significant limitations of previous studies clearly, additional research is needed that explores family and paternal influences as related to patterns of attachment and romantic attitudes and behaviors in young adulthood. Perhaps the call for such research is even more crucial for African American females given the many challenges faced by Black families. According to the United States Census Bureau (2004), Blacks are less likely to be married and constitute a lower number of married-couple families than non-Hispanic Whites. In 2004, 44.4% of Blacks, compared to 24.9% of non-Hispanic Whites, had never married. In addition, 31.9% of Blacks versus 56.1% of Whites were married at the time of reporting, with 44.87% of Black families maintained by single Black mothers in comparison to 13.2% of White families. Also, on average Black families are larger than White families, and Black families maintained by women alone have higher rates of poverty than White families headed by single women or two-parent Black families.

The statistics on marriage and family income may create greater risk for more distant relationships with their fathers. Some external factors that contribute to the separation of Black fathers from their children include imprisonment, high death rates, unemployment, and the imbalance of the male-female ratio (McAdoo & McAdoo, 2002). Research also indicates that family members or the children's mothers may prevent unemployed Black fathers from seeing their children because some of these men are unable to provide needed financial support (Coley, 2001). Furthermore, some unemployed men choose to distance themselves from their children due to the shame of being unable to support their children adequately. In an urban sample of African American unmarried parents, Coley and Chase-Lansdale (1999) revealed that education and employment were significant predictors of fathers' involvement in their children's lives. That is, fathers employed at the time of the study were six times more likely than unemployed fathers to have been highly involved after the child's birth and later during the child's preschool years. In addition, fathers were more likely to be highly involved with their children when mothers reported closer relationships with the fathers. Interestingly, in this sample, the researchers discovered that neither highly involved grandmothers nor new maternal partners deterred men from remaining involved in their children's lives. Hamer (2001) contends that living away from children is not equivalent to absence, as many live-away Black fathers remain involved in the lives of their children. Another study examining 'low-risk' African American adolescent girls found that higher father's education was related to lower sexual risk-taking as well as higher self-esteem (Peterson, 2007).

In a sample of Black, Hispanic, and White college students, Lopez, Melendez, and Rice (2000) explored the influence of parent marital status (intact versus divorced) and parent-child bonds on adult attachment. Measures included the Parental Bonding Instrument (assesses the reported quality of emotional bonds experienced with each parent during the first 16 years of life) and the Adult Attachment Questionnaire (assesses anxiety and avoidance in adult attachment relationships). The former measure yields a Care subscale (recalls experiences of parent warmth

and caring versus parental neglect and indifference) and an Overprotection subscale (recalls memories of parental control and intrusiveness versus appropriate fostering of independence and autonomy). Among Black college students (as well as Hispanics), researchers discovered that parent-child bonds significantly predicted attachment-related anxiety, but not avoidance, in their intimate relationships. Specifically, among Blacks, father overprotection, low father care, and high mother overprotection significantly predicted adult attachment anxiety. Among White participants, both avoidance and anxiety scores were predicted by recollections of parent-child emotional bonds. Among Whites, low father care and mother care predicted avoidance while low father care predicted attachment anxiety. Overall results of Lopez et al. study found that African American and Hispanic American students reported greater adult attachment avoidance, but not anxiety, than their White peers.

In another one of the few studies that has examined adult attachment across diverse ethnic groups, researchers at a predominantly White university found that African Americans student participants reported greater attachment avoidance than White students (Wei, Russell, Mallinckrodt, & Zakalik, 2004). Although attachment anxiety was associated with negative mood for all ethnic groups, for African Americans, attachment avoidance was not significantly associated with negative mood. Rather, attachment avoidance was significantly associated with negative mood for White and Hispanic American students only. Although Kurdek (2008) did not specifically examine attachment, he reported small differences between Black and White heterosexual dating couples on some relationship-oriented variables. That is, Black college partners reported more attractive alternatives to their relationship, less satisfaction with their relationship, less support of their relationship (from family and friends), and more ineffective arguing than their White peers. More specifically, Black women were more likely than White women to report less commitment and lower satisfaction with their relationships. However, overall results demonstrated that variables linked to relationship functioning were similar for Black and White couples (Kurdek, 2008).

### *Limitations of Existing Research*

The majority of the research on paternal acceptance and rejection has focused on middle-class European American parents (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001). Needless to say, such research is not representative of all populations and cannot simply be extrapolated to groups from different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Related to this point, most of the research on minority fathers has examined the negative impact of father absence. With respect to the focus of the present study, a review of the literature revealed no other studies that have examined African American participants, parental relationships, and subsequent adult romantic relationships. Clearly, the lack of research investigating father-daughter relationships and later adult behavior in romantic relationships represents a significant gap in the literature. Because African American families experience many challenges to maintaining healthy families and little research has examined the role that father-daughter relationships may have for African American women's attachment and intimacy, a decision was made to examine this target group.

Given the aforementioned gaps in the literature and the lack of research reporting the reliability of parental attachment, or father-daughter instruments for Blacks, it is uncertain whether the previously employed measures are valid with a Black sample. Specifically, few empirically-validated measures of father-daughter relationships exist. In fact only one other father-daughter scale was identified in the literature; however, this instrument had been used with even less frequency than the scale utilized in the present study (the Father-Daughter Scale, Brown, Thompson, & Traffimow, 2002). Therefore, it is difficult to know whether the Father-Daughter Scale is internally consistency in this population. However, there is no inherent reason to speculate that the quantity of time or the quality of young Black women's relationships with their fathers should not be related to attachment behaviors.

Similarly, internal reliability for the other instruments used in this study, the Parental Attachment Questionnaire (Kenny, 1987), the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000), the Relationship Scale Questionnaire (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994),

and the Fear of Intimacy Scale (Descutner & Thelen, 1991) have not been reported for minority populations. However, it is likely that feelings and behaviors related to anxiety and avoidance are part of many minority women's relationships. Related to this, there is no reason to assume that relationships with their fathers should not be associated with young African American women's feelings and behaviors in their romantic relationships. Therefore, the constructs addressed seem reasonable to examine in this population. However, again, particular attention was given to the internal consistency and the degree to which the identified relationships relate to what might be expected in this population.

Despite concerns regarding the reliability and validity of these instruments, there is a need for studies of Black father-daughter relationships. It is precisely this lack of research and the importance of this topic that prompted the present study. Given the current gaps in the literature, the present study assessed African American female college students' retrospective reports of the amount of time they spent with their fathers and the quality of the father-daughter relationship during high school as related to their general style of attachment, attachment behaviors in romantic relationships, and fear of intimacy in romantic relationships. Although it was not hypothesized that the theoretical underpinnings of this study would be limited in its applicability to the current population, the researchers deemed it imperative to investigate similarities and potential differences in Black women's reports of attachment relationships.

Although there may be many critical periods for the development of these behaviors, due to the nature of the outcome variables targeted (i.e., attachment and intimacy), a decision was made to assess the global quality of the father-daughter relationship and the amount of time fathers and daughters spent together during mid-adolescence (i.e., high school) as related to attachment and intimacy in young adulthood.

It was also believed that asking young women to report on their relationships with their fathers during a specific period of time that they are able to recall easily (as compared to early childhood) would yield less ambiguity in the study results. In addition, a decision was made to ask

respondents to report on two distinct types of father involvement. Specifically, women reported on the quality and closeness of their relationships with their fathers. Women were also asked to report the amount of time they typically spent with their fathers in a given week during high school. The rationale for assessing both women's perceptions of the quality and the amount of time that daughters spent with their fathers was based on literature that has suggested both the amount of time one spends with a child and the emotional quality of the relationship may be important for child outcomes (e.g., Belsky, 1999; Day & Lamb, 2004; Flouri & Buchanan, 2003; Kenny & Gallagher, 2002; Thompson, 1999). Moreover, it was anticipated that the amount of time respondents spent with their fathers would be related to whether the father lived in the home. In contrast, the emotional attachment to the father and the support perceived by the father may have been less likely to be related to whether the father was physically present in the home.

Again, the research on father influences on children's short- and long-term development has a number of significant limitations. The majority of the research on paternal acceptance and rejection has focused on middle-class European American parents (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001). Again, empirical research is needed to determine whether relationships identified in studies of White samples are present for African-American father-daughter relationships. Related to this point, most of the research on minority fathers has examined the negative impact of father absence. Few research studies have examined how father involvement and father-child interactions may be associated with psychosocial, emotional, and relationship functioning beyond adolescence. However, some research suggests that African American women may exhibit greater avoidance in their romantic relationships as compared to White women (Lopez et al., 2000); therefore, it is plausible that the amount of time that fathers spend with their daughters and the quality of the father-daughter relationship may have particular associations with Black women's reports of avoidance in romantic relationships. Again, however, a review of the literature did not reveal any studies that have examined the relationship between the quality of father-child relationships and the amount of time spent with fathers and romantic attachment among young Black women. Thus, the

author sought not only to explore how results of the current study compared to the existing research base, but also to expand the existing void in the research base.

It was hypothesized that: 1) Black female college students who reported better relationships with their fathers would report less insecure styles of attachment and a more secure style of attachment. Specifically, those students who reported that they spent more time with their fathers during high school would report a less fearful style of general attachment, a less preoccupied general style of attachment, a less dismissing style of attachment, and a more secure style of attachment. It was hypothesized that those who perceived their relationships to be closer with their fathers would report a less fearful style of general attachment, a less preoccupied general style of attachment, a less dismissing style of attachment, and a more secure style of attachment. Participants who reported a stronger emotional component to their relationships with their fathers were hypothesized to report a less fearful style of general attachment, a less preoccupied general style of attachment, a less dismissing style of attachment, and a more secure style of attachment. Students who perceived their fathers as more supportive were also hypothesized to report a less fearful style of general attachment, a less preoccupied style of attachment, a less dismissing style of attachment, and a more secure style of attachment; 2) the nature of the father-daughter relationship would be related to behavior in romantic relationships, such that Black undergraduate women who reported more positive relationships with their fathers would report less anxiety and avoidant behaviors in their romantic relationships. Specifically, those who reported more time spent with their fathers were expected to report less anxiety and avoidant behaviors in their romantic relationships. Students who perceived their relationships to be closer with their fathers were hypothesized to report less anxiety and avoidant behaviors in their romantic relationships. Students who reported a stronger emotional component to their relationships with their fathers were hypothesized to report less anxiety and avoidant behaviors in their romantic relationships. Also, students who perceived their fathers as more supportive were expected to report less anxiety and avoidant behaviors in their romantic relationships; and 3) college student women who reported

better relationships with their fathers were expected to report less fear of intimacy in their romantic relationships. Specifically, those who reported that they spent more time with their fathers would report less fear of intimacy in their romantic relationships. Women who perceived their relationships to be closer were expected to report less fear of intimacy in their romantic relationships. College women who reported a stronger emotional component to their relationships were hypothesized to report less fear of intimacy in their romantic relationships. Finally, women who perceived their fathers as more supportive were also expected to report less fear of intimacy in their romantic relationships.



## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

#### *Participants*

Participants were 185 college students attending a large university in southeastern Virginia. Participants ranged in age between 18 and 51 years of age ( $M = 21.3$  years,  $SD = 5.0$  years). All participants considered their race/ethnicity to be Black/African-American. Specifically, the ethnic/racial identity of the sample was as follows: 90.8% were African American, 3.8% were African, 2.2% West Indian, and 1.6% were Bi-Racial/Other. Year in college was as follows: 33% freshman, 24.9% sophomores, 21.1% juniors, 16.8% seniors, and 3.8% graduate students.

As reported in Table 2, the majority of the sample was single and heterosexual. The sample was diverse in terms of their relationship status, with the majority of women either dating one person exclusively ( $n = 61$ ) or not dating at all ( $n = 56$ ). Of those who were in a relationship at the time of the study, most reported being very or mostly satisfied with their partner. The majority of participants reported that the average length of their dating relationships were between 1 to 6 months in duration. See Table 1 for a description of the study participants. When reporting on their fathers, 76.8% of participants were referring to their biological father, 5.9% to their stepfather, 1.1% to their adoptive father, and 15.1% to "other" or "did not have a father." Of those that reported "other," participants' references to paternal figures included their mother's boyfriend, mother's ex-boyfriend, or grandfather. Four participants reported that their fathers were deceased. Four of the participants reported that they were raised by their biological father only and one participant reported that she was raised by her adoptive father only. Approximately 14 % of the sample was dropped from the analyses because those participants reported that they did not have a father to whom they could refer.

Table 1

*Demographic Characteristics of the Sample*

	<u>N (%)</u>	<i>P</i>
Education		<0.001
Freshman	61 (33.0)	
Sophomore	46 (24.9)	
Junior	39 (21.1)	
Senior	31 (16.8)	
Graduate Student	7 (3.8)	
Ethnicity		<0.001
African-American	168 (90.8)	
African	7 (3.8)	
West Indian	4 (2.2)	
Bi-racial or Other	3 (1.6)	
Marital Status		
Never Married	173 (93.5)	
Married	11 (5.9)	
Divorced	1 (0.5)	

Ns = 182 – 185.

Table 2

*Relationship Characteristics of the Sample*

	<u>N (%)</u>	<u>P</u>
Current Relationship Status		
Not dating	56 (30.3)	
Dating, no exclusivity	42 (22.7)	
Exclusive partner	61 (33.0)	
Cohabiting	10 (5.4)	
Engaged	13 (7.0)	
Satisfaction with Relationship		<0.001
Very satisfied	46 (24.9)	
Mostly satisfied	38 (20.5)	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	12 (6.5)	
Mostly dissatisfied	5 (2.7)	
Very dissatisfied	4 (2.2)	
Sexual Orientation		<0.001
Exclusively heterosexual	163 (88.1)	
Mostly heterosexual	6 (3.2)	
Equally heterosexual and homosexual	1 (0.5)	
Mostly homosexual	1 (0.5)	
Exclusively homosexual	3 (1.6)	
Average Length of Relationships		0.55
Between 1 and 6 months	52 (28.1)	
Between 7 and 12 months	43 (23.2)	

Table 2 (Continued)

Between 1 and 2 years	39 (21.1)
2 years and longer	42 (22.7)

---

Ns = 105 to 182.

Participants were recruited via the following means: 1) a description of the study posted on a psychology research board at the participant's university, 2) an announcement sent via the university's online research system, and 3) announcements made in their psychology classes regarding the study. In exchange for their participation, students received one research credit. Results of a power analysis with traditional alpha of .05, 7 predictors, an anticipated effect size of .15, and a desired power level of .80, indicated that a minimum of 153 women were needed to yield adequate power for testing the hypotheses.

Prior to data collection, the study was reviewed and approved by the College of Sciences Human Subjects Committee at the participating university. All participants were treated in accordance with the ethical guidelines for the treatment of human subjects as stipulated by the American Psychological Association.

### *Measures*

Father-Daughter Relationship Scale (Brown, Thompson, & Traffimow, 2002). The Father-Daughter Relationship Scale is a 9-item questionnaire that measures two aspects of women's perceptions of their relationships with their fathers. These dimensions include Closeness of the Relationship and Amount of Time Spent Together. Closeness of the Relationship is assessed by four questions (e.g., "How close did you feel to your father while you were in high school?"). The items on the Closeness of the Relationship subscale are rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1= very distant, to 7= very close, or 1= not at all, to 7= a lot). The Amount of Time Spent Together is assessed by the remaining 5 questions (e.g., "How many times a week did you converse with your father while you were in high school?"). Each item on the Amount of Time Spent Together

subscale is answered by circling one of four numbers that correspond to the number of times fathers and daughters engaged in various activities (e.g., 1= 1-5 times; 2= 6-10 times; 3= 11-15 times; 4= 16 or more times). Sample items include: “How many times each week did you do something [talk, watch movies or sports event, play a game] with your father each week during high school?” After summing the responses, the mean was calculated for each subscale. Brown et al. (2002) reported Cronbach’s alphas of .91 and .89 for the Closeness of the Relationship and the Amount of Time Spent Together subscales, respectively. In the present study, one item was dropped from each of the subscales in order to increase reliability of the scale. This resulted in three questions that assessed the Closeness of the Relationship and four questions that assessed the Amount of Time Spent Together subscale. The alpha for the revised Closeness of the Relationship subscale was .85; the alpha for the items that assessed Amount of Time Spent Together was .80. The Father-Daughter Relationship Scale is presented in Appendix A.

Parental Attachment Questionnaire (PAQ; Kenny, 1987). The PAQ is a 55-item questionnaire that assesses security of parental attachment. The areas that are assessed in the PAQ are perceived parental availability, understanding, acceptance, respect for individuality, facilitation of independence, interest in interaction with parents, affect toward parents during visits, student help-seeking behavior in situations of stress, and satisfaction with help obtained from parents. From these areas, the PAQ generates three dimension scores which have been supported by the results of principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation (Kenny, 1987). The dimensions of the PAQ are: Affective Quality of the Relationship, Parents as Facilitators of Independence, and Parents as Source of Support. The following are sample items from the three dimensions: Affective Quality of the Relationship (“Are persons I can count on to provide emotional support when I feel troubled”), Parents as Facilitators of Independence (“Restricts my freedom or independence”), and Parents as Source of Support (“Supports my goals and ideas”).

Participants answer each question twice: once as the item pertains to their mother and once as the statement relates to their father. However, for the purposes of the present study only responses that pertained to fathers or father figures were analyzed in the analyses that follow. In addition, based on the literature review, only two dimensions of the PAQ, Affective Quality of Relationships and Parents as Source of Support, appear related to attachment behaviors and intimacy. Therefore, only these two dimensions of the PAQ were scored for the present research. Affective quality refers to the affective nature of the relationship (i.e., Are there positive or negative feelings between the child and parent?). Affective quality is a key component to the development of attachment as an enduring affective bond (Hazan & Zeifman, 1999). The Support subscale of the PAQ is related to the concept of the attachment figure as offering a secure base of support when needed (i.e., “Is the child able to turn to the parent as a source of help when needed? Does that help serve to reduce stress and anxiety?”). Although these two subscales may be related, it is possible to have positive feelings towards one’s father but not necessarily turn to them for help and support.

Items are scored using a 5-point Likert-type scale from: 1 “Not at All” to 5 “Very Much” (see Appendix B). A total score was created by summing the individual item scores. From the total score a mean was created for each of the PAQ subscales with higher scores representing higher affective quality and paternal support, respectively. Kenny (1987) assessed the reliability of the PAQ questionnaire through test-retest and internal consistency methods. Test-retest reliability over a 2-week period was .92 for the measures as a whole and ranged from .82 to .91 for various dimensions. Cronbach’s alphas were reported as .96 for Affective Quality of Relationships and .88 for both Parents as Facilitators of Independence and Parents as Source of Support.

Fear-of-Intimacy Scale (FIS; Descutner & Thelen, 1991). The FIS is a 35-item scale that measures the individual’s anxiety about close dating relationships. Anxiety not only refers to individuals’ experiences within relationships, but also, anxiety at the prospect of intimate relationships. Specifically, the FIS measures: Content (i.e., the communication of personal

information), Emotional valence (i.e., intense feelings about the information being exchanged), and Vulnerability (i.e., high regard for the significant other receiving the information) individuals experience with respect to their anxiety in close dating relationships (Descutner & Thelen, 1991). All items are based on the definition that fear of intimacy constitutes a disturbed capacity to exchange personally significant emotions and thoughts with another person who is valued highly because of anxiety. These items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = “not at all characteristic of me”, to 5 = ‘extremely characteristic of me’. A total score was created from summing the individual item scores; high scores on the FIS are indicative of greater fear of intimacy in close, dating relationships. Sample items include: “I would feel comfortable telling 0 about things in the past that I have felt ashamed of,” and “I would feel at ease to completely be myself around 0.” Descutner and Thelen (1991) reported Cronbach’s alpha of .93 and test-retest reliability over a one-month period of .89 for the FIS. Doi and Thelen (1993) found significant relationships between the FIS and measures of self-disclosure and loneliness supporting the validity of the FIS. The FIS is presented in Appendix C.

Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). The RSQ is a 30-item self-report questionnaire that assesses four styles of attachment: (1) *secure* (e.g., “I find it easy to get emotionally close to others”), (2) *preoccupied* (e.g., “I worry about having others not accept me”), (3) *fearful* (e.g., “I am nervous when anyone gets too close to me”), and (4) *dismissing* (e.g., “It is very important to me to feel independent”). Respondents think about past and present relationships and endorse the extent to which each item matches their feelings about their relationships (see Appendix D). Items are scored on a 5-point Likert scale from: 1= “not at all like me” to 5 = “very much like me”. Internal consistencies for the subscales have been reported to range from .31 to .75 (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994).

Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R; Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000). The ECR-R is a 36-item questionnaire that assesses how individuals’ perceive they experience emotionally intimate (romantic) relationships. The ECR-R assesses two broad dimensions (i.e.,

anxiety and avoidance) that are theorized to underlie adult attachment (Kurdek, 2002). The 18 anxiety items assess fear of abandonment and desire for intimate contact (e.g., “I need a lot of reassurance that I am loved by my partners.” “I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me.”). Avoidance items assess discomfort with interpersonal disclosure about personal issues (e.g., “I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down” and “I am nervous when partners get too close to me”). Individuals rate how well each item describes their feelings in romantic relationships from: 1 = “strongly disagree” to “7 = strongly agree”. Internal consistency has been reported to be .90 and higher for both the anxiety and avoidance dimensions (Fraley et al., 2000; Lopez, Mitchell, & Gormley, 2002). Additional research has confirmed the two-factor structure and high test re-test reliability over a 6-week period (Sibley & Liu, 2004). In the current study, the alphas for both ECR-R scales were .93. The ECR-R appears in Appendix E.

### *Procedure*

The study was conducted in accordance with the code of ethics of the American Psychological Association and approved by the College Human Subjects Committee at the participating university. Participants were informed of the study via the following means: 1) a description of the study posted on a psychology research board at the participant’s university, 2) an announcement sent via the university’s online research system, and 3) announcements made in their psychology classes regarding the study. Individuals who chose to participate completed the packet of questionnaires online. After completing the survey, participants were directed to a separate website where they could receive extra credit for their participation; however, their identity was not linked to the data.

Given the potential of perceived intrusiveness and emotionally-laden material from the measures, consideration was given to the order of survey administration. Ultimately, it was decided that all participants would be administered the survey in the same order (of perceived increasing intrusiveness). The order of presentation to the students was as follows: Fear of Intimacy Scale, Experiences in Close Relationships Scale-Revised, Relationship Scales Questionnaire, Parental



Attachment Questionnaire, Father-Daughter Relationship Scale, and Demographics Questionnaire.

In addition to the five aforementioned questionnaires, participants received a brief description of the nature of the study and its general purpose that stressed the anonymity of the study as well as all risks and benefits. In an attempt to normalize all family systems and experiences, a disclaimer was also included noting the researchers' acknowledgement of wide diversity in family patterns.

Participants were informed of the potential for experiencing some emotional distress after participating in the study. They were also instructed to proceed to the next question if one did not apply or if they simply did not want to answer. It is possible that participants were in part motivated by their informed potential to think more reflectively about their interpersonal relationships. Initial instructions asked participants to recall the relationships with parents as experienced during high school when completing parental-child measures. These instructions were provided for consistency, as the Parental Attachment Questionnaire could be perceived as assessing a more global sense of attachment over time. Upon completion of the survey, students were given the contact information for the counseling center at the participating university in case they experienced any distress from the survey and wished to talk with a mental health professional regarding their concerns.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### *Preliminary Analyses*

The data were screened for missing information, coding errors, outliers, and normality. More specifically, scores were screened for outliers based on the recommendation from Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), that is, scores with an absolute  $z$  value of 3.3 or higher were considered outliers. No outliers were identified and the study variables were found to be normally distributed. Regarding regression, the most conservative methodology for handling missing data was used (i.e., listwise deletion) in which data for the respondent were dropped from the analysis in which data were missing).

#### *Descriptive Statistics and Psychometric Properties of the Study Measures*

After the data were screened for outliers and normality, the means, standard deviations, and alphas were examined for the scales and subscales of interest (i.e., Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised [ECR-R], the Relationship Scales Questionnaire [RSQ], the Fear of Intimacy Scale [FIS], the Father-Daughter Relationship Scale, and the Parental Attachment Questionnaire [PAQ]). These data are summarized in Table 3. Subscale standard deviations were generally low in relation to mean scores which suggest minimal variability around each point estimate and a lack of positive or negative skew. All primary study variables were also correlated to assess for potential multicollinearity. Table 4 displays intercorrelations between all predictor and outcome variables. The affective quality of the relationship and parents as sources of support had correlation coefficients of 0.72, which indicated the possibility of multicollinearity. A decision was not made to combine these two predictor variables.

Prior to conducting analyses, study scales were assessed for their psychometric properties by estimating reliability using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Internal consistency for each scale or subscale is reported in Table 3. With the exception of the Relationship Scales Questionnaire, alpha coefficients exceeded .70 and indicated adequate to very good reliability. Specifically, alphas for the

subscales of the ECR-R were .93 for both anxiety and avoidance. Cronbach's alpha for the Fear of Intimacy Scale was .72. On the PAQ, the subscales, Affective Quality of the Relationship and Parents as Sources of Support yielded alphas of .93 and .85, respectively. Internal consistency for the Father-Daughter scale was .85 for the Closeness of the Relationship subscale and .80 for the Amount of Time Spent Together subscale. Alphas for the Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ) were .53 for secure, .28 for preoccupied, .62 for fearful, and .33 for dismissing attachment styles, respectively. Although the authors of the RSQ (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994) contend that lower alphas are defensible in that each dimension of the RSQ reflects an additive combination of disparate self-model and other-model perspectives, RSQ subscales often do not yield acceptable levels of reliability. Given the poor reliability of all of the RSQ subscales, a decision was made not to examine the RSQ further. Previous published studies have also reported low alphas for some of the RSQ subscales (Kelley, Cash, Grant, Miles, & Santos, 2004). Subscale internal consistencies of the RSQ have been reported to range from .31 and .75 (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Further, researchers have been encouraged to shift from categorical models of attachment styles, such as the RSQ, to more continuous measures (Kurdek, 2002). A measure such as the ECR-R provides a more continuous assessment of attachment that better encompasses aspects of more categorical measures. In an exploration of the factor structure and goodness-of-fit indices of the RSQ, Kurdek (2002) did not find support for the categorical model of attachment.

### *Study Hypotheses*

*Hypothesis 1.* The initial study hypothesis contended that Black female college students who report better relationships with their fathers, as assessed by a) spending time, b) perceiving their relationships as close, c) reporting a strong emotional component, and d) perceiving their fathers as supportive would report a less fearful style of general attachment, a less preoccupied general style of attachment, a less dismissing style of attachment, and a more secure style of attachment. Because the Relationship Scales Questionnaire yielded poor alphas, hypothesis 1 was not examined.

Table 3

*Means Standard Deviations and Alphas for the Study Measures*

Measures	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Alpha</u>
Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised				
Anxiety	3.0	1.3	1.0- 6.3	0.93
Avoidance	2.9	1.2	1.0-6.50	0.93
Relationship Scales Questionnaire				
Secure	3.3	0.75	1.20-5.0	0.53
Preoccupied	2.8	0.70	1.0-5.0	0.28
Fearful	2.9	0.92	1.0-5.0	0.62
Dismissing	3.5	0.62	1.8-4.8	0.33
Fear of Intimacy Scale	98.6	13.4	63.0-140.0	0.72
Parental Attachment Questionnaire				
Affective Quality of the Relationship	3.7	0.80	1.52-4.96	0.93
Parents as Source of Support	3.2	0.86	1.0-4.69	0.85
Father-Daughter Scale				
Closeness of the Relationship	4.81	1.74	1.0-7.0	0.85
Amount of Time Spent Together	2.20	1.12	1.0-4.75	0.80

*Note.* Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised = Means of items that assess Anxiety and Avoidance dimensions on the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (where 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree); Relationship Scales Questionnaire = Mean of items that assess Secure, Fearful, Preoccupied, and Dismissing items on the Relationship Scales Questionnaire (where 1= not at all like me; 5 = very much like me) Fear of Intimacy = Mean of items that assess

*Note* (continued)

fear of intimacy in close dating relationships on the Fear of Intimacy Scale (where 1 = not at all characteristic of me; 5 = extremely characteristic of me); Parental Attachment Questionnaire = Mean of items that assess Affective Quality of Relationships and Parents as Source of Support on the Parental Attachment Questionnaire (1 = not at all; 5 = very much); and Father-Daughter Scale = Mean of items that assess Closeness of the Relationship and Amount of Time Spent Together on the Father-Daughter Relationship Scale.

Table 4

Table of Variable Inter-correlations

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Anxious	1.00*	0.57*	0.21*	-0.26*	-0.15*	0.05	-0.02
2. Avoidant		1.00	0.16*	-0.31*	-0.17*	-0.03	-0.14*
3. FIS			1.00	-0.15*	-0.07	-0.01	-0.01
4. Emotional				1.00	0.72*	0.46*	0.65*
5. Support					1.00	0.53*	0.60*
6. Time Spent						1.00	0.66*
7. Closeness							1.00

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$

*Hypothesis II.* The second study hypothesis held that the nature of the father-daughter relationship would be related to behavior in romantic relationships. Specifically, Black undergraduate women who report more positive relationships with their fathers, as assessed by a) spending time (as measured by the Amount of Time subscale of the Father-Daughter Scale, b) perceiving their relationships as close (as assessed by the Closeness of the Relationship subscale), c) reporting a strong emotional component (as assessed by the Affective Quality of the Relationship subscale of the Parental Attachment Questionnaire), and d) perceiving their fathers as supportive

(as assessed by the Parents as Sources of Support subscale of the Parental Attachment Questionnaire) would report less anxiety and avoidant behaviors in their romantic relationships. As planned, this hypothesis was assessed by conducting two multiple regression analyses, the results of which are summarized in Table 5. The dependent variables for the multiple regressions were the Anxiety and Avoidance subscales of the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised.

Overall, the model for anxious attachment was significant,  $F(4, 150) = 4.9, p < 0.01, R^2 = 0.12$ . Specifically, greater emotional involvement as determined by scores on the Parental Attachment Questionnaire was associated with less anxious behavior,  $t(150) = -3.3, p < 0.001$ . The prediction of avoidant behavior also produced a statistically significant model,  $F(4, 150) = 4.8, p < .01, R^2 = .18$ . Again, the only significant predictor was the quality of the affective relationship,  $t(150) = -3.5, p < 0.01$ . Women who reported a stronger emotional component to their relationships with their fathers reported less avoidance in their romantic relationships.

*Hypothesis III.* The third and final study hypothesis held that participants who reported better relationships with their fathers, as assessed by a) spending time (as measured by the Amount of Time subscale of the Father-Daughter Scale), b) perceiving their relationships as close (as measured by the Closeness of the Relationship subscale of the Father-Daughter Relationship Scale, c) reporting a strong emotional component to the relationship (as measured by the Affective Quality of the Relationship subscale of the ECR-R, and d) perceiving their fathers as supportive (as assessed by the Parents as Sources of Support subscale of the PAQ) would report less fear of intimacy (as assessed in the Fear of Intimacy Scale) in romantic relationships. The results of this hypothesis are summarized in Table 6. The overall regression model was not significant,  $F(4, 150) = 2.19, ns$ .

