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**Attachment to Mother, Father, and Best Friend as Predictors
of the Quality of Adolescent Romantic Relationships**

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A Thesis

In

The Department

Of

Psychology

**Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
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Abstract

Attachment to Mother, Father, and Best Friend as Predictors of the Quality of Adolescent Romantic Relationships

Sara Day

The relative contribution of the attachment to mother, father, and best friend to the quality of adolescent romantic relationships was investigated. Participants (N= 276, mean age = 19) completed the Relationships Questionnaire (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Scores were calculated to form perception of one's worthiness with the target figure (Model of Self) and perception of the target figure's availability (Model of Other; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Hypotheses were: 1) attachment to romantic partner would be predicted by attachment to best friend after controlling for the contribution of attachment to parents, and 2) attachment to parents would predict attachment to best friend.

Results indicated that more secure attachments to parents predicted more favorable views of the Self with Romantic Partner, with views of Self with Father uniquely contributing. In addition, attachment to best friend predicted beyond that of parents, with Self with Best Friend uniquely contributing. Relationship quality with parents predicted the quality of best friendships, with views of Self with and of mother uniquely contributing. These results suggest that the more favorable adolescents view themselves with their best friend, and their parents, the more positively they view

themselves with their romantic partner. Additionally, how adolescents perceive themselves with and view their mothers seems to play a unique role in how they see themselves with and view their best friends. Furthermore, while good relationships with mothers may contribute uniquely to more secure adolescent best friendships, fathers may have a special place in adolescents' romantic relationships.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures	viii
List of Tables	ix
List of Appendices	x
Introduction	1
Attachment Theory	1
Internal Working Models	4
Individual Differences in Attachment	5
Attachment across the Lifespan	9
Sullivan's Theory of Social-Personality Development	15
Behavioral Systems Conceptualization of Romantic Relationships	16
Relational Views	19
Further Research on Friendships and Romantic Relationships	21
The Present Study	23
Method	25
Participants	25
Procedure	26
Measures	26
Results	28
Data Analysis	28
Predictions to Self with Romantic Partner Controlling for Length of Relationship	29

Predictions of Model of Self with Romantic Partner Controlling for Important People	31
Summary of Results of Predictions to Romantic Relationship	34
Predictions to Model of Self and Other with Best Friend	36
Discussion	36
Future Direction	43
Summary	45
References	46
Appendices	55

List of Figures

	Page
Figure 1. The Four Attachment Styles Conceptualized as Model of Self and Other	10

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1: Hierarchical regressions predicting Model of Self and Other with Romantic Partner from Length of Relationship, Models of Self and Other with Best Friend, Mother and Father.	30
Table 2: Hierarchical regressions predicting Model of Self and Other with Romantic Partner from Length of Relationship, Models of Self and Other with Mother, Father, and Best Friend.	32
Table 3: Hierarchical regressions predicting Model of Self and Other with Romantic Partner from Important People, Models of Self and Other with Best Friend, Mother and Father.	33
Table 4: Hierarchical regressions predicting Model of Self and Other with Romantic Partner from Length of Relationship, Models of Self and Other with, Mother, Father, and Best Friend.	35
Table 5: Regressions predicting to Models of Self and Other with Best Friend from Models of Self and Other with Mother and Father.	37

:

List of Appendices

	Page
Appendix A: Consent Form	55
Appendix B: Relationship Questionnaire	57
Appendix C: General Information	59
Appendix D: Relationships History	61
Appendix E: Important People Questionnaire	63

Attachment to Mother, Father, and Best Friend as Predictors of the Quality of Adolescent Romantic Relationships

Psychologists have long been interested in the influence of parent-child relationships on subsequent relationships. More recently researchers of adolescent romantic relationships have examined the impact of peer relations. The following study assesses the relative contribution of parental relationships and best friendships to romantic relationships in late adolescence, using attachment theory to conceptualize individual differences in the quality of relationships.

Psychoanalytical thought has long maintained that early developmental history is paramount in the understanding of subsequent relationships. Freud (1940, as cited in Owens, Crowell, Pan, Treboux, O'Connor, & Waters, 1995) maintained that the infant-mother relationship was a prototype that influenced later love relationships. Bowlby (1958, 1960, 1962, as cited in Waters, Kondo-Ikemura, Posada, & Richters, 1988) preserved this insight in his early writings on attachment theory, which provided a framework as to how and why our earliest relationships affect subsequent liaisons. Rather than Freud's mental energy and drive reduction model of motivation, Bowlby developed an ethological/control systems model of motivation more in keeping with the research of the times (Waters et al., 1988).

Attachment Theory

The central tenet of attachment theory is that humans, like other primates, possess an evolutionarily adapted attachment behavior system. This system, like the physiological systems that serve to maintain set goals for various body functions, has a set goal of keeping a sufficient degree of physical proximity to the caregiver or

attachment figure, in order to ensure safety. According to Bowlby (1969/1982) attachment bonds have four defining features that emerge in sequence and distinguish them from other types of social relations. The first feature is *close proximity*. This is maintained by intentional actions on the part of the caregiver and reflexive behavior on the part of the infant. The second feature, *safe haven*, begins to emerge as the infant learns to associate the caregiver with comfort and alleviation of distress. The advent of self-locomotion and stranger wariness brings forth the third and fourth features. The third feature, *separation distress*, is the tendency to resist and be distressed by separations from the caregiver. The fourth feature, *secure base*, is when the infant derives security from the availability of the caregiver and uses that caregiver as a base from which it can explore the world safely.

Bowlby's theory of attachment grew out of his and other investigators' (Edelston, 1943; Henincke, 1958; Robertson, 1953, as cited in Vormbrock, 1993) observations of the behavior of infants and young children who were separated from their primary caregivers due to hospitalization or placement in a residential nursery. From these observations, Robertson and Bowlby (1952; Bowlby, 1960, as cited in Vormbrock, 1993) concluded that young children separated from their mother exhibited a three-stage sequence of emotional reaction: 1) protest; crying, seeking, and resistance to others' soothing efforts, 2) despair; apathetic withdrawal, lethargy, passivity, mixture of clinging behavior and turning away from mother during visits, and 3) detachment; superficial amiability without real attachment to nurses, preoccupation with sweets and toys rather than with mother during visits, renewed interest in surroundings. When the children returned to their homes, they were observed to be strangely remote and seemed to enter a

phase of ambivalence. In this phase the children alternated between anxiously clinging to, and outburst of anger toward their mother. This behavior disappeared within a three-month time period.

Through these observations, Bowlby (1969) concluded that these reactions are biologically programmed behaviors in which built-in mechanisms develop at birth to ensure physical closeness between parents and their young. Physical separation is one of any number of threatening conditions which activate the system, eliciting distress behavior in the child aimed at reestablishing contact with the parent (Bowlby, 1969). As well, because of what is called the "caregiving behavioral system" (Bowlby, 1969, 1973), the parent is biologically predisposed to be responsive to the child's distress. Therefore, the child's anger at reunion serves to discourage the parent from leaving again (Bowlby, 1973).

Only when an infant is healthy, alert and unafraid and in the presence of its mother does it seem interested in the exploration of its environment and the establishment of affiliative contact with others. In other words the infant uses the mother as a secure base from which it can venture out with confidence (Bowlby, 1973). Strong feelings of security are based on the knowledge that the attachment figure is available and responsive (Bowlby, 1982). According to Main (1990) infants are equipped with adaptive biologically based abilities to tailor the necessary attachment behaviors to particular care-giving contexts. These abilities she called attachment strategies. A secure attachment relationship in infancy is one in which the infant displays "primary conditional strategies" such as proximity seeking under stressful conditions and exploration under conditions of safety. This relationship however depends on the

primary caregiver's sensitivity and responsiveness and on the child's ability to trust in the caregiver's accessibility. When there is insensitivity, distrust or unresponsiveness "secondary conditional strategies" may be employed such as anxious clinging and vigilance or premature independence as the child adapts to non-optimal caregiving environments (Rothbard & Shaver, 1994).

Internal Working Models

This earliest relationship that children form with their attachment figure with respect to her/his accessibility and responsiveness is of fundamental importance because it shapes what Bowlby (1969, 1973) called "internal working models"; that is, internal mental representations as to whether or not the world is a safe place, if close others are dependable, and if the self is viewed as lovable and protected. These representations are used to interpret and predict the behavior of others as well as to plan one's own responses, an idea Bowlby drew from Craik, a psychologist involved in the design of intelligent rocket guidance systems. Craik (1943, as cited in Bretherton, 1990) first proposed a conceptualization of the representational process when he wrote:

...If the organism carried a 'small-scale model' of external reality and of its own possible actions within its head, it is able to try out various alternatives, conclude which is the best of them, react to future situations before they arise, utilize the knowledge of past events in dealing with the present and future and in every way to react in a much fuller, safer and more competent manner to the emergencies which face it (p. 61).

