

FATHERS' ATTACHMENT STYLES AND FATHER/CHILD RELATIONSHIPS BY
PARTNER AND CAREGIVER TYPES

A DISSERTATION

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BY

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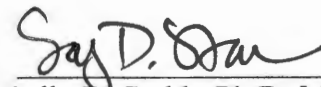
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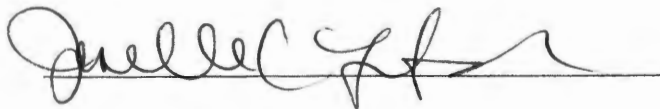
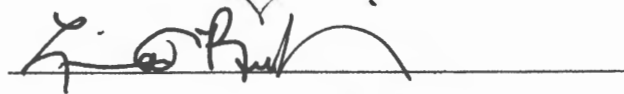
To the Dean of the Graduate School:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Connie M. Siciliano Avila entitled "Fathers' Attachment Styles and Father/Child Relationships by Partner and Caregiver Types." I have examined this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a major in Counseling Psychology.

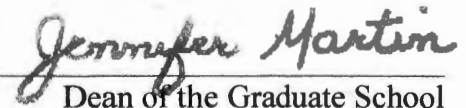


Sally D. Stabb, Ph.D. Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:



Accepted:


Dean of the Graduate School

DEDICATION

To my little Hercules, Cylas, I cherish and love you.

To Carmela, D'Anna, and Dante, you are the loves of my life. Thank you for your patience, encouragement, and sacrifices.

To Art, through your love, generosity, and practical support, you provided the foundation beneath my feet and kept the home fires burning. I love, respect, and appreciate you.

To all fathers who wish and strive to be an important part of your children's lives, may you continuously attend to and nurture your relationships.

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ABSTRACT

CONNIE M. SICILIANO AVILA

FATHERS' ATTACHMENT STYLES AND FATHER/CHILD RELATIONSHIPS BY PARTNER AND CAREGIVER TYPES

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The purpose of this study was to integrate attachment, divorce outcomes, and father involvement fields to examine differences between father statuses across partner and caregiver types regarding fathers' attachment and father/child relationships. Father statuses consisted of four groups: traditional, stay-at-home, custodial, and noncustodial fathers. Sixty-eight fathers completed the Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR; Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998) and Parent Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI; Gerard, 2000) questionnaires for the online study at Psychdata.com. Data analyses consisted of three steps. Step one was preliminary analyses of demographic variables and ECR scales. For step two, a 2 (partnered, unpartnered) x 2 (primary, secondary) MANOVA was conducted on the two dimensions (anxiety, avoidance) of the ECR. Step three was an exploratory analysis to determine whether or not the ECR scales mediated or moderated relationships between partner type and the PCRI scales. Additionally, Pearson Product Moment correlations were utilized with ECR and PCRI scales. For the preliminary analysis, there was a significant main effect for partner type. Currently unmarried fathers had higher attachment anxiety and avoidance scores than currently

married fathers. For the primary hypotheses, results showed a significant main effect for partner type. Post hoc analysis revealed a significant univariate effect for attachment anxiety. Unpartnered fathers had higher attachment anxiety scores than partnered fathers. For the exploratory analysis, fathers' attachment scores did not mediate or moderate associations between partner types and fathers' parenting scores. There were no associations between fathers' attachment styles and their parenting processes. The results indicated that fathers' internal working models of relationships may not be related to their caregiving behaviors; thus, the results may not support the idea of intergenerational transmission of fathers' attachment styles via fathers' parenting processes. Findings of the present study were integrated with the literature on attachment, divorce, and father involvement. Implications for theory, research and practice were included.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the first half of the 20th century, traditional families consisted of a husband, wife, and their biological children. However, over the decades, family configurations have changed. Within the last 60 years, there has been a decrease in married couple families and a subsequent increase in single parent families. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2003a) from 1950 to 2003, family configurations with children under age 18 changed from 93% of married couples to 72% of married couples. In 2010, the percentage dropped further to 66% of married couples (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010b). Another significant change in families has been the change in women's work status. Prior to World War II, most middle to upper class women stayed home to raise the children (Brinkley, 1997). During World War II, women entered the workforce in large numbers to help fill jobs that men had occupied prior to the war while men were away serving the country (Brinkley). The employment of women helped to meet economic and military demands in various job sectors (Brinkley). After the war, soldiers returned home and replaced many women and minorities in the employment sector; 80% of these women wanted to continue to work, but were pushed out by employers (Brinkley). In 1963, Betty Friedan articulated in her book, *The Feminine Mystique*, the dissatisfaction of women living in traditional roles of wife and mother (Chafe, 1996). Betty Friedan conveyed the boredom and lack of intellectual stimulation that women experienced in their traditional

roles (Brinkley) along with the limited opportunities available to women (Chafe). Betty Friedan was credited with beginning the feminist movement that continued into the 1970s (Brinkley). Thus, after responding to the wartime call to work outside the home then seeing the possibilities raised by the Women's Movement in the 1970s, women began to assume new roles (Brinkley; Chafe; Levant & Wimer, 2010).

These new roles included entry into the work force and created change in work force patterns. Many families went from having only a single earner to having both parents in the paid workforce. From 1986 to 2003, the percentage of married couples with children under the age of 18 who had dual earner incomes increased from 59% to 65% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003b). In response to these changes, some men took on more responsibilities within families (Coltrane, 2000; Ishii-Kuntz & Coltrane, 1992; Levant & Wimer, 2010). Although some men contributed more than in generations past, recent findings showed that mothers continue to perform more caregiving behaviors to offspring than fathers (Campos, Graesch, Repetti, Bradbury, & Ochs, 2009; Lee, Vernon-Feagans, Vazquez, & Kolak, 2003; Levant & Wimer; Moon & Hoffman, 2008; Pailhé & Solaz, 2008). One possible explanation for the slow progression towards increased father involvement rests with socialized gender roles (Levant & Wimer). Several studies indicated that societal expectations for parents' roles remain mostly traditional with mothers seen as primary caregivers or nurturers (Moon & Hoffman; Riggs, 2005; Sakka & Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, 2006). Levant and Wilmer chronicled the shifts in women's gender roles and the slow response from men to change in men's gender roles over the

past 50 years. With women contributing financially to the family, men had lost the “good provider role” (p. 7). For some men with working wives, they began to share parenting and domestic chores with their wives to develop the “new father role” (p. 6).

Additionally, Levant and Wilmer noted that men had begun to focus on the quality of family relationships. However, traditional gender role ideals continued to be embraced by men with resistance to the new father role and remained strongly embedded in society.

Levant and Wilmer suggested that the “good family man” (p.7) consisted of the new father role, a husband who co-parents, helps with chores, and shares financial commitments with his wife; thus the new father role represented the modern father. In present times, modern fathers faced expectations to be more involved with their children (Brooks, 2001; Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004; Levant & Wimer).

Father Involvement

With the changes in the workforce, family structures, and expectations of fathers, several studies examined fathers’ involvement and child outcomes (Caldera, 2004; Lamb, 1995; Marsiglio, Amato, Day, & Lamb, 2000). Fathers’ involvement may or may not have contributed to the overall well being of children. For example, one study found that fathers who provided high levels of daily care to their children, their children had attachment-security scores that were higher than children whose fathers provided less daily care (Caldera). Lamb (1995) reviewed fathering studies to conclude that fathers may be involved with their children at different levels; fathers may have negative and positive impacts on their children. For example, fathers’ involvement had a positive

influence on children's social competence and academic achievement (Gadsden, Fagan, Ray, & Davis, 2001). Additionally, Lamb stated that fathers' context and quality of involvement was important. In the context of divorce, findings from a meta-analysis indicated that ongoing parental involvement with both fathers and mothers promoted child adjustment post-divorce (Bauserman, 2002). In particular, positive child outcomes were related to father/child relationships having warmth and closeness (Lamb). For example, a father provided his child breakfast and showed anger when the child indicated that the food tasted bad. The father responded by insisting that the child eat the food regardless of taste; this father exhibited harshness. In contrast, another father in the same circumstance responded by tasting the food himself and adding salt to improve the flavor; this father showed sensitivity towards the child's needs. Fathers' ability to show warmth and achieve closeness with their children exemplified positive father involvement (Lamb). Findings showed that fathers' positive involvement has positive effects on children (Bauserman; Caldera; Gadsden et al., 2001; Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004).

Primary Caregiver Fathers

In some family contexts, fathers assumed primary responsibilities for the children such as daily feeding, bathing, dressing, disciplining, etc. to become highly involved with their children. Fathers who are primary caregivers comprised only a small percentage of the total population. In 2003, for married fathers with children under 15 years old, less than 1% stayed home from the workforce to assume childcare and domestic responsibilities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003c). However, stay-at-home fathers (SAHFs)

are increasing; primary caregiver fathers comprised of 3% of total stay-at-home parents for married families in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010c). Similarly, for families with children under the age of 18 years old, father-only families (custodial fathers) were 5% of the total number of families (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003a). Although the percentage was small, the trend for father-only families does seem to be getting larger, as it increased from 1% in 1950 to 5% in 2003 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003a) with only a slight decrease to 4.3% in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010a).

SAHFs and custodial fathers faced issues both similar to and different from their female counterparts (Risman, 1987; Weinraub & Gringlas, 1995). Research findings supported the idea that primary caregiver fathers provided the same type of daily caretaking of their children as primary caregiver mothers (Amato, 2000; Cohen, 1995). Although primary caregiver fathers and mothers performed their functions similarly, there are some major differences.

One of the main differences is that custodial and SAHFs are minorities in the childrearing world of women. SAHFs and custodial fathers breached typical gender roles. Primary caregiver fathers reported feeling isolated (Blair, 2005; Merla, 2008; Rochlen, McKelley, & Whittaker, 2010) and had awareness of a social stigma in their caregiver roles (Rochlen et al., 2010). Some fathers may have sought support from partners, family, and friends. Support may have been helpful for primary caregiver fathers regarding feelings of isolation (i.e., Blair; Merla, 2008), developing caregiving skills (i.e., Levant & Wimer, 2010), and resolving any conflict fathers had about their own gender role beliefs

(i.e., Brooks, 2010; O'Neil, 2008). Alternately, primary caregiver fathers' may have not found others to be helpful due to others reinforcing social stigmas (Doucet, 2004; Merla). Blair reported that single custodial fathers experienced difficulty in establishing support networks. For example, Coles (2009) conducted a qualitative study of 20 single custodial fathers who were African American. Twelve fathers received very little or no support from extended family members. Fathers reported the following reasons: family was already burdened with stressors, lived too far from extended family, and desired a sense of independence (Coles). Similarly, Warshak (1988) posited a possible lack of support not only from custodial fathers' former partners but also from the extended family and current employers. Other researchers concluded that deterrents to fathers taking parental leave and active family participation included a lack of support from employers (Bronte-Tinkew, Bowie, & Moore, 2007; Seward, Yeatts, & Zottarelli, 2002). Russell and Hwang (2004) reviewed studies on workplace and father involvement. Findings showed that workplace policies are becoming increasingly supportive of fathers, and further research needed to be done regarding workplace culture issues (Russell & Hwang). Although fathers had family leave available to them, they tended not to take it (Russell & Hwang). One explanation for the resistance to take leave included father's own gender role beliefs (Seward et al.). For primary caregiver fathers, the culture of socially dominant gender roles created barriers to their active participation in their children's lives.

Gender Role Socialization and Custody Issues

In the 1800s, historically and socially based gender roles ascribed mothers the role of primary caregiver and fathers the role of financial supporter in their separate spheres (Brinkley, 1997; Coltrane, 1997). Warshak (1996) stated that in the late 1800s courts deemed that mothers were better able to care for infants than fathers, and awarded temporary custody of young children to mothers. During this period and into the turn of the century, families were moving from farms to cities to work in factories and mills (Brinkley). According to Brinkley, with the industrial revolution, there was a rise of the middle class. Men's and women's roles became more separate as women took on domestic chores and the raising of the children. The new female realm was treated as special and superior to men in certain areas, such as morality, religion, and childrearing, which placed a high value on roles of wife and mother (Brinkley). Mothers were supposed to be best suited for the care and nurturance of children while fathers were expected to provide other types of support. Brescoll and Uhlmann (2005) found evidence for continued biases in that parents who violated traditional gender roles, such as stay-at-home fathers and working mothers, were given poor evaluations in comparison to more traditional parents by study participants. These historically and socially ascribed gender roles carried over into the judicial system and gave legal preference to mothers as primary caregivers with the tender years' presumption in custodial decisions until approximately 1972 (Warshak, 1996). As a result, this societal dictum has led to a gender bias against fathers in the courts (Pisarra, 2011; Smith, 2003; Vatsis, 2001). Both non-

custodial and custodial fathers who are separated, divorced, and never married tended to experience gender biases in the judicial system and society (e.g., Kruk, 2010; McNeely, 1998; Pisarra, 2011; Warshak, 1996, 2000). The current legal standard for deciding physical custody is theoretically gender neutral, known as the best interests of the child (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2007). Despite the stated legal paradigm, mothers are most often awarded custody (Pisarra, 2011; Smith, 2003; Vatsis, 2001), and currently efforts are being made towards increasing shared custody decisions (Dunlevy, 2009; Moloney, 2009; Smith). However, exact statistics about legal biases are unknown as there are no systematic reporting procedures in place to account for and track judicial decisions as it related to gender and custody awards (McNeely, 1998). Additional societal biases existed in relation to divorce such as parental custodial and residential designations. Kielty (2006) reported similarities and differences between nonresidential parents. Apparently, both mothers and fathers who did not live with their children reported difficulties in maintaining their relationships with their children; however, mothers faced societal biases and stigma for nontraditional roles as secondary caregivers (Kielty). Although noncustodial fathers escaped biases for being secondary caregivers, in a similar vein to noncustodial mothers, they were stigmatized and perceived negatively for their nonresidential status by college students in comparison to all other father types which included married, adoptive, gay, custodial, and stepfathers (Troilo & Coleman, 2008). Judicial and societal biases impacted families, children, and fathers' relationships (Kruk, 2010).

Fathers' Relationships

Many studies showed that the quality of fathers' relationships was associated with their level of involvement with their children (Finley & Schwartz, 2007; Kalmijn, 2007; King, 2007). For example, fathers' relationships with their biological children's mothers (Forste, Barkowski, & Jackson, 2009; Kruk, 2010; Lee & Doherty, 2007; Rochlen & McKelley, 2010), their children (Kalmijn; Scott, Booth, King, & Johnson, 2007), and own parents (Beaton & Doherty, 2007) influenced their involvement. Cabrera et al. (2004) found that fathers, who were partnered to their biological children's mothers, were the most available fathers to take an active role in their children's lives among all other father types. Additionally, fathers tended to be active in their children's lives when they received support from their biological children's mothers (Berger, 2010; Rochlen & McKelley). However, if conflict existed between parents, then fathers tended to be less involved with their children (Leite & McKenry, 2006). Oftentimes, maternal gatekeeping was an outcome of conflict (Amato & Sobolewski, 2004). When a mother created barriers to fathers' access to children, mothers' actions were referred to as maternal gatekeeping (Seward, Stanley-Stevens, et al., 2006). Maternal gatekeeping occurred in both intact and nonintact families but most often in disrupted families. Maternal gatekeeping was noted for disruptions in fathers' relationships with their children (Kruk). When conflict occurred between parents, children tended to suffer deleterious effects (Harper & Fine, 2006). Research showed that following divorce noncustodial fathers' tended to experience declines in their relationships with their children that held overtime

(Kalmijn; Kruk). Kalmijn found that adult children reported the least amount of contact and support in later life with nonresident fathers in comparison to all other mother/father groups from intact and non-intact families. Additionally, findings provided evidence that fathers' own childhood histories and relationships with their parents influenced their father/child relationships (Beaton & Doherty; DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002). The possibility exists that adult children may have recreated similar relationship styles from their families of origin with their children (Van IJzendoorn, 1992). This intergenerational transmission of relationship characteristics was a foundational tenet of attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969/1982).

Fathers' Attachment Styles

Adult attachment research was an outgrowth of child attachment research. Originally, mother/infant dyads were investigated, and researchers identified three patterns of infant attachments such as secure, anxious-resistant, anxious-avoidant (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). Later, Main and Solomon (1986) identified a fourth pattern, which was disorganized/disoriented. As attachment investigations expanded to include adult attachments in romantic relationships, investigators linked romantic relationships to Bowlby's attachment theory (1969/1982) and Ainsworth et al.'s attachment patterns. Investigators identified several adult attachment styles. Depending upon the theorists, adult attachment included a variety of styles, which were similar and related to Ainsworth et al. The various attachment styles are presented according to particular theorists and were developed chronologically as follows: secure,

anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant (Hazan & Shaver, 1987); secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991); and secure, anxious, and avoidant (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). The Brennan et al. (1998) categories were utilized in the current study.

Recent research findings indicated that fathers' adult attachment style or ways of relating to others was associated with their children's attachment patterns (Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009; Dinero, Conger, Shaver, Widaman, & Larsen-Rife, 2008; Newland, Coyl, & Freeman, 2008). Studies have shown associations between adult functioning in relationships and adult attachment dimensions such as secure, anxious, and avoidant (Haggerty, Siefert, & Weinberger, 2010; Saavedra, Chapman, & Rogge, 2010). Fathers may have shown secure or insecure (anxious and avoidant) attachment styles. This possible transference of fathers' attachment styles was important for the current study. The usage of the term transference was meant to convey that a particular set of relationship skills are either taught or modeled to the next generation through attachment figures' caregiving behaviors. Depending upon fathers' histories and contexts, they may have either positively or negatively impacted their children through their interactions with offspring. Van IJzendoorn (1992) reviewed studies that examined the intergenerational transmission of attachment styles. There was evidence for the transmission of attachment styles between generations. Although in several studies the mechanism for transmission was unclear, there was evidence that certain parental behaviors, for example responsiveness, was related to the transmission (Van

IJzendoorn). The transmission of attachment styles may have continued on from one generation to the next generation and so on. Researchers were examining the conditions for transmission of fathers' attachment styles to their children. Investigators called for the examination of fathers in various contexts to better understand fathers' ways of relating and how it influenced children's attachment (Bernier & Miljkovitch; Dalton III, Frick-Horbury, & Kitzmann, 2006).

Fathering Contexts

Fathering contexts may be related to parenting processes, intergenerational transmission, and offspring's attachment. Usage of the term context made reference to the intersection of fathers' relationships (partnered, unpartnered) to mothers of their biological children and their caregiver roles (primary, secondary) to their children. As fathering research progressed, experts in the field have called for research that included more complexity and different fathering contexts (Andrews, Luckey, Bolden, Whiting-Fickling, & Lind, 2004; Coley & Coltrane, 2007; Marks & Palkovitz, 2004; Saracho & Spodek, 2008). Dalton III et al. (2006) examined traditional fathers (married secondary) and found unexpected results that fathers' caregiving behaviors were related to their adult children's romantic relationships. Investigators expected participants' mothers, the primary caregivers, to influence romantic attachment styles. On the contrary, there was a positive association between fathers' healthy caregiving behaviors and students' beliefs in their own abilities to form healthy relationships (Dalton III et al.). It seemed plausible that fathers' caregiving behaviors were a model for offspring in later close relationships.

From these results, Dalton et al. recommended that future research include the examination of other caregiver contexts such as single parents and nontraditional families. Similarly, when Bernier and Miljkovitch (2009) concluded their study of traditional (partnered secondary) and custodial (unpartnered primary) fathers, researchers suggested that future investigators compare custodial fathers to other fathers in similar caregiver roles. Thus, Bernier and Miljkovitch recommended the examination of fathers in primary caregiver roles which included custodial and stay-at-home fathers. Bernier and Miljkovitch concluded, in essence, that making comparisons between traditional and nontraditional fathers regarding the transmission of attachment styles was difficult due to differing caregiver roles.

Additionally, fathers needed to be studied, not only within context, but from a broader perspective. By looking at the whole picture of father contexts within a single study, researchers would better understand differences between fathers' experiences. As fathers have become more involved in the family, differing groups have emerged based on fathering roles and levels of involvement with children. Thus, there appeared to be four major fathering groups/contexts: partnered secondary (traditional), partnered primary (stay-at-home), unpartnered secondary (noncustodial), and unpartnered primary (custodial). Research examining these groups has been conducted from such diverse research fields as attachment, divorce outcomes, and father involvement. Investigators have studied some father groups separately (e.g., Pruett, 1998; Rane & McBride, 2000; Rothen & McKelley, 2010), together (e.g., Bauserman, 2002; Fagan & Barnett, 2003;

DeGarmo, 2010), and in conjunction with mother groups (e.g., Caldera, 2004; Kalmijn, 2007; Tacon & Caldera, 2001). However, no known researchers with the exception of Siciliano (2005) have yet combined all four father groups by partner and caregiver types within the same study.

Through the convergence of attachment, divorce outcomes, and father involvement research fields, fathers were examined according to their attachment styles, fathering characteristics, and father/child relationships within context across groups by partner and caregiver types, resulting in a new study design. This study was an expansion of previous work (Siciliano, 2005) and utilized archival data. The data were collected in the spring and summer of 2005. Portions of text were taken from my unpublished manuscript (Siciliano) and incorporated into this paper.

Definitions

The concept of attachment is rather complex. Historically, Bowlby (1969/1982) conceived of the theory and placed attachment in the context of mother/infant dyads. Ainsworth et al. (1978) investigated mother/infant dyads and identified three patterns of infant attachments as secure, anxious-resistant, and anxious-avoidant. As attachment research expanded, Main and Solomon (1986) identified a fourth pattern, which was disorganized/disoriented. Further information regarding child attachment patterns is presented in the attachment theory section of Chapter II. Eventually, attachment theory was applied to adult romantic relationships. Investigators were drawing parallels to Bowlby's and Ainsworth et al.'s research on child attachment. However, adult romantic

attachment was differentiated from child attachments. Similarly to child attachments, adult attachments were categorized; however, adult attachments were referred to as styles. Hazan and Shaver (1987) were the first to categorize romantic relationships based on Bowlby and Ainsworth et al.'s research. Investigators devised three attachment styles, which included secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant (Hazan & Shaver). Next, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) identified four categories of adult attachment, which were labeled as secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful. Eventually, Brennan et al. (1998) utilized all available adult attachment self-reports to develop the Experiences in Close Relationships questionnaire (ECR). From factor analytic procedures, Brennan et al. found that the adult attachment characteristics loaded on two main dimensions, which were attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. These two continuous dimensions account for both the previous three and four attachment style categories (Brennan et al.). Further information is presented in the adult romantic attachment section of Chapter II. Additionally, for the purposes of the current study, Brennan et al.'s two continuous attachment dimensions were utilized to describe adult attachment styles. The following operational definitions applied to the current study.

Attachment. Attachment was defined as an enduring emotional bond between caregivers and infants (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Bowlby (1969/1982) described attachment as an innately driven behavior to seek physical closeness and contact with a caregiver under stressful conditions. In adult romantic relationships, the attachment behaviors and bonds were reciprocal between adults (Zeifman & Hazan, 2008).

Attachment security. According to Brennan et al. (1998), adult attachment security was characteristic of adults with low anxiety and avoidance.

Attachment anxiety. According to Brennan et al. (1998), adults identified with attachment anxiety are low on avoidance and high on anxiety. The anxiety dimension consisted of a preoccupation with romantic relationships, jealousy/fear of abandonment, and fear of rejection. Brennan et al. stated that attachment anxiety is similar to Ainsworth et al.'s (1978) category of anxious-resistant.

Attachment avoidance. According to Brennan et al. (1998), adults identified with attachment avoidance are high on avoidance and low on anxiety. The avoidance dimension consisted of an avoidance of intimacy, discomfort with closeness, and a display of self reliance. Brennan et al. stated that attachment avoidance is similar to Ainsworth et al.'s (1978) category of anxious-avoidant.

Primary caregivers. Primary caregivers were attachment figures who provided the majority of the child's care on a daily basis over time (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

Secondary caregivers. Secondary caregivers were attachment figures who provided supplementary care to the child (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

Partnered. Partnered fathers were legally married to and/or cohabitating with their biological children's mother while residing with their children (Siciliano, 2005).

Unpartnered. Unpartnered fathers were separated, divorced, widowed, or never married to and were not cohabitating with their biological children's mother (Siciliano).

The four groups created by the partner by caregiver type design included the following father statuses:

- 1) Partnered secondary (Traditional fathers and intact families)
- 2) Partnered primary (Stay-at-home fathers and intact families)
- 3) Unpartnered secondary (Noncustodial/shared/no custody fathers and non-intact families)
- 4) Unpartnered primary (Custodial fathers and non-intact families)

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review examined three major fields of research: attachment, divorce outcomes, and father involvement. These fields of research were vast, so the scope of this study was narrowed to fathers and their biological children, which were the primary focus of the study. By doing so, decisions were made to exclude studies and findings that did not pertain directly to biological fathers, fathers' relationships with their children, and relationships to their children's mothers. Bounding the study has been achieved by excluding the following topics: mothering outcomes, stepfather relationships, adoptive fathers, grandfathers, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender parenting issues. It should be noted that in almost all of the studies on attachment and parenting, researchers never considered assessing parental sexual orientation. Thus, it was unknown if gay, bisexual, or transgendered fathers were part of the samples in the literature covered. While all these topics are important, no single study encompassed them all as a matter of practicality.

Many findings within the domains of attachment, divorce outcomes, and father involvement overlapped and common themes emerged. Therefore, summaries of findings regarding parenting and fathering issues are presented to reduce redundancy whenever possible. However, some studies are reviewed in more detail when such a focus is relevant. The order of presentation is attachment followed by an integrated section on

divorce outcomes and father involvement. This order was intentionally chosen to reflect the chronological progression of fathering research. For the attachment domain, the literature review focused on studies which utilized attachment theory, caregiver types, and with some attention to the assessment of attachment. Following this domain, an integrated review of divorce outcomes and father involvement are presented and organized by common themes across these fields. Then, in an integrated summary, the conclusions from the literature were synthesized with findings from my previous work (Siciliano, 2005), and rationale for the current study are presented. Finally, study goals, research questions, and hypotheses are given.