Table 5

*Results of the Multiple Regression Analyses Examining Predictors of Anxious and Avoidance*

*Behavior*

<i>Variable</i>	Non-standardized $\beta$	SE	Standardized $\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial	Model <i>F</i>
Anxious							
(Constant)	4.64	0.48	--	9.72	0.00	--	4.9*
Emotional	-0.66	0.20	-0.41	-3.31	0.00	-0.26	--
Supportive	-0.04	0.18	-0.03	-0.21	0.84	-0.02	--
Time spent	0.18	0.12	0.16	1.48	0.14	0.12	--
Closeness	0.12	0.09	0.17	1.37	0.17	0.11	--
Avoidant							4.8
(Constant)	4.63	0.45	--	10.22	0.00	--	--
Emotional	-0.66	0.19	-0.43	-3.48	0.00	-0.27	--
Supportive	0.13	0.17	0.09	0.73	0.47	0.06	--
Time spent	0.12	0.11	0.11	1.06	0.29	0.09	--
Closeness	0.01	0.08	0.01	0.08	0.94	0.01	--

Table 6

*Results of Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Fear of Intimacy*

<i>Variable</i>	Non-standardized $\beta$	SE	Standardized $\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Partial	Model <i>F</i>
FIS							ns
(Constant)	111.55	4.99	--	22.38	0.00	--	--
Emotional	-4.78	2.07	-0.30	-2.31	0.02	-0.19	--
Supportive	-0.17	1.92	-0.01	-0.09	0.93	-0.01	--
Time spent	0.58	1.25	0.05	0.46	0.64	0.04	--
Closeness	0.98	0.93	0.13	1.06	0.29	0.09	--

*Note.* FIS = Fear of Intimacy (Dependent Variable); Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised = Means of items that assess Anxiety and Avoidance dimensions on the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (where 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree); Fear of Intimacy = Mean of items that assess fear of intimacy in close dating relationships on the Fear of Intimacy Scale (where 1 = not at all characteristic of me; 5 = extremely characteristic of me); Parental Attachment Questionnaire = Mean of items that assess Affective/Emotional Quality of Relationships and Parents as Source of Support on the Parental Attachment Questionnaire (1 = not at all; 5 = very much); and Father-Daughter Scale = Mean of items that assess Closeness of the Relationship and Amount of Time Spent Together on the Father-Daughter Relationship Scale.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

The current study sought to explore a topic that has received little empirical attention in the literature. That is, the quality and quantity of young Black women's relationships with their fathers as related to attachment behaviors and intimacy in romantic relationships. Although many researchers have explored the impact of early attachment relationships as related to child and adolescent development and well-being, far fewer studies have investigated how the quality of one's attachment to parents may be related to later behavior and romantic relationships. This is especially so for non-White populations. In order to expand upon our current understanding of these issues, in the present study, Black female college students were sampled in order to investigate how their relationships with their fathers (or father figures) may be associated with their behavior and feelings in adult romantic relationships.

Partial support was found for the hypothesis that Black undergraduate women who reported better relationships with their fathers would report fewer anxious and avoidant attachment behavior in romantic relationships. Specifically, participants who reported more positive feelings toward their father (father figure) reported less anxiety and less avoidance in their romantic relationships.

Few researchers have examined the relationship between Black father-daughter attachment and women's perceptions of anxiety and avoidance in their romantic relationships. However, existing studies have explored relationships between parent-child attachment and concepts such as adjustment and psychological functioning (rather than adult romantic attachment). For example, in a sample of African American daughters, Coley (2003) examined the relationship between father-daughter attachment and measures of adolescent functioning. Whether fathers were biological or social/non-kin did not have a significant impact on adolescent girls' functioning. With respect to biological fathers only, increased school problems were associated with increased reports of anger and alienation in father-daughter relationships. However, among participants who had low levels of contact with their father or primary father figure, more intensive emotional attachment relationships

(including both anger and alienation and trust and communication) were associated with more problematic psychosocial functioning (i.e., trust and communication). Coley explained the findings as follows. When a father is physically unavailable or has little contact, but the daughter still maintains or reports an intense and emotional attachment (whether positive or negative) to the father, poor psychosocial functioning may result from the daughter's unfulfilled expectations of the father. Perhaps the combination of identifying a primary father with whom they experience a strong emotional attachment and fathers' disengagement culminates into daughters' persistently unfulfilled expectations and internalizing problems.

The present results are related to Coley's findings. Specifically, Coley found that a more intense and negative emotional relationship between father and daughter was associated with lower levels of trust and communication. From this vantage, the present study found that higher levels of emotional involvement (i.e., a higher level of affective quality to the father-daughter relationship) was associated with fewer reports of anxiety and avoidance in romantic relationships. This finding expands on previous research by demonstrating that the emotional or affectional quality of the relationship, rather than the amount of time spent with their daughters, appears associated with young Black women's reports of anxiety and attachment in romantic relationships. Very globally, these findings suggest that for African American women, maintaining an emotionally supportive, positive relationship with their father (or father figure) appears to be associated with their experiences of anxiety and avoidance in romantic relationships.

At the same time, it is important to note that these data were collected contemporaneously and causal statements cannot be made. That is, because the temporal ordering of variables is necessary to make causal statements, conclusions regarding whether the affective quality of one's relationships with a father (or father figure) causes behaviors in romantic relationships cannot be determined. Rather, it can only be concluded that reports of the affective quality of one's relationships with a father (or father figure) is associated with anxiety and avoidance in later romantic relationships. Nevertheless, this association supports previous research generally

conducted with White samples (e.g., Feeney, Noller, & Patty, 1993). Again, it appears that more positive relationships with fathers are associated with the number of anxiety and avoidant romantic behaviors women experience. These results give further credence to recognizing the importance of the quality of parent-child relationships among fathers and daughters as opposed to the quantity of time spent together. Further, it can be argued that because fewer Black females reside with their fathers/father figures that the affective quality of their relationships becomes an exceptionally more salient factor than the amount of time/number of activities engaged in with fathers. It would seem that when Black fathers maximize their encounters with daughters (e.g., through physical time spent and other forms of communication) such that daughters perceive a strong emotional connection with their fathers, positive impacts on women's psychological well-being are quite likely. Black fathers would serve their daughters well by recognizing the power of their interactions with their daughters, regardless of the frequency of the interactions. Along the same lines, Black mothers would also serve their daughters well by encouraging father-daughter interactions whether or not the father resides with the family.

In a study of ethnically diverse, academically successful, inner-city group of adolescents, researchers found that paternal attachment was associated with depressive symptoms (Kenny, Gallagher, Alvarez-Salvat, & Silsby, 2002). That is, more negative attachment to one's father was associated with higher reports of depressive symptoms. Although extrapolation from the Kenny et al. (2002) study to that of the present should be made with caution, in the present study, participants who reported more positive affective quality to the father-daughter relationship reported fewer anxious and avoidant behaviors in their romantic relationships. Thus, similar to the Kenny et al. (2002) study, the present study also found that less positive attachment to fathers was associated with less positive experiences in romantic relationships. Both studies found that relationships to fathers were associated with aspects of psychological well-being.

Using a subsample of the larger sample, Kenny et al. (2002) found that the availability of extended family members and nonkin adults emerged as a significant factor in students' lives.

Those who were most successful in terms of psychological well-being and academic success (regardless of family structure) reported high levels of family support, low levels of conflict, and strong support for educational attainment. The Kenny et al. study lends credence to the importance of examining the role of non-biological relationships in the lives of adolescents and young adults. It should be noted that approximately one-quarter of respondents listed a non-biological father as their primary father figure. Father figures included grandfathers, stepfathers, and their mothers' partners. As such, additional research should expand the investigation of fathers to non-biological fathers and consider the meaning of non-biological fathers for young women's psychological well-being.

It is not always clear whether those with insecure attachment orientations tend to shun long-term committed relationships, whether insecure attachment tends to interfere with the ability to engage in romantic relationships, or whether a combination of both exists. Feeney, Noller, and Patty (1993) found that young adults who endorsed an avoidant history of parental attachment were more willing to engage in casual sex and favored short-term romantic relationships indicative of low levels of commitment and closeness. It is interesting to note that Feeney et al. reported that women with avoidant attachments were more likely to experience the early loss of a parent, grew up with fewer siblings, and grew up in cities rather than suburban or small town locales. It is interesting to note that poor affective quality in relationships to fathers was associated with greater reports of both anxiety and avoidance in romantic relationships.

Neither subscale of the Father-Daughter Relationship Scale (Time Spent Together and Closeness of the Relationship) was related to women's attachment in adult romantic relationships. That is, increased time spent with fathers (father figures) and greater closeness to father (father figures) during high school was not associated with decreased experiences of anxiety and avoidance in their romantic relationships. It is important to note that the items used to assess "closeness" of the father-daughter relationship on the Father-Daughter Relationship Scale (e.g., How close did you feel to your father when you were in high school?) may not have sufficiently captured the

emotional component of a relationship. The current results are consistent with the notion that it is not necessarily the amount of time spent together, but rather the quality of time spent between father and child (Hamer, 2001). In fact, a review of the literature indicated that fathers' mere contact or time spent with children did not significantly predict children's development or adjustment (Marsiglio & Cohan, 2000). In contrast, the dimension of the Parental Attachment Questionnaire that assessed the emotional quality of the relationship to the father appeared to have greater face validity (e.g., "Is someone I can count on to provide emotional support when I feel troubled," "Is sensitive to my feelings and needs"). In addition, the Parental Attachment Questionnaire has received greater validation (e.g., Kenny & Gallagher, 2002; Kenny, Gallagher, Alvarez-Salvat, & Silsby, 2002). In retrospect, the emotional quality of the father-daughter relationship appeared to be more accurately assessed by the longer and more well-validated instrument (i.e., Parental Attachment Questionnaire).