Internal working models are constructed through repeated interactions throughout childhood and adolescence and thought to be at first relatively flexible and impressionable (hence the term “working”). However, the same type of repeated interactions will eventually structure and strengthen the emerging models making them resistant although not impervious to change (Bretherton, Ridgeway, & Cassidy, 1990, as cited in Rothbard & Shaver, 1994). Bowlby (1973) also considered the expectations of the accessibility and responsiveness of the attachment figures that the individual develops as an accurate reflection of what the child has actually experienced. Essentially, working models of self and other become blueprints for later relationships, providing a template as to whether the child feels worthy of being responded to and loved and whether their attachment figures can be relied upon for support during times of distress (Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985). These models are then carried forward into new relationships where they guide expectations, perceptions and behavior; providing for cross-age continuity in attachment style. These processes are particularly important for understanding the role early relationships play in determining adult relationships (Collins & Read, 1990).

Individual Differences in Attachment

Because parents are not all alike as to their ability to be sensitive or responsive to the child, individual differences in working models arise in the child’s image of themselves, others, and the world around them. Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall (1978) created a research paradigm known as the “Strange Situation” which elicits an infant’s attachment behaviors through brief separation and reunion situations between the infant and caregiver. Following introductory periods where the infant is introduced to the room, toys and a stranger, the parent leaves the room and returns to it twice. Through

laboratory observations three major styles of attachment were identified: secure (Group B), anxious/ambivalent (Group C), and avoidant (Group A). Home observations of these same infants found the caregivers of children with each attachment style behaved differently.

An infant classified as secure is one who is able to use the caregiver as a secure base for explorations of a novel room and toys while often checking back with the caregiver. When separated from the caregiver the infant may be overtly distressed; however, s/he may be friendly with the stranger and somewhat comforted. Upon reunion with the caregiver the distressed secure infant will seek contact, be readily comforted and then return to play. Even if not distressed, a secure infant will be responsive to the caregiver's return either by smiling and/or initiating interaction. Home observations of these infants found caregivers to be consistently available and responsive. According to Campos, Barrett, Lamb, Goldsmith, and Stenberg (1983) this is the most common of attachment patterns (about 60% of American samples).

The anxious/ambivalent infant is unable to use the caregiver as a secure base for the exploration of a novel situation, is wary of the stranger, and seeks contact with the caregiver even before separation. When actually separated s/he is likely to be quite distressed and not easily calmed. Once reunited with the caregiver, although the infant may seek contact, s/he is not calmed by that contact. In many cases the infant will seek and then resist contact angrily once achieved, showing an obvious ambivalence in the relationship. Home observations found these caregivers to exhibit inconsistent responsiveness to the infant's signals, at times being unavailable or unresponsive and at

other times being intrusive. Approximately 15% in American samples have been found to be anxiously/ambivalently attached (Campos et al., 1983).

The third classification, an avoidant infant, will show a different pattern. S/he will usually engage with the toys in the presence of the caregiver but is unlikely to show affective sharing. Upon separation the infant often does not show signs of distress and tends to treat the stranger the same way s/he does the caregiver. When reunited with the caregiver, the infant shows signs of ignoring, looking away, or moving past the caregiver and will make no effort to maintain contact if picked up. In home observations the caregivers of these infants consistently rebuffed or deflected their infants' bids for comfort, especially for close bodily contact. Campos et al. (1983) classified approximately 25% of their sample as avoidant.

Approximately 15% of attachments in normative samples are difficult to classify using the A, B, C system (Solomon & George, 1999). These infants exhibit disorganized and/or disoriented behaviors in the parent's presence (i.e., disoriented movements, dazed expressions, and brief gestures of fearfulness and prolonged stilling and stereotypies). These behaviors have been attributed to intruding perceptions of the parent as frightening or frightened (Main & Solomon, 1990). Main and Solomon (1990) introduced an additional classification for such cases entitled "disorganized/disoriented" (Group D).

Sensitive caregivers give rise to securely attached children, who simultaneously develop an internal working model of the caregiver as trustworthy and helpful and the self as deserving of such treatment. Insensitive caregiving on the other hand, leads to an insecure attachment with an internal working model of the caregiver as unavailable and not trustworthy and the self as unworthy of sensitive treatment (Bowlby, 1973). Both

Ainsworth (1989) and Bowlby (1979) proposed that attachment bonds continue throughout the lifespan, and are not restricted to the primary caregiver but occur with other people as well. Furthermore, the internal working models are the primary vehicles for the formation of subsequent attachment relationships.

A meta-analysis of the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George, Kaplan, & Main, 1996) assessing adult patterns of attachment revealed a distribution of classifications similar to that found in infancy: 58% secure, 24% dismissing, and 18% preoccupied (Bakermans-Kranenburg & van Ijzendoorn, 1993). Findings of concordance between the AAI and infant strange situation for *adolescents* have been mixed, from high concordance to none at all (Main, 1997; Hamilton, 1994; Weinfield, 1996 as cited in Allen & Land, 1999). Results of a study by Waters et al. (1995, as cited in Allen & Land, 1999) help to explain this discrepancy. Security in the AAI was concordant with infant strange situation security at a rate of 70% ($\kappa = .40$). However when individuals who had undergone major life events were excluded the concordance rate rose to 78% ($\kappa = .52$). Individuals with a significant major life event had a concordance of only 44%, which was not significant. Adolescent attachment organization may be significantly influenced both by developmental changes and by challenges in the current environment (Allen & Land, 1999).

In keeping with Bowlby's (1973) internal working models of self and other, Bartholomew (1990) described *four* prototypic forms of adult attachment, derived by combining positive and negative view of self with positive and negative view of others. They are secure, preoccupied, dismissing and fearful attachment patterns. According to Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) someone with a secure attachment pattern would have

a sense of worthiness or being lovable as well as the expectation that other people are generally accepting and responsive. A person with a preoccupied attachment pattern would have a sense of unworthiness or not being lovable but a positive evaluation of others. The third attachment pattern, dismissing, would describe a person who has a sense of worthiness or being lovable combined with a negative disposition toward other people. Finally, a person with a fearful attachment style would have a sense of unworthiness or not being lovable as well as an expectation that others are not trustworthy and rejecting (see Figure 1).

The two dimensions of model of self and model of other represent general expectations about the worthiness of the self and the availability of others while the four attachment patterns are conceptualized as prototypic strategies for regulating felt security in close relationships (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Both approaches have been useful in organizing and understanding individual differences in self-concept and interpersonal functioning (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

Attachment throughout the Lifespan

In addition to Bartholomew and Horowitz, a number of researchers (e.g., Feeny & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Zeifman, 1994; Main, 1990) have investigated attachment in adults. According to Bowlby (1979), the attachment system in adults continues to be operative in two ways: 1) through the influence of the initial parent-child attachment on other relationships, and 2) through the formation and continuation of other attachments, the prototypical one being with the romantic partner. It is through the mechanism of the internal working models that the influence of the initial parent-child attachment on romantic relationships is thought to take place.

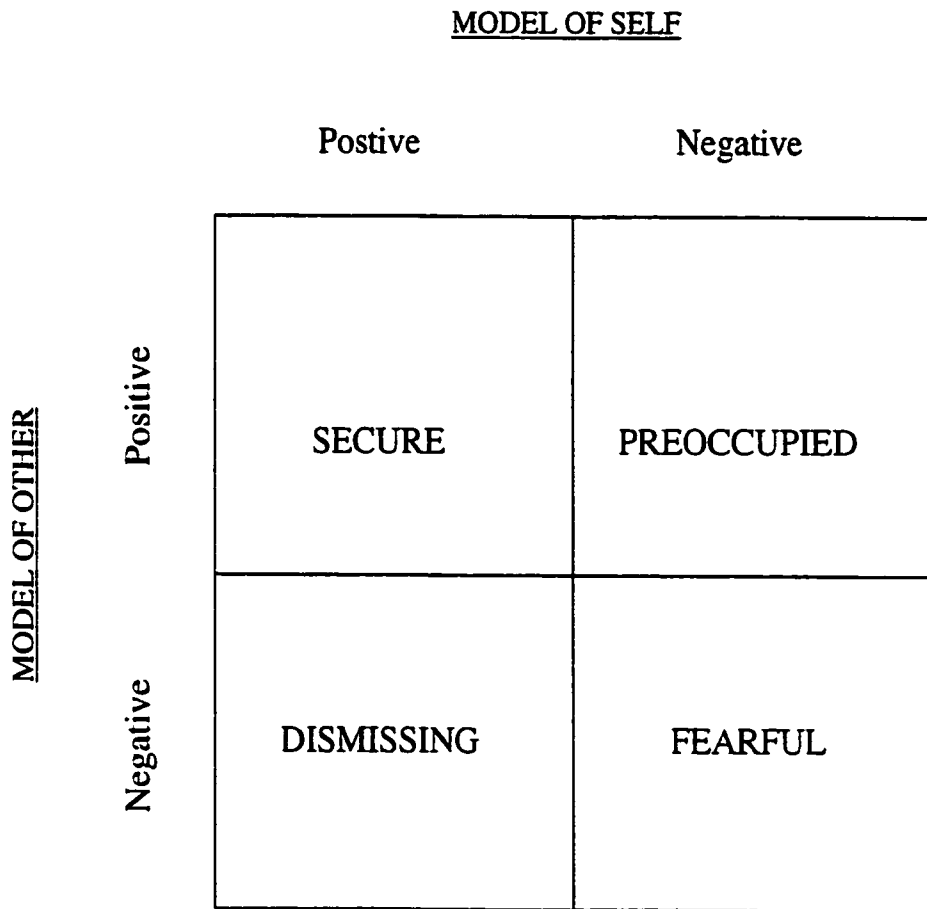


Figure 1: The four attachment styles conceptualized as Model of Self and Other (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991)

Other research has explored whether romantic partners and best friends become attachment figures. Weiss (1982, 1988) was the first to investigate if adult romantic relationships are indeed attachment bonds. He began his research with adults much like Bowlby did with infants, by looking at responses of individuals to separation and loss. He noted that divorced and widowed subjects responded to separation in ways similar to children responding to separations from attachment figures. He also maintained that the four features of infant-caregiver bonds, proximity maintenance, safe haven, separation protest and secure base, apply not only to most marital relationships but committed romantic relationships as well (Weiss, 1991). That is, an individual not only wants to be with their partner, especially in stressful situations, and derives comfort and security from that partner, but also protests when the partner threatens to become unavailable.