Attachment

Theory

John Bowlby (1969/1982) theorized that human infants have an instinctual need to attach to a caregiver for survival. Interactions between caregiver and infant facilitated attachment over time. Human infants exhibited the ability to cling to caregivers and used social exchanges, such as crying, smiling, and babbling, to engage caregivers (Bowlby). Alternately, caregivers responded to infants and utilized their caregiving system to satisfy babies' needs (Bowlby). Infants and caregivers typically maintained close physical distance. Bowlby referred to the close physical distance as "proximity maintaining behavior" (p. 200). Infants utilized caregivers as a safe base from which to explore and return afterwards (Bowlby). Ainsworth et al., (1978) stated that the concept of attachment figures being a secure base meant that caregivers/children maintained proximity to each

other, and babies ventured away from caregivers to explore the environment. Either babies returned to their “secure base” (p. 265, Ainsworth et al.) or were retrieved by caregivers (Ainsworth et al.; Bowlby). When babies explored, their state of being was one of curiosity and safety in the absence of fear (Ainsworth et al.).

Similarly, but in contrast, during exploration when babies felt threatened or fearful, babies’ attachment system became activated, and they sought protection from caregivers (Ainsworth et al.; Bowlby). Ainsworth et al. referred to the attachment figure as a “secure haven” (p. 265). When infants felt threatened, they immediately sought caregivers’ protection (Bowlby). Simultaneously, caregivers monitored infants’ movements and retrieved their babies as necessary to provide protection from harm. Bowlby posited that when babies experienced separation from their attachment figures, babies may have felt distress, which activated babies’ attachment systems. Additionally, Bowlby stated that social interactions, sensory stimulation, and environmental factors influenced children’s attachment behaviors and developmental progress.

Bowlby (1969/1982) said that interactions between caregivers and infants were bidirectional. Although attachment theory stated that attachment figures utilized their caregiving system to facilitate babies’ attachment and caregivers own attachment style was related to their caregiving system, Bowlby recognized that multiple variables existed that influenced the interactions between attachment figures and babies. The pattern of interactions that developed were the outcome of characteristics that each in the dyad contributed to in the relationship, which resulted in each influencing the behavior of the

other (Bowlby). Bowlby gave the following example, “Thus an apathetic baby initiates less and rewards his mother less, and thereby tends to be neglected, whereas an over-reactive and unpredictable baby can drive his mother to exasperation.” (p.341). However, Bowlby focused on caregivers as primarily responsible for the nurturance of infants’ attachment through attachment figures’ caregiving system. All the while, emotions and (ideally) affection accompanied the interactions between caregivers and babies.

Attachment was an enduring emotional bond between caregivers and infants (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Bowlby (1969/1982) described attachment as an innately driven behavior to seek physical closeness and contact with a caregiver under stressful conditions

Bowlby (1969/1982) utilized ethological and human studies to explain child well-being outcomes based upon caregiver and infant interactions. Bowlby posited that when infants received responsive and sensitive caregiving behaviors from attachment figures, then positive emotions and affection, such as love, resulted. These interactions fostered trust and safety, such as security, for infants. Deklyen and Greenberg (2008) referred to this security as possibly providing a protective factor during the developmental process. Research findings indicated that children with secure attachments to parents exhibited more positive child outcomes than children with insecure attachments to parents (Liu, 2006; Richaud De Minzi, 2006).

In contrast, Bowlby (1969/1982) reported that either disruptions in attachment relationships or negative interactions resulted in negative emotions and anxiety along with possible child psychopathology. When the interactions were less than favorable,

such as caregiver rejection, avoidance, and neglect, infants lacked a sense of trust and safety, such as insecurity. Deklyen and Greenberg (2008) referred to this insecurity as possibly posing an increased risk to developmental problems. Research findings supported that negative developmental outcomes were associated with relationships between parents and offspring (Gomez & McLaren, 2007; Lawson, 2008; Richaud De Minzi, 2006; Riggs, 2010).

Bowlby (1969/1982) proposed that as infants interacted in the world babies internalized information. Gradually, babies started to make sense of the world by creating mental representations. By the end of the first year, babies' language development began to accelerate, and they added to their internal mental representations, such as objects, people, events, and interactions (Bowlby). Children learned about what to expect in the world. Children learned about how they and others were supposed to behave. Interactions with attachment figures became mental templates for ways to interact with others (Bowlby). Through repeated interactions with attachment figures, children learned about themselves and others (Berlin, Cassidy, & Appleyard, 2008; Bowlby). Children developed models of self and others, which may or may not have been accurate representations (Berlin et al.; Bowlby). Children with sensitive caregivers may have learned to trust others and value themselves (Berlin et al.; Bowlby). In contrast, children with insensitive caregivers may have learned to distrust others and not value themselves (Berlin et al.; Bowlby). Bowlby referred to the templates as internal working models (IWMs). Over time, IWMs may or may not have been adjusted based on experiences with

attachment figures and others in the world (Bowlby). Thus, IWMs of close relationships became representations for future relationships.

Bowlby (1969/1982) stated that attachment was relationship specific, and IWMs were updated based upon experiences with attachment figures over the lifetime. Bowlby stated that parents would likely pass their attachment styles on to their children through attachment figures' caregiving system. In the literature, the passing of IWMs from one generation to the next was referred to as intergenerational transmission. Van IJzendoorn (1992) reviewed findings on intergenerational transmission of parenting styles and concluded that there was some support for the concept, but stated that mechanisms of transmission were unclear and more research needed to be done. Additional findings were provided in the literature review section below titled, Intergenerational Transmission.

In parent and child relationships, Bowlby (1969/1982) differentiated between primary and secondary attachment figures. Primary attachment figures were the main caregivers and secondary attachment figures were subordinate caregivers. Primary caregivers would facilitate children's attachment via the caregiving system as principal attachment figures (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby). There was a higher likelihood that mothers would become the primary caregivers and principal attachment figures rather than other supplemental caregivers (Ainsworth et al.; Bowlby). However, not all primary caregivers were necessarily mothers (Ainsworth et al.; Bowlby). Theorists stated that children did form attachments to secondary caregivers (Ainsworth et al.; Bowlby).

Bowlby proposed that attachments were organized in a hierarchal system with principal attachments first followed by secondary attachments. Children did not necessarily attach to others due to merely having interactions or relationships with them. Attachments occurred within affective relationships (Ainsworth et al.; Bowlby).

Mothers. In the early 1970s, researchers became interested in testing the theory of attachment (Bowlby, 1969/1982) by examining primary caregiver and infant interactions. As mothers tended to be primary caregivers, mother and infant dyads were the initial focus of most attachment research (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Ainsworth et al. designed a laboratory experiment called the Strange Situation. Researchers studied mother and baby interactions in a series of mother leaving from, returning to, and reuniting with babies (Ainsworth et al.). Systematically, strangers entered the scene with children while mothers were either in or out of the room. Researchers were interested in mothers' caregiving behaviors and babies' responses to mothers. From observed mother and baby interactions, Ainsworth et al. classified infant attachment styles as secure and insecure (anxious-resistant, anxious-avoidant).

Attachment security was shown in a pattern of infants' behaviors, such as cooperative with and willing to comply with attachment figures' demands and signals. Secure babies tended to exhibit social ability and competence in exploring the environment (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Bowlby (1969/1982) described securely attached babies' behaviors as content to move away from, look back to, and return to attachment

figures. Bowlby stated that securely attached babies enjoyed being held and released to explore the environment.

Attachment anxiety was shown in babies with a pattern of ambivalence about physical contact (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Ainsworth et al. reported that the babies exhibited a mix of anger for not being held and resistance to being held. Ainsworth et al. categorized the pattern as anxious-resistant. The babies appeared to experience high anxiety upon separation from attachment figure; they seemed distressed by the presence of a stranger. Ainsworth et al. reported that the babies neither seemed confident to explore away from attachment figures nor to have control over their situation. The babies tended to cry, protest, and show fear (Ainsworth et al.). Bowlby (1969/1982) stated that the babies showed passiveness rather than exploration.

Attachment avoidance was shown in babies as an approach to and avoidance of attachment figures (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Ainsworth et al. described the babies' pattern of behaviors as anxious-avoidant due to having separation anxiety and unpleasant physical contact with attachment figures. Researchers offered that babies exhibited detachment during separations and reunions with attachment figures (Ainsworth et al.). Bowlby (1969/1982) reported that the babies touched periphery parts of caregivers and was tense when held by attachment figures. Yet, when the babies were released, they showed an angry protest. The babies expressed anger at objects other than attachment figures and, at times, injured caregivers for no apparent reason (Bowlby).

Originally, Ainsworth et al. (1978) identified two insecure attachment patterns. There was a third insecure attachment category added later. Main and Solomon (1986) described a category that captured unpredictable attachment behaviors. Researchers titled this pattern as disorganized/disoriented, which was related to children who were abused and neglected by caregivers (Main & Solomon).

Solomon and George (2008) described Ainsworth's insecure attachment patterns as avoidant and ambivalent. According to Solomon and George, the avoidant types showed little emotion, distress, and exploration along with an avoidance of caregivers. Instead, these babies appeared more interested in the toys than their caregivers. Similarly to the avoidant types, the ambivalent types showed little exploration; however, ambivalent types displayed distress, anxiety, and mixed responses to caregivers. Ambivalent types demonstrated both contact with and rejection of caregivers.

In the 1980s, attachment research expanded to include father caregivers and their infants as well. Even though fathers remained secondary caregivers in martially intact families (Belsky, Gilstrap, & Rovine, 1984; Palkovitz, 1984), researchers sought to discover the differences and similarities between mothers' and fathers' interactions with infants (Chibucos & Kail, 1981; Cox, Owen, Henderson, & Margand, 1992). These types of comparisons created difficulties in drawing firm conclusions about fathers as attachment figures when caregiver roles differ substantially. When mothers were the primary caregivers and fathers were the secondary caregivers, there were differences between the levels of caregiving and interactions with children. For example, primary

caregivers provided more hours and functions of caregiving on a daily basis than secondary caregivers. Primary caregivers had many more opportunities to nurture the bonds between them and their children than secondary caregivers.

Mother and father gender differences. In traditional and most intact families, mothers remained as primary caregivers and fathers as secondary caregivers, which means that most fathers spent less time than mothers with children (Grossmann, Grossmann, Kindler, & Zimmermann, 2008). Grossmann et al. stated that due to caregiver roles, mothers as primary and fathers as secondary, gender differences appeared between mothers and fathers regarding their interactions with children. Also, researchers recommended that Ainsworth's Strange Situation may not be the best way to examine father and infant relationship quality. Reviewers suggested examining fathers' play interactions with children instead of utilizing the Strange Situation (Grossmann et al.). Research findings showed fathers played more with infants than mothers (Field, 1978; Paquette, 2004). In one qualitative study of 49 fathers from intact and dual career families, mothers and fathers were interviewed about their babies' attachment behaviors (Bretherton, Lambert, & Golby, 2005). Bretherton et al. found that mothers were favored as attachment figures, while fathers were preferred as playmates by their children (Bretherton et al.). Also, fathers reported that they played rough with sons more often than daughters (Bretherton et al.).

Several studies utilized play interactions, the Strange Situation, or both to assess attachment behaviors and relationships. One study of 62 partnered couples utilized the

Strange Situation at 12 and 13 months to study mothers, fathers, and their infants (Wong, Mangelsdorf, Brown, Neff, & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2009). Wong et al. found that mothers who held beliefs that fathers' caregiving role was important and had highly fussy infants were less likely to have infants categorized as securely attached to them. In contrast to these mothers, fathers with either high marital quality or infant fussiness and beliefs that their caregiving role was important, were more likely to have infants categorized as securely attached to them. Also, researchers found that as fathers' work hours increased their infants were less likely to be categorized as securely attached to them (Wong et al.). These findings indicated that fathers who spent less time with their infants were less likely to establish attachment relationships similar to mothers.

Several other attachment studies examined parental gender differences regarding emotional processes and parental relationships with their children. For emotional processes, studies included variables such as parental warmth, responsiveness, emotional perception, and emotional responses. Studies examining gender differences between parents found that mothers were higher on warmth than fathers (Tacon & Caldera, 2001) along with sensitivity and responsiveness (Kazura, 2000). The operational definition for the term warmth was unclear in Tacon and Caldera's study. Belsky et al. (1984) conducted a longitudinal study and found that mothers were significantly more interactive (i.e., responsive, stimulating, and affectionate) with infants than fathers. Additionally, fathers' involvement with infants was associated with marital interactions (Belsky et al.). Other research findings supported that father and child attachment

relationships tended to be influenced by fathers' relationships with children's biological mothers (DeKlyen, Speltz, & Greenberg, 1998; Howes & Markman, 1989).

In another study, investigators utilized both the Strange Situation and play interactions to examine differences between parents' emotional perception (Arnott & Meins, 2007). Arnott and Meins examined parents' ability to read infants' emotions. Preliminary findings suggested that mothers understood their infants' emotional states better than fathers. Researchers posited that mothers increased contact and opportunities with infants during the postpartum period may account for the gender differences (Arnott & Meins). In contrast, Spangler, Geserick, and von Wahlert (2005) conducted a study of 23 married couples with infants between 9 and 10 months old to investigate factors that may affect responsiveness, such as emotional perception. Findings indicated no gender differences in mothers' and fathers' abilities to understand infant emotions. With mothers' and fathers' perceiving infant emotions equally well, both genders showed the capacity to respond to infants' needs appropriately (Spangler et al.). However, other factors may have influenced parents' responses to and their relationships with their infants.

One such factor may be parents' own emotional responses to their infants. In a Portuguese study, Figueiredo, Costa, Pacheco, and Pais (2007) examined mothers' and fathers' reports of their own emotions at 24 and 48 hours after their infants' birth. Results indicated that mothers' and fathers' emotional responses were similar, and most parents reported positive emotional responses with the exception of some mothers (3.6%) and

fathers (2.9%). Some mothers (1%) and fathers (1.4%) reported negative responses. There were a higher percentage of mothers than fathers reporting negative emotional responses, such as sadness and emotions unrelated to bonding with their infants (Figueiredo et al.). These differences between mothers and fathers emotional responses would be expected as mothers' biological processes are changing in the post partum period, which may influence mothers' emotions (Santrock, 2011). In the United States, approximately 70% of new mothers experienced feelings of depression and anxiety after giving birth (Santrock). Simultaneously, parents' emotional responses and infants' bonding experiences play important roles in attachment relationships.

Additionally, parental gender differences emerged for emotional availability in parent/child relationships (Lovas, 2005). Lovas utilized indoor play interactions between parent and toddler dyads. Lovas observed, videotaped, and measured parent's emotional availability. Emotional availability was described as a bidirectional relationship between parent and child. Emotional availability consisted of parents' sensitivity to, involvement with, and perception of children's cues along with parents' responses to the cues. At the same time, researchers measured child's ability to engage parents and maintain autonomy (Lovas). Results showed that mothers' scores indicate more emotional availability than fathers' scores. Also, there were parent/child sex differences. The results showed in, ranked order for parental sensitivity, structuring, non-intrusiveness, and non-hostility from highest to lowest scores respectively, the following dyads: mother/daughter, mother/son, father/daughter, and father/son. However, for hostility, mother/daughter and

father/son dyad scores were higher than mother/son and father/daughter dyad scores at observation time of 24 months. Even though mothers' scores were higher than fathers' scores for emotional availability, both mothers and fathers struggled in their relationships with their same sex child (Lovas).

Similar findings were found with parents and older children. For example, Diener, Isabella, Behunin, and Wong (2008) found that elementary school-aged girls and boys reported greater attachment security with same sex parents. Although children reported feeling greater security with same sex parents, in another study on parental sensitivity and attachment, results showed that both parents were more sensitive to daughters than sons (Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2006). However, Schoppe-Sullivan et al. reported that sons with insecure attachment to mothers were bolstered by fathers' increased sensitivity to sons. Results indicated that fathers' sensitivity in attachment relationships offer children additional benefits and protections in intact families. Verschueren and Marcoen (1999) found that a secure attachment to one parent can balance an insecure attachment to the other parent. In all of the above mentioned studies regarding parental gender differences and attachment, most of the studies included participants from partnered and traditional families. Parents' caregiver roles were not clearly specified in the literature.

Two studies focused on fathers' caregiving behaviors (partner type unknown) when investigating parental gender differences. Field (1978) examined primary caregiver mothers, primary caregiver fathers, and secondary caregiver fathers in a play interaction task with their four month old infants. Findings showed that both gender and caregiver

statuses were associated with parent and infant interactions. Although fathers as a group engaged more in playful behaviors than mothers, primary caregivers of both genders “exhibited more smiling, mimicry of infant grimaces, and high-pitched imitative vocalizations than did secondary caregiver fathers” (p. 184). Field concluded that primary mother and father caregivers were more similar than primary and secondary father caregivers in their interactions with their infants. Field attributed the similarities between primary caregivers to having more experience with their infants than secondary caregivers.

In Switzerland, Frascarolo (2004) utilized a modified Strange Situation in 37 families’ homes with babies 12 to 14 months old. Both mothers and fathers participated in the study. Fathers were assigned as either nontraditional or traditional caregiver roles. Nontraditional fathers reported that they participated regularly in diapering, bathing, and feeding babies. Traditional fathers reported that they did not participate regularly in the caretaking behaviors. The results showed that babies utilized both parents equally as secure bases in homes with nontraditional fathers. These results suggested that gender was less important than actual caregiving behaviors when establishing attachment relationships with babies (Frascarolo).

Consequently, the results of these studies regarding gender differences showed mixed results. Although gender differences between parents’ caregiving behaviors may exist, children continued to form attachments to fathers (Grossmann et al., 2008; Paquette, 2004). Children attached to their fathers in similar fashion to children attaching

to their mothers (Van IJzendoorn & De Wolff, 1997). When considering the context of fathering roles, it was important to move away from only examining differences between genders and towards further investigation of father/child relationships.

Fathers. In general, several attachment studies on paternal and child interactions showed fathers' particular contributions to children's development. Paternal attachment was associated with both negative and positive influences on children. Negative paternal interactions were associated with disruptive preschooler behaviors (DeKlyen et al., 1998). Paternal availability was associated with lower youth depression (Liu, 2008; Richaud de Minzi, 2006). Additionally, secure paternal attachment was associated with positive peer relations (Lieberman, Doyle, & Markiewicz, 1999; Liu). Liu reported that adolescent girls' paternal attachment predicted their friend support and expectations of peer reactions in social interactions. Additionally, adolescent girls' attachment to fathers predicted their self-worth scores (Liu). For adolescent boys, their attachments to fathers predicted their friend support (Liu). Also, positive paternal interactions with at-risk youth showed decreased substance use and criminal activity (Stein, Milburn, Zane, & Rotheram-Borus, 2009). In one meta-analysis of father and infant attachment, researchers concluded that fathers contributed to children's attachment and recommended that future investigations include parenting contexts to view more complexity in attachment and father/child relationships (Van IJzendoorn & De Wolff, 1997). Thus, examinations of fathers across partner and caregiver contexts were needed to improve the complexity of attachment research.

Attachment and Father Statuses

As attachment research expanded, investigators examined fathers in partner and caregiver contexts, which included secondary caregivers, primary caregivers, and caregivers in disrupted families. Many studies continued to focus on gender differences and at times compared fathers by their caregiver roles. Very few studies specified both fathers relationship to their biological children's mother (partnered, unpartnered) and caregiver roles (primary, secondary). Thus, several of the studies reported below are older and demonstrated the lack of research done in this area. The few studies that clearly delineated partner and caregiver role are presented by father status.

Partnered secondary. As researchers became more interested in examining partnered secondary fathers, several longitudinal studies were conducted. In one longitudinal study, Grossmann et al. (2002) investigated parent and child play interactions along with child attachment in 44 families with mostly stay-at-home mothers and working fathers. Grossman et al. utilized his archival data from the late 1970s and more recently analyzed them for children's internal working model of attachment at ages 6, 10, and 16 years old. Results showed that fathers' play, when encouraging and stimulating for children, predicted attachment security in children. Fathers' positive involvement during play was possibly reflective of fathers' emotional availability. Grossmann et al. concluded that parental differences in caregiver behaviors contributed to and complemented each other during child attachment processes.

Chibucos and Kail (1981) examined 19 father/infant dyads regarding the quality of their interactions. In this study, researchers examined the bidirectional influences within father and infant interactions. These dyads were observed in the laboratory at 2 and 7 ½ months old. Fathers were instructed to place infants on a rug and act as they normally would while together. Investigators tape recorded and observed dyads from behind a one-way mirror. Fathers were rated for quality of their interactions based on fathers' sensitivity, playfulness, and initiation. Also, researchers observed infants' responses to fathers and the interaction between father/infant dyads. Three other interactions, looking face-to-face, touching, and vocalizing, were observed to create behavioral scores. Results showed that at 2 months old the quality of the interaction predicted infants' security with fathers at 7 ½ months old. Also, the quality of interaction remained stable from 2 months old to 7 ½ months old. Finally, the quality of interaction was associated with vocalization and looking face-to-face. The findings indicated that the quality of interactions influenced infants' attachment to their secondary caregiver fathers. When theorizing about the bidirectional nature of infant attachments, Bowlby (1969/1982) focused on specific caregiver/infant relationships. Bowlby did not differentiate between the nature of bidirectionality as specific to a particular caregiver type such as primary only or secondary only. Instead, Bowlby seemed to generalize the concept of bidirectionality to either caregiver type.

Brown, McBride, Shin, and Bost (2007) explored parenting quality, father involvement, and father/child attachment. The sample consisted of 46 father/child dyads.

Children were between 2 years old and 3 years old. Measurements included several self-reports, audio-taped interviews, and in-home/laboratory observations. Researchers concluded that children developed secure attachments in spite of fathers' level of involvement. Fathers' involvement may have been damaging to attachment relationships when there was a lack of positive emotion, poor task structure, or intrusive fathering behaviors (Brown et al.). In contrast, highly positive interactions between partnered secondary fathers and their children predicted future secure attachment (Chibucos & Kail, 1981; Cox et al., 1992; Grossmann et al., 2002).

Partnered primary. Researchers eventually moved from comparing mothers and fathers in families with primary caregiver mothers and secondary caregiver fathers to investigating the role of fathers as primary caregivers (Lamb, Frodi, Frodj, & Hwang, 1982; Pruett, 1998; Radin, 1994). Lamb et al. created two groups of caregivers, involved and less involved. The involved were primary caregivers for more than a month, and less involved were secondary caregivers. Mothers and fathers were assigned to one of either group. In-home observations revealed significant effects between mothers and fathers. Mothers, regardless of their caregiver role, were more vocally expressive and affectionate with their babies than fathers. Fathers differed by their caregiver roles. Involved fathers were less vocally expressive and played more with their babies than less involved fathers. These findings suggested that mothers were different from fathers regardless of the amount of time spent with babies, and fathers differed from each other based on the amount of time spent with babies.

Pruett (1983) investigated 17 two-parent families, and the fathers were primary caregivers while mothers worked full-time. Results showed that these fathers understood their infants well and responded accordingly to infants needs. Moreover, after following these 17 families for years, Pruett (1998) concluded that fathers provided nurturing behaviors which produced socially competent children. Other researchers of primary caregiver fathers reported similar positive results (Field, 1978; Radin, 1994).

Unpartnered secondary. While partnered fathers received some attention in the attachment research, very few attachment studies have examined unpartnered (separated, divorced, and never married) fathers acting as secondary caregivers. In the few attachment studies that have looked at this group of fathers, results have been mixed. Solomon and George (1999) found that overnight visitation of infants with fathers was correlated with less secure attachment to mothers than infants in intact families. The visitation had no impact on attachment for fathers. However, findings from Solomon and George may not have generalized to other noncustodial fathers, since a major limitation to the study was a biased sample with many high conflict couples in the overnight visitation group. Thus, infants' attachments were likely related to parental conflict prior to parental separation, rather than overnight visitations with fathers. Warshak (2000) reviewed attachment literature and posited that restrictions on overnight visitations to non-custodial parents were lacking empirical support. However, in a study about spending time with fathers (Fabricius, 2003), college students reported wanting significantly more time with their fathers than they had in their visitation schedules. Also,

students reported that they wanted more time with their fathers than they believed that their mothers wanted for them. Fabricius argued that college students advocated for shared custody arrangements. Thus, Fabricius posited that parent availability and responsiveness to children contributed to children's security and emotional bonds to parents. Moreover, spending time with noncustodial parents and having flexibility with visitation seemed to foster children's security and attachment to parents.

In one attachment and divorce study, McCormick and Kennedy (2000) examined 218 college students, who were separated from their fathers during childhood. Participants from divorced families reported lower acceptance by their fathers in childhood and late adolescence in addition to lower scores on self-esteem than students from intact families. Based on the low number of studies about this group, no strong conclusions could be drawn, except that separation and divorce had some deleterious effects on parent and child attachment relationships.

Unpartnered primary. A thorough review of the literature revealed two studies examining attachment styles and unpartnered fathers as primary caregivers along with their children (Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009; Olivas & Stoltenberg, 1997). In an effort to study father and child dyads regarding attachment styles without utilizing play interactions and the Strange Situation, Bernier and Miljkovitch examined differences between partnered secondary and unpartnered primary fathers. Bernier and Miljkovitch examined intergenerational transmission of internal working models to fathers' offspring.

The Bernier and Miljkovitch study was explained in further detail below under the heading of Intergenerational Transmission.

Another attachment study of 72 college students examined outcomes from mother and father custody families in comparison to intact families (Olivas & Stoltenberg, 1997). Olivas and Stoltenberg investigated undergraduate students' satisfaction in intimate relationships and their attachment styles in comparison to students from custodial mothers, custodial fathers, and intact families. Results indicated young adults from custodial father families were no different than young adults from custodial mothers, married mothers, and married fathers (Olivas & Stoltenberg). The study design made a contribution to fathering research by utilizing attachment theory to investigate young adults' internal working models and parental relationships through students' current romantic relationships.

