

CH. 8, Close Relationships

I. Attachment Theory

A. Bowlby's Conceptualization

- Ethological approach to the infant-caregiver relationship
- Challenges Object relations view of food as primary connection between caregiver and child. Consistent with Harlow's studies with the wire and terry cloth mothers (Rhesus Monkeys).
- Attachment system regulates behaviors aimed at maintaining optimal proximity to the attachment figure.
 - stages
 - pre-attachment (0-6 weeks)
 - indiscriminant use of signaling behaviors
 - attachment in the making (6 weeks - 6-8 months)
 - selective use of signaling behaviors
 - clear-cut attachment (to 2 years)
 - facilitated by locomotor development
 - secure base behavior
 - formation of reciprocal relationship (2yrs >)
 - child symbolically represents attachment fig.
- Normative model. We all form attachments.
 - Major disruptions of attachment relationships result in pathology
- Working Models of self and other are developed in the child-caregiver relationship.
 - Model of other (caregiver) is developed first
 - Model of self is developed from our model of other

B. Mary Ainsworth's Individual difference approach.

- Trained by Bowlby
- Looked at differences in the quality of child-caregiver relationships in normative samples.
- Original studies in Uganda.
 - Cross-Cultural Followup in Baltimore, MD.
- The Strange Situation
 - Mother baby observer, 30,sec.
 - Mother baby 3 min
 - stranger mother baby 3 min
 - stranger baby 3 min or less
 - mother baby 3 min or longer
 - baby alone 3 min or less
 - stranger baby 3 min or less
 - mother baby 3 min
- 3 category Classification
 - Secure = 65%
 - Use mother as secure base
 - Show stranger anxiety
 - Show separation anxiety
 - Calm down when mother returns (secure base beh.)
 - Insecure-Avoidant = 20%
 - Focus on pseudo exploration
 - No apparent stranger or separation anxiety (heart monitor shows

otherwise)

- Insecure-Resistant / Ambivalent = 15 %
 - Little exploration, maintain proximity to caregiver
 - Extreme stranger and separation anxiety
 - do not calm down when mother returns.

- Mary Main's 4th category

- Disorganized / Disoriented
 - Previously categorized as secure
 - noted by freezing, stereotyped behavior, and approach/avoidant beh.
 - over-represented by abused and neglected children

C. Adult Attachment

- Hazan & Shaver (1987)

- Conceptualized adult romantic (and other close relationships) as an attachment process.
 - Involves careseeking, caregiving, and sexual components (sex not included in child attachment system).
- Classified the quality of Romantic Relationships by adapting Ainsworth's 3 category system.

- Avoidant I am comfortable without a lot of closeness. It is important to me to be independent and self-reliant. I'd rather not depend on others or have others depend on me.
- Ambivalent I want closeness, but I find others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I sometimes worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close, or that others won't care about me as much as I care about them.
- Secure I am comfortable with closeness, and find it relatively easy to trust and depend on others. I don't often worry about being hurt by those I'm close to.
- Bartholomew's 4 category Model (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991)
- suggest that there are 2 dimensions underlying attachment: Model of Self, Model of Other
- Secure. A) It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on others and having others depend on me. I don't worry about being alone or having others not accept me.
(Positive Self, Positive Other)
- Dismissing B) I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me.
(Positive Self, Negative Other)
- Preoccupied C) I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don't value me as much as I value them.
(Negative Self, Positive Other)
- Fearful D) I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close

relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.

(Negative Other, Negative Self)

- Other researchers have questioned the self/other dimensions
 - The two dimensions are thought to reflect:
 - Security vs. Insecurity
 - Closeness vs. Avoidance

D. Correlates of Adult Attachment

- Security = Interpersonal competence
Better relationship Quality (Parent child, peer, and romantic)
Higher levels of marital satisfaction
Better conflict management skills
Fewer worries about work and school performance
Higher College GPA (using SAT as covariate)
More curiosity and physical exploration of the world
Relationships serve as stress buffers.
- Security is negatively associated with childhood sexual abuse.
- Dismissing Have stereotyped positive views of themselves
- That do not match peer and romantic partner ratings
Down play the importance of close relationships
Tend to focus on work to the exclusion of social relationships
Show lower levels of curiosity for novel objects and relationship information
- Preoccupied Have higher levels of anxiety about close relationships
Report more relationship conflict
Have higher levels of anxiety about their work and school performance.
Reports that relationship and social concerns interfere with their work and school activities
- Fearful Are over represented among children of alcoholics
Have negative perceptions about close relationships
Report lower level of academic curiosity and exploration of college campus and surrounding areas.