Hazan and Zeifman (1994) also investigated the four features of attachment, to see if romantic relationships met the definitional criteria. They also wanted to determine if romantic relationships do in fact replace the parental figures as the predominant source of emotional security. In their study, an interview measure of the four attachment features was developed. Then it was administered to three groups of adults ($N = 120$) ranging in age from 18 to 82: those not in a romantic relationship, those in a romantic relationship for less than two years, and those in a romantic relationship for two or more years. Results of the study showed that while nearly all participants indicated proximity maintenance and safe haven items for friends and romantic partners rather than parents or siblings, only those involved in romantic relationships of at least two years named partners in response to the items covering separation distress and secure base. Individuals in romantic relationships of a shorter period, or those who did not have a romantic partner

named a parent or, to a lesser degree, a friend as a base of security. As Bowlby predicted, romantic partners of two years duration, do assume the primary status of attachment figures (Hazan & Zeifman, 1999).

Close friendships have been identified as fulfilling components of attachment roles (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985; Gottman, 1983; Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986). Hazan and Zeifman (1994) argued that developmentally a new attachment relationship requires each component of attachment to be transferred sequentially from the parent to the peer. In a cross sectional study of children and adolescents ranging in age from 6 to 17, they looked at this transfer of attachment components. They found that while the proximity-seeking component was transferred to peers in early childhood, there was a marked shift between the ages of 8 and 14 in the safe-haven component. Finally, it was not until later adolescence (ages 15-17years) that the relationships could be considered “full-blown” attachments with the inclusion of the secure base component. Using a revised version of Hazan’s attachment-related functions measure (WHO TO, Hazan, Hutt, Sturgeon, & Bricker, 1991) with one hundred and fifty-six university students (mean age = 20.42 years, SD = 3.82), Fraley and Davis (1997) also found all attachment components present with romantic partners only for those in relationships of approximately two years or more in length. Furthermore, the degree of transfer of attachment related functions from parent to peer increased as a function of the relationship length. In non-dating participants, however, friendships that fulfilled all three of the attachment-related functions used in their study (separation anxiety was not measured) had lasted on average five and a half years. Again, the transfer of attachment-related functions from parent to friend increased as a function of the friendship duration.

Attachment functions were more likely to be transferred to friendship relationships that were characterized by high levels of mutual caring/support and trust/intimacy (Fraley & Davis, 1997). In defining attachment with the four components in these studies we can see that not only romantic partners but also close friendships may become attachment figures in adulthood.

In considering Bowlby's tenet that early parent-child attachment influences other relationships, research has shown strong links between early caregiver-child attachment quality and childhood relationships. For preschool children, security of attachment in infancy strongly predicted effective peer relationships, more popularity among peers, and positive relationships with teachers (Sroufe, 1983; Sroufe, Schork, Motti, Lawroski, & LaFreniere, 1984; Suess, 1987, as cited in Collins & Sroufe, 1999). In middle-childhood, children who had been securely attached at 12 to 18 months were more likely to form a friendship than those who had been insecurely attached, and attachments at age 1 also predicted peer competence in a camp setting at age ten (Elicker, Englund, & Sroufe, 1992, as cited in Kerns, 1996). Kerns (1996) found in a study of fourth and fifth graders that securely attached children reported better quality friendships than did insecurely attached children, and, in friend dyads, children's perceptions of and interactions in friendships were related to mother-child attachment quality.

The influence of parent-child relationships has also been studied in adult relationships, in particular adult romantic relationships. Because working models of self and other are formed as a result of interaction with attachment figures, they should influence behavior in situations that elicit attachment behavior (Bowlby, 1988; Bretherton, 1987, Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985). Thus, for adults, working models of

childhood attachment relationships should be strongly related to the quality of both parent-child and couple relationships (Cohn, Silver, Cowan, Cowan, & Pearson, 1992). Using the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George, Kaplan, & Main, 1996), Cohn et al., (1992) found working models of childhood attachment relationships in both laboratory and home observations to be associated with the quality of couple relationships in adulthood. Husbands classified as secure on the AAI were likely to be in dyads that engaged in more positive interactions and displayed less conflict than those classified as insecure.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) argued that individual differences in how romantic love is experienced and manifested are due to differences in past attachment histories, and found three main types of love relationships that parallel the three main infant attachment classifications of Ainsworth et al. (1978). Through a measure of attachment history they also found perceptions of the quality of participants' relationships with each parent and the parents' relationship with each other was the best predictor of adult attachment. Furthermore, results also indicated that people with different attachment orientations entertained different beliefs about the course of romantic love, the availability and trustworthiness of love partners and their own love-worthiness, thus reflecting individuals' working models. Finally, they also found that people experienced love differently in a manner consistent with their attachment style. This landmark study providing a link between infant attachment theory and the theories of romantic love instigated numerous subsequent studies in the area of attachment and romantic relationships (e.g., Bringle & Bagby, 1992; Feeny & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1990, 1994; Kobak & Hazan, 1991; Main, 1990).

According to Bowlby's theory of working models of attachment relationships and the subsequent research on the links between parent-child attachment with childhood relationships as well as with adult romantic relationships, it seems logical that parent-child attachment would also predict *adolescent* romantic relationships. However researchers in adolescence (e.g., Brown, 1999; Furman, 1999) point out this may be only one factor in predicting romantic relationships, and that the impact of friendships, and other peer relationships must also be considered. Brown (1999) and Furman (1999) argue that adolescent romantic relationships resemble friendships more than the parent-child relationship, and are therefore influenced by friendships, because they are simultaneously reciprocal, voluntary, and form in the context of peer relationships. Sullivan (1953) was one of the first theorists to recognize the contributions of both parents and peer relationships in the development of subsequent relationships.

Sullivan's Theory of Social-Personality Development

In his theory of social-personality development, Sullivan talks of five social needs added one at a time to six developmental stages. They are tenderness, companionship, acceptance, intimacy and sexuality. For each of these needs there is a key relationship, which is crucial for the fulfillment of that stage's need. In the first two stages (from 0-6 years) the key relationship is with the parents. In the third stage (between 6-9 years) there is a shift in the primary object of companionship need from parent to peers and the emerging need becomes acceptance by one's peers.

"Chumships" are formed in the fourth stage (preadolescence between 9-12 years) when there is a need for intimacy exchange and friendships. At this time friendships, particularly same-sex friends, begin to replace parents for fulfillment of all the needs.

“Chumships” are intensive close bonds based on extensive self-disclosure and validations of personal worth. Preadolescents can feel worthy and important because they are intensely wanted and needed by their chums. The crucial factor in achieving the friend’s esteem, however, is being a good relationship partner; that is, having a loving and caring orientation that leads one chum to love and care about the other (Buhrmester & Furman, 1986). These chumships represent a significant advance in children’s mastery of forms of personal relationships and are considered the prototype of adult friendships as well as the foundation for romantic and marital relationships (Berndt, 1982; Buhrmester, & Furman, 1986).

In the last two stages, the need for sexuality is added, which is fulfilled by the romantic partner. During these stages the romantic partner can also replace the same-sex friend as the key relationship for the need for intimacy, companionship and tenderness. These stages cover the entire adolescent period from puberty through young adulthood. The task of early adolescence is that of discovering one’s sexual identity and preferred way of relating to a romantic partner. In late adolescence the task is to establish a network of mature interpersonal relationships, one of which is a committed love relationship. Sullivan’s theory clearly recognizes the contributions of both parent-child and peer relationships. From this theory one can readily see a developmental sequence in which the fulfillment of social needs is first met by parents then peers and finally romantic relationships.

A Behavioral Systems Conceptualization of Romantic Relationships

Furman and Wehner’s (1994) behavioral systems conceptualization of romantic relationships expands on Sullivan’s theory by integrating insights from attachment

theory. It also accounts for both parental and peer contributions to romantic relationships. A behavioral system is a goal-corrected system that functions to maintain a relatively steady state between the individual and his/her environment (Bretherton, 1985). This behavioral system includes: (a) an appraisal process that indicates if the set goal of the system is being met or not, (b) emotions elicited by this process when the set goal is met or not, and (c) emotion-related actions that correct the system when the set goal is not met (Shaver & Hazan, 1988).