Attachment and Internal Working Models

As attachment research continued to expand in regard to parent/child relationships and included the assessment of IWMs, debate existed among experts as to whether individuals developed IWMs that either extended similarly to all other relationships or were relationship specific. Several attachment studies showed support for parent and child relationships as being relationship specific (Cugmas, 2007; Lamb, 1978; McCormick & Kennedy, 1994; Richaud de Minzi, 2006; Rosen & Burke, 1999; Van IJzendoorn & De Wolff, 1997). Researchers stated that the child formed an attachment to individual caregivers, and the type of attachment style did not generalize to other

relationships, so infants developed different attachment styles with each parent and others (Cugmas; Lamb; Rosen & Burke; Van IJzendoorn & De Wolff). McCormick and Kennedy posited that attachment was relationship specific and reported a continuity of mental representations for specific mother and father relationships over time, which supported Bowlby's (1969/1982) theory regarding IWMs.

Other studies supported the concept of mental representations generalizing to both parents (Furman & Simon, 2004), and children developed a template about close emotional relationships that holds over time (Bengtsson & Psouni, 2008; Caspers, Yucuis, Troutman, Arndt, & Langbehn, 2007). At some point in development, young adults shifted away from family of origin attachment patterns in late adolescence and early adulthood to possibly modify or update IWMs of romantic attachment styles (Dinero et al., 2008; Phelps, Belsky, & Crnic, 1998). Bartholomew and Shaver (1998) proposed that IWMs of attachment patterns with parents from childhood may be unrelated to mental representations of romantic relationships in adulthood. In one study that examined IWMs over time and early adulthood attachment, Dinero et al. found that parent/child interactions during adolescence predicted attachment style and indirectly influenced adult romantic interactions at age 25 years old. However, at 27 years old, participants' romantic interactions and attachment styles began to change after they entered into other significant relationships (Dinero et al.). Phelps et al. said that some individuals with an insecure attachment history were able to establish secure attachments in their adult romantic relationships and maintained appropriate parenting practices while

under high stress. When individuals identified as having earned security, maintained healthy parenting skills under stress, these parents showed that they incorporated and overcame their earlier insecure attachment representations.

As the literature above showed, internal working models can be sustained from childhood into adulthood, and there was some evidence that less secure attachment styles can be shifted through the experience of secure relationships later in life. There was a large body of research on adult attachment in romantic relationships. This literature is reviewed in a condensed form below. By doing so, important perspectives may be gained regarding fathers' childhood history and current adult functioning.

Adult romantic attachment. Researchers have conducted a multitude of studies regarding adult romantic relationships and attachment styles (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Mikulincer and Shaver stated that several self-report measures were developed to assess adult attachment styles. Several measures showed good psychometric properties and were widely used to assess adult romantic attachment (Mikulincer & Shaver). A brief history of the development of self-report measures for adult attachment is reported below. Mikulincer and Shaver reported that adult attachment self-report measures were based on Ainsworth's and colleagues' (Ainsworth et al., 1978) categories of attachment patterns. Ainsworth et al. investigated mother/infant dyads and identified three patterns of infant attachment, which included secure, anxious-resistant, and anxious-avoidant. Later, Main and Solomon (1986) added a fourth attachment pattern, disorganized/disoriented. Hazan and Shaver (1987) applied attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969/1982) and Ainsworth et al.'s

three attachment patterns to adult romantic relationships. Researchers devised three adult attachment styles that paralleled Ainsworth et al.'s attachment patterns.

The romantic attachment styles included secure, anxious/ambivalent, and avoidant (Hazen & Shaver, 1987). Hazen and Shaver described securely attached adults in romantic relationships as happy and trusting; secure romantic attachments consisted of mutual acceptance and support between partners. In contrast, Hazen and Shaver described anxious/ambivalent adults in romantic relationships as obsessive with love, craving mutuality and merging with another, emotionally unstable, and extreme jealousy paired with sexual attraction. Also, Hazen and Shaver reported that adults with avoidant attachments in romantic relationships exhibited a fear of closeness, emotional instability, and jealousy. Researchers reported that a characteristic of adults with avoidant romantic attachments was a lack of acceptance for others (Hazen & Shaver). A few years later, the Relationship Questionnaire (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) was developed and followed by the Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994) to assess adult romantic attachments. Bartholomew and Horowitz identified four categories of adult attachment, which were labeled as secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful. Bartholomew and Horowitz described adults with secure attachment styles as having a positive view of self and others. Securely attached adults believed that they were loveable and worthy; they believed that others were accepting and responsive (Bartholomew & Horowitz). In contrast, Bartholomew and Horowitz referred to adults with preoccupied attachments as having a negative view of self, but a positive view of

others. Adults with a preoccupied attachment style tended to believe that they were unlovable and sought acceptance from others (Bartholomew & Horowitz). Also, Bartholomew and Horowitz described adults with dismissive avoidant attachments as viewing self positively and others negatively. Researchers stated that dismissive avoidant attachments were characterized by adults being detached and dismissive of romantic partners (Bartholomew & Horowitz). Also, Bartholomew and Horowitz described adults with fearful-avoidant attachments as viewing self and others negatively. Researchers stated that adults with fearful-avoidant attachments were characterized by viewing self as unlovable and expecting rejection from others (Bartholomew & Horowitz).

Eventually, Brennan et al. (1998) utilized all available adult attachment self-reports to develop the Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR). The ECR was created through a factor analysis of existing attachment self-report items, and redundant items were removed as a result (Brennan et al.; Crowell, Fraley, & Shaver, 2008). From factor analytic procedures, Brennan et al. found that the adult attachment characteristics loaded on two main dimensions, which were attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. These two continuous dimensions accounted for both the three (i.e., Ainsworth et al., 1978; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and four (i.e. Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) attachment categories (Brennan et al.). The ECR can be scored to reflect either the two dimensions or four categories; however, Brennan et al. preferred the utilization of the two dimensions more so than the four categories. The ECR was later revised, and the newer version was titled the Experiences in Close Relationships Questionnaire-Revised (ECR-R; Fraley,

Waller, & Brennan, 2000). The ECR-R scales were improved upon and more precise than the original ECR (Fraley et al.). According to Crowell et al., the ECR and ECR-R are the most commonly employed self-report measures of romantic attachment, and either one was acceptable for research purposes. Among researchers who utilized adult attachment self reports, there seemed to be a consensus that the dimensional measures captured insecure attachments better than utilizing the four category approach (Brennan et al.; Crowell et al.; Fraley et al.). Brennan et al. stated that the ECR measures attachment anxiety and avoidance similarly to Ainsworth et al.'s two insecure patterns. Attachment security was indicated by low scores on both attachment scales (Bennan et al.).

Regarding the ECR's main two dimensions, Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) described the anxious dimension as a fear of abandonment and distress about separations; they described the avoidance dimension as a lack of emotional closeness and suppression. Additionally, Mikulincer and Shaver proposed that individuals with high scores on the anxiety dimension tended to display their distress to partners by increasing their vulnerability, seeking-attention, seeking-comfort, and displaying anger when their needs were not met. Individuals with high scores on the avoidance dimension tended to hide or minimize their distress by decreasing their vulnerability, suppressing their feelings, dismissing their needs, and showing independence (Mikulincer & Shaver). The ECR was widely used in adolescent and adult attachment research (Crowell et al.).

Since the ECR was a collection of existing attachment self-report measures and was utilized in the original thesis project (Siciliano, 2005), outcomes with the ECR will

be focused on heavily within this section. Several studies that employed the ECR found associations between adult functioning in relationships, anxiety (Brassard, Shaver, & Lussier, 2007; Haggerty et al., 2010; Mikulincer, Shaver, Bar-On, & Ein-Dor, 2010; Saavedra et al., 2010; Vilchinsky et al., 2010), and avoidance (Brassard et al.; Haggerty et al.; Mikulincer et al., 2010; Saavedra et al.). In adult romantic relationships, Feeney and Thrush (2010) utilized the ECR to measure adult attachments and found support for the hypothesis that adults used spouses as a secure base from which to explore in novel activities. When spouses' attachment styles were examined in relation to providing a secure base, spouses' attachment styles were predictive of their behaviors during partners' novel activity (Feeney & Thrush). Findings showed that attachment avoidance was predictive of low availability scores. Additionally, attachment anxiety was predictive of high levels of interference and low levels of encouragement. Finally, spouses' with high anxiety and avoidance scores (fearful attachments) had very low encouragement scores (Feeney & Thrush). Findings showed that spouses' noninterference and supportive encouragement were predictive of partners' exploration in a novel activity (Feeney & Thrush). These results indicated that adult romantic relationships had similar processes and characteristics of attachment behaviors in parent and child relationships.

For insecure attachment in adulthood, Mikulincer et al. (2010) reported that participants with higher anxiety scores showed ambivalence when they were given tasks to approach partners for closeness and avoid partners for distance. Also, investigators stated that participants with higher avoidance scores showed discomfort with separation

from partners regardless of their positive comments regarding relational distance (Mikulincer et al.). These results indicated that individuals with either high attachment anxiety or avoidance scores struggled to know what their needs were and have their needs met in relationships.

Saavedra et al. (2010) conducted an online study and collected participants' self-reported data regarding their relationship satisfaction, attachment style, coping with conflict, and daily attention/awareness. Findings showed that both attachment anxiety and avoidance were associated with poor relationship quality. Additionally, individuals with high attachment avoidance scores reported relationship dissatisfaction over time (Saavedra et al.). These findings indicated that Bowlby's (1969/1982) theory regarding insecure attachment and the quality of relationships in childhood seemed similar to adulthood functioning in romantic relationships.

In a study with 79 college students, Haggerty et al. (2010) focused on free recall of childhood memories, intensity of affect, and attachment styles. Results showed a positive association between attachment anxiety scores and total number of negative memories recalled. Haggerty et al. suggested that participants with high attachment anxiety scores may have negative memories readily available for recall, since the instructions for the memory task were under a neutral condition. Similarly, there was a positive association between attachment avoidance scores and total negative memories; participants reported that caregivers were present in the negative memories. Additionally, attachment avoidance scores were negatively associated with intensity of affect scores,

which were related to the memories. So as individuals with high attachment avoidance scores reported more negative memories with caregivers present, they also reported lower intense affect regarding the negative memories (Haggerty et al.). These findings offered support for Bowlby's (1969/1982) theory regarding insecure attachment behaviors. Negative memories with caregivers were readily recalled in adulthood, which indicated the impact these experiences had on individuals during childhood. Individuals with insecure attachment styles carried forward their childhood experiences into their daily experiences during adulthood. Figure 1, below, displays child and adult attachment categories; it is a compilation of the attachment measures discussed in this section.

		High Avoidance Negative Other (-O)			
Low Anxiety Positive Self (+S)	Dismissing Avoidant (+S, -O)			Fearful Disorganized (-S, -O)	High Anxiety Negative Self (-S)
	Secure (+S, +O)			Preoccupied Anxious (-S, +O)	
		Low Avoidance Positive Other (+O)			

Figure 1. Adult and child attachment categories. Based on anxiety/avoidance dimensions (Brennan et al., 1998; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Main & Solomon, 1986) and model of self/other (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) summarized findings on adult attachment for attachment secure, anxious, and avoidant styles regarding daily functioning experiences and caregiving to others. Securely attached adults tended to have positive concepts of self and others (Mikulincer & Shaver). When faced with affective processes, individuals with secure attachment styles seemed comfortable with managing their own and others' affect. Individuals with secure attachments appeared to manage their own daily stressors and were available to others as a secure base or safe haven (Mikulincer & Shaver). Similarly, Kunc and Shaver (1994) found that adults with secure attachments tended to be physically available, sensitive, and cooperative in their caregiving to a romantic partner. Individuals with secure attachments tended to provide caregiving without being intrusive or dominating (Kunc & Shaver).

In contrast, insecurely attached adults seemed to struggle with daily stressors (Mikulincer & Shaver). According to Mikulincer and Shaver, attachment anxious individuals were concerned with others' needs; however, they seemed to tend to others' needs as a way to satisfy their own needs for closeness. Adults with attachment anxious styles were intrusive and insensitive to others' needs (Mikulincer & Shaver). Due to possible deficits in responding to others, anxiously attached individuals may have experienced withdrawal by others and express anger. Also, adults with attachment anxious styles may not have provided to provide a secure base for others to explore from due to fears of abandonment (Mikulincer & Shaver). Additionally, Kunc and Shaver

discovered that adults with preoccupied attachments scored high on being physically available, affectionate, and domineering in their caregiving behaviors. Simultaneously, individuals with preoccupied attachments scored low on being sensitive and cooperative with partners (Kunze & Shaver).

Attachment avoidant adults appeared to be comfortable with distance and independence (Mikulincer & Shaver). Individuals with attachment avoidant styles seemed not to handle their own suppressed emotions and preferred to avoid others' affect as well. Individuals with attachment avoidance styles tended to dismiss vulnerability and projected their own vulnerabilities on others (Mikulincer & Shaver). Individuals with avoidant styles tended to have a negative view of others and responded insensitively to others' needs (Mikulincer & Shaver). Kunze and Shaver described the caregiving behaviors of adults with dismissing attachments as very low on becoming over-involved in partners' problems, being affectionate, and being sensitive. Kunze and Shaver stated that adults with fearful attachments tended to score low on being physically available and sensitive; however, individuals with fearful attachments were highly over-involved in their partners' issues. Clearly, adult attachment styles impacted caregiving roles. Internal working models of relationships affected adults' interactions with both their romantic partners and with their children. Literature regarding this intergenerational transmission of attachment and internal working models are presented next, with a primary focus on fathers.

Intergenerational Transmission

In this section, the use of the words, intergenerational transmission, did not imply a genetic transference of attachment patterns or styles. Rather, the use of the terms was to imply that the attachment patterns and styles may continue within multiple generations of a family. Although there was evidence supporting the idea that attachment patterns or styles replicated from one generation to the next, there was a need for more investigations to understand the mechanisms involved in the continuation of either secure or insecure attachments within families (Van IJzendoorn, 1992). Bowlby (1969/1982) theorized that parents' caregiving behaviors were modeled and transmitted to offsprings' IWMs. As such, once offspring grew up, they began to raise their own children with similar parenting behaviors, and the cycle continued with the next generation. Within this section, findings are presented with an emphasis on fathers, fathers within partner by caregiver contexts, and outcomes related to male gender role socialization.

In a foundational study of the intergenerational transmission of attachment style, Steele, Steele, and Fonagy (1996) examined parents' reports of their own childhood experiences and their offsprings' attachment style to discover significant associations between parents' and their children's attachment styles. Their results suggested that parents may transmit attachment styles to their children. Thus, parent/child relationships and attachment styles may be transmitted overtime and across generations, since parents may reestablish their own attachment experiences with their romantic partners and possibly with their own children. Steele et al.'s study was important because it included

both fathers and mothers. Bowlby's (1969/1982) original theory regarding internal working models was based on mother/child relationships in which the theory arose. In keeping with current changes in family configurations and roles, research has now expanded to include fathers' relationships with children, internal working models, and attachment.

Fathers. Several studies were conducted to examine internal working models and transmission from fathers to their children (Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009; Dalton III et al., 2006; Hare, Miga, & Allen, 2009; Newland et al, 2008; Roelofs, Meesters, & Muris, 2008). In a study of fathers and attachment systems, Newland et al. investigated 102 fathers' involvement, internal working models, and their preschoolers' attachment style. The purpose of the study was to examine fathers' adult attachment and social support as it relates to parenting practices. Additionally, researchers were interested in relationships between parenting and co-parenting along with fathers' internal working model and children's attachment style. Researchers explored whether or not fathers' parenting behaviors mediate associations between fathers' internal working model and children's attachment security. The sample consisted of 76% of partnered fathers, 19% of custodial mothers and fathers, and 5% of other caregiver types. Research assistants visited homes and administered questionnaires to participants. Questionnaires consisted of items pertaining to adult attachment, social support, fathers' play interactions, parenting/co-parenting consistency, parenting/co-parenting behaviors, and preschoolers' attachment behaviors. The results supported that fathers' attachment representations and social

support were associated with parenting/co-parenting behaviors, which were predictive of preschoolers' attachment style. Also fathers' attachment to their partners predicted child attachment security. Additionally, several other variables were related to child attachment security; however, only fathers' play was a significant predictor of preschoolers' attachment security (Newland et al.). While these results contributed to understanding father/child relationships, internal working models, and attachment, results failed to show within group differences in the mixed sample of fathers.

In another study with unspecified father partner and caregiver types, Roelofs et al. (2008) investigated father/child self-reported attachment and fathers' parenting styles. The purpose of the study was to find relationships between parental romantic attachment, child self-reported attachment, and parenting behaviors. The sample consisted of 237 children between 9 years old to 12 years old, 227 mothers, and 205 fathers in the Netherlands. Measures included single-item attachment measures for parents and children. Also, parents completed a parenting questionnaire that identifies behaviors resulting in parenting types (ie., authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative). Findings showed that fathers' insecure attachment style was significantly associated with youths' insecure attachment style to fathers. Also, children with insecure attachment to fathers had fathers with weak authoritative parenting scores when compared to children with secure attachment to fathers. However, when examining the contribution of paternal parenting behaviors, the primary contributor to children's attachment style was fathers' romantic attachment style. There were several limitations to the study, which required

caution when interpreting the results. The study utilized an attachment measure with youths that was modified from an adult version of romantic attachment. Also, the distribution of youths' secure and insecure attachment styles did not match previous research findings and may be related to the children's attachment measure (Roelofs et al.). Another limitation to this study included an absence of fathers' partner and caregiver types to distinguish any differences in father statuses and attachment.

Hare et al. (2009) were interested in associations between parents' marital relationship, adolescent attachment security, and intergenerational transmission of aggression in offspring's romantic relationships. In this study, fathers were partnered, and their caregiver status was unknown. Study participants included 75 adolescents, who were interviewed twice at approximately ages 13 years old and 18 years old. Participants were initially interviewed with their parents and again later with their romantic partners. Demographic information consisted of data regarding youths, parents, and partners. Parents completed two measures regarding physical aggression and relationship satisfaction. Adolescents were interviewed to determine their attachment style. After approximately five years, young adults and their partners completed questionnaires on physical aggression during conflicts and romantic relationship satisfaction. Results showed a significant main effect for fathers' aggression. Additionally, there was a significant interaction between fathers' aggression and youths' attachment style. There was a significant positive association between fathers' aggression and less securely attached youths' perpetration of aggression in romantic relationships at age 18 years old.

Additionally, there was a significant positive association between fathers' aggression and less securely attached youths' victimization from aggression in romantic relationships at age 18 years old. These associations were not significant for securely attached youths. Hare et al. interpreted these findings as the transmission of families' emotional and conflict resolution patterns to offspring with insecure attachment styles in their adult romantic relationships. The researchers stated that secure attachment may act as a buffer for individuals who viewed aggressive behaviors during childhood (Hare et al.). While these results were significant for partnered fathers, within group differences regarding aggression and internal working models between primary and secondary father caregivers remained unknown.

Partnered secondary and unpartnered primary. In contrast, partnered secondary fathers and primary mothers were examined in a retrospective study on parenting and current relationship quality with a group of college students (Dalton III et al., 2006). Dalton III et al. hypothesized that both parents' caregiving behaviors would be associated to their college students' relationship quality, such as beliefs regarding others as available, relationships as important, and self as capable of having healthy relationships. Of the 75 student participants, 65% were women and 35% were men. All were unmarried and in romantic relationships for at least three months. Participants completed two questionnaires, which included parents' caregiving behaviors during childhood that corresponded with specific attachment styles and relationship assessment for current interactions with parents, partners, and others. Also, the relationship

assessment included beliefs about self. Results showed that both parents' caregiving in childhood contributed to current relationship quality with mothers having a stronger influence on current relationships with both parents. However, fathers' caregiving in childhood contributed to current relationship with both parents and romantic partners. Additionally, as students rated paternal caregiving in childhood as more positive, their ratings of belief in their own abilities to form healthy relationships became stronger. Dalton III et al. stated that the findings for fathers' caregiving in childhood as influential upon students' current romantic relationships were unexpected and without explanation. The researchers rationalized that mothers' primary caregiver behaviors seemed more important for students' romantic relationships and internal working models than fathers' secondary caregiver behaviors. Investigators made several recommendations for future investigations, which included examining other caregiver contexts, such as single parent and nontraditional families (Dalton III et al.).

Another study examined differences between partnered secondary and unpartnered primary fathers, intergenerational transmission of internal working models, and their children's attachment styles (Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009). Bernier and Miljkovitch compared 16 married fathers' (secondary caregivers) to 12 custodial fathers' (primary caregivers) attachment histories and their children's (ages 4 - 6 years old) attachment styles. Researchers utilized the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George, Kaplan, & Main, 1996) to assess fathers' own attachment styles based on father reports of their own histories with their parents and the MacArthur Story-Stem Battery ASCT

(Bretherton & Oppenheim, 2003) to assess children's attachment styles. The ASCT categories included "attachment security, deactivation (corresponding to avoidance), hyperactivation (corresponding to resistance), and disorganization" (p. 38). Bernier and Miljkovitch hypothesized that custodial fathers would transmit their attachment styles to their children similarly to primary caregiver mothers, which was supported by the findings. Results indicated no relationship between married secondary fathers' and their children's attachment styles. Additionally, findings showed custodial fathers' preoccupied attachment style positively related to their children's hyperactivation (ie., resistance) attachment style. These unexpected findings highlighted custodial fathers' and their children's insecure attachment styles. For future studies, investigators recommended comparing custodial fathers to either custodial mothers or married primary caregiver fathers to determine which factors related to the transmission of attachment styles. The researchers suggested the need to compare fathers to other fathers by similar caregiver roles (Bernier & Miljkovitch). Two limitations to this study included the comparison of dissimilar partner and caregiver types.

After reviewing the literature, it seemed evident that attachment research provided strong evidence for the transmission of fathers' attachment styles across generations. Fathers' ability to impact and influence their offspring was not limited to attachment styles alone. Fathers played a key role in the development and transmission of gender role socialization as well.

Father Attachment and Gender Role Conflict

As fathers were raised as sons, they were taught beliefs and behaviors about how to behave as men. Their caregivers modeled, reinforced, and taught socially acceptable standards for being male. Many standards have worked well for men until recent times. As such, men's gender role socialization may not have prepared them for the current expectations and shifts in the culture (Brooks, 2010; Levant & Richmond, 2007; O'Neil, 2008; J. H. Pleck, 1995). Male gender role socialization theories encompassed an entire field of research and were not covered in detail in this paper. However, a basic summary of male gender role concepts as they related to attachment were briefly presented here.

Brooks (2010) chronicled the crisis that men have endured in the past several decades as these cultural changes took place. Brooks summarized research on men and their gender role socialization, which placed a high value on engaging in success/achievement, suppressing emotions except anger, rejecting feminine qualities, and exhibiting bravado in relationships with other men. Brooks stated that raising boys with these masculine ideals and beliefs may be harmful to them in their intimate relationships as sons, partners, and fathers. Men with traditional masculine beliefs may feel stressed and conflicted in intimate relationships when they needed to express vulnerable feelings, which contradicts beliefs about men being tough, less emotional than women, and independent (Brooks). As attachment research expanded and included men, some researchers examined men's attachment and the associations to male gender role ideals.

In one study on attachment and gender role conflict, Schwartz, Waldo, and Higgins (2004) assessed 170 male college students with the Relationship Questionnaire (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) and the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS; O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, & Wrightsman, 1986). Findings showed that men with a secure attachment style had significantly less gender role conflict on the Restrictive Emotionality scale than men with insecure attachment styles. Basically, men with secure attachment styles reported more comfort with expressing and talking about their feelings in intimate relationships than men with insecure attachment styles (Schwartz et al.).

From another view, Blazina (2001) completed a study of 172 male college students regarding their gender role beliefs, attachment with parents, and individuation in relationships. The results showed that as men's gender role conflict scores increased, they reported problems with differentiation and poor relationships with their parents (Blazina). These findings suggested that more traditional beliefs about male gender roles may be related to an absence of a clearly defined sense of self and the ability to engage in intimate relationships with parents.

DeFranc and Mahalik (2002) investigated men's attachment to and perceptions of their fathers. In a sample of 204 male college students, participants completed measures of psychological separation from and attachment to parents. Additionally, men reported their own and perceptions of their fathers' gender role attitudes and stress regarding failure to meet traditional male roles. Findings indicated that men whose perceptions of their fathers were that they had lower levels of gender role conflict and stress, reported

closer relationships with parents and especially their fathers. At the same time, these same men reported lower levels of gender role conflict themselves (DeFranc & Mahalik). Again, these findings suggested that men with nontraditional male gender role beliefs tended to report more intimate relationships with others than men with higher levels of gender role conflict. In other words, men with traditional beliefs tended to be more rigid and emotionally disconnected in their attachment with significant others. These results suggested that men with traditional male gender role beliefs had some similarities to other adults with insecure attachment styles. These findings highlighted the idea that male gender role beliefs may have influenced attachment bonds and possibly intergenerational transmission of internal working models from fathers to offspring.

Attachment Summary

Several key themes about fathers and attachment emerged from this review. First, while gender differences were found with mothers showing more warmth (Belsky et al., 1984; Lamb et al., 1982; Tacon & Caldera, 2001), sensitivity (Belsky et al.; Kazura, 2000), and emotional availability (Lovas, 2005) than fathers, there were mixed results regarding gender differences and accurate perceptions of infant emotions. One consistent finding showed that fathers played more with their children than mothers (Bretherton et al., 2005; Field, 1978; Paquette, 2004). Several studies showed that fathers' relationship with mothers was related to father and child attachment (Belsky et al.; Deklyen et al., 1998; Wong et al., 2009).