Respondents' perception of their fathers as supportive was also not related to anxiety and avoidance in romantic relationships. That is, increased reports of fathers as sources of support were not associated with decreased reports of insecure attachment styles in romantic relationships. The results of this study indicate that the affective component of relationships with fathers is likely a more salient variable when considering impacts on future adult romantic relationships. Perhaps with women comparable to those represented in this sample, the perceptions of the emotional quality of the relationship is most important in comparison to their perceptions of fathers as supportive and/or the amount of time spent with their fathers in high school. Interestingly, the women in this study reported "good" relationships with their fathers, in regards to the affective component of their relationships. Examining the sample mean score of 3.7 on a scale ranging from 1 to 5 suggests that these women recall relatively strong emotional connections with their fathers. Coley (2003) found that African American girls' depressive symptoms and problematic behaviors were fostered to a greater extent by feelings of disengagement and alienation with their fathers as compared to a trusting and communicative father attachment relationship. Most studies examined

found similar results when children were asked about their feelings about their fathers. Silverstein and Auerbach (1999) also note that other studies demonstrate that even though some fathers are in the home, their presence can actually be draining (e.g., consuming family resources through gambling, alcohol use) to the family. A rare study that examined the relationship between former parent-child relationships and adult romantic attachment lends further support to the results yielded in the current study. Researchers found that the quality of parent-child interactions in adolescence (ages 15 and 16) predicted attachment security at age 25 (Dinero, Conger, Shaver, Widaman, & Larsen-Rife, 2008). Further, the findings indicated that in addition to positive parent-adolescent interactions, positive romantic interactions at age 25 contributed significantly to romantic attachment security at age 27. Thus, it is not solely the parent-child relationship that can impact later adult romantic attachment, but also the quality of romantic experiences that one encounters within young adulthood.

The final hypothesis, which expected that participants reporting better relationships with their fathers would report less fear of intimacy within romantic relationships, was also not significant. Further research is needed to confirm these results. It is possible that the hypothesized variables are not necessarily linked to fear of intimacy. It is also possible that further measures are needed to assess additional aspects of intimacy. For example, in a small sample of undergraduate students, Neal and Frick-Horbury (2001) found that individuals who described their parents as authoritative did not have higher self-intimacy than those with authoritarian or permissive parents. However, individuals recalling authoritative parenting reported greater positive perceptions of others' responsiveness, trustworthiness, and accessibility. These results indicated that parenting styles and relationships may not always impact individuals' beliefs about their own relationship abilities, but they can also impact how they perceive others in terms of relationship abilities and trustworthiness. However, these results must also be interpreted with great caution given the small sample size and sole sampling of students from two-parent homes. However, in another small sample of university students, Scheffler and Naus (1999) found a negative relationship between

perceived fatherly affirmation and fear of intimacy (utilizing the Fear of Intimacy Scale). It is difficult to determine why the present results were not significant. Possibly, this measure does not accurately reflect fear of intimacy in this population/sample and may simply not be associated with attachment security in this population. Additional study is needed with similar samples to determine whether the construct measured by the Fear of Intimacy Scale is significantly associated with Black women's reports of anxiety and avoidance.

Although the Relationship Scales Questionnaire was administered, the alpha coefficients were low for all subscales. Therefore, a decision was made not to utilize the data from this measure. Although it is possible that the Relationship Scales Questionnaire was not a valid measure to use in this population, it seems more plausible that it is a poor scale that does not adequately measure its constituent dimensions. As already mentioned, some researchers have reported low alphas for the Relationship Scales Questionnaire subscales and others have found little support for its categorical model of attachment (Kelley et al., 2004; Kurdek, 2002). Within the literature, the use of the Experiences in Close Relationships Scale, with its more continuous assessment of adult attachment, is utilized far more frequently than the Relationship Scales Questionnaire. Although the Relationship Scales Questionnaire and Experiences in Close Relationships Scale target similar constructs of attachment-related security and insecurity, research and factor analysis have demonstrated that the dimensions of attachment could most accurately be summarized in terms of anxiety and avoidance (Brassard, Shaver, & Lussier, 2007). Furthermore, given that reasonable scale reliability is considered to be approximately .70, it was deemed that further examination of the Relationship Scales Questionnaire would not afford the opportunity to accurately assess its dimensions in relation to the participants' adult attachment styles.

Although it was not possible to examine how relationships with one's father was related to respondents' global attachment style (i.e., secure, fearful, preoccupied, or dismissing), it was possible to assess respondents' anxiety and avoidant attachment behaviors in romantic relationships as related to reports of the quality and quantity of respondents' relationships to their fathers.

### *Comparison to Previous Research*

Although not a hypothesis in the present study, an attempt was made to examine how the means for the various subscales compare to means reported in previous studies. It was difficult to accurately compare the mean scores of all constructs examined as many other published studies have not reported means for the various instruments and previous samples are dissimilar from the present sample. However, a sample of French Canadian couples reported means of 3.07 and 1.73 for anxiety and avoidance Experiences in Close Relationships scales (Brassard et al., 2007). Other mean scores for the anxiety and avoidance subscales, respectively, of the Experiences in Close Relationships Scale are as follows: 3.21 and 2.30 in a sample of young adults, 3.31 and 2.59 in a college student sample, and 4.28 and 3.32 in an adult outpatient sample treated for depression (Cash, Thériault, & Annis, 2004; Goldstein, Chesir-Teran, & McFaul, 2008; Ravitz, Maunder, & McBride, 2008). Means for the present study were 3.0 and 2.9 for anxiety and avoidance ECR-R scales, respectively. Thus, while the mean anxiety score appears fairly similar to that reported in previous studies of non-clinical samples, the mean for avoidance appears slightly higher than that reported in non-clinical samples. The findings that respondents in the present sample reported slightly higher means for avoidance than previous research is notable in that Lopez et al. (2000) reported that African American and Hispanic American students reported greater adult attachment avoidance, but not anxiety, than their White peers.

Studies who also examined that had employed the Fear of Intimacy Scale (Descutner & Thelen, 1991). In their sample of female psychiatric hospital employees, Scheffler and Naus (1999) reported a total fear of intimacy score of 78.49. Other researchers have found the following Fear of Intimacy total score: 83.63 for predominately White female high school students; 78.75 for college students; 68.8 for a diverse sample of college students; 74.14 for a lesbian community sample; 72.18 for college women without histories of abuse, 75.46 with histories of child sexual abuse, 75.46 with histories of child and 95.32 with histories of child physical and sexual abuse; and 65.51 for female college students (Cash, Thériault, & Annis, 2004; Davis, Petretic-Jackson, & Ting, 2001;



Descutner & Thelen, 1991; Greenfield & Thelen, 1997; Sherman & Thelen, 1996; Thelen, VanderWal, Thomas, & Harmon, 2000). The total score for the Fear of Intimacy scale in the present study was 98.6. Collectively, the slightly higher avoidance mean score for the Experiences in Close Relationships Revised (Fraley et al., 2000) and the higher total score for the Fear of Intimacy scale suggest that college student African-American women may experience greater avoidance and fear of intimacy than other groups of women. A number of possibilities for greater reported avoidance and fear of intimacy in Black women include experiences in childhood, minority status, cultural mistrust, mothers' influences, and presence at a predominately White university. Clearly, this is an issue that should be explored in additional research.

### *Study Limitations*

A number of limitations should be considered when interpreting the results of this study. Information was gathered using self-report measures only. Ideally, future research should attempt to corroborate respondents' reports of attachment behaviors with reports from friends, family members, and parents, and with self-report and observational data. Another limitation was the correlational and cross-sectional nature of this study. As a result, it is not possible to determine causality among the variables. It is possible that experiences in relationships may have influenced how respondents viewed their fathers. It is also possible that other variables, not examined here, may have influenced the study findings. For instance, mother-daughter relationships were not a focus of this research; however, relationships with one's mother or mother figure may have influenced respondents' experiences of anxiety and avoidance in romantic relationships. Future investigators might also examine whether identity status is associated with attachment style and relationship functioning (Berman, Weems, Rodriguez, & Zamora, 2006). Identity status refers to the Marcia's (1966) operationalization of Erikson's concept of identity formation involving the two dimensions of exploration and commitment. Exploration refers to an individual's active search for a resolution to the issues associated with finding one's purpose in life, whereas commitment signifies the actual resolution of identity issues (e.g., selection of an occupation, relationship, or

group membership). Although resources do not always permit, ideally, further research should examine the development of romantic attachment over time with the focus on possible mechanisms that affect romantic attachment.

Although the current study sought to focus on young adult women, the results may not generalize to non-college student women. Moreover, these women were essentially volunteers.

Additional research is needed to explore these issues in a more diverse sample of young Black women (i.e., those attending college and not attending college). Another possible limitation of this study was the utilization of the Father-Daughter Scale to assess closeness of the relationship and amount of time spent together. Although the initial development study reported sufficient reliability, it was normed on a predominately White college sample. However, to increase the reliability of the Father-Daughter Scale subscales, an item was eliminated from each subscale. Moreover, neither the Closeness nor the Time Spent subscales were associated with respondents' reports of romantic attachment or fear of intimacy. It is possible that an instrument developed for this population may have yielded possible relationships. At the same time, it should be considered that for this population, the Closeness and Time Spent are not keys to the types of outcomes (i.e., romantic behavior, fear of intimacy) assessed in the present study. Given the potential limitations of this measure, it is also important to note the lack of other available father-daughter relationship scales. Along the same lines, it will likely be beneficial for researchers to develop a scale that specifically assess father-daughter relationships among Black women. Such a measure would take into account some of the unique experiences that are relevant to this population and Black fathers in particular. Concerning the affective component of the relationship, additional researchers might investigate the possibility of enmeshment and an excessive emotional connection between father and daughter.

Because the Relationship Styles Questionnaire yielded poor reliability, overall style of attachment was not examined empirically. Thus, it was not possible to examine whether overall style of attachment was associated with the quality and quantity of respondents' relationships with

their father. Our understanding of this issue would benefit from a more internally consistent instrument to address this construct.

### *Study Strengths*

Given the aforementioned limitations, there are also a number of notable strengths of the current study. Primarily, this research contributes significantly to the literature base given the scarcity of such studies. This topic of study, which has received minimal attention in the literature, particularly in non-White populations, assists in forging towards a better understanding of the relationships between father-daughter attachment and adult romantic attachment. The examination of parent-child/adolescent relationships and subsequent romantic relationship functioning is an important topic and may have important consequences for the psychological adjustment of young adults. More specifically, as individuals mature, romantic relationships serve as major sources and extensions of the attachment system. That is, romantic bonds provide additional and often the major source of affectional bonds (Ainsworth, 1989).

An additional study strength is the sample size of 185 which is generally considered a medium sample size, and provided sufficient power to test the hypotheses (Kline, 2005). Also, much of the previous research on African Americans has focused on low-income and inner-city families. In contrast, the present study focused on women attending a four-year university who represent a more advantaged sample than the focus of much previous research. Other than the Relationship Scales Questionnaire that yielded poor internal consistency, the other scales yielded good reliability.