In Shaver & Hazan's (1988) model of love they proposed an integration of the attachment, caregiving, and sexual behavioral systems. Furman and Wehner (1994) add the *affiliative* system as well for romantic relationships, and contend that this system is particularly important for understanding the contribution of peer relationships.

The four behavior systems are thought to have evolved because they increased survival during the course of evolution. Furman (1999) pays particular attention to the affiliative system and maintains that humans are biologically predisposed to affiliate with people that are known, and that these interactions are adaptive because they provide protection and cooperative food sharing. Food-seeking strategies, such as fighting off other predators together, are examples of what Wrangham (1982, as cited in Furman, 1999) called *mutualism* where joint action results in immediate benefits to all parties. Giving food away is an example of *reciprocal altruism* (Triver, 1971, as cited in Furman, 1999) where there is no immediate benefit. However this action can be adaptive if there is opportunity for subsequent reciprocity. Interacting with someone known provides the greatest opportunities for the reciprocation of altruism. Affiliation therefore provides not only protection but also opportunities for mutualism and reciprocal altruism. Parent-child

relationships on the other hand provide few opportunities for mutualism or reciprocal altruism because the relationship is so asymmetrical (Furman, 1999). It is the egalitarian nature of peer relationships that provides rich opportunities for reciprocity, cooperation and reciprocal altruism. Through these interactions individuals develop not only their capacities to cooperate with and support one another, but also to co-construct a relationship (Furman, 1999). It is these skills that are important in the making and maintaining of romantic relationships.

The capacities for intimacy and conflict resolution are important relationship skills for romantic relationships that are enhanced by the affiliative system. Studies have shown that early relationships with caretakers play a critical role in the development of trust and the capacity for intimacy (for review see, Collins, Hennighausen, Schmit & Sroufe, 1997). However, such competencies are further developed in children's friendships (Furman, 1999). In friendships, intimacy and disclosure are no longer unidirectional but mutual, and it is in these relationships that children not only learn how to turn to peers, but also how to listen and be supportive (Furman, 1999). Similarly, children first learn how to resolve conflict through interactions with parents. However, unlike parent-child relationships, successful resolution of a conflict between peers usually requires negotiation on the part of both parties, as the participants are of equal status and power (Furman, 1999).

Using this framework it is easy to see why the inclusion of friendship is so important in the conceptualization of romantic relationships. At different points of time different behavioral systems are activated in romantic relationships. Romantic partners are thought to first emerge as an affiliative and sexual figure. This is when the influence

of peers is likely to be the strongest. Then as the attachment and caregiving systems become more important in romantic relationships (usually late adolescence or adulthood) the links with relationships with parents are expected to become more evident (Furman & Wehner, 1994).

Relational Views

Extending Bowlby's theory of working models, Furman and Wehner (1994) developed the concept of relational *views*: "the conscious and unconscious perceptions of a particular relationship, the self in that type of relationship, and the partner in that relationship" (p.178). Views are formed not only by the interactions within the relationship but also by past experiences in similar and other relationships, and are organized hierarchically (Furman & Simon, 1999). Individuals form a view of close relationships in general as well as different views of different types of relationships and different views of particular relationships themselves. The latter two views are formed by their relation to the behavioral systems and other characteristics that are salient in those relationships. Therefore views of different relationships need not be identical since they are based on different relational experiences. Hence, an individual may have distinct views for each type of relationship (i.e., "friendship views", and "romantic views") that are still influenced to some degree by the view of close relationships in general. This type of hierarchy accounts for some of the continuities and discontinuities across views of different relationships. Early parent-child experiences may influence the view of close relationships in general with regards to expectancies of intimacy and closeness, whereas peer experiences may influence the general view in areas of reciprocity, mutuality and other affiliation-related features. This view of close

relationships in general then influences the establishment of romantic views (Furman & Simon, 1999). Romantic views are not static however, and develop further as a function of the adolescent's romantic experience. When experiences in romantic relationships differ from existing expectations, views of the relationships change; conversely when romantic experiences are similar to those in past relationships, views are reinforced and further elaborated.

Furman and Wehner's (1994) study of 165 middle adolescent females in the 10th to 12th grades, showed support for their theory on relational views. They found a general relationship style in examining mother, father, closest friends and romantic relationships as well as evidence that specific styles (e.g., romantic) are linked with the experiences within and between particular types of relationships. With regards to comparisons between relationships, friendships and romantic styles were found to be consistently related to one another; whereas relationship style scores for parents were less related to romantic relationships but more related to those for friendships. A series of iterative regression analyses that were later performed revealed that the style scores for friends provided an increment above that obtained from parents in predicting romantic styles, whereas entering parental styles after friendship styles did not significantly improve predictions (Furman, 1999).

Additionally, in a subsequent subset (n = 54) of the same sample, working models were also examined using interviews for friendships and romantic relationships analogous to the Berkeley Adult Attachment Interview. Multiple coders read the transcripts and using Koback's (1993, as cited in Furman, 1999) Q-sort methodology, sorted the descriptors into 9 categories. Results indicated that ratings of security in

friendships and romantic relationships were significantly related ($r = .47, p < .01$), with 50% of the items in the set of friendship descriptors being significantly related to their corresponding romantic descriptors. The correlations between parental relationships and romantic relationships, however, were not significant, as only 5% of the items in the parent Q-sort were related to corresponding items in the romantic Q-sort. Interestingly, ratings of relationships with parents and of friendships were significantly related (Security $r = .34, p < .05$). Consistent with the results of the larger sample, iterative regression analyses revealed that the friendship scores provided a significant increment in the prediction of romantic scores above that obtained from the corresponding scores for relationships with parents. Neither of the scores for relationships with mother nor father provided a significant increment in prediction above that obtained from the corresponding friendship rating alone.

Further Research on Friendships and Romantic Relationships

As noted previously, romantic relationships and friendships share many affiliative features. Hendrick and Hendrick (1993) found that college students described the friendship aspects of their romantic relationship almost twice as often as any other aspect, including passion. Similarly, Feiring (1996) found the most frequently reported advantage of having a dating partner for the fifteen-year-olds interviewed were all affiliative features found in friendships: companionship, intimacy and support.

Furman and Buhrmester (1992), in a study using the Network of Relationships Inventory ($N = 112$; mean age = 15.6), found that the kinds of support obtained from friends and romantic partners were similar to each other, but different from those obtained from parents. Adolescents commonly turned to friends and romantic partners

for intimacy and companionship, but for affection, instrumental aid, and a sense of reliable alliance turned to parents. This pattern of results is consistent with the idea that affiliative features are particularly salient in both friendships and romantic relationships. Furthermore, support in best friendships provided a significant increment in predicting support in romantic relationships, above and beyond that obtained from the parent-adolescent relationships. Parent-adolescent relationships on the other hand provided a significant increment in predicting support in romantic relationships above that obtained from best friendships. This provides additional support that both types of relationships provide unique contributions to the prediction of support in romantic relationships (Furman, 1999).

In Freeman's (1998) study examining the relative strength of adolescent attachment to parents and peers ($N = 99$; mean age = 17.3), he predicted that adolescent attachment style would predict individual differences in who adolescents turned to for primary support (parents, best friend, romantic partner or other adult). Results indicated that for secure adolescents, parents, especially mothers were rated highest. However, secure respondents *with a romantic partner* rated mothers significantly lower than those without a romantic partner. Their ratings of best friends and romantic relationships were also significantly correlated giving the impression that secure adolescents expect similar types of support from their peer relationships as their romantic ones. Insecure adolescents preferred peers to parents for support. While dismissing respondents nominated both friends and romantic partners, preoccupied respondents more than any other attachment groups were more likely to nominate romantic partners. This suggests that who adolescents turn to for support varies depending on their attachment style.

Taken together, research on adolescence provides initial evidence that friendships and romantic relationships are related (Feiring, 1996; Furman & Buhrmester, 1992; Furman & Wehner, 1994; Hendrick & Hendrick, 1993). Additionally, representations of friendships may mediate a link between views of relationships with parents and those with romantic partners. The observed links between representations of parents and friends and those between representations of friends and romantic partners are consistent with this explanation (Furman & Wehner, 1994). However this does not explain the finding that representations of friendships typically accounted for additional variance in the prediction of romantic representations after representations of relationships with parents had been controlled for (Furman, 1999). This suggests that representations of friendships seem important in and of themselves, not just as mediators.

The Present Study

Empirical studies have well documented the link between the quality of early parent-child relationships and the quality of adult romantic relationships (Bowlby 1979; Feeny & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Similarly, early parent-child relationships have been linked with the quality of peer relationships (for review, see Elicker, Englund, & Sroufe, 1992). The importance of peer influence and close friendships on adolescent romantic relationships has also been established (Brown, 1999; Furman, 1999; Sullivan, 1953). What is less understood, however, is the joint role of parents and best friend in the development of such relationships.