Second, even though mothers were reported as the preferred attachment figure (Bretherton et al., 2005), several studies found that attachments to fathers may serve a protective or buffer role for children's development (Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2006; Wong et al., 2009). The quality of father and child interactions predicted attachment security (Brown et al., 2007; Chibucos & Kail, 1981). After attachment research began to investigate fathers by caregiver roles, findings showed primary caregiver fathers were more similar to primary caregiver mothers than secondary caregiver fathers (Field, 1978; Frascarolo, 2004). Primary fathers were noted to be as nurturing as mothers, with positive child outcomes (Pruett, 1983, 1998; Radin, 1994). While attachment literature dwindles when studies included unpartnered secondary and primary fathers, studies with college students from divorced families showed that they wished for more time with their fathers, and had better outcomes when they did, as well as worse outcomes when they did not (Fabricius, 2003; McCormick & Kennedy, 2000).

Third, attachment research included a multitude of studies on IWMs, adult romantic attachment, and intergenerational transmission of IWMs. While there were some exceptions, the balance of research findings showed support for fathers of varying partner statuses transmitting their attachment styles to their children (Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009; Dalton III, 2006; Dinero et al., 2008; Feeny & Thrush, 2010; Hare et al., 2009; Newland et al., 2008; Roelofs et al., 2008; Steele et al., 1996).

Fourth, there were clear trends in the relationships between male gender role socialization and attachment. Fathers and sons with lower levels of traditional male

gender role beliefs had closer relationships than men with higher levels of traditional male gender role beliefs (DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002). Men with high levels of male gender role ideals appeared similar to other adults with insecure attachment styles, which may have influenced attachment through intergenerational transmission of IWMs. These outcomes demonstrated the need for further research, since it was unclear what the relationship was between attachment and gender role socialization.

Although research findings indicated that fathers and their children form attachment relationships, there were many gaps in the research regarding fathering contexts by partner and caregiver types. An even larger gap existed within the attachment field regarding the investigation of father statuses as a whole and examining within group differences.

Fathers, Divorce, and Involvement

Similar to the attachment field, there were no known studies that have examined fathers holistically by both partner and caregiver types for all four father statuses within a single study. Many researchers have utilized custodial (Clarke-Stewart & Hayward, 1996; Cohen, 1995; DeGarmo, 2010; Risman, 1987), residential (Bronte-Tinkew, Carrano, & Guzman, 2006; Isacco & Garfield, 2010; Mitchell, Booth, & King, 2009) and partnered (Bulanda, 2004; Isacco, Garfield, & Rogers, 2010; Palkovitz, 1980) father types. Some have investigated various father types within a single study (e.g., Bauserman, 2002; DeGarmo, 2010; DeGarmo, Patras, & Eap, 2008) and fallen short of including all four father statuses. Even so, recent studies have begun to examine within group differences

(e.g., Bauserman; DeGarmo; DeGarmo, et al.; Kalmijn, 2007). The majority of fathering studies reviewed include predominantly Caucasian samples with a few studies that were exclusive to underrepresented fathering groups, such as Latino (Ojeda, Rosales, & Good, 2008; Taylor & Behnke, 2005) and African American (Forste et al., 2009; Julion, Gross, Barclay-McLaughlin, & Fogg, 2007; Leite & McKenry, 2006; Perry, 2009) fathers. In this section, divorce and father involvement research findings are presented in an integrated and progressive approach. Several topics will be covered in this section, including the use of theory in research, awarding of custody in the legal system, unpartnered fathers, and partnered fathers. Then, common themes for divorce and father involvement research regarding gender roles, parenting beliefs/behaviors, child outcomes, and fathers' relationships with their biological children's mothers were presented. A summary of findings are presented at the end of this section.

Theory

Fathering research transitioned from examining divorce outcomes in the 1970's and 1980's (Amato & Keith, 1991) to father involvement in the 1990's (Marsiglio et al., 2000) to the present, and it has lacked a unified theoretical base. Amato (2000) summarized that divorce research was guided by a variety of theories and the majority consisted of a "stress framework" (p. 1271). Similarly, there was a general lack of theory to guide fathering research (Saracho & Spodek, 2008). Marsiglio et al. reviewed the fathering literature to identify theoretical patterns and reported that interdisciplinary researchers utilized concepts such as social capital, social role, and father/child

relationships within the larger social context. According to Marsiglio et al., some researchers utilized identity theory (Stryker, 1987) to understand fathers' experiences, ideals, values, and actual behaviors.

Lamb, J. H. Pleck, Charnov, and Levine (1985, 1987) posited that father involvement consisted of three main areas, which included fathers' interactions with, availability to, and responsibility for their children. One way that researchers measured fathers' availability was through parental reports of time spent with children, including the use of time diaries (Saracho & Spodek, 2008). Lamb et al.'s (1985, 1987) model became a widely used approach to fathering involvement research (Marsiglio et al., 2000) and continues to be utilized today. Also, more recent fathering research showed the continued use of social role/identity theory (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2006; DeGarmo, 2010; Harper & Fine, 2006; Leite & McKenry, 2006; Maurer & J. H. Pleck, 2006), models of social capital (Finley & Schwartz, 2006; J. H. Pleck, 2007), and ecological systems theory (J. H. Pleck, 2007; Seward, Stanley-Stevens, et al., 2006). However, there remained a general disorganization of the father involvement field and a plethora of variables (e.g., Fagan & Barnett, 2003; Hofferth & Anderson, 2003; Jain, Belsky, & Crnic, 1996; McBride, Schoppe, & Rane, 2002) investigated (Saracho & Spodek) without specific theoretical foundations.

In addition to a lack of theory guided research, there was disagreement about how to operationalize and assess father involvement. In fact, there was an absence of agreement on and uniformity across studies regarding the definition of a father (Hofferth,

2007; O'Brien, 2007; Saracho & Spodek, 2008). Saracho and Spodek stated that many studies utilized biological relatedness to define the meaning of a father. Other studies instituted a combination of biological and social variables in defining fathers, which translated to resident male caregivers, such as mothers' boyfriends, stepfathers, and extended family members or other father figures (Saracho & Spodek). Additionally, there was a lack of consensus about how to operationalize the concept of involvement (Finley, 2004; Gadsden et al., 2001; Marsiglio et al., 2000; J. H. Pleck, 2007; Saracho & Spodek). Many researchers have posited a need for broader and more multidimensional conceptualizations of father involvement (Saracho & Spodek) beyond time spent with children (Gadsden et al.; Schoppe-Sullivan, McBride, & Ho, 2004). Suggestions for what should be incorporated into such a definition included attention to an array of aspects (e.g., psychological, emotional, cognitive, economic, ethical, and spiritual) and attending to variables like caregiving, co-parenting, and financial contributions. However, as yet, no specific definition and assessment of father involvement has been agreed upon by researchers in the field.

Although there was an absence of agreement regarding theory, operational definitions, and fathering assessment, there were some shared findings from the plethora of variables in divorce and father involvement fields. Topics with a substantive body of literature behind them included gender roles (Bulanda, 2004; Finley & Schwartz, 2006; Hofferth, 2003; Ojeda et al., 2008), parenting beliefs/behaviors (Beaton & Doherty, 2007; Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2006; Hofferth & Anderson, 2003), child outcomes (Cheadle,

Amato, & King, 2010; Dunn, O'Connor, & Cheng, 2005; East, Jackson, & O'Brien, 2007; Vogel, Bradley, Raikes, Boller, & Shears, 2006), and fathers' relationships to their biological children's mothers (Berger, 2010; Fagan & Palkovitz, 2007; Isacco & Garfield, 2010; Mikelson, 2008). Before delving into these areas, some legal history regarding custody and fathering outcomes are presented next.

Legal History

Warshak (1996) reported that until the early 1800s, fathers had "near-absolute right to custody" (p. 396). Over time, this rule changed with the "tender years" (p. 396) doctrine, which held that mothers due to their nature were best suited to care for the needs of young children. The presumption regarding the primacy of maternal nurturance led to an overall preference for mothers as custodial caregivers until 1972. However with the advent of the women's movement and attention to equality, the tender years' presumption was replaced with the "best-interests-of-the-child standard" (p.397). For the first time, the best-interests-of-the-child standard required judges to take gender neutral factors into account when determining custody cases (Warshak). The best-interests-of-the-child standard allowed fathers a better chance of winning custody.

Custodial bias. Custodial decisions were made by either parents themselves or family court judges (Levy, 2010). In almost 9 out of 10 divorce cases, families chose maternal custody, which may have indicated a gender bias in society (Warshak, 1996). Both mothers and fathers may have followed typical gender roles in an effort to fulfill societal expectations (Kielty, 2006). Additionally, even though the current legal standard

for deciding custody cases was gender neutral, many researchers and experts in the field of family law believed that a gender bias still existed, which favored mothers in custodial decisions (Kielty; Levy, McNeely, 1998; Pisarra, 2011; Sagi & Dvir, 1993; Smith, 2003; Vatsis, 2001; Warshak, 1996, 2000).

Several research studies supported the claim of gender bias against fathers within family court systems and custodial decisions (Kruk, 2010; Sagi & Dvir, 1993). Sagi and Dvir (1993) found that in hypothetical child custody disputes between parents, most social workers made custody recommendations in favor of mothers, even in cases when father custody was in the best interest of the children. Similarly, McNeely (1998) cited cases of gender bias in family courts and a failure by the court system to monitor gender neutrality through statistical reporting about custodial decisions and parent gender. Likewise, attorneys working in family law have suspected gender biases (Pisarra, 2011; Vatsis, 2001). Until recently, statistics were difficult to obtain in support of attorneys' suspicions; however, Vatsis reviewed, uncovered, and reported statistics showing a biased pattern of physical custody awards issued between 1995 and 1998 in the State of Michigan. Vatsis found a clear preference for mother custody over father custody decisions. Although gender bias in family law lacked a unified system for reporting statistical information, many experts familiar with the court system acknowledged the existence of gender discrimination (Fathers, Families, Fairness, 2011; Pisarra; Smith, 2003).

Gender bias in custody decisions was not limited to the United States alone. There were reports of gender issues for family legal matters in other countries as well, including Canada (Kelly, 2009) and Australia (Dunlevy, 2009; Moloney, 2009). Although gender discrimination may have existed, Meyer and Garasky (1993) reported a shift in that mothers are no longer automatically awarded sole physical and legal custody. Steps have been taken to decrease bias and increase gender neutral decisions (Scott, 2010) and promote shared custody decisions (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2007; Dunlevy; Moloney; Smith, 2003). However, fathers have lagged behind mothers in winning physical custody decisions in their favor (Kruk, 2010; Pisarra, 2011; Smith; Vatsis, 2001). Clearly, the divorce and legal process has been difficult for families, and lives have changed as a result.

Catlett and McKenry (2004) explored fathers' changes in power, authority, and access to children after divorce. Catlett and McKenry posited that fathers enjoyed male privileges afforded by gender role socialization prior to divorce, and the reconfiguration of family structure through the legal system diminished fathers' privileges after divorce. Basically, nonresidential fathers' narratives described losses of entitlement regarding power and authority, since they were no longer the heads of their families. Power and authority shifted to mothers. Fathers had limited access to and influence over their children. Additionally, many fathers suffered losses of and control over financial issues.

Catlett and McKenry (2004) identified socioeconomic patterns to fathers' outcomes. Researchers noted that some high income fathers' reassessed their work

priorities, rearranged their lives, and gained shared custody of their children. Also, high income fathers' utilized their financial resources to secure a palatable divorce agreement. Middle income fathers seemed to struggle especially with male ideals of financially caretaking their families, the decreased availability of money, and inability to control the use of child support by mothers. Additionally, middle income fathers seemed to struggle with the newer fathering ideals of being an involved father when they had limited access and opportunities to parent their children. Low income fathers recognized economic difficulties of the divorce process and their limited financial resources. Also, low income fathers described problematic father/child relationships and minimal visitation schedules (Catlett & McKenry). Nonresident fathers, who were satisfied with their custody and legal outcomes tended to remain involved in their children's lives (Stone & McKenry, 1998). These results were important, because the findings illustrated fathers' perceptions of the divorce and legal process, impact of socioeconomic status, losses incurred by divorce, and limited opportunities for involvement with children.

Unpartnered Fathers

Custodial. Upon examination of research findings in the past several decades, evidence supported the use of gender neutral guidelines in custody decision-making. Many studies investigated custodial fathers and mothers to show many similarities and some differences. In contrast to research in the field of attachment, many researchers have investigated fathers as primary caregivers in unpartnered arrangements. In general, it appeared that children adjusted equally well in primary custody homes regardless of

parent gender (Amato, 2000; Risman & Park, 1988; Weinraub & Gringlas, 1995).

Additionally, investigators have demonstrated that custodial fathers arranged their lives around their children (Cohen, 1995) and enacted parental behaviors (Risman, 1987) similar to custodial mothers. Thus, custodial fathers appeared to be competent primary caregivers.

Although both genders appeared to be competent primary caregivers, research examining child outcomes has been mixed. Some research has supported the idea that children fared better when living with the same sex parent (Santrock & Warshak, 1979; Warshak, 1986). One study reported mixed results in that boys fared better in father custody, but girls did not show an advantage to mother custody over father custody (Clarke-Stewart & Hayward, 1996). Still other researchers have not found the same sex, parent/child advantage (Amato, 2000). Although inconsistent results were found regarding same sex parent/child relationships, researchers posited that custodial fathers had special relationships with their children (Chang & Deinard, 1982; Clarke-Stewart & Hayward). Investigators suggested that custodial fathers themselves may be different from both custodial mothers and other father groups due to being more focused on children (Hetherington, Bridges, & Insabella, 1998).

There were more recent studies which have examined parent/child relationship quality for residential fathers (DeGarmo, 2010; DeGarmo et al., 2008; King, 2007). In a sample of 294 adolescents, King investigated differences in quality of parent/child relationships between custodial fathers, stepmothers, and noncustodial mothers. King

reported that adolescents were significantly closer to their fathers than stepmothers and biological mothers. Additionally, youths' closeness to fathers was associated with youth well-being outcomes. King posited that full custody fathers and mothers were probably similar in the quality of their parent/child relationships, and the findings suggested possibly a connection between closeness and residency arrangements. Perhaps, non-residence and distance from a parent was a risk factor for closeness.

On the contrary, DeGarmo (2010) examined within group differences of divorced fathers and quality of involvement. DeGarmo found few differences in quality of involvement with children between full, shared, and no custody fathers. However, shared custody fathers displayed more positive interactions with children than the other fathers (DeGarmo). In another examination of within group differences between full, shared, and no custody fathers, DeGarmo et al. (2008) found that shared custody fathers performed more positive interactions with their children than full custody fathers. Full custody fathers appeared less adept in father/child interactions, and they reported the highest levels of stress and conflict with ex-wives (DeGarmo et al.), which may have influenced custodial fathers' interactions with their children. However, taking the outcomes of these studies into consideration, custodial fathers seemed similar to custodial mothers and nonresidential fathers in their post-divorce parent/child relationships. More research was needed to determine the quality of relationships between custodial fathers and their children.

Noncustodial fathers. Several studies about noncustodial fathers' relationships with their children showed contradictory results to the studies utilizing within group differences (e.g., DeGarmo, 2010; DeGarmo et al., 2008) for divorced fathers. One common complaint from unpartnered fathers, who were secondary caregivers, was a decline in relationship quality with their children after the divorce (Hoffman, 1995; Kalmijn, 2007; Kruk, 2010; Scott et al., 2007). Scott et al. studied unpartnered fathers and changes in their postdivorce relationships with their adolescents. Scott et al. reported that most father/youth relationships decreased in closeness. Scott et al. attributed the decrease to possibly fathers' changed residence and lack of closeness with adolescents prior to divorce. Yet, a small percentage of father/youth relationships actually maintained closeness, and some dyads increased in closeness over time after the divorce (Scott et al.). Researchers discovered that adolescents wanted to feel important to their nonresident fathers, and associations were found between youths' sense of mattering to fathers and youths' difficulties following divorce (Schenck et al., 2009).

Similarly, researchers examined unpartnered fathers' relationships with daughters (East et al., 2007; Nielsen, 2007). In a qualitative study of father/daughter relationships, themes emerged from women's narratives that indicated daughters' feelings of hurt, absences of closeness, and desires for positive connection with nonresident fathers (East et al.). Additionally, East et al. heard daughters report ongoing relationship difficulties with other men regarding trust and intimacy issues. These findings were supported by a 15 year study of parent/daughter relationships, which found father/daughter relationships

deteriorated after a divorce (Nielsen). Additionally, daughters reported generally closer relationships to mothers than fathers in both intact and non-intact families (Nielsen). These results indicated possible gender differences in the quality of parent/child relationships.

A Netherlands study showed gender differences in adult children's contact and support of parents in later life for intact and disrupted families (Kalmijn, 2007). Kalmijn investigated adult children's contact and support of married mothers/fathers, divorced mothers/fathers early in children's lives, divorced mothers/fathers late in children's lives, and widowed mothers/fathers. Researchers hypothesized that fathers received protective benefits in parent/child relationships from marriage through mothers' facilitation of fathers' connections with children. Additionally, researchers hypothesized that parents nurtured relationships with offspring via investments of time and energy during childhood. Hypotheses were supported by the data. Findings showed that adult children contacted and supported parents in later life, according to the following statuses from most to least for widowed, married, and divorced statuses. Additionally, offspring contacted and supported mothers more than fathers for all statuses. Fathers who divorced early in their children's lives appeared to receive the least amount of contact and support from their offspring in later life compared to all other parent groups. According to Kalmijn, fathers who divorced early in their children's lives had fewer opportunities to invest in their parent/child relationships than other parents. The case worsens for divorced fathers when they either remarried or produced new biological children. These

additions to divorced fathers' lives seemed to subtract from fathers' relationships with their offspring from their previous families (Kalmijn). A limitation to the Kalmijn study included the absence of parents' caregiver roles. The attempt to examine parents holistically was informative and showed important differences between groups. The use of caregiver roles may have helped to distinguish differences in mothers' and fathers' relationships with their children to obtain a richer understanding of the results. Nonetheless, Kalmijn's findings highlighted parental gender differences and supported previous divorce outcomes regarding father/child relationship changes along with difficulties that fathers experienced in maintaining positive connections with their biological children (Amato & Sobolewski, 2004).

So far in the review of divorce and father involvement literature, the majority of the findings suggested that some differences existed between custodial and noncustodial fathers regarding their father/child relationships. However, when divorced fathers were examined together in the same study (DeGarmo, 2010; DeGarmo et al., 2008), few within group differences appeared for father/child relationships. These mixed findings illustrated the complexities of separately viewing father groups and the usefulness of a more holistic approach. Thus far, for unpartnered fathers, the picture that has begun to emerge was one of difficulty within social, cultural, and legal contexts. Likewise, another group of fathers, partnered primary, faced social and cultural challenges when they enacted their fathering roles.

Partnered Fathers

Stay-at-home dads or fathers (SAHFs), as they were commonly referred to in the father involvement literature, were usually partnered primary caregivers. There were some single, custodial fathers, who stayed home as well; but generally in the research, SAHFs tended to be partnered. SAHFs were very similar to custodial fathers, since they shared primary caregiver roles; however, most stay-at-home fathers were spared the difficulties and outcomes of divorce legal proceedings.

Stay-at-home fathers. Common topics which emerged from the SAHFs research included support, satisfaction, decisions, and gender role beliefs. Unlike single custodial fathers, who reported high levels of distress and conflict with former spouses (DeGarmo et al., 2008), most SAHFs reported feeling supported by spouses and other family members in their caregiver roles (Rochlen & McKelley, 2010; Rochlen, McKelley, Suizzo, & Scaringi, 2008; Rochlen et al., 2010; Rochlen, Suizzo, McKelley, & Scaringi, 2008); however, some fathers did not feel supported by their friends (Merla, 2008; Rochlen, McKelley, et al., 2008). Many SAHFs reported feeling satisfied with their lives (Rochlen et al., 2010; Rochlen, McKelley, et al., 2008), their decisions (Rochlen, Suizzo, et al., 2008), and their relationships (Rochlen, McKelley, et al., 2008). However, there were no known studies on the quality of SAHFs relationships with their children; more research was needed in this area.

For SAHFs to enact their roles as primary caregivers, they violated socially ascribed male gender roles. In doing so, SAHFs were in the minority. Since the primary

caregiver role was usually performed by women, one common research question was “How did SAHFs decide to become the primary caregiver?” SAHFs offered various responses, such as job loss, achieved career goals, career transitions, partner higher pay/career investment, valuing a parent staying home, economic practicality, and better fit as a parent than the other partner (Doucet, 2004, Merla, 2008; Rochlen et al., 2010; Rochlen, Suizzo, et al., 2008; West et al., 2009). As male primary caregivers, some SAHFs reported feeling isolated (Merla; Rochlen et al., 2010) and stigmatized in society (Doucet; Merla; Rochlen & McKelley, 2010; Rochlen et al., 2010; West et al.).

For SAHFs to reconcile societal dictates about men’s roles in society and their roles as primary caregivers, many SAHFs determined their own standards of masculinity (Merla, 2008; Rochlen & McKelley, 2010; Rochlen, Suizzo, et al., 2008). Most SAHFs reported less traditional and more egalitarian gender role beliefs (Merla; Rochlen, McKelley, et al., 2008; West et al., 2009), which showed their flexibility (Rochlen & McKelley, 2010) and adaptability (Merla) in their primary caregiver roles. In fact, over time, many SAHFs experienced significant changes in their lives, such as increased emotional awareness and expression, as a result of becoming primary caregivers (Rochlen, Suizzo, et al.). Thus, SAHFs reported the development of more feminine qualities (Rochlen, Suizzo, et al.). These findings indicated that SAHFs decided to stay home for various reasons and tended to feel satisfied with their lives regardless of societal stigmatization. Additionally, SAHFs reported more flexible gender role beliefs.

Common Themes Across the Divorce and Father Involvement Literature

Gender roles. Traditionally based gender roles have ascribed mothers the role of primary caregiver and fathers the role of secondary caregiver. These socially ascribed roles were the result of Western industrialization, which provided fathers jobs away from homes and the roles of being primary breadwinners in families (Brooks, 2001). Brooks stated that these secondary caregiver and economic provider roles robbed fathers of opportunities to interact with their children. In recent decades, with cultural shifts away from breadwinner only roles and new expectations of fathers as nurturers, fathers may have still lacked the skill sets necessary to perform basic nurturance tasks (Brooks). Additionally, Brooks posited that fathers who attempted to change may struggle with their own beliefs and behaviors related to being male. Finley and Schwartz (2006) conducted a retrospective study of father involvement for intact and non-intact families to test for cultural changes in fathering behaviors. College students reported that their fathers' generally performed traditional functions, such as provider, disciplinarian, protector, and moral teacher. Students from intact families endorsed that their fathers performed high levels of traditional functions and a minimal level of nontraditional forms, such as caregiving, emotional, spiritual, and social functions. Additionally, students from disrupted families reported that their fathers performed a low level of both traditional and expressive forms of involvement. These findings indicated that fathers' continued to interact with their children in traditional male gender roles, and children from disrupted families barely interacted with their fathers at all (Finley & Schwartz).

Another study attempted to test for a cultural change in fathering behaviors from traditional provider to nurturing father roles between generations of fathers and sons (Morman & Floyd, 2002). In a study of mostly Caucasian males, Morman and Floyd gathered data on expressions of affection and relationship closeness between three generations. The data showed that fathers and sons reported mutual closeness, relationship satisfaction, and affectionate relationships with each other more so than fathers felt with their own fathers. These findings indicated a possible shift in fathering behaviors and culture between generations (Morman & Floyd).

Bulanda (2004) examined parents' gender role beliefs and fathers' involvement. Participants consisted of married fathers, who were primary breadwinners, and mothers, who were primary caregivers. Findings showed a negative association between fathers' work hours and the "proportional hours of fathers' involvement" (p. 43). Additionally, fathers with less traditional and more egalitarian gender beliefs were more involved with children. Mothers' gender role beliefs were unrelated to fathers' involvement (Bulanda). In contrast, Seward, Yeatts, Zottarelli, and Fletcher (2006) conducted a study of parental gender role beliefs, parental leave, and fathers' involvement. Seward et al.'s findings showed that both parents' egalitarian beliefs along with mothers' number of hours worked were positively related to fathers' taking leave after children's births. Although fathers who took leave had higher scores than men who did not take leave on caregiving tasks, overall the scores were not statistically significant for father involvement. In terms

of ethnic differences, mostly Caucasian, few African American, and no Asian or Native American fathers took leave (Seward et al.).

Studies were conducted with Latino fathers regarding cultural beliefs, gender roles, and fathering behaviors (Ojeda et al., 2008; Taylor & Behnke, 2005). Taylor and Behnke found within group differences for Latino men living in Mexico and the United States. The fathers living in Mexico reported more traditional fathering roles, such as being the head of the family, using harsh corporal punishment, and being providers/protectors. In contrast, Latino fathers, who immigrated to the United States, reported less traditional fathering roles and less harsh discipline strategies (Taylor & Behnke). These findings were supported by more recent research with Mexican American college students who were compared to a Caucasian sample (Ojeda et al.). Ojeda et al. confirmed that Mexican American males reported more traditional male role beliefs than other American males. These studies were important, because they highlighted the role of culture, gender role beliefs, and fathering behaviors.

Overall, the research on fathers and gender roles supported that fathers who espoused less traditional gender roles tend to be more involved fathers. Additionally, primary caregiver fathers were willing to violate cultural and societal dictates. Research has indicated that custodial fathers were capable and competent providers of children's daily care (Cohen, 1995; Risman, 1987, Risman & Park, 1988; Santrock & Warshak, 1979), and SAHFs were satisfied with their lives (Rochlen et al., 2010; Rochlen, McKelley, et al., 2008). Moreover, in a study of partnered fathers as secondary

caregivers, Palkovitz (1980) posited that the best predictor of fathers' behaviors was fathers' gender role scores. Additionally, Palkovitz stated, "Androgynous fathers were the most involved fathers as a group" (p. 64).