Although the majority of hypotheses were not supported, the relationship between the emotional relationship between fathers and daughters and reports of anxiety and avoidant in romantic relationships is what might be hypothesized based on our knowledge of parent-child attachment and young adult outcomes. These results add to the literature by further highlighting the impact of the emotional component of the parent-child relationship as well as the utility of the Experiences in Close Relationships Scale with Black women.

### *Suggestions for Future Research*

Future researchers will hopefully expound upon the current study by continuing to explore the potential impact father-daughter relationships have upon Black women's romantic relationships. Perhaps other researchers will also explore alternative ways of assessing attachment that take into account other relationship data (e.g., relationship satisfaction and length of relationship). Additional research should also sample non-college students and attempt to understand how father-daughter relationships may be associated with relationship status (i.e., married, cohabitating, single women) and relationship satisfaction. Because relationships with father figures may change over time, it is important to examine longitudinally how changes in father-daughter relationships may coincide with daughters' adjustment and romantic relationship behaviors and beliefs over time. In addition, it is possible that relationships with one's father may be associated with at-risk sexual behaviors or sexual functioning.

### *Summary and Conclusions*

In conclusion, the results of this investigation highlight the importance of studying the associations between father-daughter attachment relationships and daughters' romantic attachment relationships. Findings indicate that the affective quality of Black women's relationships with their fathers is significantly associated with reports of anxiety and avoidance in adult romantic relationships. That is, Black women who reported a more positive emotional relationship with their fathers during adolescence endorsed lower levels of anxiety and avoidant behaviors in their romantic relationships. Results also indicate that, in general, African American women may also experience greater avoidance and fear of intimacy than has been reported in other samples. These findings will hopefully encourage other researchers to replicate and expand our understanding of the intersection between paternal-child and adult attachment relationships among more diverse populations. Alternatively, there was no support for the proposal that women who reported better relationships with their fathers/father figures would report decreased fear of intimacy in their romantic relationships. Such replication will hopefully equip parents, young women, treatment

providers, and other professionals with valuable information that can alter some aspects of relationship functioning. Both mothers and fathers of Black daughters should be educated on the significance of the father-daughter relationship and encouraged to maintain these connections. In this technological age, father-daughter relationships can be fostered by promoting contact that includes a variety of means (e.g., e-mail/sending photos, texting, and web cams) as well as written and phone communication.

## References

- Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist*, 44, 709-716.
- Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Arbona, C., & Power, T. G. (2003). Parental attachment, self-esteem, and antisocial behaviors among African American, European American, and Mexican American adolescents. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 50, 40-51.
- Baker, R. W., & Siryk, B. (1984). Measuring adjustment to college. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 31, 1797-189.
- Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61, 226-244.
- Belsky, J. (1999). Modern evolutionary theory and patterns of attachment. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 141-161). New York: Guilford Press.
- Berman, S. L., Weems, C. F., Rodriguez, E. T., & Zamora, I. J. (2006). The relation between identity status and romantic attachment style in middle and late adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence*, 29, 737-748.
- Birnbaum, G. E. (2007). Attachment orientations, sexual functioning, and relationship satisfaction in a community sample of women. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 24, 21-35.
- Bolgar, R., Zweig-Frank, H., & Paris, J. (1995). Childhood antecedents of interpersonal problems in young adult children of divorce. *Journal of the American Academy of Child Adolescent Psychiatry*, 34, 143-150.
- Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 2. Separation*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1979). *The making and breaking of affectional bonds*. New York: Tavistock.
- Bowlby, J. (1982). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Basic Books.

- Brassard, A., Shaver, P. R., & Lussier, Y. (2007). Attachment, sexual experience, and sexual pressure in romantic relationships: A dyadic approach. *Personal Relationships, 14*, 475-493.
- Brennan, K. A., Clark, C. L., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Self-report measurement of adult attachment: An integrative overview. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 46-76). New York: Guilford Press.
- Brown, J., Thompson, L. A., & Traffimow, D. (2002). The father-daughter relationship rating scale. *Psychological Reports, 90*, 212-214.
- Cabrera, N. J., Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., Bradley, R. H., Hofferth, S., & Lamb, M. E. (2000). Fatherhood in the twenty-first century. *Child Development, 71*, 127-136.
- Campbell, L., Simpson, J. A., Boldry, J., & Kashy, D. A. (2005). Perceptions of conflict and support in romantic relationships: The role of attachment anxiety. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 88*, 510-531.
- Cash, T. F., Thériault, J., & Annis, N. M. (2004). Body image in an interpersonal context: Adult attachment, fear of intimacy, and social anxiety. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 23*, 89-103.
- Cassidy, J. (2000). Adult romantic attachments: A developmental perspective on individual differences. *Review of General Psychology, 4*, 111-131.
- Coley, R. L. (2001). Invisible men: Emerging research on low-income, unmarried, and minority fathers. *American Psychologist, 56*, 743-753.
- Coley, R. L. (2003). Daughter-father relationships and adolescent psychosocial functioning in low-income African American families. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 65*, 867-875.
- Coley, R. L., & Chase-Lansdale, P. L. (1999). Stability and change in paternal

- involvement among urban African American fathers. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 13, 416-435.
- Colin, V. L. (1996). *Human Attachment*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Collins, N. L., & Feeney, B. C. (2004). An attachment theory perspective on closeness and intimacy. In D. J. Mashek & A. Aron (Eds.), *Handbook of closeness and intimacy* (pp. 163-187). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Davis, J. L., Petretic-Jackson, P. A., & Ting, L. (2001). Intimacy dysfunction and trauma symptomatology: Long-term correlates of different types of child abuse. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 14, 63-79.
- Day, R. D., & Lamb, M. E. (2004). Father involvement and the diversity of family context. In R. D. Day & M. E. Lamb (Eds.), *Conceptualizing and measuring father involvement* (pp. 293-319). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- DeHart, G. B., Sroufe, L. A., & Cooper, R. G. (2000). *Child development: Its nature and course* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Descutner, C. J., & Thelen, M. H. (1991). Development and validation of a fear-of Intimacy scale. *Psychological Assessment*, 3, 218-225.
- Diehl, M., Elnick, A. B., Bourbeau, L. S., & Labouvie-Vief, G. (1998). Adult attachment styles: Their relations to family context and personality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 1656-1669.
- Dinero, R. E., Conger, R. D., Shaver, P. R., Widaman, K. F., & Larsen-Rife, D. (2008). The influence of family of origin and adult romantic partners on romantic attachment security. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 22, 622-632.
- Doi, S. C., & Thelen, M. H. (1993). The fear-of-intimacy scale: Replication and extension. *Psychological Assessment*, 5, 377-383.



- Donellan, M. B., Larson-Rife, D., & Conger, R. D. (2005). Personality, family history, and competence in early adult romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 88*, 562-576.
- Feeney, J. A. (1999). Adult romantic attachment and couple relationships. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 355-377). New York: Guilford Press.
- Feeney, B. C., & Collins, N. L. (2004). Interpersonal safe haven and secure base caregiving processes in adulthood. In W. S. Rholes & J. A. Simpson (Eds.), *Adult attachment* (pp. 300-338). New York: Guilford Press.
- Feeney, J. A., & Noller, P. (1990). Attachment style as a predictor of adult romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 58*, 281-291.
- Feeney, J. A., Noller, P., & Patty, J. (1993). Adolescents' interactions with the opposite sex: Influence of attachment style and gender. *Journal of Adolescence, 16*, 169-186.
- Flouri, E., & Buchanan, A. (2002). What predicts good relationships with parents in adolescence and partners in adult life: Findings from the 1958 British birth cohort. *Journal of Family Psychology, 16*, 186-198.
- Flouri, E., & Buchanan, A. (2003). The role of father involvement in children's later mental health. *Journal of Adolescence, 26*, 63-78.
- Fraley, R. C., Davis, K. E., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Dismissing-avoidance and the defensive organization of emotion, cognition, and behavior. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 249-279). New York: Guilford Press.
- Fraley, R. C., & Shaver, P. R. (2000). Adult romantic attachment: Theoretical development, emerging controversies, and unanswered questions. *Review of General Psychology, 4*, 132-154.

- Fraley, R. C., Waller, N. G., & Brennan, K. A. (2000). An item-response theory analysis of self-report measures of adult attachment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 350-365.
- Goldstein, S. E., Chesir-Teran, D., & McFaul, A. (2008). Profiles and correlates of relational aggression in young adults' romantic relationships. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 37, 251-265.
- Greenfield, S., & Thelen, M. (1997). Validation of the fear of intimacy scale with a lesbian and gay male population. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 14, 707-716.
- Griffin, D. W., & Bartholomew, K. (1994). The metaphysics of measurement: The case of adult attachment. In K. Bartholomew & D. P. Perlman (Eds.), *Advances in personal relationships: Attachment processes in adult relationships, Volume 5* (pp. 17-52). London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Hamer, J. (2001). *What it means to be daddy: Fatherhood for black men living away from their children*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hazan, C. & Shaver, P. R. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 511-524.
- Hazan, C., & Zeifman, D. (1999). Pair bonds as attachments: Evaluating the evidence. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 336-354). New York: Guilford Press.
- Hetherington, M., & Aratesh, J. D. (1988). *Impact of divorce, single parenting and stepparenting on children*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Hofferth, S. L. (2006). Residential father family type and child well-being: Investment versus selection. *Demography*, 43, 53-77.
- Kane, H. S., Jaremka, L. M., Guichard, A. C., Ford, M. B., Collins, N. L., & Feeney, B. C. (2007). Feeling supported and feeling satisfied: How one partner's attachment style predicts the other partner's relationship experiences. *Journal of Social and*

- Personal Relationships*, 24, 535-555.
- Kelley, M. L., Cash, T. F., Grant, A. R., Miles, D. L., & Santos, M. T. (2004). Parental alcoholism: Relationships to adult attachment in college women and men. *Addictive Behaviors*, 18, 1-6.
- Kelley, M. L., Smith, T. S., Green, A. P., Berndt, A. E., & Rogers, M. C. (1998). Importance of fathers' parenting to African-American toddlers' social and cognitive development. *Infant Behavior and Development*, 21, 733-744.
- Kenny, M. E. (1987). The extent and function of parental attachment among first-year college students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 16, 17-27.
- Kenny, M. E., & Gallagher, L. A. (2002). Instrumental and social/relational correlates of perceived maternal and paternal attachment in adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence*, 25, 203-219.
- Kenny, M. E., Gallagher, L. A., Alvarez-Salvat, R., & Silsby, J. (2002). Sources of support and psychological stress among academically successful inner-city youth. *Adolescence*, 37, 161-182.
- Kline, R. B. (2005). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Guilford Press.
- Klohnen, E. C., & Bera, S. (1998). Behavioral and experiential patterns of avoidantly and securely attached women across adulthood: A 31-year longitudinal perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 211-223.
- Krohn, F. B., & Bogan, Z. (2001). The effects absent fathers have on female development and college attendance. *College Student Journal*, 35, 598-608.
- Kurdek, L. (2002). On being secure in insecure relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 811-834.
- Kurdek, L. (2008). Differences between partners from Black and White heterosexual dating couples in a path model of relationship commitment. *Journal of Social and*