The present study examines the relative contribution of the quality of relationship with mother, father, and best friend to the quality of adolescent romantic relationships. Individual differences in the quality of relationship with each of these target figures were

measured using two fundamental dimensions underlying attachment, Model of Self (Self) and Model of Other (Other). This enabled us to examine not only how one perceives his/her worthiness or loveableness in the relationship (Self), but also how the individual perceives the availability or dependability of the particular other (Other).

In using attachment to measure the quality of relationship, it was important to establish whether or not the romantic partner was an actual attachment figure. Previous research has shown that the duration of the relationship may be one indicator of whether the romantic partner is an attachment figure. For this reason we included length of relationship as a control variable. Another way of determining if someone is an attachment figure is the relative importance given to that person in the individual's life compared to other people. Thus, a second control variable indicated whether or not the individual nominated his or her romantic partner as one of the five most important people in his or her life.

In light of the developmental theory of romantic relationships (Furman & Wehner, 1994) and the previous research on adolescent romantic relationships, we hypothesized that for adolescents, attachment quality with best friends would predict attachment quality with romantic partners over and above what the quality of attachments with parents would predict. We also hypothesized that it is the quality of attachment relationship with parents that predicts the quality of attachment relationship with best friend, thus suggesting a possible developmental sequence of influence, with parental attachment quality influencing friendships, and friendship attachment quality influencing romantic relationships.

Method

Participants

Participants were 276 students from two Cegep colleges in Montreal, Quebec. Out of the 276, five were dropped from the analysis, as they were three standard deviations from the mean age of 19 years (ages ranged from 17-24). Of the remaining 271 participants, 155 were female and 116 were male. All but 11 of the participants lived at home. Ninety-nine of the participants reported that they currently had a romantic partner (female = 66, male = 33), the average length of relationship being less than one year. An additional 102 who were not presently in a romantic relationship said they previously had had one. One hundred and sixty two participants out of the 271 completed in its entirety the attachment measures for mother, father, best friend and romantic partner and of those 162, only 149 included the length of either their present or previous romantic relationship (female = 92, male = 57). Also of the 162, only 146 completed the questionnaire as to the important people in their lives (female = 87, male = 59).

Students varied in ethnicity. On the questionnaires, students could endorse one or more items. Seventy seven percent endorsed one item: of the total sample 25% endorsed European, 17% English Canadian, 11% Asian, 5.5% African, 4.7% French Canadian, 1.8% Latin American and 11.9% Other. Twenty one percent endorsed two or three items, most of which were a mixture of English Canadian with European or European with Other. Two percent of the sample did not endorse any items.

The majority of students came from middle-class families, based on reported occupation of father, and mother if working (Blishen, Carroll, & Moore, 1987). Mean socioeconomic status (SES) was 48.03 (SD = 15.75) for fathers (characteristic of

supervisors, opticians, construction electricians, and mechanical repairers) and 43.76 (SD = 13.46) for mothers (characteristic of social workers, teachers, interior designers, and sales persons) based on the 1981 socioeconomic index for occupations in Canada (Blishen et al., 1987).

Procedure

Following approval from the colleges' own ethics boards, permission was obtained from the Deans of the colleges and from the psychology professors to invite their students in class to participate in a study on relationships and well-being in adolescence. In class, students were given a written consent (see Appendix A) to participate and a questionnaire package of self-report measures. To encourage participation, the names of students who completed the package were entered into a draw for certificates at a local music store, movie passes, and a Discman. The consent rate was 98% and the questionnaire package took approximately one hour and thirty minutes to complete. The present study focused on four of the questionnaires contained in the larger package, which dealt with issues not relevant to this study (e.g., adjustment, coping strategies, and perceptions of parents' marital relationship).

Measures

The Relationship Questionnaire (RQ). To assess the quality of relationships between the adolescent and their mother, father, best friend, and romantic partner an adaptation of The Relationship Questionnaire (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) was administered. Both a dimensional and a categorical measure of attachment were used. There were four descriptive paragraphs, one for each attachment-style prototype: secure, fearful, preoccupied, and dismissing. In this study we asked participants to rate each

paragraph on 7-point scales indicating the extent to which the paragraph described them. They were then asked to choose one paragraph that best described each of their current or past relationships (mother, father, best friend, and romantic partner).

The RQ has been validated against self-report measures of self-concept and interpersonal functioning (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), and has shown significant correspondence with other self-report measures of attachment security (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998). According to Bartholomew (1996) the measure can be worded either to refer to general orientation to close relationships or to specific relationships. Recent research has employed the RQ in such a way as to measure older adolescents' attachment with multiple targets (Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994; Trinke & Bartholomew, 1997).

The Important People Questionnaire (Hazan, 1994). This questionnaire was used to determine whether or not the individual considered their romantic partner an important person in their life, one possible indication of that person being an actual attachment figure. In this questionnaire participants are asked to list the five most important people in their lives and to indicate the person's initials, relationship to them, approximate age, sex, and length of relationship.

The Relationship History questionnaire. This measure was used to determine whether or not a participant had a romantic partner and/or a best friend. Participants were also asked to indicate the length of relationship by checking one of 6 boxes ranging from "0-3 months" to "7+ years." Length of relationship was then used as a possible estimate of whether the romantic partner was indeed an attachment figure.

General Information. This questionnaire was used to obtain the age, sex, mother tongue, school attended, marital status of participants' parents, if they had siblings, and ethnic/cultural background, as well as the people with whom they were currently living.

Results

Data Analysis

In order to reduce the number of predictors into meaningful variables, the continuous ratings of secure, dismissing, preoccupied and fearful attachments were combined into two underlying dimensions of attachment; Model of Self and Model of Other (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Participants with secure attachment patterns are thought to have a positive view of self and others; those with dismissing attachment patterns have a positive view of self but negative view of others. Those with preoccupied attachment patterns have a negative view of self and positive view of other and finally, those with fearful attachments have a negative view of self and a negative view of others. A Model of Self dimension is obtained by summing the ratings of the two attachment patterns with positive self models (secure and dismissing) and subtracting the ratings of the two patterns with negative self models (preoccupied and fearful). A Model of Other dimension is obtained by summing the ratings of the two attachment patterns with positive other models (secure and preoccupied) and subtracting the ratings of the two patterns with negative other models (dismissing and fearful). These two models (Self and Other) for each relationship (mother, father, best friend, romantic partner) then identified the quality of each attachment relationship.

Predictions to Self with Romantic Partner controlling for Length of Relationship

In order to determine the differential contributions of the quality of relationship with mother, father and best friend to the quality of relationship with romantic partner, eight hierarchical regressions were performed. Four used Self with Romantic Partner as the criterion, and four used Other with Romantic Partner as the criterion. In the first regression Self with Romantic Partner was the criterion variable. Control variables in the first step were Sex, and Length of Relationship. In the second step Self and Other with Best Friend were the predictor variables while the third step predictor variables were Self and Other with Mother and Father. Finally, in the fourth step, interaction variables of Self and Other with Mother, Father, and Best Friend by Length of Relationship were included (see Table 1). Results indicated the first step to be significant ($R^2 = .07$, $p < .01$) with Length of Relationship ($\beta = .21$, $sr^2 = .05$, $p < .01$) contributing uniquely. The longer the romantic relationships, the more favorable the Self with romantic partner. The second step was also significant ($R^2 = .15$, $R^2 \Delta = .09$, $p < .01$) with Self with Best Friend uniquely predicting Self with Romantic Partner ($\beta = .24$, $sr^2 = .05$, $p < .01$). The third step, which included Model of Self and Other with Mother and Father, and the fourth step of interactions were not significant (see Table 1.).

In order to determine if Self and Other with Best Friend predicted Model of Self with Romantic Partner above and beyond Self and Other with Mother and Father, a second hierarchical regression was performed reversing the predictor variables in the

Table 1.

Hierarchical Regressions Predicting to Model of Self and Other with Romantic Partner from Length of Relationship, Models of Self and Other with Best Friend, Mother, and Father.

Predictors	Romantic Partner					
	Model of Self			Model of Other		
	R ²	R ² Δ	Beta	R ²	R ² Δ	Beta
<u>Step 1</u>	.07**			.03		
Sex			.15 ^t			.01
Length of Relationship			.21**			.17
<u>Step 2</u>	.15**	.09**		.06	.03	
Model of Self with Best Friend			.24**			.09
Model of Other with Best Friend			.14			.13
<u>Step 3</u>	.19	.04		.09	.03	
Model of Self with Mother			.03			.01
Model of Self with Father			.19			-.18
Model of Other with Mother			-.01			.06
Model of Other with Father			-.04			.03
<u>Step 4</u>	.22	.03		.12	.03	
Model of Self with Best Friend						
X Length of Relationship			-.18			-.03
Model of Other with Best Friend						
X Length of Relationship			.03			.16
Model of Self with Mother						
X Length of Relationship			.26			-.10
Model of Self with Father						
X Length of Relationship			-.04			-.11
Model of Other with Mother						
X Length of Relationship			.09			-.10
Model of Other with Father						
X Length of Relationship			.02			.14

n = 149, *p < .05, **p < .01, ^tp < .10

Note: Male=1, Female=0; High scores on Self and Other indicates more favorable model

second and third steps (see Table 2). The second step with Self and Other with Mother and Father was not significant. The third step was significant ($R^2 = .19$, $R^2 \Delta = .07$, $p < .01$) with Self with Best Friend once again coming through as a unique predictor to Self with Romantic Partner ($\beta = .22$, $sr^2 = .05$, $p < .01$) (see Table 2.). The fourth step with the interaction variables was not significant. These results suggest how older adolescents see themselves with their best friends and how they see their friends, not their attachments with their parents, predicts how they see themselves with their romantic partner.