Parenting beliefs and behaviors. Within father/child relationships, paternal satisfaction was associated with father involvement (McKenry, Price, Fine, & Serovich, 1992). Additionally, fathers' positive perceptions of their fathering roles were related to their involvement (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2006). According to Bronte-Tinkew et al., residential fathers with less positive perceptions were those who were unmarried and those with low income, less education, and of minority status. These findings indicated that fathers have many barriers to overcome. Fathers' abilities to overcome these barriers may lie at least partially within their own expectations. Fathers' own expectations of self were associated with fathers' involvement (Cook, Jones, Dick, & Singh, 2005). Cook et al. found that fathers who expected to make emotional and practical contributions to their children's upbringing tended to follow through with these behaviors. Likewise, Rane and McBride (2000) posited that fathers who scored high on the nurturing role as central to their sense of self were significantly more involved with their children than fathers who scored low on the nurturing role as central to their sense of self.

Oftentimes, fathers relationships with their own fathers were related to levels of involvement (Beaton & Doherty, 2007; Kerr, Capaldi, Pears, & Owen, 2009; Shannon, Tamis-LeMonda, & Margolin, 2005). Fathers utilized their own childhood histories to inform them of how to parent. Fathers tended to either model after or compensate for

their fathers' behaviors (Beaton & Doherty). Julion et al. (2007) solicited African American fathers' participation in focus groups. Julion et al. heard fathers report the importance of caregiving, guiding, providing, and transmitting culture to their children. However, African American fathers expressed concerns about their own father involvement and barriers to enacting their fathering roles due to some fathers' experiences with their own uninvolved and absent fathers in childhood (Julion et al.). Although many fathers lacked appropriate role models, father involvement programs and interventions have shown effectiveness in assisting fathers' with increasing positive involvement in their children's lives (Kocayörük & Sümer, 2009; Saleh, Buzi, Weinman, & Smith, 2005).

Child outcomes. In this section, divorce and father involvement findings for child outcomes regarding general well-being, father contact, child support, and geographical location is reviewed. In some studies, child well-being outcomes differed according to gender (Dunn et al., 2005; Finley & Schwartz, 2007; Harper & Fine, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2009), and others they did not (DeGarmo, 2010). Experts pointed out that fathers' positive and negative involvement occurred within differing family structures resulting in various child development outcomes (Vogel et al., 2006). In general, positive father involvement promoted child well-being (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Harper & Fine; Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004; Mitchell et al.; J. H. Pleck & Masciadrelli, 2004) for various family types.

Depending upon the type of family structure, some families may have provided better contexts for child development than others (Amato, 2000; Finley & Schwartz, 2007). Some children may have suffered deleterious effects from disrupted families (East et al., 2007; Mitchell et al., 2009; Stadelmann, Perren, Groben, & von Klitzing, 2010). In many divorced families, children may have faced particular stressors and adjustments that children from intact families never have faced, such as losing contact with biological fathers and gaining stepfamily members. Amato summarized divorce outcomes and stated that children from divorced families tended to score lower on measures of well-being than children from intact families. However, when fathers maintained positive connections with their children, this may have decreased potential risks to their children's well-being (Amato & Sobolewski, 2004; Day & Padilla-Walker, 2009). In cases of divorce and early separation from parental figures, Hetherington and Stanley-Hagan (1995) concluded that parental involvement, care, and responsiveness along with authoritative parenting promoted child well-being during marital transitions. In an early review of the divorce literature, Tillitski (1992) reported that parenting skills and parent adjustment were important for child well-being in post divorce families. One measure of paternal adjustment included distress level. In a study of nonresidential fathers and children's well-being, Harper and Fine (2006) reported a negative relationship between fathers' distress and child well-being with daughters showing more sensitivity to fathers' distress than sons.

There was a positive association between father-child relationship quality and levels of child well-being (Dunn, 2004; Harper & Fine, 2006). Fathers contributed to relationship quality through personal attributes and interactions. Findings indicated that positive fathering characteristics were related to child well-being regarding warmth (Harper & Fine; Sandler, Miles, Cookston, & Braver, 2008), play (Roggman, Boyce, Cook, Christiansen, & Jones, 2004), and connectedness (Day & Padilla-Walker, 2009; Vogel et al., 2006). In one study on adolescents' connection to nonresident fathers, Mitchell et al. (2009) examined fathers' involvement and adolescent well-being. Mitchell et al. found that daughters and sons reported fairly equal amounts of father involvement; however, sons reported direct contact consisting of more overnight stays and shared activities, such as sports and movies, than daughters. Additionally, boys reported more feelings of closeness with their fathers than girls, and feelings of closeness to nonresident fathers were related to lower internalizing problems in adolescent girls (Mitchell et al.). Similarly, in a retrospective study, women reported a desire for more interactions with nonresident fathers that consisted of emotional, social, and spiritual connections (Finley & Schwartz, 2007). Findings suggested that nonresident fathers needed to attend to the quality of their relationships with their daughters. In cases where fathers paid attention to and developed quality relationships, fathers' may have served as buffers to children's well-being when either mothers' involvement was low (Day & Padilla-Walker) or supportiveness was scored as average or below (Martin, Ryan, & Brooks-Gunn, 2010).

Even though fathers may have served as a buffer in the parental system, they may have made unique contributions based on their biological relationship to their children. In a study of biological and stepfathers, J. H. Pleck and Hofferth (2008) found that fathers' biological status was related to involvement. When participants of one study were asked to identify the most helpful male-parent figure to them, 97% of co-residing children and 82% of non-co-residing children selected their biological fathers (Munsch, Woodward, & Darling, 1995). In studies that included various father types, fathers' positive relationships with their biological children tended to contribute to children's well-being more so than other father figures (Cookston & Finlay, 2006; Flouri, 2007).

Contact. For fathers to engage in relationships with their biological children, they interacted through either direct or indirect contact. Direct contact may have included caregiving activities, such as dressing, feeding, playing, disciplining, and helping with homework. Also, direct contact may have included visiting in person, talking by phone, and writing messages. Indirect contact may have included forms of support, such as child support and practical help to children's mothers.

The importance of contact between fathers and their biological children emerged from research on divorce and father absence (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda, 2004). Some fathers may have become absent in response to custodial arrangements and infrequent contact with children (Hetherington et al., 1998). Lamb and Tamis-LeMonda reported that similarly to divorce outcome studies, researchers investigated differences between children from intact and father-absent families. Overall, according to Lamb and Tamis-

LeMonda, findings showed that children from father-absent families tended to score lower on measures of well-being than children from intact families. Of course, individual differences existed within these groups, and some children fared better than others (Lamb & Tamis-LeMonda).

Many studies continued to examine fathers' level of contact and involvement with children regarding well-being. Not all experts believed that fathers' level of involvement influenced children's well-being. Hawkins, Amato, and King (2007) referred to fathers' influence on children as "father effects" (p. 991), and children's influence on fathers' involvement as "child effects" (p. 991). Hawkins et al. proposed that adolescents' well-being influenced the level of fathers' involvement supporting a child effects model. In contrast, most researchers tended to examine fathers' influence upon their children. Findings suggested that fathers who maintained contact with their children often promoted child well-being (DeGarmo, 2010; Dunn, Cheng, O'Connor, & Bridges, 2004; Vogel et al., 2006). For example in disrupted families, Williams and Finley (1997) found that higher father contact in childhood and recent father contact in adolescence was associated with perceived higher affective quality of fathering.

There were mixed results regarding family structure and children's well-being outcomes. Although originally, divorced and father-absent families were compared with intact families, researchers expanded and examined within group differences of disrupted families in comparison to intact families (Bauserman, 2002). In a meta-analysis of shared custody, sole custody, and intact families, Bauserman found support for good outcomes

in father contact, indicating that positive ongoing parental involvement with both parents promoted child adjustment. Additionally, Bauserman posited that children in shared custody fared better than children from sole custody families; however, no difference existed between children from shared custody and intact families.

Other research results contradicted the findings that children from shared custody families did not differ from intact families. When Finley and Schwartz (2007) conducted a retrospective study with college students, results showed that father involvement and well-being was positively related mostly in students from intact families. Finley and Schwartz (2006, 2007) stated that students from disrupted families indicated a desire for increased father involvement. Typically, for intact families, children had their fathers more readily available than children from disrupted families; thus, there were increased opportunities for children from intact families to interact and develop strong relationships with their fathers.

Researchers reported mixed results for frequency of contact, father involvement, and quality of father/child relationships. Several findings supported the importance of the quality of the relationship over the frequency of contact (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; DeGarmo, 2010; Marsiglio et al., 2000). Marsiglio et al. concluded that time spent with children was not as important as the type of interactions between nonresident fathers and children. Several researchers who examined parent/child relationships and interactions identified particular parenting practices which contributed to child well being. Authoritative parenting was described as parents having warmth, acceptance, and

appropriate boundaries for their children (Baumrind, 1971; Milevsky, Schlechter, Klem, & Kehl, 2008; Sartaj & Aslam, 2010). Findings indicated that children whose parents practiced authoritative parenting scored high on measures of well being (Milevsky et al.; Sartaj & Aslam). In contrast, children whose parents interacted with them in cold, strict, and punitive ways scored low on measures of well being (DeKlyen et al., 1998; Sartaj & Aslam). In cases of family disruption, authoritative parenting was related to children's positive adjustment (Dunn, 2004; Hetherington et al., 1998; Lansford, 2009). However, in order for fathers to be available as parents, there needed to be access to and contact with their children. Yet, the amount of contact depended upon the custody arrangement (DeGarmo). According to DeGarmo, regardless of the quantity of contact, the quality of involvement between full, shared, and no custody fathers showed little differences. In contrast, Finley and Schwartz (2007) stated that students with nonresident fathers reported a yearning for more father involvement and suffered losses in the quality of their relationships with their biological fathers than students raised in intact families. Other findings supported the idea that frequent contact between fathers and their biological children was most beneficial (Dunn et al., 2004; Vogel et al., 2006). Also, frequent and consistent contact was related to the quality of father/child relationships and better child outcomes (Dunn et al.).

Child support and geographical distance. Several studies showed the importance of fathers' paying child support (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Dunn, 2004; Huang, 2006; McLanahan & Carlson, 2004) and living within a geographical location close to their

children (Andrews et al., 2004; Leite & McKenry, 2002, 2006), which enhanced fathers' contact and access for visitation (Cheadle et al., 2010). In contrast, one study did not find an association between child support and adolescent well-being outcomes (Hawkins et al., 2007). In some cases, fathers may have needed assistance in making direct and indirect contact with their children. Huang utilized the Current Population Survey-Child Support Supplement (CPS-CSS) data from 1988-1998. Based on the national data set of mother reports about never married fathers' involvement, father involvement was measured by child support payments and number of days fathers spent with their children within a year. Father involvement was the dependent variable. Huang created a child support enforcement index based on 8 variables pertaining to states' laws and enforcement of child support. The child support enforcement and mothers' socioeconomic variables were predictor variables. Huang employed regression analyses to find associations between the predictor and criterion variables. Findings showed that child support enforcement index scores were significantly associated with child support payments and visitation days (Huang). Huang stated that mothers who lived in states with laws for enforcement of child support tended to receive higher child support payments and their children spent more time visiting with their fathers per year than mothers who lived in states without strong child support enforcement policies. These results indicated that fathers may have wanted to and struggled with staying connected with their children.

Cheadle et al. (2010) examined patterns of nonresident fathers and contact with children. Two-thirds of the fathers were consistent in maintaining contact with little

change over a 14-year period. Based on the patterns, fathers were categorized into one of four groups. The four groups consisted of the following types of contact: high/stable, low/stable, high/decreasing, and low/increasing. For the high/stable group, fathers tended to stay geographically close to their children, tended to pay child support, had older children at the end of the romantic relationship to the mother, and most likely were married to the mother prior to the separation. For the low/stable group, fathers were young when their children were born, tended not to pay child support, had no or little contact in the first year after the end of the relationship to the mother, and were most likely not married to the mother prior to the separation. For the high/decreasing group, fathers' initially made frequent contact in the first year after the termination of the relationship and steadily decreased contact over time. Also, the high/decreasing group of fathers tended to pay child support and lived geographically close in the first year, but not in later years. For the low/increasing group, fathers tended to live geographically far from their children in the first year after the end of the relationship to the mother and closer to their children in the years that followed the first year (Cheadle et al.). From these findings, in addition to child support and geographical location, fathers' relationship to the mother appeared to play an important role in father's level of involvement and contact.

Fathers' relationships to children's mothers. In general, findings from the majority of studies, which included parental relationship variables, indicated that fathers' relationships with the mothers of their children were associated with fathers' level of

involvement for intact (Berger, 2010; Bouchard, Lee, Asgary, & Pelletier, 2007; Easterbrooks et al., 2007; Palkovitz, 1980, 1984) and non-intact families (Cabrera et al., 2004; Devault et al., 2008; Easterbrooks et al.; Kruk, 2010; Perry, 2009). However, in the review of the fathering research, three known studies found that fathers' level of involvement was unrelated to their relationships with their children's mothers (Bulanda, 2004; Rouyer, Frascarolo, Zaouche-Gaudron, & Lavanchy, 2007; Shannon et al., 2005). Although three studies showed contrary results, many studies have examined maternal beliefs and support, relationship status, residency status, relationship quality, parental conflict, and maternal gate-keeping, which all emerged as key variables for fathers' involvement and child well-being.

Maternal beliefs and support. Research findings consistently showed the importance of fathers' perceiving and receiving support in their father/child relationships by others, especially mothers of their biological children (Berger, 2010; Devault et al., 2008; Maurer & J. H. Pleck, 2006; Perry, 2009). Several studies have supported the idea that mothers' opinions of and beliefs about fathers' skill are associated with fathers' levels of involvement (Andrews et al., 2004; McBride & Rane, 1998; Palkovitz, 1980, 1984). For intact families, Palkovitz (1980, 1984) found that wives' beliefs and expectations about fathers' behaviors predicted fathers' involvement with their infants. In a Canadian study, Bouchard et al. (2007) examined partnered secondary fathers and found that fathers' perceptions of partners' support regarding fathers' competence was related to fathers' own feelings of competence and motivation to provide care to their

children. Similarly, a study on father involvement and parental alliance discovered significant correlations between fathers' beliefs about their spouses' opinion about them and their parenting ability and involvement, responsibility, non-workday interactions, and accessibility scores (McBride & Rane). Additionally, McBride and Rane found that mothers' reports of fathers' parenting ability was significantly related to fathers' involvement, responsibility, work/non-workday interaction, and work/non-workday accessibility scores. Investigators concluded that the results were suggestive of mothers' regulation of father involvement (McBride & Rane). Mothers' regulation of fathers' involvement was often tied to the couples' relationship status. Relationship and residency statuses added complexity and context to parental relationships and fathers' involvement with children.

Relationship status. Several studies showed that the parental relationship status was associated with fathers' level of involvement (Cabrera, Ryan, Mitchell, Shannon, & Tamis-LeMonda, 2008; Fagan & Palkovitz, 2007; Futris & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2007; Herzog, Umaña-Taylor, Madden-Derdich, & Leonard, 2007). In relationship to a child's mother, father status may have consisted of a romantic, friendship, acquaintance, or disengaged stance. In a study of teenage parents, Herzog et al. found that mothers who were in romantic relationships with the fathers, perceived fathers as more involved, and less involved after the romantic relationships ended. The closer or more intimate the parents' relationship, such as either romantic or friends as opposed to acquaintances, the higher fathers' involvement (Fagan & Palkovitz). One study showed differences in

involvement based on fathers' race or ethnicity, with Caucasian fathers being less involved than African American and Hispanic fathers, based on the relationship status to their biological children's mothers (Cabrera, Ryan, et al.). These studies showed the importance of considering relationship or partner status between fathers and the mothers of their children. Partner status influenced fathers' roles in their children's lives and was very closely tied to fathers' residential status as well. Residential status indicates whether fathers live with or without their children and children's mothers.

Residency status. Several studies found that fathers' residential status was associated with fathers' involvement (Cabrera et al., 2004; Cabrera, Fagan, & Farrie, 2008; Fagan & Barnett, 2003; Fagan, Palkovitz, Roy, & Farrie, 2009; Isacco & Garfield, 2010; Kruk, 2010; Tamis-LeMonda, Kahana-Kalman, & Yoshikawa, 2009). Fathers who were in romantic relationships with their children's mothers and resided in the same home with their children, were more readily available to participate in their children's lives than fathers' estranged from the mothers and living apart (Cabrera et al., 2004; Cabrera, Fagan, et al., 2008; Easterbrooks et al., 2007). Cabrera et al. (2004) found significant differences between fathers based on their relationship and residency statuses. According to Cabrera et al. (2004), resident fathers and nonresident fathers engaged in romantic relationships with their children's mother reported more accessibility to their children than nonresident fathers, who were estranged from the mothers. Also, married fathers reported more decision-making influence than all other fathers (Cabrera et al., 2004). These findings were supported by a more recent study on residential status and

fathers' decision-making in healthcare matters (Isacco & Garfield). Isacco and Garfield found that residential fathers viewed themselves as parenting equals with mothers in making several medical decisions about their children. In contrast, non-residential fathers' viewed themselves as in lower positions of power regarding healthcare decisions (Isacco & Garfield). Similarly, Erera and Baum (2009) reported that divorced, non-residential fathers expressed feelings of diminished power regarding their children's lives in the context of living apart from their children. In a study of resident and nonresident fathers, Fagan and Barnett revealed that fathers living with their children were seen by mothers as more competent caregivers than fathers living away from their children, and there was a positive relationship between mothers' attitudes about the fathers' role and father involvement. These findings were important because they showed that fathers' context and relationships with mothers influenced fathers' involvement in their children's lives. To further understand fathers' involvement, researchers examined the quality of parental relationships.

Fathers' relationship quality with mothers. Many findings showed that the quality of the relationship between fathers and their children's mothers were related to fathers' involvement (Berger, 2010; Bradford & Hawkins, 2006; Carlson, McLanahan, & Brooks-Gunn, 2008; Devault et al., 2008; Easterbrooks et al., 2007; Isacco et al., 2010; Lee & Doherty, 2007; Matta & Knudson-Martin, 2006; Maurer & J. H. Pleck, 2006; Tamis-LaMonda, et al., 2009). Outcomes based on the quality of parental relationships applied to intact (Bradford & Hawkins; Henley & Pasley, 2005; Lee & Doherty) and non-

intact (Henley & Pasley; Jackson, Choi, & Franke, 2009; Tamis-LeMonda et al.) families. In studies with partnered fathers, the quality of the relationship with mothers regarding marital intimacy (Bradford & Hawkins), marital satisfaction (Lee & Doherty), and fathers' responsiveness (Matta & Knudson-Martin) were associated with fathers' involvement with children.

For married fathers, specific qualities of the fathers and in relationships with mothers appeared to influence fathers' interactions with their children. Bradford and Hawkins (2006) posited a developmental model that fathers learned to provide caregiving to their children through their relationships with their wives. Bradford and Hawkins found that fathering behaviors were associated with marital intimacy and supported the developmental model for fathering. Apparently, stable, close, and loving marital relationships fostered fathers' involvement with their children (Bradford & Hawkins,). Similarly, Lee and Doherty (2007) found a positive relationship between fathers' marital satisfaction and fathers' quantity of involvement with children. Additionally, findings showed a significant and positive relationship between fathers' marital satisfaction and quality of involvement (Lee & Doherty). In a qualitative study with 40 married couples, Matta and Knudson-Martin (2006) posited a construct, "responsivity" (p. 19), to describe fathers' awareness of and response to the emotional, practical, and power needs of their immediate family members. From the data, Matta and Knudson-Martin deduced three types and levels of responsive fathers, which included low, moderate, and high. These researchers described low responsive fathers as showing low involvement in household

and child-related tasks, traditional gender role beliefs, angry expressions of power, limited awareness of wives' emotional needs, powerlessness regarding work schedules, and power inequalities within the couple relationship. Moderate responsive fathers showed some appreciation for and awareness of wives' needs, traditional gender role beliefs, assistance with household and child-related tasks, awareness of job effects on family, and acceptance of wives influence. High responsive fathers exhibited more egalitarian gender role beliefs, shared power with partners, high participation in household and child-related tasks, and freedom regarding employment options. Additionally, high responsive fathers demonstrated more emotional awareness of wives' needs and higher levels of involvement with children than the other father groups (Matta & Knudson-Martin). These findings for married fathers were important in demonstrating the quality of partnered relationships influence fathers' actual behaviors with children; thus, higher relationship quality translated to more father involvement.

In cases of disrupted and never-married families, fathers who maintained good relationships with their children's mothers were likely to provide caregiving behaviors while children were in fathers' possession (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2009). Devault et al. (2008) conducted a study of 17 fathers with at-risk variables, such as low socioeconomic status, young age at time of child's birth, and difficult histories with their own fathers. Findings showed that co-parenting relationships with former partners and perceived support from fathers' own mothers were related to at-risk fathers remaining connected with their offspring (Devault et al.). When fathers and mothers forged good working

relationships, noncustodial fathers showed increased probabilities of remaining involved in their children's lives (Carlson et al., 2008). However, not all studies produced the same results for father involvement, relationship quality, and co-parenting support. Isacco et al. (2010) reported that unpartnered fathers, unlike partnered fathers, did not perceive co-parent support from mothers. Carlson et al. advocated for interventions to develop and facilitate strong co-parenting skills, so unpartnered fathers remain involved with children after changes in relationship status with previous partners. For nonresident fathers, Jackson et al. (2009) discovered a positive association between quality of parental relationship and frequency of father contact; additionally, high quality relationships and frequent contact was related to child well-being. In summary, parents who made efforts to develop strong co-parent relationships post-termination of romantic partnerships may have reduced negativity and conflict in order to increase positive child outcomes.

Parental conflict. Several studies showed that conflict between fathers and their children's mothers was related to fathers' involvement with children (Easterbrooks et al., 2007; Forste et al., 2009; Henley & Pasley, 2005; Leite & McKenry, 2006; J. H. Pleck & Hofferth, 2008; Pruett, Williams, Insabella, & Little, 2003; Stadelmann et al., 2010) and child outcomes (Sandler et al., 2008). Easterbrooks et al. examined partnered and unpartnered fathers and the quality of their relationships with their offspring's mothers. Easterbrooks et al. found that increased parental conflict was related to increased parental distress. According to Easterbrooks et al., parental conflict manifested in some fathers' angry expressions during play with their children. Children may be affected by their

parents' conflicts, which may lead to child problems (Sandler et al.). One recent study about parental separation found that children, who experienced high conflict in their parents' relationships, exhibited higher levels of emotional symptoms in comparison to other children (Stadelmann et al.). Similarly, in a study of intact and non-intact families, Dunn et al. (2005) reported that children's involvement in their parents' conflict was associated with difficult parental/child relationships and problematic child outcomes in disrupted families. Unfortunately, parental conflict contributed negatively to the adjustment of children (Harper & Fine, 2006). Similarly for intact families, Davies and Cummings (1994) posited the emotional security hypothesis, which stated that children's emotional well-being was undermined by parents' destructive marital conflict, and children may reenact the behaviors in their future relationships.

Two recent studies with minority fathers showed parental conflict as a barrier to fathering roles (Forste et al., 2009; Leite & McKenry, 2006). Forste et al. conducted a study of unmarried, low-income, and mostly minority fathers. Forste et al. interviewed fathers about their relationship histories with their own fathers. Results showed that men who experienced close relationships with their fathers, wanted to be similar to their fathers as nurturers to their children. In contrast, men, who were not close to or had absent fathers, wanted to be different and better than their fathers as good financial providers. However, fathers indicated that their relationships and conflict with their children's mothers were barriers to enacting their ideals as fathers (Forste et al.). Similarly, Leite and McKenry (2006) examined the fathering role of African American

fathers, who were separated and divorced. One outcome included a relationship between low levels of involvement regarding decision-making and ongoing conflict with children's mothers (Leite & McKenry). These results regarding fathers' relationships with their children's mothers indicated the strong influence of conflict and contextual factors on enacting their fathering roles. In cases when mothers interfered with fathers' ability to enact their fathering roles, this interference was often referred to in the literature as maternal gatekeeping.

Maternal gatekeeping. Maternal gatekeeping meant that mothers' may either encourage or discourage fathers' involvement with children (Seward, Stanley-Stevens, et al., 2006). Maternal gate-keeping may have occurred in partnered and unpartnered relationships. Researchers have examined how mothers influenced fathers' level of involvement to offer explanations about fathers' lack of involvement. There were mixed findings about fathers' actual versus reported levels of involvement. Wical and Doherty (2005) found similarities between mothers and fathers reports of fathers' involvement. However, mothers reported lower levels of father involvement than fathers reported for intact (Mikelson, 2008) and non-intact (Andrews et al., 2004) families. Oftentimes, the literature referred to maternal gatekeeping in unpartnered relationships and disrupted families (Kruk, 2010). Amato and Sobolewski (2004) summarized that some mothers blocked fathers' access to children in unpartnered relationships, but the majority of mothers preferred fathers' involvement. Additionally, mothers who never married their

children's fathers indicated their support of fathers' visitation to facilitate father and child relationships even in the absence of child support payments (Laakso, 2004).

Divorce and Father Involvement Summary

While it is acknowledged that the literature on divorce and father involvement research has been disorganized and lacked agreement on theories, operational definitions, or assessment (Marsiglio et al., 2000; Saracho & Spodek, 2008), several important conclusions can nevertheless be drawn from this body of research. First, efforts are currently being made towards more shared custody decisions (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2007; Moloney, 2009) for fathers. An increase in shared custody determinations was critical, because in general, research supported the idea that more contact at least provided the opportunity for higher levels of father involvement and the benefits that can be derived from that contact (Cheadle et al., 2010; Day & Padilla-Walker, 2009; Dunn et al., 2004; Finley & Schwartz, 2007).