- Personal Relationships*, 25, 51-69.
- Lamb, M. E. (Ed.). (2004). *The role of the father in child development* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Levy, K. N., Blatt, S. J., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Attachment styles and parental representations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 407-419.
- Lewis, C., & Lamb, M. E. (2003). Fathers' influences on children's development: The evidence from two-parent families. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 28, 211-228.
- Lopez, F. G., Melendez, M. C., & Rice, K. G. (2000). Parental divorce, parent-child bonds, and adult attachment orientations among college students: A comparison of three racial/ethnic groups. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 47, 177-186.
- Lopez, F. G., Mitchell, P., & Gormley, B. (2002). Adult attachment orientations and college student distress: Test of a mediational model. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 49, 460-467.
- Marcia, J. E. (1966). Development and validation of ego-identity status. *Journal of Personal and Social Relationships*, 3, 551-558.
- Marsiglio, W., & Cohan, M. (2000). Contextualizing father involvement and paternal influence: Sociological and qualitative themes. *Marriage and Family Review*, 29, 75-95.
- Mashek, D. J., & Sherman, M. D. (2004). Desiring less closeness with intimate others. In D. J. Mashek & A. Aron (Eds.), *Handbook of closeness and intimacy* (pp. 343-356). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Mattanah, J. F., Hancock, G. R., & Brand, B. L. (2004). Parental attachment, separation-individuation, and college student adjustment: A structural equation analysis of mediational effects. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 51, 213-225.
- McAdoo, H. P., & McAdoo, J. L. (2002). The dynamics of African American fathers'

- family roles. In H. P. McAdoo (Ed.), *Black children*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp.3-11). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Mikulincer, M. (1998). Attachment working models and the sense of trust: An exploration of interaction goals and affect regulation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 1209-1224.
- Neal, J., & Frick-Horbury, D. (2001). The effects of parenting styles and childhood attachment patterns on intimate relationships. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 28, 178-183.
- Parke, R. D. (2002). Fathers and families. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed). *Handbook of parenting: Being and becoming a parent* ( 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 27-73). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Parker, G., Tupling, H., & Brown, L. B. (1979). A parental bonding instrument. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 52, 1-10.
- Parkes, C. M., Stevenson-Hinde, J., & Marris, P. (1993). *Attachment across the life cycle*. London: Routledge.
- Peterson, S. H. (2007). The importance of fathers: Contextualizing sexual risk-taking in “low-risk” African American adolescent girls.
- Pietromonaco, P. R., & Barrett, L. F. (2000). The internal working models concept: What do we really know about the self in relation to others? *Review of General Psychology*, 4, 155-175.
- Pietromonaco, P. R., Greenwood, D., & Barrett, L. F. (2004). Conflict in adult close relationships: An attachment perspective. In W. S. Rholes & J. A. Simpson (Eds.), *Adult attachment* (pp. 267-299). New York: Guilford Press.

- Ravitz, P., Maunder, R., & McBride, C. (2008). Attachment, contemporary interpersonal theory and IPT: An integration of theoretical, clinical, and empirical perspectives. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 38, 11-21.
- Reese-Weber, M., & Marchand, J. F. (2002). Family and individual predictors of late adolescents' romantic relationships. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 31, 197-206.
- Rholes, W. S., & Simpson, J. A. (2004). *Adult attachment*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Rice, K. G., Cunningham, T., & Young, M. (1997). Attachment to parents, social competence, and emotional well-being: A comparison of black and white late adolescents. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 44, 89-101.
- Rohner, R. P., & Veneziano, R. A. (2001). The importance of father love: History and contemporary evidence. *Review of General Psychology*, 5, 382-405.
- Scheffler, T. S., & Naus, P. J. (1999). The relationship between fatherly affirmation and a woman's self-esteem, fear of intimacy, comfort with womanhood, and comfort with sexuality. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, 8, 39-45.
- Seiffge-Krenke, I., Shulman, S., & Klessinger, N. (2000). Adolescent precursors of romantic relationships in young adulthood. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 18, 327-346.
- Sherer, M., Maddux, J. E., Mercadante, B., Prentice-Dunn, S., Jacobs, B., & Rogers, R. W. (1982). The self-efficacy scale: Construction and validation. *Psychological Reports*, 51, 663-671.
- Sherman, M. D., & Thelen, M. H. (1996). Fear of intimacy scale: Validation and extension with adolescents. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 13, 507-521.
- Shorey, H. S., & Snyder, C. R. (2006). The role of adult attachment styles in psychopathology and psychotherapy outcomes. *Review of General Psychology*, 16, 1-20.
- Sibley, C. G., & Liu, J. H. (2004). Short-term temporal stability and factor structure of the revised experiences in close relationships (ECR-R) measure of adult attachment. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36, 969-975.

- Silverstein, L. B., & Auerbach, C. F. (1999) Deconstructing the essential father. *American Psychologist*, 54, 397-407.
- Storch, E. A., Bravata, E. A., Storch, J. B., Johnson, J. H., Roth, D. A., & Roberti, J. W. (2003). Psychosocial adjustment in early adulthood: The role of childhood teasing and father support. *Child Study Journal*, 33, 153-163.
- Tabatchnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using Multivariate Statistics* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Thelen, M. H., VanderWal, J. S., Thomas, A. M., & Harmon, R. (2000). Fear of intimacy among dating couples. *Behavior Modification*, 24, 223-240.
- Thompson, R. A. (1999). Early attachment and later development. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 265-286). New York: Guilford Press.
- United States Census Bureau (2004, April). The black population in the United States: March 2004. *Current Population Reports*. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/p20-541.pdf>
- Wei, M., Mallinckrodt, B., Larson, L. M., & Zakalik, R. A. (2005). Adult attachment, depressive symptoms, and validation from self versus others. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 368-377.
- Wei, M., Russell, D. W., Mallinckrodt, B., & Zakalik, R. A. (2004). Cultural Equivalence of adult attachment across four ethnic groups: Factor structure, structured means, and associations with negative mood. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 51, 408-417.
- Wei, M., Russell, D. W., & Zakalik, R. A. (2005). Adult attachment, social self-efficacy, self-disclosure, loneliness, and subsequent depression for freshmen college students: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 602-614.
- Wei, M., Vogel, D. L., Ku, T., & Zakalik, R. A. (2005). Adult attachment, affect regulation, negative mood, and interpersonal problems: The mediating roles of

emotional reactivity and emotional cutoff. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 14-24.



## Appendix A

### Father-Daughter Relationship Scale

Think about the most important male influence in your life. Specifically think about your father (or father figure). Who was he?

☐ biological father

☐ step father

☐ adopted father

☐ mother's boyfriend

☐ grandfather

☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

☐ none (skip to section 2)

Think of the person you checked above as your father figure; please answer the survey with this person in mind.

Section 1. Instructions: Please **circle** the description that best describes your answer. Please select **only one answer** per question.

1. How many times each week did you do something (talk, watch movies or sports event, play a game) with your father when you were in high school?

2. How close did you feel to your father when you were in high school?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
very distant						very close

3. How many hours did you and your father spend in conversation each week when you were in high school?

A. 1-5 hours    B. 6-10 hours    C. 11-15 hours    D. 16 or more hours

4. How many times a week did you converse with your father while you were in high school?

A. 1-4    B. 6-10    C. 11-15    D. 16 or more

5. When your father was away from home, how much did you typically miss him?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not much			some			a lot

6. How much time do you feel that you and your father spent together while you were in high school?







___	___	45. I seek help from a professional, such as a therapist, college counselor, or clergy.
___	___	46. I think about how my family might respond and what they might say.
___	___	47. I work it out on my own, without help or discussion with others.
___	___	48. I discuss the matter with a friend.
___	___	49. I know that my family will know what to do.
___	___	50. I contact my family if I am not able to resolve the situation after talking it over with my friends.

**WHEN I GO TO MY MOTHER/FATHER FOR HELP:**

**M      F**

___	___	51. I feel more confident in the ability to handle the problems on my own.
___	___	52. I continue to feel unsure of myself.
___	___	53. I feel that I would have obtained more understanding and comfort from a friend.
___	___	54. I feel confident that things will work out as long as I follow my parent's advice.
___	___	55. I am disappointed with my mother's/father's response.

## Appendix C

### Fear-of-Intimacy Scale

Section 2. Part A. Instructions: Imagine you are in a close dating relationship. Respond to the following statements as you would if you were in that close relationship. Rate how characteristic each statement is of you on a scale from 1 to 5 as described below. Please select only one answer and put it in the blank next to the number of each question.

Note: In each statement "0" refers to the person who would be in the close relationship with you.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all characteristic of me	slightly characteristic of me	moderately characteristic of me	very characteristic of me	extremely characteristic of me

1. \_\_\_\_ I would feel uncomfortable telling 0 about things in the past that I have felt ashamed of.
2. \_\_\_\_ I would feel uneasy talking with 0 about something that has hurt me deeply.
3. \_\_\_\_ I would feel comfortable expressing my true feelings to 0.
4. \_\_\_\_ If 0 were upset I would sometimes be afraid of showing that I care.
5. \_\_\_\_ I might be afraid to confide my innermost feelings to 0.
6. \_\_\_\_ I would feel at ease telling 0 that I care about him/her.
7. \_\_\_\_ I would have a feeling of complete togetherness with 0.
8. \_\_\_\_ I would be comfortable discussing significant problems with 0.
9. \_\_\_\_ A part of me would be afraid to make a long-term commitment to 0.
10. \_\_\_\_ I would feel comfortable telling my experiences, even sad ones, to 0.
11. \_\_\_\_ I would probably feel nervous showing 0 strong feelings of affection.
12. \_\_\_\_ I would find it difficult being open with 0 about my personal thoughts.
13. \_\_\_\_ I would feel uneasy with 0 depending on me for emotional support.
14. \_\_\_\_ I would not be afraid to share with 0 what I dislike about myself.
15. \_\_\_\_ I would be afraid to take the risk of being hurt in order to establish a closer relationship with 0.
16. \_\_\_\_ I would feel comfortable keeping very personal information to myself.
17. \_\_\_\_ I would not be nervous about being spontaneous with 0.