Similar regressions were also run using Other with Romantic Partner as the criterion variable. The results were not significant, suggesting that neither attachments to friends nor to parents predict how adolescents view their romantic partners (see Table 1 & 2).

Predictions to Self with Romantic Partner controlling for Important People

A fifth and sixth hierarchical regression were run similar to the first and second using the control variable Important People (whether or not the current romantic partner was an important person in their lives) instead of Length of Relationship. In the fifth regression where Self and Other with Best Friend was in the second step and Self and Other with Mother and Father was in the third step, only the second step was significant ($R^2 = .10$, $R^2 \Delta = .06$, $p < .01$). Self with Best Friend once again contributed uniquely ($\beta = .23$, $sr^2 = .05$, $p < .01$) (see Table 3). There was a trend for the third step to be significant, however ($R^2 = .16$, $R^2 \Delta = .06$, $p = .06$), with Self with Father coming through

Table 2.

Hierarchical Regressions Predicting to Model of Self and Other with Romantic Partner from Length of Relationship, Models of Self and Other with Mother, Father, and Best Friend.

Predictors	Romantic Partner					
	Model of Self			Model of Other		
	R ²	R ² Δ	Beta	R ²	R ² Δ	Beta
Step 1	.06**			.03		
Sex			.15 ^t			.01
Length of Relationship			.21**			.17
Step 2	.11	.05		.06	.04	
Model of Self with Mother			.08			.03
Model of Self with Father			.19			-.17
Model of Other with Mother			.03			.08
Model of Other with Father			-.06			.03
Step 3	.19**	.07**		.09	.03	
Model of Self with Best Friend			.22**			.09
Model of Other with Best Friend			.13			.12
Step 4	.22	.03		.12	.03	
Model of Self with Mother						
X Length of Relationship			.26			-.10
Model of Self with Father						
X Length of Relationship			-.04			-.11
Model of Other with Mother						
X Length of Relationship			.08			-.10
Model of Other with Father						
X Length of Relationship			.02			.14
Model of Self with Best Friend						
X Length of Relationships			-.18			-.03
Model of Other with Best Friend						
X Length of Relationship			.03			.16

n = 149, *p < .05, **p < .01, ^tp < .10

Table 3.

Hierarchical Regressions Predicting to Model of Self and Other with Romantic Partner
from Important People, Models of Self and Other with Best Friend, Mother, and Father.

Predictors	Romantic Partner					
	Model of Self			Model of Other		
	R ²	R ² Δ	Beta	R ²	R ² Δ	Beta
<u>Step 1</u>	.04 ^t			.08**		
Sex			.09			.03
Important People			.17*			.29**
<u>Step 2</u>	.10**	.06**		.11	.02	
Model of Self with Best Friend			.23**			.08
Model of Other with Best Friend			.06			.11
<u>Step 3</u>	.16	.06 ^t		.13	.02	
Model of Self with Mother			.09			.03
Model of Self with Father			.20*			-.15
Model of Other with Mother			-.05			.04
Model of Other with Father			-.05			.08
<u>Step 4</u>	.19	.03		.18	.05	
Model of Self with Best Friend X Important People			-.13			.10
Model of Other with Best Friend X Important People			.12			-.03
Model of Self with Mother X Important People			.25			-.10
Model of Self with Father X Important People			.12			.21
Model of Other with Mother X Important People			.05			.08
Model of Other with Father X Important People			-.08			.27

n = 146, *p < .05, **p < .01, ^tp < .10

as a unique predictor ($\beta = .20$, $sr^2 = .05$, $p < .05$). The fourth step with the interaction terms of Self and Other with Mother, Father, and Best Friend by Important People was not significant.

In the sixth regression where Self and Other with Mother and Father was in the second step and Self and Other with Best Friend was in the third step, both the second ($R^2 = .11$, $R^2 \Delta = .07$, $p < .05$) and the third step ($R^2 = .16$, $R^2 \Delta = .04$, $p < .05$) were significant. In the second step, Self with Father was a unique predictor ($\beta = .21$, $sr^2 = .03$, $p < .05$) while in the third step Self with Best Friend was a unique predictor ($\beta = .20$, $sr^2 = .04$, $p < .01$) (see Table 4). This suggests that above and beyond the quality of attachment with parents, it is how older adolescents view themselves with their best friendship that predicts how they view themselves with their romantic relationships. The fourth step of interaction terms was not significant.

Two additional regressions were run with the same predictor variables using Other with Romantic Relationships as the criterion variable. Except for the first step ($R^2 = .08$, $p < .01$) with Important People being a unique predictor ($\beta = .29$, $sr^2 = .08$, $p < .01$) results were not significant (see Tables 3 & 4).

Summary of Results of Predictions to Romantic Relationship

Regardless of which variable was used in step one in order to control for the likelihood that the romantic relationship was an attachment, consistent findings occurred with respect to the following: only views of Self with romantic partner, not of Other, were significantly predicted by attachments to parents and/or friends. Attachment to friends, particularly Self with Best Friend, accounted for most of the variance. Finally, if parental attachments were significant predictors, Self with Father contributed uniquely.

Table 4.

Hierarchical Regressions Predicting to Model of Self and Other with Romantic Partner from Important People, Models of Self and Other with Mother, Father, and Best Friend.

Predictors	Romantic Partner					
	Model of Self			Model of Other		
	R ²	R ² Δ	Beta	R ²	R ² Δ	Beta
<u>Step 1</u>	.04 ^t			.08**		
Sex			.09			.03
Important People			.17*			.29**
<u>Step 2</u>	.11*	.07*		.11	.03	
Model of Self with Mother			.13			.05
Model of Self with Father			.21*			-.14
Model of Other with Mother			-.01			.08
Model of Other with Father			-.08			.06
<u>Step 3</u>	.16*	.04*		.13	.02	
Model of Self with Best Friend			.20**			.09
Model of Other with Best Friend			.06			.10
<u>Step 4</u>	.19	.03		.18	.05	
Model of Self with Mother						
X Important People			.25			-.10
Model of Self with Father						
X Important People			.11			.21
Model of Other with Mother						
X Important People			.05			.08
Model of Other with Father						
X Important People			-.08			.27
Model of Self with Best Friend						
X Important People			-.13			.10
Model of Other with Best Friend						
X Important People			.12			-.03

n = 146, *p < .05, **p < .01, ^tp < .10

Predictions to Model of Self and Other with Best Friend

With friendships playing a significant role in adolescent romantic relationships we wanted to investigate the possibility of parents having an indirect effect on romantic relationships by contributing to the quality of relationship with best friendships that would in turn contribute to the quality of relationship with romantic partners. A hierarchical regression was performed with the control variable Sex in the first step, Self and Other with Mother and Father in the second step, and interaction terms of Self and Other with Mother and Father by Sex in the third step. The criterion variable was Self with Best Friend. Results showed that step 2 was significant ($R^2 = .06$, $R^2 \Delta = .06$, $p < .01$) with Self with Mother as a unique predictor ($\beta = .18$, $sr^2 = .02$, $p < .05$) (see Table 5.). The third step of interaction terms of Self and Other with Mother and Father by Sex was not significant.

When the criterion variable was changed to Other with Best Friend the second step again showed significance ($R^2 = .11$, $R^2 \Delta = .04$, $p < .05$) with Other with Mother being a unique predictor ($\beta = .14$, $sr^2 = .02$, $p < .05$). Together these results suggest that for older adolescents while the quality of relationship with parents predicts the quality of best friendship, it is the relationship with mother that plays a special role (see Table 5).

Discussion

Parents and friends have been implicated in playing a role in adolescent romantic relationships. However, the joint role of these figures in the development of such relationships is less understood. The purpose of this study was to look at the differential contribution parents and best friends have to adolescent romantic relationships. We first hypothesized that the quality of relationship adolescents have with their best friend would

Table 5.

Regressions predicting to Models of Self and Other with Best Friend from Models of Self and Other with Mother and Father.

Predictors	Best Friend					
	Model of Self			Model of Other		
	R ²	R ² Δ	Beta	R ²	R ² Δ	Beta
<u>Step 1</u>	.00			.07**		
<u>Sex</u>			-.02			-.26**
<u>Step 2</u>	.06**	.06**		.11*	.04*	
Model of Self with Mother			.18*			-.01
Model of Self with Father			.07			-.01
Model of Other with Mother			.10			.14*
Model of Other with Father			-.09			.10
<u>Step 3</u>	.07	.01		.12	.01	
Model of Self with Mother X Sex			.13			.05
Model of Self with Father X Sex			.00			.10
Model of Other with Mother X Sex			.12			-.06
Model of Other with Father X Sex			-.05			-.02

n = 244, *p < .05, **p < .01

predict the quality of relationship with their romantic partner above and beyond what the quality of relationship they have with their parents would predict. Secondly, we hypothesized that the quality of relationship with parents would predict the quality of relationship with best friend, thus indirectly potentially contributing to adolescent romantic relationships.