In a related vein, there seemed to be overwhelming evidence that fathers' relationships with mothers' played an important role in the likelihood of fathers' interacting with children from both intact and non-intact families (Amato & Sobolewski, 2004; Berger, 2010; Bouchard et al., 2007; Cabrera, Ryan, et al., 2008; Devault et al., 2008; Fagan & Barnett, 2003; Lee & Doherty, 2007; Jackson et al., 2009; Palkovitz, 1980, 1984; Perry, 2009). In cases where parents failed to get along, fathers' tended to be less involved in their children's lives (Forste et al., 2009), and children exhibited problematic behaviors (Dunn et al., 2005).

Second, there were variations in parental involvement based on father status.

Though not universal, most studies found that custodial fathers and SAHFs tended to gain time and responsibilities with their children, sometimes forming uniquely strong bonds with them (Clarke-Stewart & Hayward, 1996; King, 2007; Rochlen et al., 2010; Risman & Park, 1988; Weinraub & Gringlas, 1995). For nonresidential fathers, findings showed more negative outcomes from divorce, separation or living apart, which can be broadly framed as declines in relationship involvement and relationship quality with their children (Kalmijn, 2007; Scott et al., 2007).

Third, father involvement and consequent relationships with their children were enhanced by adopting non-traditional or more egalitarian gender roles (Bulanda, 2004; Palkovitz, 1980; Rane & McBride, 2000; Rochlen et al., 2010; West et al., 2009). There was evidence that fathers' roles have shifted in this direction across generations and time (Morman & Floyd, 2002), particularly for SAHFs (West et al.). However, non-White fathers may have remained more traditional (Ojeda et al., 2008; Seward, Yeatts, et al., 2006; Taylor & Behnke, 2005).

Fourth, regarding child outcomes, research trends showed that, in general, children fared better in intact families than when in non-intact families (Amato, 2000; Finley & Schwartz, 2007) and fathers may have served as buffers to mothers (Martin et al., 2010). However, some researchers (e.g. Bauserman, 2002) found no differences between intact and divorced/shared custody families and child adjustment. Hetherington et al. (1998) summarized that unhealthy parental relationships, a lack of support, high

conflict, and poor parenting skills contributed to difficulties in children's adjustment post divorce. However, in cases of good co-parenting support, authoritative parenting, and cohesion in families post divorce, children's well being was similar to children from intact families (Hetherington et al; Lansford, 2009).

Integration of Attachment, Divorce, and Father Involvement Fields

After reviewing the literature for attachment, divorce outcomes, and father involvement fields, several shared findings and gaps within the fields emerged. Many studies showed that fathers' relationships with mothers of their biological children were related to father/children attachment (Belsky et al., 1984; Deklyen et al., 1998; Wong et al., 2009) and fathers' involvement (Berger, 2010; Bouchard et al., 2007; Devault et al., 2008; Perry, 2009). Fathers' conflict with mothers of their biological children tended to negatively impact their offspring (Hare et al., 2009; Sandler et al., 2008) and involvement with children (Forste et al., 2009; Stadelmann et al., 2010). Thus, mothers' support of fathers' roles was important and influential (Belsky et al.; Berger; Devault et al.; Perry; Rochlen & McKelley, 2010).

Findings indicated that children formed attachments (Diener et al., 2008; Frascarolo, 2004; Grossman et al., 2008; Wong et al., 2009) and close relationships (King, 2007; Morman & Floyd, 2002) with fathers. However, studies indicated that parental gender differences (Arnott & Meins, 2007; Figueiredo et al., 2007; Lovas, 2005; Warshak, 1986) existed, such as offspring tended to report feeling more emotional closeness to mothers than fathers (Bretherton et al., 2005; Kalmijn, 2007; Nielsen, 2007).

In addition, sons tended to report feeling closer to fathers than daughters (Mitchell et al., 2009). Yet, fathers may have served as buffers to mother/child relationships (Martin et al., 2010; Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2006; Wong et al.). Oftentimes, fathers established roles as playmates (Bretherton et al.; Grossmann et al., 2008) and contributed to child well-being through play (Roggman et al., 2004). Generally, fathers tended to function in traditional gender roles within families (Bulanda, 2004; Finley & Schwartz, 2006), with some number of fathers reporting less traditional beliefs and increased involvement (Bulanda; DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002; Palkovitz, 1980; West et al., 2009).

For primary caregiver fathers, studies showed similarities and differences between partnered and unpartnered fathers with gaps in the literature. As the research shows, SAHFs tended to report less traditional and more egalitarian gender role beliefs (West et al., 2009), which seemed adaptive for their roles as primary caregiver fathers. There was an absence in the literature across the three fields for custodial fathers' gender role beliefs. The literature did confirm that SAHFs and custodial fathers proved to be competent and nurturing caregivers with good child outcomes (Pruett, 1983, 1998; Radin, 1994; Risman, 1987); they appeared similar to primary caregiver mothers (Cohen, 1995; Field, 1978; Frascarolo, 2004). Yet, the few studies examined the quality of custodial father/child relationships showed mixed findings (DeGarmo, 2010; DeGarmo et al., 2008; King, 2007). There was no known study about the quality of SAHFs' relationships with their children.

Several experts posited that the quality of father/child interactions was more important than fathers' level of involvement (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Brown et al., 2007; DeGarmo, 2010; Marsiglio et al., 2000), which applied to all father statuses. Oftentimes, noncustodial fathers reported declines in their relationship quality with their children after divorce (Kalmijn, 2007; Scott et al., 2007). In retrospective studies, adult children with nonresident fathers reported a desire for more involvement (Fabricius, 2003; Finley & Schwartz, 2007) and positive involvement with fathers (East et al., 2007).

Across the fields of study, the literature showed fathers' own relationships impact their fathering roles. Research supported the idea that attachment representations held over time and generalized to others as internal working models (Bengtsson & Psouni, 2008; Caspers et al., 2007; Dinero et al., 2008; McCormick & Kennedy, 1994). As such, fathers' relationships with romantic partners (Cabrera et al., 2004; Newland et al., 2008) and their own parents (Beaton & Doherty, 2007; Dalton III et al., 2006; Julion et al., 2007), impacted their father/child relationships. Additionally, fathers may have transmitted the ways that they relate to others to their children (Bernier & Miljkovich, 2009; DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002; Forste et al., 2009; Julion et al.).

One way to integrate attachment, divorce, and father involvement fields of research and to make a valuable new contribution was to examine a number of the aforementioned variables among different father groups. As previously stated, different father statuses have not been investigated thoroughly within the same study across three fields of research, with the exception of my previous study (Siciliano, 2005). I studied

fathers by partner and caregiver types and examined many of the aforementioned variables, with the exception of fathers' own attachment relationships. Because this work served as a foundation for the current study, it is described below.

Previous Study and Results

A brief description of my thesis project (Siciliano, 2005) is given below. More detailed study information is provided in Chapter III, Method section. Through the integration of attachment, divorce, and father involvement research fields, I examined differences between father statuses. I gathered demographic data, fathers' romantic attachment, and parenting beliefs/behaviors via an online study. Groups consisted of partnered secondary (traditional), partnered primary (stay-at-home), unpartnered secondary (noncustodial), and unpartnered primary (custodial) fathers. Both stay-at-home and custodial fathers violated gender role norms by providing the majority of childcare responsibilities in their families. I investigated differences in fathers due to these untraditional roles. I wanted to understand how these primary fathers were different from partnered and unpartnered secondary fathers. Many studies examined these father groups separately, in comparison to women, and a few in comparison to each other; however, there were no known studies that directly compared all four types of fathers in the same study.

I utilized data from the Parent Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI; Gerard, 2000) and demographic variables to examine differences between father statuses (Siciliano, 2005). Fathers' romantic attachment, which was measured through the ECR (Brennan et

al., 1998), was not analyzed for the study. The PCRI measures fathering beliefs, attitudes, and father/child relationship variables. There was a marginal interaction effect. Post hoc analysis revealed significant univariate effects for parental support and gender role beliefs between partnered and unpartnered primary fathers. In contrast, no significant associations were found regarding other father groups on any of the parenting and father/child relationship subscales.

Support. Stay-at-home fathers' support scores were the highest of all father groups, which meant that SAHFs reported the most support, confidence, and help with parenting/household tasks (Siciliano, 2005). Similarly, recent findings showed that SAHFs reported feeling supported by partners and family (Rochlen & McKelley, 2010). Although partnered primary fathers scored the highest on support, unpartnered primary fathers scored the lowest on support (Siciliano). Findings were similar to a previous report by Bloir (2005), which indicated that single, custodial fathers lacked support in their roles. Additionally, other studies found that unpartnered primary fathers may have encountered stressors with their children's mothers (DeGarmo et al., 2008) along with societal (Kielty, 2006) and judicial (Smith, 2003; Vatsis, 2001) biases.

Parenting beliefs/behaviors and father/child relationships. There were no significant differences by partner and caregiver status on all other parenting scales of the PCRI. Based on these results, it appeared that more or less time spent on providing children's daily care was not associated with better parenting and father/child relationships. This lack of significance supported research, which found father/child

interactions were more important than mere time spent together (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999; Marsiglio et al., 2000). Additionally, my findings did support a lack of connection between custody arrangements and quality of relationships (Siciliano), similarly to DeGarmo (2010).

In consideration of custody arrangements, regardless of partner and caregiver status, respondents did not differ significantly on their parenting beliefs/behaviors and father/child relationships. Thus, my previous study (Siciliano, 2005) differed from previous findings by Field (1978), which examined differences in father/child interactions based on caregiver status. Also, my previous study (Siciliano) failed to support recent findings by DeGarmo (2010), which examined differences in fathers' interactions with children by unpartnered primary and secondary caregivers. Although I did not observe father/child interactions, the study did investigate father reports about how they interacted with their children in areas such as discipline, communication, and involvement. Also, in contrast to previous suggestions that custodial fathers had special relationships with their children (Chang & Deinard, 1982; Clarke-Stewart & Hayward, 1996), these findings were not supported by my previous study (Siciliano). Additionally, I may have offered what was possibly the first examination into SAHFs relationships with their children.

Gender roles. Between the two groups of primary fathers, significant differences were found for scores on the gender role scale (Siciliano, 2005). Partnered primary fathers scored higher on gender role beliefs (i.e., they held more egalitarian and less

traditional beliefs) than unpartnered primary fathers (Siciliano), which supported results from a recent study of SAHFs, who reported more egalitarian beliefs than other fathers (West et al., 2009). Additionally, these results may have supported previous research that partnered fathers' gender role scores predicted fathers' behaviors with their children (Bulanda, 2004; Palkovitz, 1980). Seemingly in contrast, unpartnered primary fathers participated in their children's daily care. Yet, unpartnered primary fathers scored lowest on gender role beliefs (holding less egalitarian and more traditional beliefs) than all other father groups (Siciliano). My study may have been the first to examine gender role beliefs for unpartnered primary fathers.

Rationale for the Current Study

The rationale for this dissertation was to extend the research findings from my thesis project (Siciliano, 2005). I wanted to utilize and analyze fathers' attachment through the ECR data. Additionally, I wanted to analyze other unused demographic data. Also, I wanted to explore any possible relationships between fathers' attachment (ECR) and father/child relationships (PCRI) data sets. Specifically, the exploration was planned to test for the potential of the ECR as a mediator or moderator of the relationship between father statuses and PCRI. Consultation with the university's statistics consultant has indicated that there were sufficient data and new statistical analysis to support a dissertation; the proposed project represented a substantial extension of the original study (R. Paulson, personal communication, April 15, 2010). A request for use of archival data was approved by my Core Faculty at the university.

Lack of Studies Examining the Four Father Statuses

Outside of my original investigation, there were still no known studies that examined the four father groups together by partner and caregiver types (Siciliano, 2005). Several studies (Bernier & Miljkovich, 2009; Cabrera et al., 2004; DeGarmo, 2010; DeGarmo et al., 2008; Kalmijn, 2007) came close to investigating fathers by partner and caregiver types, but fell short. For example, Cabrera et al. (2004) investigated involvement of biological fathers by relationship status to mothers and residency; however, the investigators did not consider fathers' caregiver types. Kalmijn (2007) studied parent/child relationships over time for mothers and fathers according to intact and non-intact families. However, one shortcoming for Kalmijn's study was the absence of caregiver types. With caregiver types, investigators may have been able to provide other possible interpretations besides gender differences for offspring reports of more contact and support later in life to mothers than fathers. Similarly, DeGarmo and DeGarmo et al. examined father/child relationships. Investigators utilized fathers' custody arrangements and omitted partnered fathers (DeGarmo; DeGarmo et al.). Although caregiver status could be inferred from custody arrangements, partnered primary and secondary fathers were overlooked regarding the quality of their father/child relationships. In contrast, Bernier and Miljkovitch included partnered fathers; yet, they lacked caregiver type and unpartnered secondary fathers.

Fathers' attachment and father/child relationships. Examination of fathers' adult attachment offered possible insights to fathers' style of relating to others and impact upon

their children's lives. Additionally, various fathering studies have indicated the importance of fathers' own relationship history as having associations with their father/child relationships (Beaton & Doherty, 2007; Cabrera et al., 2004; Dalton III et al., 2006; Julion et al., 2007; Newland et al., 2008). An investigation of fathers' adult attachment has provided an opportunity to reveal information about fathers' IWMs and gave insight to possible transmission of attachment style to their children. Several attachment studies (Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009; Dalton III et al.; Hare et al., 2009; Newland et al.; Roelofs et al., 2008) have done similar and important work in this area. Only one study (Bernier & Miljkovitch) was fairly close to the partner by caregiver design, having examined fathers' attachment and father/child relationships between married and custodial fathers. Bernier and Miljkovitch examined attachment transmission between father and child dyads. Married fathers' caregiver status was unspecified, and custodial fathers were considered primary caregivers. Bernier and Miljkovitch assessed fathers' attachment through the AAI (George et al., 1996) and children's attachment through The MacArthur Story-Stem Battery ASCT (Bretherton & Oppenheim, 2003). Investigators failed to compare father statuses, as they did not assess married fathers' caregiver status and excluded noncustodial fathers from the study.

Purpose of the Current Study

The purpose for the current study included goals to implement a broad study design. Additionally, I planned to examine differences between father statuses and fathers' attachment. Also, an exploration of fathers' attachment in terms of whether it mediated or

moderated the relationship between father statuses and father/child relationship variables were planned for examination. By considering differences between father groups, findings had the potential to indicate opportunities for and challenges to fathers as they interact with their children. Results had the potential to inform others of new directions to support and encourage fathers in their roles. By supporting fathers and children, families had opportunities to benefit; thus, society at large had opportunities to benefit.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Six research questions were asked in accordance with the partner by caregiver study design to examine differences between father statuses. Six hypotheses are presented with each question and were based on findings within the literature review.

Research question and hypothesis 1. What differences exist between caregiver types on the adult attachment dimension of anxiety? It was hypothesized that no differences would exist between primary and secondary caregivers on the ECR anxiety scale.

Research question and hypothesis 2. What differences exist between partner types on the adult attachment dimension of anxiety? It was hypothesized that partnered fathers' scores would be lower than unpartnered fathers' scores on the ECR anxiety scale.

Research question and hypothesis 3. What differences exist for the interaction of partner by caregiver types on the adult attachment dimension of anxiety? It was hypothesized that father statuses' scores would range from lowest to highest for ECR

anxiety as follows: partnered primary, partnered secondary, unpartnered secondary, and unpartnered primary.

Research question and hypothesis 4. What differences exist between caregiver types on the adult attachment dimension of avoidance? It was hypothesized that no differences would exist between primary and secondary caregivers on the ECR avoidance scale.

Research question and hypothesis 5. What differences exist between partner types on the adult attachment dimension of avoidance? It was hypothesized that partnered fathers' scores would be lower than unpartnered fathers' scores on the ECR avoidance scale.

Research question and hypothesis 6. What differences exist for the interaction of partner by caregiver types on the adult attachment dimension of avoidance? It was hypothesized that father statuses' scores would range from lowest to highest for ECR avoidance as follows: partnered primary, partnered secondary, unpartnered secondary, and unpartnered primary.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Much of the following information reflects the participants, most of the instruments, and procedure originally used in my thesis project (Siciliano, 2005). However, the description of the participants, analysis plan, and description of the attachment instrument were either expanded or added for the current study.

Participants

Seventy U.S. and one Israeli father with biological children between the ages of 3 to 18 years participated in this study. Research participants were obtained via the Internet, a national call-in radio show, and personal contact. Although 71 surveys were completed, three had problems with their validity and had to be discarded. As reported by two fathers in emails to the researcher after study completion, they had no contact with their children and answered the questionnaires as if they were in relationship with their children. Another father's response was detected as socially desirable on the instrument validity indicators. The study resulted in a sample size of 68 fathers.

Participants ranged in age from 26 to 58 years ($M = 41.57$, $SD = 7.35$). The race/ethnicity of the participants was predominantly Caucasian (82.4 %) with the remainder identified as Hispanic (7.4%), African American (4.4%), and other (5.8%). Annual household income consisted of fathers reporting less than \$15,000 (1.5%), between \$15,000 to \$30,000 (7.4%), \$30,000 to \$45,000 (2.9%), \$45,000 to \$60,000

(13.2%), \$60,000 to \$75,000 (17.6%), \$75,000 to \$90,000 (17.6%) and over \$90,000 (39.7%) resulting in a fairly affluent sample. The majority of the participants were highly educated with 92.6% of fathers reporting two years or more of college education. Fathers' identified their focal child as male (52.9%) and female (47.1%). The mean age of the biological child that fathers' focused on for survey completion was 10.29 years ($SD = 4.36$).

Instruments

Demographic Questionnaire

The demographic questionnaire was an author-generated questionnaire created to assess specific participant characteristics, such as race/ethnicity, age, educational level, marital and caregiver status, custodial information, father/child activities (See Appendix A).

Parent Child Relationship Inventory

The Parent Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI; Gerard, 2000) was a 78-item multidimensional, Likert-type self-report measure developed to assess parenting characteristics with norms scaled separately for both mothers and fathers. Responses are made on a 4-point Likert-type scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The PCRI assesses relationship qualities via seven separate subscales (support, satisfaction with parenting, involvement, communication, limit setting, autonomy, and gender role orientation) comprised of differing numbers of items per scale. The PCRI

also contained two validity indicators that checked for socially desirable and inconsistent/random answers.

Subscales are presented below with descriptions, score ranges, and meanings of low/high scores for each. The Support subscale assessed for practical and emotional support that parents received in the parental role. Additionally, items on the scale determined the presence/absence of financial stress and others who may assist with parenting responsibilities. Scores ranged from 9 to 36. Very low scores indicated that parents experienced their parenting responsibilities as extremely burdensome. High scores indicated that parents managed parenting stressors effectively.

The Satisfaction with Parenting subscale reflected the presence/absence of parents' pleasure in their parenting roles. Scores ranged from 10 to 40. Very low scores indicated that parents feel discomfort in their parenting roles and may question the reasons for becoming a parent. High scores indicated that parents found pleasure and satisfaction in their parenting role.

The Involvement subscale assessed the presence/absence of interest in children's activities, relative amount of time spent with child, and knowledge about the child. Scores ranged from 14 to 56. Very low scores indicated that parents may avoid their child and feel tremendous distance in the parent/child relationship. High scores indicated that parents enjoyed spending time with their child and showed interest in their child's activities.

The communication subscale reflected parents' awareness of communication with their children and existence of parental empathy. Scores ranged from 9 to 36. Very low scores indicated that parents experienced extreme difficulty in the communication process with their child. Parents indicated that their child did not talk with them about friends and activities in their lives. High scores indicated parents ease in communicating with their child. Parents indicated that their children discuss personal matters with them.

The Limit Setting subscale measured parents' effectiveness and approach to discipline with their children. Scores ranged from 12 to 46. Very low scores indicated that parents' attempts to discipline were ineffective, and the child was likely out of control; parents indicated that they felt angry towards the child. High scores indicated that parents were effective in setting limits and following through on consequences when the child's behavior was inappropriate.

The autonomy subscale exhibited parents' willingness to encourage children's independence. Scores ranged from 10 to 40. Very low scores indicated that parents failed to promote their child's independence and longed for the parent/child closeness during the child's younger years. High scores indicated that parents were aware of and encouraged developmentally appropriate activities for their child.

Finally, the Role Orientation subscale represented parents' beliefs of egalitarian and traditional gender roles. Scores ranged from 9 to 36. Very low scores indicated that parents held very traditional beliefs about gender roles. High scores indicated more

egalitarian views about gender roles. With publisher permission and copyright notice, five sample items are presented in Appendix B.

The PCRI demonstrated adequate psychometric properties. According to Gerard (2000), reliability estimates for the seven subscales ranged from .70 (Support) to .88 (Limit Setting). For the current study, PCRI reliabilities for the seven subscales and the validity scale consisted of the following Cronbach's alphas: Support ($\alpha = .71$), Satisfaction ($\alpha = .91$), Involvement ($\alpha = .89$), Communication ($\alpha = .80$), Limit Setting ($\alpha = .83$), Autonomy ($\alpha = .55$), Role Orientation ($\alpha = .80$), and Social Desirability ($\alpha = .53$). Gerard (2000) reported that construct validity was supported by a pattern of moderate intercorrelations between subscales that ranged from Autonomy/Communication ($r = -.35, p < .01$) to Involvement/Satisfaction ($r = .64, p < .01$). Additionally, concurrent validity was supported by correlations between PCRI subscales and the Personality Inventory for Children subscales (PIC; Wirt, Lachar, Klinedinst, Seat, & Broen, 1990) that ranged from Autonomy/Somatic Concern ($r = -.71, p < .01$) to Communication/Somatic Concern ($r = .42, p < .01$). Gerard (2000) stated that both internal consistency ($\alpha = .82$) and test-retest autocorrelation ($M = .81$) have been shown to be adequate (See Appendix B).

Experiences in Close Relationships

The Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR; Brennan et al., 1998) was a 36-item self-report questionnaire that measured adult attachment, and can be scored in two different ways. Either continuous measures of anxiety and avoidance can be derived or

the four categories of adult attachment styles can be used (Brennan et al.; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2008). Participants were instructed to rate how they felt and experienced romantic relationships. Responses were made on a 7-point Likert-type scale, ranging from “Disagree strongly” to “Agree strongly.” Anxiety and avoidance scores ranged from 18 to 126 and was divided by 18, which resulted in a total score with a range of 1 to 7 on each scale. The higher the scores on anxiety and avoidance scales, then the more anxious or avoidant participants’ attachment styles were believed to be (Brennan et al.); low scores on anxiety and avoidance scales indicated secure attachment styles. For the anxiety dimension, sample items included, “I worry about being abandoned,” and “I resent it when my partner spends time away from me.” For the avoidance dimension, sample items included, “I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down,” and “I try to avoid getting too close to my partner.” Brennan et al. reported that the anxiety and avoidance scales were nearly “uncorrelated, $r = .11$ ” (p. 59). Additionally, Crowell et al. (2008) stated that anxiety and avoidance scales had “coefficient alphas of about .90” (p. 616), which supported high internal consistency. Item-total correlations ranged from .50 to .73 (Brennan et al.). The ECR showed test-retest reliability for anxiety ($\alpha = .91$) and avoidance ($\alpha = .90$) scales (Fraley et al., 2000). For the current study, ECR reliability was good for both anxiety ($\alpha = .87$) and avoidance ($\alpha = .88$) scales. Self-report measures of adult attachment showed discriminant and construct validity (Crowell et al.). The ECR had shown internal reliability, predictive validity, and construct validity (Conradi, Gerisma, van Duijn, & de Jonge, 2006). The ECR was widely utilized (Crowell et al.)

and strongly encouraged for use in research (Conradi et al.; Crowell et al.; Fraley, 2010) (See Appendix C).

Procedure

Participants were recruited by word of mouth, postings of fliers on Internet/physical bulletin boards associated with fathering and parenting issues, and via a nationally syndicated call-in radio show for fathers. As a result of the recruitment postings, a small number of potential participants expressed concerns via online postings about a possible feminist agenda regarding the study. On two occasions, I responded with online postings assuring potential participants that the study was being conducted from an ethical and neutral position with scientific intentions. Then, I ceased in posting any further responses, so I would not accidentally and negatively incite any fathers. Additionally, participants were recruited through fliers at family events in the North Texas area. Each participant was told that he had an opportunity to win one of four \$50.00 cash prizes through a drawing at the completion of the study. Participants emailed me to express interest in the study and were given a Psychdata link, a survey number and password, and an ID number. Upon receipt of access information, participants went to www.psychdata.com, entered the survey number, and password. The study consisted of an informed consent page (See Appendix D), an identifying information page (See Appendix E), a demographic information page, and two questionnaires, one examining adult attachment and one looking at father/child relationships. Upon completion of all survey information, respondents viewed a debriefing page (See Appendix F).

Original Study Design

The original study design was a two-way factorial mixed design by partner type to biological children's mother and caregiver type. I made decisions about fathers' partner and caregiver types based on answers to the demographic information page. To determine fathers' partner type, I assigned fathers by their reports of marital and residency statuses to biological children's mother. If fathers were married to or living with biological children's mother, then fathers were categorized as partnered. If fathers were separated, divorced, widowed, never married, and not residing with biological children's mother, then fathers were categorized as unpartnered.

To determine fathers' caregiver type, decisions were made based on father reports of residency to child, custodial information (as applicable), responsibility for care, and subjective assessment for percentage of overall daily care. If fathers reported that they resided with their children, had primary custody (as applicable), and/or had responsibility for more than 55% of children's daily care, then fathers were categorized as primary caregivers. If fathers reported that they did or did not reside with their children, had either shared or no custody (as applicable), and/or had responsibility for less than 55% of children's daily care, then fathers were categorized as secondary caregivers. The use of 55% of daily care rather than a priori 50% of daily care as a cut-off for secondary caregiver types resulted from two fathers' unexpected answers to an open-ended question.