18. \_\_\_\_ I would feel comfortable telling 0 things that I do not tell other people.
19. \_\_\_\_ I would feel comfortable trusting 0 with my deepest thoughts and feelings.
20. \_\_\_\_ I would sometimes feel uneasy if 0 told me about very personal matters.
21. \_\_\_\_ I would be comfortable revealing to 0 what I feel are my shortcomings and handicaps.
22. \_\_\_\_ I would be comfortable with having a close emotional tie between us.
23. \_\_\_\_ I would be afraid of sharing my private thoughts with 0.
24. \_\_\_\_ I would be afraid that I might not always feel close to 0.
25. \_\_\_\_ I would be comfortable telling 0 what my needs are.
26. \_\_\_\_ I would be afraid that 0 would be more interested in the relationship than I would be.
27. \_\_\_\_ I would feel comfortable about having open and honest communication with 0.
28. \_\_\_\_ I would sometimes feel uncomfortable listening to 0's personal problems.
29. \_\_\_\_ I would feel at ease to completely be myself around 0.
30. \_\_\_\_ I would feel relaxed being together and talking about our personal goals.
31. \_\_\_\_ I have shied away from opportunities to be close to someone.
32. \_\_\_\_ I have held back my feelings in previous relationships.

Section 2. Part B. Instructions: Respond to the following statements as they apply to your **past relationships**. Rate how characteristic each statement is of you on a scale from 1 to 5 as described in the instructions for Part A.

33. \_\_\_\_ There are people who think I am afraid to get close to them.
34. \_\_\_\_ There are people who think I am not an easy person to get to know.
35. \_\_\_\_ I have done things in previous relationships to keep me from developing closeness.

## APPENDIX D

### RELATIONSHIP SCALES QUESTIONNAIRE (RSQ)

Please use the following scale to answer each statement. Enter your response, as a number 1 to 5, in the blank next to each item. Notice that this scale differs from the one you used in the previous questionnaire.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

- \_\_\_ 1. I find it difficult to depend on other people
- \_\_\_ 2. It is very important to me to feel independent.
- \_\_\_ 3. I find it easy to get emotionally close to others.
- \_\_\_ 4. I want to merge completely with another person.
- \_\_\_ 5. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.
- \_\_\_ 6. I am comfortable without close emotional relationships.
- \_\_\_ 7. I am not sure that I can always depend on others to be there when I need them.
- \_\_\_ 8. I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others.
- \_\_\_ 9. I worry about being alone.
- \_\_\_ 10. I am comfortable depending on other people.
- \_\_\_ 11. I often worry that romantic partners don't really love me.
- \_\_\_ 12. I find it difficult to trust others completely.
- \_\_\_ 13. I worry that others don't value me as I value them.
- \_\_\_ 14. I want emotionally close relationships.
- \_\_\_ 15. I am comfortable having other people depend on me.
- \_\_\_ 16. I worry that others don't value me as much as I value them.
- \_\_\_ 17. People are never there when you need them.
- \_\_\_ 18. My desire to merge completely sometimes scares people away.
- \_\_\_ 19. It is very important to me to feel self-sufficient.
- \_\_\_ 20. I am nervous when anyone gets too close to me.
- \_\_\_ 21. I often worry that romantic partners won't want to stay with me.



- \_\_\_ 22. I prefer not to have other people depend on me.
- \_\_\_ 23. I worry about being abandoned.
- \_\_\_ 24. I am uncomfortable being close to others.
- \_\_\_ 25. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like.
- \_\_\_ 26. I prefer not to depend on others.
- \_\_\_ 27. I know that others will be there when I need them.
- \_\_\_ 28. I worry about having others not accept me.
- \_\_\_ 29. Romantic partners often want me to be closer than I feel comfortable being.
- \_\_\_ 30. I find it relatively easy to get close to others.

## APPENDIX E

### Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R)

The 36 items below concern how you feel in emotionally intimate relationships. We are interested in how you generally experience relationships, not just in what is happening in a current relationship. Respond to each statement by using the following scale to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

- |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.  | It's not difficult for me to get close to my partner.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2.  | I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner.                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3.  | I tell my partner just about everything.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4.  | I rarely worry about my partner leaving me.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5.  | I prefer not to be too close to romantic partners.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6.  | My romantic partner makes me doubt myself.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7.  | I get uncomfortable when a romantic partner wants to be very close.                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8.  | I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me.                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9.  | I'm afraid that I will lose my partner's love.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10. | I talk things over with my partner.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11. | I find it easy to depend on romantic partners.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 12. | I find it relatively easy to get close to my partner.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 13. | I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner.                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 14. | It makes me mad that I don't get the affection and support I need from my partner.              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 15. | I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on romantic partners.                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 16. | I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him or her.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 17. | When I show my feelings for romantic partners, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 18. | I worry a lot about my relationships.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 19. | It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need.                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 20. | My partner really understands me and my needs.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 21. | I worry that romantic partners won't care about me as much as I care about them.                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 22. | Sometimes romantic partners change their feelings about me for no apparent reason.              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 23. | I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 24. | I find that my partner(s) don't want to get as close as I would like.                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 25. | I'm afraid that once a romantic partner gets to know me, he or she won't like who I really am.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 26. | I am nervous when partners get too close to me.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 27. | I am very comfortable being close to romantic partners.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 28. | It's easy for me to be affectionate with my partner.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 29. | I do not often worry about being abandoned.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 30. | My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

- |     |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 31. | When my partner is out of sight, I worry that he or she might become interested in someone else. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 32. | I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 33. | I feel comfortable depending on romantic partners.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 34. | I don't feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 35. | I worry that I won't measure up to other people.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 36. | My partner only seems to notice me when I'm angry.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

## APPENDIX F

### DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ years
2. Education:    Freshman    Sophomore    Junior    Senior    Graduate Student
3. Ethnicity:    African American    African    West Indian    Bi-Racial (please specify below)  
    Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Marital Status: Never Married    Married    Separated    Divorced    Widowed
5. Current Relationship Status (check all that apply):  
       \_\_\_ Not Dating Anyone  
       \_\_\_ Dating, but no one exclusively  
       \_\_\_ Exclusive Partner  
       \_\_\_ Cohabiting  
       \_\_\_ Engaged  
       \_\_\_ Married

If you are not currently in an exclusive, monogamous relationship, proceed to question # 8.

6. How long have you been with your partner?  
       \_\_\_ years        \_\_\_ months        \_\_\_ weeks
7. How satisfied are you with your relationship? (circle one)

Very Satisfied                      Mostly Satisfied                      Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied

Mostly Dissatisfied    Very Dissatisfied

8. Your sexual orientation: (please check one)  
       \_\_\_ Exclusively heterosexual  
       \_\_\_ Mostly heterosexual  
       \_\_\_ Equally heterosexual and homosexual  
       \_\_\_ Mostly homosexual  
       \_\_\_ Exclusively homosexual
9. How many exclusive relationships have you had since the age of 16? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What is the *average* length of your relationships? (please check one)  
       \_\_\_ between 1 and 6 months  
       \_\_\_ between 7 and 12 months  
       \_\_\_ between 1 and 2 years  
       \_\_\_ 2 years and longer
11. What is the length of your longest relationship?  
       \_\_\_ years    \_\_\_ months

12. Consider your living arrangements while you were growing up. *Most of the time* growing up, what adults did you live with? Please check the most accurate description.

- ☐ Biological mother only  
☐ Foster/Adoptive mother only (circle one)  
☐ Biological father only  
☐ Adoptive father only  
☐ Biological mother and father  
☐ Mother and Stepfather  
☐ Father and Stepmother  
☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is the marital status of your parents?

- ☐ married  
☐ never married  
☐ divorced: What was your age when they divorced? \_\_\_\_  
☐ separated: What was your age when they separated? \_\_\_\_

14. If your parents were never married, did your mother or father live with you at any time?  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_ How long? \_\_\_\_\_

15. If you did NOT live with both biological parents until age 18, why not?  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. If you did not live with your biological father during childhood, why not?  
\_\_\_\_\_

17. How old were you when your biological father no longer lived with you? \_\_\_\_\_

18. If you did not live with your biological mother during childhood, why not?

19. How old were you when your biological mother no longer lived with you? \_\_\_\_\_

20. Have either of your parents ever been imprisoned? \_\_\_\_\_

21. Have either of your parents died? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, which of your parents died? \_\_\_\_ mother \_\_\_\_ father \_\_\_\_ both. How old were you when he/she died? \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ .

22. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother/mother figure?

23. What is the highest level of education completed by your father/father figure?

## VITA

Nicole A. Dock

### *Department of Study*

The Virginia Consortium Program in Clinical Psychology  
Virginia Beach Higher Education Center  
1881 University Drive, Suite 239  
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23453-8083

Telephone: 757.368.1820

Fax: 757.368.1823

### *Education*

- August 2009    Doctor of Psychology, Clinical Psychology  
The Virginia Consortium Program in Clinical Psychology  
Virginia Beach, Virginia
- Dec 2001       Bachelor of Arts, Psychology Major  
Hampton University  
Hampton, Virginia

### *Relevant Work Experiences*

- 12/08-present    Clinical Psychologist for Hudson County of New Jersey. Conduct psychological assessments; provide individual and group therapy; coordinate care with interdisciplinary treatment teams; provide clinical training to staff. Population includes adults with Axis I, II, and III disorders in a psychiatric inpatient setting.
- 2/07-12/08       Staff Clinical Psychologist 3 for Vineland Developmental Center in NJ. Developed behavior support plans; conducted individual counseling; provided behavior management training to staff; supervised bachelor's level clinical staff; coordinated care with interdisciplinary team; completed various assessments and clinical paperwork. Population included adults with developmental disorders in an institutional setting.
- 9/05-9/06       Intern for Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, NY. Conducted and interpreted psycho-educational and psychological evaluations; provided various modes of individual and group therapy; presented clinical cases, created and implemented behavioral management and treatment plans. Population included children, adolescents, and adults with Axis I, II, and III disorders in hospital inpatient and outpatient settings, a community weight down program, and a development center.
- 8/04-5/05       Student Therapist for Norfolk State University Counseling Center. Conducted intake evaluations; created and implemented treatment plans; provided individual therapy and crisis intervention; developed and implemented outreach programs; completed administrative and clinical paperwork. Population included outpatient undergraduate and graduate students with Axis I disorders.