Results from the study support both of these hypotheses. In support of our first hypothesis, the most clear and reliable finding from regression analyses showed that model of self with best friend predicted model of self with romantic partner above and beyond model of self and other with mother and father. Once mother and father were controlled for, best friend added significantly to the prediction. However, when best friend was controlled for, mother and father did not add significantly, there was only a trend. This seems to indicate that how adolescents view themselves with their best friend makes a unique contribution to how they view themselves with their romantic partner. Interestingly, significant results were not found for parents or best friend when model of *other* with romantic partner was used as the criterion variable. In other words, how adolescents viewed their parents and best friends did not contribute to how they viewed their romantic partner. Taken together it appears to be only how adolescents view *themselves* (i.e., they are loveable, and worthy of support) with their romantic partner that is predicted by the quality of their relationship with their best friend, not how they view their romantic partner (i.e., their romantic partner is trustworthy, dependable and/or available). This suggests it is the adolescent's self-concept in the romantic relationship that is affected by the quality of relationships with other attachments. This point is consistent with the idea that children form expectations concerning themselves in the

environment based on salient relationship experiences in earlier life (Bowlby, 1973; Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986). Moreover, the self may be more important when dealing with new relationships, such as adolescent romantic ones, as it means taking on a new role and concern as to whether or not one is lovable, valuable in that role.

In addition to the contribution of best friendship to adolescent romantic relationships above and beyond that of parents, we also found modest evidence that the relationship with the father is a contributing, although less important, factor. Although there was variation depending on the control variable (Length of Relationship or Important People), when the quality of attachment to parents predicted the quality to adolescent romantic relationships, Self with father was a unique predictor. This suggests that not only is there something in how adolescents view themselves with their parents that contributes to their view of themselves with their romantic partner but also something in particular in how they view themselves with their Father.

The importance of friendships in romantic relationships that these results seem to show is consistent with Furman's (1999) findings of significant correlations between descriptors of friendships and romantic relationships, but not for descriptors of parental relationships and romantic relationships, indicating a link between friendships and romantic relationships. It is also consistent with the Furman and Wehner (1994) study on the role of parental and friend styles in predicting romantic styles, where they found friend styles provided an increment above that obtained from parental styles.

In our second hypothesis we predicted that the quality of relationships with mother and father would predict the quality of relationships with best friend. Results from a regression analysis strongly supported this hypothesis. As a step, Self and Other

with mother and father significantly predicted Self with best friend, with model of self with mother predicting uniquely. The same was true when using *Other* with best friend as the criterion variable, only this time *Other* with mother came through as a unique contributor. Taken together these results seem to indicate that how adolescents see themselves with their parents and how they view their parents, particularly their mother, predicts not only how they see themselves with their best friends but also how they view their best friends as a person. This is consistent with the findings that preschool and middle-childhood peer relationships are linked with parental attachment, and that early peer relationships are linked to effectiveness in later peer and romantic relationships (for review, see Collins & Sroufe, 1999). Interestingly, whether predicting to Self with best friend or to Other with best friend, Self and Other with mother and father as a block came through as significant. Whereas when predicting to romantic partner it was only when predicting to *Self* with romantic partner that significant results were obtained. This may suggest that best friend is not a new role to the adolescents and are therefore able to think about the other person, but romantic partner is a new type of role causing them to concentrate more on their own worthiness in that relationship.

It is interesting to note that while mothers have a unique role in predicting adolescent best friendships, fathers may have a special place in predicting adolescent romantic relationships. The elusive quality of fathers is less understood (Lamb, 1985; Lieberman, Doyle, & Markiewicz, 1999) and it may be that this is more emotionally comparable to adolescent romantic relationships, which developmentally are new. Relationships with mothers on the other hand might have more in common with best friendships, in that they are both usually more consistent and provoke less fear that the

relationship will end. Alternatively, there is some evidence that suggests that attachment to fathers may be particularly felt in the domain of sociability with peers (Suess, Grossmann, & Sroufe, 1992; van Ijzendoorn & Kroonenberg, 1988). This may then be transferred to the romantic relationship. The understanding of the differential contribution of mother and father in adolescent romantic relationships is a subject worthy of future research.

In sum, our evidence clearly shows that although the quality of parent-adolescent relationship, particularly the mother-adolescent relationship, predicts the quality of adolescent best friendship, it is to a large extent the quality of best friendship that predicts the quality of adolescent romantic relationships. These findings are consistent with developmental theorists who contend that interpersonal relating in successive life periods builds on prior relationship experiences (Collins, Hennighausen, Schmit, & Sroufe, 1997). That is, early caregiver-child relationships, peer relationships in preschool and middle childhood, and friendships in adolescence all contribute to adolescent romantic relationships.

The influence of best friendships in adolescent romantic relationships is not surprising. Adolescent romantic relationships and friendships share many commonalities. Because adolescent peer relationships are equal, mutually close, reciprocal in nature, and provide companionship, they provide the context for development in intimacy, autonomy, and conflict resolution skills in a way parent-child relationships cannot. In romantic relationships we see the extension of these processes, building on the foundation of relatedness with friends (Connolly & Goldberg, 1999). Adolescents' conceptions of their romantic relationships are likely tied to their progress

with these processes. Those persons with whom they feel most intimate may well be those who exert the greatest influence on their conceptions of romantic relationships. The increased importance of friendships, relative to that of parents, may reflect the shift in intimacy from parents to friends. Viewed from this perspective, the link between adolescent romantic relationships and best friendships over that of parent-adolescent relationships is not an unexpected one.

Another reason that must be considered as to why parent-adolescent attachment did not predict romantic partner attachment above and beyond that of best friendship attachment is that the romantic partner may not in fact be an attachment figure. That is, parental attachment may be a more important predictor for romantic partners who are attachment figures. Although we tried to control for whether or not the romantic partner was an attachment figure by using Length of Relationship and Important People as control variables, these may not have been strict enough criteria. If we had used stricter criteria, which would have included being at least two years in an intimate sexual relationship, this would have diminished the sample size significantly. An interesting future study would include enough participants that fulfilled such criteria in order to establish more firmly that the romantic partners were attachment figures, in order to test for possible correlations between adolescent attachment to romantic relationships and parent-adolescent attachments.

Finally attention must be given to this particular sample. The results seem to indicate that the relationships within this group were more like those of young adolescents than those of adults, even though participants had a mean age of 19. We acknowledge that other studies with similar age groups (e.g., Collins & Read, 1990;

Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) show a stronger relation between parental factors and romantic relationships. However, participants from those studies were often university students many of whom may no longer live at home and therefore have become more independent. The present sample of students attended Cegep colleges, an educational system unique to Quebec, which may extend the adolescent period, as students continue to live at home and associate with established peer groups. Brown (1999) urges investigators not to overlook the developmental context in the study of adolescent romantic relationships, as it plays an integral role. This might be particularly true for a sample still in a high school type setting where “peers serve as something between a guiding or inspiring and a controlling social context for romantic relationships” (Brown, 1999, p. 292).

Future Direction

An important next step in this line of research is gathering longitudinal data in order to understand the transitions and transformations in parental, peer and romantic relationships that take place over the course of adolescence. This would elucidate more clearly when and what role peer relationships play in adolescent romantic relationships and how this might change during the adolescent years. Additionally such research may provide the link between adolescent and adult romantic relationships, which could be an important factor in understanding what leads to adaptive or maladaptive romantic relationships.

Collecting data from multiple sources is also recommended, as this may be especially helpful in understanding the reciprocity of the relationships as well as their ever-changing nature. Reports on intimacy and other relationship qualities from romantic

partners, parents and best friends could bring particular insight in relationship processes. Cohn et al., (1992) make the significant point that because coherence of a person's account of his or her childhood attachment experiences should be most strongly linked to *behavior* in the context of other attachment relationships, appropriate naturalistic observations might prove to be more sensitive indices of the affective quality of the attachment relationship than self-reports. For this reason we suggest not only that multiple informants be used in the collection of future data but multiple formats as well. Additionally, researchers should be mindful of historical changes and national or cultural differences at work in adolescent romantic relationships as well as to be careful not to separate romantic couples from the social context in which their relationship is situated. Such influences might bring important insight as to the nature and development of romantic relationships that would otherwise go unsuspected.

In order to understand the developmental process of adolescent romantic relationships, longitudinal assessments of multiple relationships from multiple sources are necessary. This would encompass parent-child relationships, peer relationships, including best friendships and romantic relationships, as well as relationship representations. In obtaining such data researchers could then establish whether early attachment experiences predict later romantic relationships qualities beyond predictions from later family experiences. Also process issues of whether and how attachment experiences are mediated through peer relationships and how relationship experiences are carried forward could be more satisfactorily explored.