Fathers answered an open-ended question about their subjective assessment for the percentage of overall daily care. Unexpectedly, two fathers reported that they provided 55% of their child's daily care. However, these same two fathers gave answers to other questions that contradicted fathers' reports of 55% of daily care. Based on these two fathers' reports and their contradictory answers, the decision was made to assign the two fathers as secondary caregiver types. Thus, 55% of daily care became the upper limit and cut off for secondary caregiver fathers. The 55% of daily care was unrealistic for noncustodial and secondary caregiver fathers. In cases of disrupted families, noncustodial fathers were more likely to provide approximately 40% of daily care based on standard visitation guidelines from a parenting plan as outlined in the 219th Judicial District Court of the State of Texas (2006). After reviewing fathers' responses to the demographic questions, fathers were categorized by partner and caregiver types resulting in four groups.

The four groups of fathers consisted of 12 partnered primary, 25 partnered secondary, 17 unpartnered primary, and 14 unpartnered secondary caregivers. A MANOVA was conducted on the seven subscales of the PCRI (Gerard, 2000). In the current proposal, the categorization system for father status has remained the same. However, the design was modified, as were the analyses.

Current Study Design and Statistical Analysis

The current study design was a two-way factorial between subjects design. The statistical analysis for the hypotheses consisted of a 2 (partnered, unpartnered) x 2

(primary, secondary) MANOVA on the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) subscales. There were three major steps in the analysis.

First, a preliminary analysis consisted of examining relationships between demographic variables and the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) subscales. Cross-tabulation chi-square tests for categorical variables (i.e., child gender, fathers' education, household income, current marital status, residency type, partner type, caregiver type, paid child support) were run. Next, Pearson's correlations of continuous variables (i.e., child's age, fathers' age, fathers' work hours, number of biological children) with the ECR were planned in order to test for potential multicollinearity and potential covariates to be used in further analyses. All of these analyses had already been conducted for the PCRI (Gerard, 2000) in the thesis project (Siciliano, 2005). The final step of the preliminary analysis involved the examination of categorical variables with the ECR subscales, which required the utilization of a MANOVA. Second, for the six primary hypotheses, a 2 (partnered, unpartnered) x 2 (primary, secondary) MANOVA was utilized to test for differences between fathers' partnered and caregiver types on the two dimensions (anxiety, avoidance) of the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) measure. The independent variables (IVs) were partner and caregiver types. The dependent variables (DVs) were attachment anxiety and avoidance scores. Significant MANOVA findings were followed up with univariate analyses.

Hypotheses

1. It was hypothesized that no differences would exist between primary and secondary caregivers on the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) anxiety scale.
2. It was hypothesized that partnered fathers' scores would be lower than unpartnered fathers' scores on the ECR anxiety scale.
3. It was hypothesized that father statuses' scores would range from lowest to highest for ECR anxiety as follows: partnered primary, partnered secondary, unpartnered secondary, and unpartnered primary.
4. It was hypothesized that no differences would exist between primary and secondary caregivers on the ECR avoidance scale.
5. It was hypothesized that partnered fathers' scores would be lower than unpartnered fathers' scores on the ECR avoidance scale.
6. It was hypothesized that father statuses' scores would range from lowest to highest for ECR avoidance as follows: partnered primary, partnered secondary, unpartnered secondary, and unpartnered primary.

Analysis

1. A 2 (partnered, unpartnered) x 2 (primary, secondary) MANOVA on the two dimensions (anxiety, avoidance) of the ECR measure.
2. A 2 (partnered, unpartnered) x 2 (primary, secondary) MANOVA on the two dimensions (anxiety, avoidance) of the ECR measure.
3. A 2 (partnered, unpartnered) x 2 (primary, secondary) MANOVA on the two dimensions (anxiety, avoidance) of the ECR measure.
4. A 2 (partnered, unpartnered) x 2 (primary, secondary) MANOVA on the two dimensions (anxiety, avoidance) of the ECR measure.
5. A 2 (partnered, unpartnered) x 2 (primary, secondary) MANOVA on the two dimensions (anxiety, avoidance) of the ECR measure.
6. A 2 (partnered, unpartnered) x 2 (primary, secondary) MANOVA on the two dimensions (anxiety, avoidance) of the ECR measure.

Third, a series of exploratory simple regression analyses were planned to test for potential of the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) as a mediator, moderator, or simply an indicator of the relationship between father partner type, caregiver type, partner by caregiver interaction, and PCRI (Gerard, 2000). The first step in the exploratory analysis consisted of a series of simple regressions between partner type scores on the ECR scales (IV or predictor variables) and each PCRI subscale (criterion variables). The normed scores for the PCRI were used in the series of linear regressions. The exploratory regression analyses ended after the first step of regressions between partner type on the ECR and PCRI subscales. In a final step of the exploratory analysis, Pearson Product Moment correlations were conducted with ECR and PCRI subscales to determine whether any relationship existed between ECR and PCRI scores.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Initially, descriptive statistics for the Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR; Brennan et al., 1998) and Parent Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI; Gerard, 2000) scales are presented, followed by preliminary analyses. Following this, the results for the primary hypotheses in the study and exploratory analyses were noted.

Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, and actual range for partner and caregiver types for the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) scales are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Range for Partner and Caregiver Types for ECR Scales

Scales and Types	n	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Actual Range
ECR Anxiety	68			1.28 - 5.17
Primary	29	2.92	.91	
Secondary	39	2.97	.86	
Partnered	37	2.67	.76	
Unpartnered	31	3.28	.91	
ECR Avoidance	68			1.00 - 4.67
Primary	29	2.38	.83	
Secondary	39	2.44	.81	
Partnered	37	2.31	.76	
Unpartnered	31	2.54	.87	

Note: The possible range for both ECR Anxiety and Avoidance subscales is 1-7. ECR = Experiences in Close Relationships (Brennan et al., 1998).

Means, standard deviations, and ranges for the interaction terms of partner by caregiver type for the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) scales are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations and Range for Partner by Caregiver Types for ECR Scales

	<u>Partnered</u>				<u>Unpartnered</u>				Range
	<u>Primary</u>		<u>Secondary</u>		<u>Primary</u>		<u>Secondary</u>		
	n = 12		n = 25		n = 17		n = 14		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Scales									
Anxiety	2.74	1.06	2.64	.59	3.04	.80	3.57	.97	1.28 - 5.17
Avoidance	2.42	.69	2.25	.80	2.35	.93	2.77	.76	1.00 - 4.67

Note: The possible range for both ECR Anxiety and Avoidance subscales is 1-7. ECR = Experiences in Close Relationships (Brennan et al., 1998).

Means, standard deviations, and actual range for partner and caregiver types for the PCRI (Gerard, 2000) scales are shown in Table 3. The interaction terms of partner by caregiver type for the PCRI scales are shown in Table 4.

Table 3

PCRI Means, Standard Deviations, and Range for Partner and Caregiver Types

Scales and Types	n	M	SD	Actual Range
Support	68			27 - 62
Primary	29	42.0	9.1	
Secondary	39	43.3	5.5	
Partnered	37	43.4	7.0	
Unpartnered	31	42.0	7.6	
Satisfaction	68			23 - 49
Primary	29	40.3	4.8	
Secondary	39	41.5	3.6	
Partnered	37	41.2	2.9	
Unpartnered	31	40.7	5.3	
Involvement	68			21 – 45
Primary	29	28.5	5.2	
Secondary	39	29.6	4.2	
Partnered	37	29.7	4.1	
Unpartnered	31	28.5	5.1	
Communication	68			9 – 42
Primary	29	19.9	7.2	
Secondary	39	21.8	7.3	
Partnered	37	21.0	6.5	
Unpartnered	31	21.0	8.1	
Limit Setting	68			29-74
Primary	29	56.3	11.2	
Secondary	39	55.9	8.7	
Partnered	37	58.5	11.2	
Unpartnered	31	56.4	10.6	

Table 3 (con't)

PCRI Means, Standard Deviations, and Range for Partner and Caregiver Types

Scales and Types	n	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Actual Range
Autonomy	68			38 - 76
Primary	29	54.2	7.6	
Secondary	39	53.5	9.5	
Partnered	37	54.8	8.7	
Unpartnered	31	52.6	8.8	
Gender Role	68			36 - 64
Primary	29	48.0	5.8	
Secondary	39	47.5	6.7	
Partnered	37	48.1	6.6	
Unpartnered	31	47.3	6.1	

Note. Scale scores were normalized due to skewed raw scores. PCRI = Parent Child Relationship Inventory (Gerard, 2000). Possible ranges on PCRI subscales are as follows: Support (9 to 36), Satisfaction with Parenting (10 to 40), Involvement (14 to 56), Communication (9 to 36), Limit Setting (12 to 48), Autonomy (10 to 40), Gender Role Orientation (9 to 36).

Preliminary Analyses

Preliminary analysis consisted of examining relationships between demographic variables and the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) subscales. A series of cross-tabulations with Chi-Squares were computed for categorical variables (i.e., child gender, fathers' education, household income, number of biological children, current marital status, residency type, partner type, caregiver type, pay child support). Cross-tabulations were not conducted for race due to small sample sizes of fathers in any non-White category; similarly, there were too few fathers receiving child support to analyze that variable.

Table 4

PCRI Means, Standard Deviations, and Range for Partner by Caregiver Types

	<u>Partnered</u>				<u>Unpartnered</u>				Range
	<u>Primary</u>		<u>Secondary</u>		<u>Primary</u>		<u>Secondary</u>		
	n = 12		n = 25		n = 17		n = 14		
Scales	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Support	45.5	8.4	42.4	6.1	39.6	9.0	43.3	3.9	27 - 62
Satisfaction	40.3	2.7	41.7	2.9	40.4	5.9	41.1	4.6	23 - 49
Involvement	28.3	4.1	30.4	4.0	28.6	5.9	28.2	4.2	21 - 45
Communication	19.8	5.8	21.6	6.9	20.1	8.2	22.1	8.2	9 - 42
Limit Setting	58.5	11.2	54.6	7.9	54.8	11.3	58.3	9.8	29 - 74
Autonomy	55.3	8.2	54.6	9.0	53.5	7.3	51.6	10.5	38 - 76
Gender Role	50.8	5.6	46.8	6.7	46.1	5.2	48.7	6.9	36 - 64

Note. Scale scores were normalized due to skewed raw scores. PCRI = Parent Child Relationship Inventory (Gerard, 2000). Possible ranges on PCRI subscales are as follows: Support (9 to 36), Satisfaction with Parenting (10 to 40), Involvement (14 to 56), Communication (9 to 36), Limit Setting (12 to 48), Autonomy (10 to 40), Gender Role Orientation (9 to 36).

For fathers’ annual household income and fathers’ education level, each category was collapsed due to small sample sizes in some cells. Fathers’ annual household income was collapsed to less than \$60,000 (25%), \$60,000 to \$90,000 (35.3%), and over \$90,000

(39.7%). Fathers' education was collapsed to less than four years of college (30.9%), four years of college (41.2%), and above four years of college (27.9%).

The preliminary analyses showed several significant relationships, most of them logical and expected. There was a significant relationship between fathers' current marital status and fathers' partner status to their children's biological mother, $\chi^2 (68) = 38.82, p < .001$, *Cramer's V* = .76. Eighty percent of currently married fathers reported that they were partnered with their child's biological mother, and all of the unmarried fathers reported that they were not partnered with their child's biological mother. As a result, fathers' current marital status will not be utilized with partner status in later analyses. There was a significant relationship between children living in the same household with fathers full-time and fathers' current marital status, $\chi^2 (68) = 14.77, p < .001$, *Cramer's V* = .47. Children were more likely to live with fathers who were currently married than fathers who were not married. There was a statistically significant relationship between focal child living in the same household with fathers full-time and fathers' education level, $\chi^2 (68) = 12.08, p = .002$, *Cramer's V* = .42. Children were more likely to live with their fathers as fathers attained higher education levels. There was a statistically significant relationship between fathers' annual household income and fathers' education, $\chi^2 (68) = 13.18, p = .01$, *Cramer's V* = .31. Fathers' household income was more likely to increase as fathers achieved higher education levels. A marginal relationship existed between current marital status and income, $\chi^2 (68) = 5.66, p = .06$, *Cramer's V* = .29. Fathers who reported higher levels of income were more likely to be

currently married than fathers who reported lower levels of income. There was a significant relationship between fathers' current marital status and paying child support, $\chi^2(68) = 13.97, p = .001, \text{Cramer's } V = .45$. Fathers who were currently not married were more likely to pay child support than fathers who were currently married. Also, there was a significant relationship between fathers' paying child support and fathers' education, $\chi^2(68) = 10.33, p = .035, \text{Cramer's } V = .28$. Fathers with lower levels of education were more likely to pay child support than fathers with higher levels of education. All remaining cross-tabulation Chi-Square analyses of categorical variables were non-significant.

The second step in the preliminary analysis required the use of Pearson Product Moment correlations of continuous variables (i.e., child's age, fathers' age, fathers' work hours) with the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) subscales to test for potential multicollinearity and potential covariates. There was a significant positive relationship between ECR avoidance and anxiety subscales, $r = .55, p < .001$. As fathers' anxiety scores increased, their avoidance scores increased too. Also, there was an obvious significant positive relationship between focal child's age and father's age, $r = .49, p < .001$. As children grew older, their fathers grew older too. All remaining analyses between continuous variables and ECR subscales were non-significant.

The final step in the preliminary analysis involved the examination of categorical variables with the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) subscales, which required the utilization of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). MANOVA was used due to multiple

levels of both independent and dependent variables as a way to test for differences between groups. A series of one-way MANOVAs was employed to analyze categorical variables and the continuous ECR scales. A 2 (married, not married) x 2 (avoidance, anxiety) MANOVA was employed to analyze current marital type and ECR scales. There was a significant multivariate main effect for current marital status, Wilks' $\lambda = .826$, $F(2, 65) = 6.85$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .17$, observed power = .91. Significant univariate effects for current marital status were obtained for avoidance, $F(1, 66) = 5.27$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .07$, observed power = .62 and anxiety, $F(1, 66) = 13.64$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .17$, observed power = .95. The not married fathers ($M = 2.73$, $SD = .85$, $N = 22$) had higher avoidance scores than married fathers ($M = 2.26$, $SD = .76$, $N = 46$). Similarly, not married fathers ($M = 3.47$, $SD = .84$, $N = 22$) had higher anxiety scores than married fathers ($M = 2.69$, $SD = .79$, $N = 46$). All remaining MANOVAs of categorical variables and ECR subscales were non-significant.

Analyses of Hypotheses

For all analyses of the six hypotheses, a 2 (partnered, unpartnered) x 2 (primary, secondary) MANOVA was conducted on the two dimensions (anxiety, avoidance) of the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998). The results are given below in Table 5, with discussion following.

Hypothesis 1

The hypothesis stated that no differences would exist between primary and secondary caregivers on the anxiety scale of the ECR. As hypothesized, there were no

main effects for caregiver types on the anxiety scale, Wilks' $\lambda = .983$, $F(2, 63) = .533$, $p = .59$, *n.s.*, $\eta^2 = .02$, observed power = .13. The hypothesis was supported.

Table 5

MANOVA Tests of Partner by Caregiver Types for ECR Scales

Effect	Λ	$F(2, 63)$	η^2	p
(A) Caregiver Type	.983	.533	.02	.59
(B) Partner Type	.875	4.52	.13	.02*
(AxB) Caregiver by Partner Types	.958	1.38	.04	.26

Note. * = $p \leq .05$ level. ECR = Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (Brennan et al., 1998).

Hypothesis 2

The hypothesis stated that partnered fathers would be lower than unpartnered fathers on the anxiety scale of the ECR. The results revealed a significant multivariate main effect for partner type, Wilks' $\lambda = .875$, $F(2, 63) = 4.52$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .13$, observed power = .75 (Table 5). There was a significant univariate effect for partner type on anxiety, $F(1, 64) = 8.91$, $p = .004$, $\eta^2 = .12$, observed power = .84. The hypothesis was supported. As hypothesized, partnered fathers' scores ($M = 2.67$, $SD = .76$) were lower than unpartnered fathers' scores ($M = 3.28$, $SD = .91$) on the anxiety scale. In other words, unpartnered fathers were significantly different from partnered fathers.

Unpartnered fathers reported higher levels of anxiety than the partnered fathers on the ECR. The hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 3

The hypothesis stated that father statuses' scores would range from lowest to highest on anxiety as follows: partnered primary, partnered secondary, unpartnered secondary, and unpartnered primary. The results indicated a non-significant interaction effect for partner by caregiver type, Wilks' $\lambda = .958$, $F(2, 63) = 1.38$, $p = .26$, *n.s.*, $\eta^2 = .04$, observed power = .29. This result was supported by an examination of the means given in Table 2, where it can be seen that father statuses' scores range from lowest to highest on anxiety as follows: partnered secondary ($M = 2.64$, $SD = .59$), partnered primary ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 1.06$), unpartnered primary ($M = 3.04$, $SD = .80$), and unpartnered secondary ($M = 3.57$, $SD = .97$). The hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis 4

The hypothesis stated that no differences would exist between primary and secondary caregivers on the avoidance scale of the ECR. As hypothesized, there were no main effects for caregiver types on the avoidance scale, Wilks' $\lambda = .983$, $F(2, 63) = .533$, $p = .59$, *n.s.*, $\eta^2 = .02$, observed power = .13. The hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 5

The hypothesis stated that partnered fathers' scores would be lower than unpartnered fathers' scores on the avoidance scale of the ECR. The results indicated a significant multivariate main effect for partner type, Wilks' $\lambda = .875$, $F(2, 63) = 4.52$, p

= .02, $\eta^2 = .13$, observed power = .75 (Table 5). Univariate analysis revealed a non-significant main effect of partner type on the avoidance scale, $F(1, 64) = 1.22, p = .28, n.s., \eta^2 = .02$, observed power = .19. As hypothesized, partnered fathers' scores ($M = 2.31, SD = .76$) were lower than unpartnered fathers' scores ($M = 2.53, SD = .87$) on the avoidance scale. However, unpartnered fathers were not significantly different from partnered fathers for avoidance on the ECR. The hypothesis was partially supported.

Hypothesis 6

The hypothesis stated that father statuses' scores would range from lowest to highest on avoidance as follows: partnered primary, partnered secondary, unpartnered secondary, and unpartnered primary. The results indicated a non-significant interaction effect of partner by caregiver types, Wilks' $\lambda = .958, F(2, 63) = 1.38, p = .26, n.s., \eta^2 = .04$, observed power = .29. An examination of the means in Table 2 shows father statuses' scores ranging from lowest to highest on avoidance as follows: partnered secondary ($M = 2.25, SD = .80$), unpartnered primary ($M = 2.35, SD = .93$), partnered primary ($M = 2.42, SD = .69$), and unpartnered secondary ($M = 2.77, SD = .76$). The hypothesis was not supported.

Exploratory Analyses

For the exploratory analyses, there were two major steps, which included the mediation/moderation analysis and the Pearson Product Moment correlations with ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) and PCRI (Gerard, 2000) scales. For the Pearson Product Moment correlations with ECR and PCRI scales, the results are shown below in Table 6.

Table 6

Pearson's Product Moment Correlations for Attachment Styles and Parenting Scales

Parenting Scales	<u>Attachment Styles</u>	
	Avoidance	Anxiety
Support	-.01	-.07
Satisfaction	-.13	-.18
Involvement	-.16	-.02
Communication	.20	.14
Limit Setting	-.01	-.06
Autonomy	-.16	-.06
Gender role	-.08	-.22 ^t

Note. ^t = $p \leq .10$ level.

For the exploratory analyses, the goal was to determine whether or not the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) scales mediate or moderate relationships between the IV (predictor variables) and the PCRI (Gerard, 2000) scales (criterion variables). For the mediation analyses to be conducted, certain assumptions needed to be met. The first assumption was that the independent variables (IVs) be significantly related to the ECR. As reported in the primary hypotheses analyses, there was a significant main effect between partner types and ECR scales, so this assumption was met. Caregiver type and the interaction term were ruled out as potential IVs, since they were not significantly related on the ECR scales. The only significant relationship was a main effect of partnered/unpartnered status

with the ECR scales. Thus, the exploratory analysis focused on the ECR as a potential mediator/moderator between partner types and the PCRI scales. A series of linear regressions were planned to test for mediation/moderation effects. Moderation effects are determined when there is a strong relationship between the predictor and criterion variables (Frazier, Tix, & Barron, 2004). Regarding moderation in the current study, partner type (predictor) and PCRI (criterion) scores were explored for relationships through the mediation steps.

To determine whether or not the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) mediates or moderates the relationship between partnered/unpartnered (IV) and PCRI (Gerard, 2000) subscales (criterion variables), the first step in the exploratory analysis began with a series of simple regressions between partner type scores on the ECR and each PCRI subscale. The normed scores for the PCRI were used in the series of linear regressions. The series of linear regressions revealed no significant results; in other words, partnered/unpartnered scores did not predict any of the PCRI subscale scores. Based on the non-significant results between partner type and PCRI scales, no further steps were conducted in the mediation/moderation process. Thus, partnered/unpartnered status was only related to the ECR scales and not the PCRI scales.

In a final exploratory analysis, Pearson Product Moment correlations were utilized with ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) and PCRI (Gerard, 2000) scales to determine whether any relationship existed between fathers' attachment scores and parenting scores. Results showed all non-significant relationships between ECR and PCRI scales. There

was a marginal negative relationship between fathers' anxiety and gender role orientation, $r = -.22, p = .07$. As fathers reported increased levels of anxiety on the ECR, their gender role orientation scores decreased on the PCRI. In other words, as fathers' reported higher levels of anxiety in romantic relationships, their gender role beliefs became less egalitarian or more traditional.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

A summary of the results and integration with previous findings are presented. The integration of findings with previous research was organized in order of preliminary, primary hypotheses, and exploratory outcomes. Implications for theory, research, training, and application are discussed. Limitations and conclusions have been included.

Summary and Integration of Findings with Previous Research

This study extended the findings of Siciliano (2005) by implementing a new series of analyses to previously untapped data in the original work, which included fathers' caregiver and partner types. Fathers were examined as a whole and for differences between groups. Father groups included partnered secondary, partnered primary, unpartnered secondary, and unpartnered primary. The main variables of interest included fathers' own attachment along with mediation/moderation effects of fathers' attachment between partner/caregiver types and fathers' parenting processes. It was hypothesized that (1) no differences would exist between primary and secondary caregivers on the Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR; Brennan et al., 1998) anxiety scale; (2) partnered fathers' scores would be lower than unpartnered fathers' scores on the ECR anxiety scale; (3) father statuses' scores would range from lowest to highest for ECR anxiety as follows: partnered primary, partnered secondary, unpartnered secondary, and unpartnered primary; (4) no differences would exist between caregiver

types on the ECR avoidance scale; (5) partnered fathers' scores would be lower than unpartnered fathers' scores on the ECR avoidance dimension; and (6) father statuses' scores would range from lowest to highest on ECR avoidance as follows: partnered primary, partnered secondary, unpartnered secondary, and unpartnered primary.

To summarize the primary hypotheses results, there was a significant main effect for partner type on the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998). Post hoc analyses revealed that unpartnered fathers were significantly different from partnered fathers, and unpartnered fathers had significantly higher anxiety scores than partnered fathers. All other analyses were non-significant. The results provided both support and contradiction for various aspects of prior research findings from the attachment, divorce, and father involvement fields. Implications are presented in the following order: preliminary findings, primary hypotheses, and exploratory findings.

Integration of Preliminary Findings

In this section, discussion of how preliminary findings for demographic variables fit with previous research was presented. However, the significant findings regarding fathers' current marital status and ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) scales were discussed in the primary hypotheses section along with partner type outcomes on the ECR scales.

For the preliminary analyses, many of the significant associations between demographic variables were unrelated to the primary hypotheses. However, the results offered information about associations between demographic variables and the sample of fathers, such as education, household income, residential status, child support, and

current marital status. The currently married fathers and their children were more likely to experience less stress than the unmarried father families. Previous findings showed that many stay at home fathers (SAHFs) reported feeling satisfied with their life (Rochlen et al., 2010). Additionally, Amato (2000) summarized that children from intact families tended to score higher on measures of well being than children from nonintact families. When fathers lived with their children, married fathers were readily available to participant in their children's lives and had more decision-making influence regarding their children (Cabrera et al., 2004).

For the unmarried fathers who did not live with their children and paid child support, there was a high likelihood that unmarried fathers experienced declines in various ways. From previous research, there was a common complaint from unpartnered fathers that a decline in relationship quality with their children occurred after the divorce (Hoffman, 1995; Kalmijn, 2007; Kruk, 2010; Scott et al., 2007). Additionally, many noncustodial fathers reported financial hardships due to costs of divorce and child support payments (Kruk, 2010). While noncustodial fathers suffered hardships, oftentimes, children from disrupted families reported losses in their relationships with fathers (East et al., 2007; Nielsen, 2007; Scott et al., 2007), and the children from disrupted families' experienced decreases in their standards of living (Hetherington et al., 1998; Lansford, 2009). However, many noncustodial fathers were able to reestablish their bonds with their children (Kruk, 2010). In cases of good co-parenting support, authoritative parenting, and cohesion in families post divorce, children's well being was similar in

intact and nonintact families (Hetherington et al; Lansford, 2009). Additional preliminary findings for current marital status and partner types on the attachment dimensions are discussed in the main hypotheses section below.

Integration of Primary Hypothesis Findings

This section was organized by caregiver types, partner types, and the interaction of partner by caregiver outcomes. Due to significant findings for partner types, this section primarily focused on implications for unpartnered fathers and their relationships, since the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) and Parent Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI; Gerard, 2000) measured characteristics of fathers' relationships. Additionally, the unpartnered fathers section compared and contrasted previous findings for the partner types.