Summary

Results of the present study show that it is the quality of attachment with best friend above and beyond the quality of parental attachments that predicts how adolescents view their own worth within their romantic relationships; thus emphasizing the importance of self-concept with best friendships in adolescent romantic relationships. Our results also clearly indicate that the quality of attachment relationship with parents, particularly with the mother, predicts the quality of attachment relationship with best friend (both how self and other are viewed). This may suggest that there is an indirect effect of the relationship with parents on romantic relationships in adolescence through best friendships. Additionally, somewhat more tentative results suggest that the relationship with the father might also play a special role in adolescent romantic relationships. Future research should include further exploration of the different role of mothers and fathers in adolescent relationships, as well as longitudinal studies, in order to understand better the nature of and contributing factors to the development of romantic relationships.

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Appendix A
Consent Form

April 1999 (CEGEP YR1)

CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Check where applicable:

_____ I agree to participate in the study conducted by Dr. Dorothy Markiewicz, and Dr. Anna-Beth Doyle of the Centre for Research in Human Development. I have been informed that the study is about relationships, coping, emotions, and behaviour.

_____ I do not agree to participate in this study.

IF YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE, please complete the following:

I have been informed that the purpose of the research is to study the link between relationship quality, coping style, emotions, and behaviour. Participation involves one session of approximately 90 minutes, during which I am asked to complete questionnaires about my relationship with my friends, my parents, my perception of my parents' relationships, the ways I cope with stress, my mood and feelings about myself, and involvement in rule-breaking behaviour, use of alcohol and drugs, and sexual behaviour. Because it is important to understand changes over time, students will be approached again in one year, and again the next year, to complete similar questionnaires. However, there is no obligation to continue. I understand that ALL INFORMATION WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL to the research team, and identified only by number. I understand that I may withdraw my consent and may discontinue participation at any time.

Everyone completing the questionnaires will have their name entered in a draw to win Cineplex Odeon movie passes for two OR a \$20 gift certificate for HMV Music Stores. There is also one grand prize, which is a Sony Discman!!

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

Name (please print): _____

Street Address: _____

City and Postal Code _____

Phone Number: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

CEGEP/CEGEP level: _____ Psychology teachers' name/class: _____

Appendix B
Relationship Questionnaire (Romantic Partner)

YOUR ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP (RQR)



54843

Please do not mark in this area

				1
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If you do not have a current girlfriend/boyfriend or have not recently had a girlfriend/boyfriend, just leave this blank and go to the next questionnaire.

Please tell us who you are thinking of when you fill out this questionnaire (one box):

- Current girl/boyfriend OR Most recent girl/boyfriend

Think about your relationship with your girlfriend/boyfriend. Now read each paragraph below and indicate to what extent **each** paragraph describes your relationship with this person. When you see a *** in the paragraphs below, think of your girlfriend/boyfriend by name. **Put an in the box UNDER the number** that is true for you.

- It is easy for me to become emotionally close to my girlfriend/boyfriend. I am comfortable depending on *** and having her/him depend on me. I don't worry about being alone or having *** not accept me.

Not At All								Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

- I am comfortable not having a close emotional relationship with my girlfriend/boyfriend. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on *** or have *** depend on me.

Not At All								Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

- I want to be completely emotionally close with my girlfriend/boyfriend, but I often find that s/he is reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable not having a close relationship with ***, but I sometimes worry that *** doesn't value me as much as I value her/him.

Not At All								Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

- I am uncomfortable getting close to my girlfriend/boyfriend. I want to be emotionally close to ***, but I find it difficult to trust her/him completely, or to depend on her/him. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to ***.

Not At All								Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

54843



Appendix C
General Information



GENERAL INFORMATION FORM

Please do not mark in this area

1

Order:

The information provided in this form will help us describe the range of participants in our study.

1. Age:

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
0

2. Date of Birth:

DAY MONTH YEAR
 / /

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
0

3. Sex: Female Male

4. Grade:

7 11
 8 Cegep 1
 9 Cegep 2
 10 Cegep 3+

5. School:

Vanier LaSalle
 Dawson St. Thomas
 John Abbott Other (specify) _____

6. My grades generally average (1-99) %

AND letter grade (circle one):
A B C D F

7. I have skipped a grade or did two years in one:

Yes No

8. I have failed/repeated a grade:

Yes No

9. What is your mother tongue (first language)?

English French Other (specify) _____

10. What languages do you speak at home?

English French Other (specify) _____

11. I have sister(s).

Specify how many are older than you:

12. I have brother(s).

Specify how many are older than you:

13. My mom is (one box):

Single Married Divorced Widowed Other

14. My dad is (one box):

Single Married Divorced Widowed Other

15. Who lives (lived) in your house with you?

(all that apply)

Mom Aunt
 Dad Grandmother
 Stepmom Grandfather
 Stepdad Cousin
 Sisters Friend of parent
 Brothers Other (specify)
 Uncle

16. For questions 13, 14 and/or 15, have there been any changes over the course of the past year?

Yes No

17. My ethnic/cultural background is

(all that apply below)

English Canadian Asian
 French Canadian American
 Aboriginal Latin American
 African Australian
 European Other (specify) _____

18. I have lived in Canada years.

53458



Appendix D
Relationships History



12340

Relationship History

Please do not mark in this area

				1
--	--	--	--	---

Answer the following questions about your **same-sex best friend**:

1. Do you have a **same-sex best friend** now (with whom you are each other's closest friend)? Yes No
 If yes, answer the following. If no, go to question 2.

a. Put the initials of his/her name here:

b. How long have you known each other?
(one box)

- 0-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-11 months
- 1-2 years
- 3-6 years
- 7+ years

c. How long have you been **best friends**?
(one box)

- 0-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-11 months
- 1-2 years
- 3-6 years
- 7+ years

2. Did you have **another best friend** before this one (that you are no longer best friends with)?
 Yes No

If yes, for how long were you **best friends**? (one box)

- 0-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-11 months
- 1-2 years
- 3-6 years
- 7+ years

3. Think about **other best friends** you've had, before this, since you were 10 years old. At any given time, think of the one person with whom you were best friends. How many such best friends (only 1 at a time) have you had since you were 10 years old? (Don't include your current or just previous best friend.)

- 0 1 2-3 4-6 7-10 11 or more

List them by their initials.

Below each person's initials indicate about how long (in months or years) you were best friends.

Initials

Initials

Initials

How long

- 0-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-11 months
- 1-2 years
- 3-6 years
- 7+ years

How long

- 0-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-11 months
- 1-2 years
- 3-6 years
- 7+ years

How long

- 0-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-11 months
- 1-2 years
- 3-6 years
- 7+ years

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Please do not mark in this area

Answer the following questions about *romantic partners*:

1. Have you ever dated someone? Yes No

If no, go to the next questionnaire.

a. How old were you when you first began dating?

- 12 years old or younger
- 13-14 years old
- 15-16 years old
- 17-18 years old
- 19 years or older

b. How many steady relationships with a romantic partner have you had since you began dating (you and your partner agreed to date only each other)?

- 0
- 1
- 2-3
- 4-6
- 7-10
- 11 or more

List your previous steady romantic partners by initials. Below each person's initials indicate about how long (in months or years) you were in a steady relationship with them. (Don't include your current partner.)

<u>Initials</u> _____	<u>Initials</u> _____	<u>Initials</u> _____
<u>How long</u> <input type="checkbox"/> 0-3 months <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 months <input type="checkbox"/> 7-11 months <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 3-6 years <input type="checkbox"/> 7+ years	<u>How long</u> <input type="checkbox"/> 0-3 months <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 months <input type="checkbox"/> 7-11 months <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 3-6 years <input type="checkbox"/> 7+ years	<u>How long</u> <input type="checkbox"/> 0-3 months <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 months <input type="checkbox"/> 7-11 months <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 years <input type="checkbox"/> 3-6 years <input type="checkbox"/> 7+ years

2. Are you currently in a steady romantic relationship? Yes No

If no, skip to the next questionnaire.

a. For how long have you known this partner (one)?

- 0-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-11 months
- 1-2 years
- 3-6 years
- 7+ years

b. How long ago did this relationship become a steady one (one)?

- 0-3 months
- 4-6 months
- 7-11 months
- 1-2 years
- 3-6 years
- 7+ years

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Appendix E
Important People Questionnaire

IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE

Think about the people in your life who are most important to you. They could be important for any number of reasons, and maybe you have a good relationship with each of them, and maybe you don't. Nevertheless, they are the people who, for whatever reason, are important to you. If you had to make a list of the most important people in your life, think about who would be on that list. If there are more than five people whom you consider important in your life, try to choose the five most important. Please fill in the appropriate information in the spaces provided below about these people.

	Person's initials	Relationship to you	Approximate age	Sex	Length of relationship in years or months (if this is someone who you've known all your life, just write "all my life")
Person 1:					_____ years or _____ months
Person 2:					_____ years or _____ months
Person 3:					_____ years or _____ months
Person 4:					_____ years or _____ months
Person 5:					_____ years or _____ months