Caregiver type outcomes. Fathers' caregiver type was not related to fathers' romantic attachment. These outcomes were expected due to mixed findings from previous research. Without consistent findings, it was suspected that caregiver status may not be associated with fathers' romantic attachment style. Although no known study examined the relationship between fathers' caregiver type and attachment dimensions alone, several studies utilized fathers' caregiver type in relationship to their parenting behaviors (Dalton III et al., 2006; Field, 1978; Frascarolo, 2004). One study examined fathers' caregiver status and offsprings' romantic attachment with unclear results regarding the contribution of fathers' caregiver status (Olivas & Stoltenberg, 1997). Two known studies specified fathers' caregiver roles, offsprings' attachment style, and either

fathers' parenting behaviors (Dalton III et al., 2006) or attachment styles (Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009), which resulted in contradictory outcomes. One study showed that fathers' role as secondary caregiver was related to their offsprings' romantic attachment style (Dalton III et al.). The other study found that fathers' role as primary caregivers was related to their children's attachment style (Bernier & Miljkovitch).

The current study makes a unique contribution by specifically examining fathers' caregiver type and adult attachment orientation. Fathers' caregiver role may be more reflective of current contextual demands in fathers' lives. For example, in previous literature, SAHFs provided various practical reasons, such as job loss, achieved career goals, career transitions, partner higher pay/career investment, valuing a parent staying home, economic practicality, and better fit as a parent than the other partner for deciding to become primary caregivers (Doucet, 2004, Merla, 2008; Rochlen et al., 2010; Rochlen, Suizzo, et al., 2008; West et al., 2009). An additional explanation for SAHFs primary caregiver role may have included SAHFs' flexibility with gender role beliefs (Merla; Rochlen & McKelley, 2010; West et al., 2009), which facilitated their role as primary caregivers in their children's lives. Also, gender role biases in society (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005) and judicial systems may have impacted fathers' caregiver roles when mothers were favored as primary caregivers (Kruk, 2010; Levy, 2010; Pisarra, 2011; Smith, 2003; Vatsis, 2001). Biases may have influenced many fathers to become secondary caregivers. In contrast, for custodial fathers, possible explanations for their caregiver roles may be related to circumstances, such as partner death, lack of maternal

fitness, and economic advantages over mothers. The findings from the current study highlighted the need for further examination of fathers' roles in various caregiver situations.

Partner type outcomes. Also, as expected, the results showed a significant main effect for partner types. Although partnered fathers scored lower than unpartnered fathers on both attachment anxiety and avoidance, these results only reached significance when examining the relationship between partner types on attachment anxiety.

Unpartnered fathers. Previous research findings from attachment, divorce, and father involvement fields indicated that many unpartnered fathers struggled in relationships with their former partners (Cheadle et al., 2010; DeGarmo et al., 2008; Forste et al., 2009; Leite & McKenry, 2006), children (East et al., 2007; Finley & Schwartz, 2007; Hoffman, 1995; Kalmijn, 2007; McCormick & Kennedy, 2000; Nielsen, 2007; Scott et al., 2007), and families of origin (Forste et al.; Julion et al., 2007). Most of the unpartnered fathers in the current study's sample were no longer in romantic relationships with their focal child's mother due to being never-married, separated, and divorced. Only three of the unpartnered fathers in the sample had deceased partners. In the current study, most unpartnered fathers were probably unpartnered due to failed relationships.

Reasons for the relationship failures were unknown, and there were many possible explanations. For example, explanations may have included parents' young age at time of child's birth, incompatible characteristics with former partners, differing career

opportunities, differing religious beliefs, and differing cultural ways of living. It was unknown why or how fathers' relationships ended, and it would be unfair to suggest that fathers' themselves were the sole reason. In the current study, unpartnered fathers were examined as a whole, and the scores were aggregated, so individual differences were unknown when examining differences between groups. The current findings resulted from a quantitative study and lacked details about fathers' lives. In a recent study, Kruk (2010) utilized both quantitative and qualitative measures. Kruk collected unpartnered fathers' histories from events that led up to the termination of their relationships through the divorce and custody processes. Kruk obtained very detailed summaries of unpartnered fathers' experiences, stressors, and challenges. Kruk's findings indicated that systemic issues were related to fathers' experiences, which may at least partially explain unpartnered fathers' insecure attachment scores. According to Kruk, unpartnered fathers reported eight themes. The eight themes were as follows: (1) fathers experienced a grieving process; (2) mothers' gatekeeping influenced fathers' involvement; (3) the legal system increased conflict between parents; (4) fathers reported multiple forms of abuse; (5) children's attachment bonds to fathers were broken; (6) fathers suffered financial strain due to legal costs and child support; (7) many fathers restored their relationships with their children; however, many fathers disengaged due to the barriers; (8) there were miscellaneous variables, such as new partners, former partners moving with the children, inadequate legal representation, and insufficient support from institutions. Findings

indicated that there were serious systemic issues, which seemed to influence fathers' relationships (Kruk).

In contrast, the current study lacked qualitative measures. The data were limited to fathers' romantic attachment and parenting processes. Because the current study utilized an adult attachment measure, implications for the results will center on attachment theory and fathers' relationships with the integration of divorce and father involvement findings. The following implications were not meant to blame fathers and their families. Rather, the implications acknowledged ways that the results may fit with previous findings regarding fathers' relationships over time with their caregivers, former romantic partners, and children.

Previous research provided some support for the speculation that unpartnered fathers may have struggled in relationships over time. According to Feeney (2008), research outcomes on personal characteristics acquired in early attachment relationships showed stability over time. Additionally, Feeney stated that the internal working models from childhood operated in adult romantic relationships and were adjusted according to new adult attachment experiences. Feeney posited that a combination of childhood and adulthood experiences operated together to update internal working models throughout the lifespan. Feeney cited findings from adult attachment research to compare and contrast adult attachment security for relationship quality. Based on previous research findings, Feeney concluded that adults with secure attachment styles reported higher levels of relationship satisfaction, longer relationship investments, and lower incidents of

divorce than adults with insecure attachment styles. In essence, adults with secure attachments utilized healthy relationship skills, and adults with insecure attachments tended to employ unhealthy relationship skills (Feeney). Similarly, Saavedra et al. (2010) stated findings that high attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance scores were associated with relationship difficulties and poor relationship quality. Although the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) measured adult attachment and not relationship quality, the basis of the questionnaire centered on trust, closeness, and abandonment issues (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007), which were related to relationship quality.

In Siciliano (2005), I encountered some unpartnered fathers with trust issues in the early stages of the recruitment process. The recruitment of unpartnered fathers was difficult due to fathers' skepticism of a female researcher from a women's university. At times, some unpartnered fathers stated concerns regarding the potential for a feminist agenda on list serves and online bulletin boards (Siciliano). Unpartnered fathers' skepticism was fair considering my context and not knowing anything about me. Levy (2010) stated that there was evidence for biases against fathers during custody investigations. Levy strongly recommended that psychologists and mental health providers examine their own histories and biases when working in the custody investigations field.

My biases were in favor of primary caregiver fathers whether partnered or unpartnered. My intentions were to understand how a small minority of men chose to become primary caregivers, because primary caregiver fathers bucked gender role norms

(Brinkley, 1997; Brooks, 2001; O'Neil, 2008). I felt awe and inspiration by primary caregiver fathers' courage to engage in a role that was socially stigmatizing (Doucet, 2004; Merla, 2008; Rochlen & McKelley, 2010; Rochlen et al., 2010; West et al., 2009). I believed that primary caregiver fathers performed the roles for the betterment of their families. I believed that primary caregiver fathers were self-sacrificing in their roles. Also, I wondered how fathers' own relationships influenced their decisions to become primary caregivers and how fathers' context related to father/child relationships.

During the recruitment and data collection phases, I read online postings by unpartnered fathers who were primary and secondary caregivers expressing their anger with former partners and the court system. Unpartnered fathers' comments may have been reflective of fathers' experiences in negotiating and obtaining custody arrangements. Similarly, Erera and Baum (2009) analyzed online postings from nonresidential fathers. Erera and Baum reported themes that included fathers' sense of powerlessness, child support issues, and strong angry expressions. Investigators found that nonresidential fathers reported difficulties with former partners, the court system, and professionals involved with their children's welfare (Erera & Baum). Similarly, Kruk (2010) found that fathers reported that former partners showed little support of fathers' contact with their children. Fathers said that partners made decisions regarding the children's welfare without consulting with them, made abuse accusations against fathers, and interfered with fathers' relationships with the children (Kruk). Additionally, fathers

sought support through various systems, such as the courts, child protective services, and local school systems, and these systems failed to assist fathers (Kruk).

In a paper for the Conference of the International Society of Family Law, Levy (2010) cited an actual court case that was an example of bias against fathers. Levy stated that the courts depended upon various helping professionals, such as social workers, psychologists, medical professionals, and guardians ad litem, for objective information, but that information has been biased at times. Also, Levy focused on the long length of time for child custody litigation and exorbitant financial expenses incurred by parents. Ultimately, Levy advocated for the encouragement of parents to devise their own custody plans, which approximately 90% to 95% of parents tended to do. In a recent blog by an attorney, he challenged the idea that sex determined the ability to parent (Pisarra, 2011). The concern about bias in the systems has gained support in the political arena. Recently, Newt Gingrich added concerns about bias against fathers in the court system to his presidential campaign issues (Fathers, Families, Fairness, 2011).

Although there seems to be a notion that bias exists in the court system, there remains very little evidence to prove the actual existence of a bias. As McNeely (1998) stated, the courts do not employ a system to track custodial decisions by parent sex. Additionally, most custodial arrangements tend to be determined by the parents themselves in 90% to 95% of the cases and only a small percentage of cases actually were determined by judges (Levy, 2010). Also, with the increased utilization of mediation and parent coordinators, many parental conflicts over custody tend to be

resolved and reduced the need for litigation (Henry, Fieldstone, & Bohac, 2009). In the small percentage of cases that actually reached a judge, judges were expected to utilize the standard of the best interest of the child to determine custody (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2007; Warshak, 1996) and not necessarily consider parent sex or biases. Prior to the 1970's, there seemed to be a clear preference for mothers (Warshak, 1996); however, within the past several decades, there has been a rise in father-headed families (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003a, 2010a). Considering these facts, it seemed difficult to clearly state that a bias actually exists, because objective data is lacking to support the bias notion. However, many attorneys, fathers, and lay people have purported that a bias against fathers still exists (Fathers, Families, Fairness, 2011; Kruk, 2010; Pisarra, 2011). It seemed reasonable that fathers who purported or perceived a bias may feel powerless during divorce and custody processes. Feelings of powerlessness may have been particularly difficult for men given their gender role socialization (Brooks, 2010). With the current data, it was not possible to tease out how unpartnered fathers' experiences with courts, custody, and child support may or may not be related to underlying attachment insecurity versus valid impacts of discrimination.

In contrast to postings by unpartnered fathers, this author read postings on a SAHFs' list serve, which were warm and happy. The SAHFs posted developmental questions about children and shared positive stories regarding their primary caregiver roles. There was a relative absence of negativity with the SAHFs' postings. The current study outcome that partnered fathers had lower scores for both attachment anxiety and

avoidance than unpartnered fathers seemed to fit with previous research on SAHFs. SAHFs reported high levels of satisfaction in their relationships (Rochlen, McKelley, et al., 2008) and support in their roles (Rochlen & McKelley, 2010; Siciliano, 2005). In contrast, unpartnered primary fathers reported low levels of support (Siciliano, 2005). Similarly, DeGarmo et al. (2008) said that custodial fathers reported high levels of stress and conflict with former partners. The literature supported the idea that unpartnered fathers experienced extreme difficulties, losses, and biases while facing custody issues (Catlett & McKenry, 2004; Kruk, 2010; Levy, 2010; Pisarra, 2011; Vatsis, 2001).

Unpartnered fathers may have experienced losses in their lives that were tantamount to abandonment. Some unpartnered fathers may have experienced losses with their own childhood caregivers, former partners, and their own children (Devault et al., 2008; Forste et al., 2009). Although fathers in the current study were not assessed for their relationships with their caregivers in childhood, the combination of previous research findings and attachment theory postulations implied that there would be some amount of difficulty expected between unpartnered fathers and their caregivers (Feeney & Monin, 2008).

Forste et al. (2009) found that the majority of participants who reported feeling close to their fathers identified their fathers as role models and valued trust as a characteristic of their fathers. In contrast, participants who were not close to their fathers identified other male figures and their mothers as role models. Additionally, the fathers who lacked closeness with their own fathers, strived to be different from their fathers

when in the parenting role themselves. The fathers who were not close to their fathers valued providing financially, but not emotionally, which contrasted with the fathers, who were close to their own fathers. Simultaneously, participants stated that conflict with their children's mothers hindered their fathering roles (Forste et al.). Forste et al. concluded that the fathers in the study operated within a context of relationships from both past and present.

Similarly, Devault et al. (2008) investigated at-risk unpartnered fathers and their relationships, past and present. The majority of the sample was raised by their mothers due to various forms of father absence and reported close relationships to their mothers. In addition to loss regarding unpartnered fathers relationship with their own fathers, most of the participants reported loss and hardship when their relationships ended with the mothers of their children. Devault et al. learned that participants suffered further losses through decreased contact with their children. However, the majority of the fathers made efforts to maintain close relationships with their children and forged co-parenting relationships with their former partners (Devault et al.). Although the aforementioned findings may not have been representative of all unpartnered fathers, Forste et al. (2009) and Devault et al. offered possible insights to unpartnered fathers' relationships with their families of origin and former partners.

Previous findings supported that when fathers' romantic relationships to their children's mothers ended, many fathers' level of access to and involvement with their children declined (Cabrera et al., 2004; Kruk, 2010). Findings showed that fathers'

relationship status (Cabrera, Ryan, et al., 2008; Fagan & Palkovitz, 2007) and residential status (Cabrera, Fagan, et al., 2008; Easterbrooks et al., 2007) in relation to their children's mothers impacted fathers' level of involvement. Fathers, who were estranged from their children's mothers and living apart, were less available to participate in their children's lives than partnered fathers (Cabrera et al.; Cabrera, Fagan, et al., 2008; Easterbrooks et al.). Possible reasons for the lack of involvement may be attributed to the quality of fathers' relationships with former partners (Kruk) and lack of co-parenting skills (Isacco et al., 2010), or may have included cases of maternal gate-keeping (Amato & Sobolewski, 2004; Kruk). When fathers' relationships with their children's mothers changed, many fathers grieved losses of their former partners and children (Kruk). Additionally, Feeney and Monin (2008) suggested that parents with a history of insecure attachments may not cope well with the stressors of divorce, and the impact of divorce may have deleterious influences on their caregiving. Divorce stress may have inhibited parents' ability to provide a safe haven and secure base to their offspring, thus affecting parent/child relationships (Feeney & Monin).

Previous findings showed that many unpartnered fathers experienced deteriorations in the quality of their relationships with their children after the termination of relationships with their children's mothers (East et al., 2007; Hoffman, 1995; Kruk, 2010; Nielsen, 2007; Scott et al., 2007), and unpartnered father/child relationship losses were sustained over time (Kalmijn, 2007). Kalmijn found that divorced fathers received the least amount of contact and support from their adult children in later life than all other

parent types. In summary, it is plausible that the findings may have represented unpartnered fathers' distrust, lack of closeness, and fear of abandonment due to multiple losses suffered from the termination of their romantic relationships.

Unpartnered fathers and attachment avoidance. The current study results showed no difference between partner types on attachment avoidance, which was unexpected. The lack of a significant outcome for avoidance seemed to divert from previous findings. Feeney (2008) reported a general finding that insecure attachment styles seemed to be related to gender and gender role socialization. Basically, men tended to be categorized as attachment avoidant more so than women (Feeney); however, there was no comparison group of women in the present study. In the current study, many of the unpartnered fathers had high attachment avoidance scores, which was evident in the preliminary analyses.

The preliminary analysis of the ECR scales and fathers' current marital status offered insight to the main hypothesis for partner types and attachment avoidance. Findings revealed significant relationships between currently unmarried fathers and married fathers on both attachment dimensions. Currently unmarried fathers had both higher avoidance and anxiety scores than currently married fathers. The current marital status and ECR scales outcomes were in the expected direction of the main hypotheses regarding partner types on the attachment dimensions.

In the preliminary analyses, there was a significant association between partner types and current marital status, so the two variables could not be utilized together. The

currently married category consisted of fathers who were partnered to their focal child's mother and fathers who were unpartnered to their focal child's mother. Nine fathers fit into both unpartnered and currently married categories. When examining the partner types and current marital status categories separately, the outcomes differed on the ECR dimensions; yet, the independent variables (IVs) were significantly related to each other. Apparently, nine unpartnered fathers married new partners. Findings supported that fathers high on anxiety would become partnered again in future relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Also, fathers with high avoidance scores were not as likely as fathers with high anxiety scores to engage in new relationships (Hazan & Shaver). The nine fathers' avoidance scores were low enough to show no difference between partnered and unpartnered fathers on attachment avoidance.

After the nine unpartnered fathers with high anxiety and low avoidance scores were relegated to the currently married group, the currently unmarried fathers had a high concentration of insecure attachment characteristics. Previous findings indicated that fathers with high anxiety and avoidance scores were highly likely to experience difficulties engaging in relationships (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) more so than any other insecure categorization. Adults with high attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance scores were identified as fearful (Bartholomew & Horowitz). Individuals with high attachment anxiety and avoidance scores indicated that they had a negative view of both themselves and others (Brennan et al., 1998). Adults who were identified as fearful tended to feel uncomfortable with closeness and feared rejection (Bartholomew &

Horowitz). For unmarried fathers, these results supported previous findings that fathers' suffered painful experiences and losses due to the ending relationships with stressful experiences during custody processes (Kruk, 2010; Levy, 2010). Besides speculating that fearful attachments may have preexisted from childhood and adulthood experiences, there were other possible explanations, such as becoming insecure in response to the attachment characteristics of romantic partners and fathers' own gender role beliefs (Feeney, 2008).

Partner by caregiver outcomes. For the interaction of partner by caregiver types, the outcome was somewhat unexpected, since several studies yielded significant associations for fathering relationships in various contexts (e.g., Field, 1978; Kalmijn, 2007; King, 2007; Lamb et al., 1982; Rochlen & McKelley, 2010; Siciliano, 2005). For the current study, fathers' attachment was not examined with their child's attachment. However, based on the idea of internal working models (IWMs), fathers' adult attachment styles were expected to represent how fathers interacted in other relationships. For example, attachment investigators examined fathers and their offspring's attachment styles to find significant associations according to fathers' contexts, such as partnered secondary (Dalton III et al., 2006) and unpartnered primary (Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009). In the divorce research, Kalmijn reported that noncustodial fathers were the least likely to receive support and contact from their children in later life than all other parenting contexts, which included married, widowed, and divorced parents. Father involvement findings indicated that fathers' involvement with their children varied

between intact and non-intact families (Finley & Schwartz, 2006, 2007). It was unclear why the current findings diverged from the aforementioned studies.

However, the results supported previous outcomes that found either no or few differences between fathering groups. For example, Olivas and Stoltenberg (1997) found no differences for college students' relationship satisfaction and attachment styles between intact /nonintact families and custodial arrangements. Similarly, DeGarmo (2010) examined within group differences of divorced fathers and quality of involvement with their children. DeGarmo reported few differences between full, shared, and no custody fathers. In the original thesis project, there was a marginal interaction effect between father groups on the PCRI (Gerard, 2000) with significant univariate effects for support and gender role scales. Partnered primary fathers had higher support and gender role scores than unpartnered primary fathers. However, the results were non-significant between father statuses on any of the actual parenting behaviors and parent/child relationship scales (Siciliano, 2005). Perhaps the current study design allowed for more accurate comparisons of father statuses than previous study designs that examined father groups either separately or partially.

Integration of Exploratory Findings

In the exploratory analyses, fathers' attachment neither mediated nor moderated the relationship between partner types and fathers' parenting processes. Additionally, there was an absence of associations between adult attachment and parenting processes.

A marginal negative relationship existed between fathers' attachment anxiety and gender role beliefs. High levels of attachment anxiety reflected traditional gender role beliefs.

Overall, the exploratory results were surprising. The outcome failed to support either previous findings of an association between fathers' attachment and parenting behaviors (e.g., Newland et al., 2008; Roelofs et al., 2008), which may imply that the current findings did not support the idea of intergenerational transmission of attachment from fathers to offspring (e.g., Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009; Dalton III et al., 2006; Steele et al., 1996). Of course, offsprings' attachment was not measured in the current study. However, there was an expectation that fathers' attachment styles would be related to parenting processes, such as caregiving behaviors, which are hypothesized to be mechanisms of transmission of attachment styles to children. In the present study, fathers' romantic attachment style appeared unrelated to fathers' parenting processes.

There may be several possible explanations for the outcomes of the exploratory analyses. The ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) assessed fathers' own attachment system and the PCRI (Gerard, 2000) tapped into fathers' caregiving system. Possibly, fathers' own attachment system was unrelated to fathers' caregiving system. Perhaps, the utilization of adult attachment and parenting self reports was too weak of an approach to detect associations between fathers' attachment and caregiving systems. Van IJzendoorn (1992) recommended the use of observational methods and the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George, Kaplan, & Main, 1996) to capture intergenerational transmission of parenting. Additionally, Bartholomew and Shaver (1998) warned against utilizing

attachment measures from different domains. For example, researchers who wanted to study attachment and parent/child relationships needed to use attachment assessments that were developed to measure parent/child relationships. For intergenerational transmission, generations of parent/child relationships within the same family would have needed to be assessed with parent/child relationship measures (Bartholomew & Shaver). In the current study, the utilization of romantic attachment and parenting assessments crossed domains.

Another possible explanation for the exploratory results included the idea that fathers' romantic attachment may be a function of gender role socialization. Possibly, men's gender socialization of suppressing emotions and vulnerability interfered in their relationships. Burn and Ward (2005) found a negative association between women's relationship satisfaction and men's gender role beliefs. Women's satisfaction in relationships decreased as traditional male role beliefs increased. For the current study, when fathers' attachment anxiety increased, their gender role beliefs became more traditional. The result supported previous findings on male gender role beliefs and attachment (Blazina, 2001; DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002; Schwartz et al., 2004). DeFranc and Mahalik found associations between men's gender role beliefs and their relationships with their fathers. The less traditional the beliefs, then the better the father/son relationships were reported to be. Sons' gender role beliefs were positively related to their perceptions of their fathers' beliefs (DeFranc & Mahalik). Attachment, gender role beliefs, and intergenerational transmissions may be an area for further exploration.

Summary

Overall, the outcomes from the current study indicated that fathers' partner type was associated with fathers' romantic attachment style. Unpartnered fathers had higher attachment anxiety scores than partnered fathers. Additionally, unmarried fathers had higher attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance than married fathers. A pattern emerged for insecure attachments. However, there was no evidence that fathers' romantic attachment styles were related to their parenting processes.

Implications for Theory

Bowlby (1969/1982) stated that attachment was relationship specific, and IWMs were updated based upon experiences with attachment figures over the lifetime. Bowlby stated that parents would likely pass their attachment styles on to their children through parent/child interactions. Bretherton and Munholland (2008) stated that researchers have begun to embrace the idea of a developmental process of IWMs being updated based on experiences in multiple attachments over the lifetime. In the present study, there was the assumption that caregivers transmitted their attachment style to their children (Bretherton & Munholland).

Internal Working Models and Intergenerational Transmission

In the present investigation, although fathers' multiple attachments and their children's attachments were not assessed, there seemed to be two possible implications for theory. First, it seemed plausible that unpartnered fathers may have insecure attachment scores from relationships in childhood and adulthood. The following

statements are speculative regarding fathers' attachment in the current study. Perhaps fathers' IWMs were based on specific relationships (caregiver and romantic attachments) and a general framework operated overtime with some revisions to the IWMs, which impacted fathers' caregiving to their own children. Fathers may have updated their IWMs to decide how they wanted to provide caregiving to their children. If so, then the current study outcome supported the developmental theory that IWMs were adjusted over the lifespan (Bowlby, 1969/1982; Bretherton & Munholland, 2008) and fathers' adjusted their caregiving to their children. On the surface, fathers' romantic attachment style may appear unrelated to their caregiving styles when in fact fathers' may have intentionally changed to caregive their children differently from their own experiences.

However, the alternative or second implication was that fathers may have established relationships with their children that were unrelated to their attachment history. Bartholomew and Shaver (1998) proposed that individuals interacted with others according to the specific relationship, which was unrelated to their attachment history. From the current study, unpartnered fathers' life trajectories were unknown. Future investigations may shed light on differences in fathers' IWMs based on multiple assessments of relationships regarding childhood, adulthood, and parenthood.

Investigations of fathers' role in transmitting attachment style produced mixed results for intact and nonintact families (Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009; Dalton III et al., 2006). However, studies showed that detecting the transmission of secure attachment was easier than detecting the transmission of insecure attachments across generations

(Bretherton & Munholland, 2008). In the current study, fathers' caregiving system was measured through the PCRI (Gerard, 2000). The findings showed that fathers' attachment failed to mediate or moderate the relationship between partner types and fathers' parenting. There appeared to be no associations between fathers' romantic attachments and their caregiving behaviors. The unpartnered fathers appeared to have provided parenting to their children in similar ways to all other father statuses in spite of their insecure attachments. Thus, the results did not seem to support the assumptions of attachment theory regarding possible transmission of internal working models through the caregiving system; however, this statement was speculative.

Romantic and child attachments. In adult attachment research, the development of romantic attachments appeared similar to attachments in childhood (Zeifman & Hazan, 2008). Zeifman and Hazan stated that romantic attachments developed along the same processes as childhood attachments to caregivers. These researchers focused on a difference between attachments in childhood and adulthood, which included sexuality in the romantic attachments. Also theoretically, parents did not receive caregiving from their children. In romantic relationships, partners engaged in a process of utilizing attachment and caregiving systems in a mutual manner (Zeifman & Hazan). At some point in development, adults moved from their role in childhood attachments into the role of parents providing care and protection to their offspring (George & Solomon, 2008). Several studies supported the idea that parents with unstable childhood histories may have compensated for their losses by adjusting in their parental role (Beaton & Doherty,

2007; Devault et al., 2008; George & Solomon). Again, there were two possible implications for the theory. Fathers may have accessed memories from their childhood, updated their IWMs, and utilized appropriate caregiving to raise their children; this statement was mere speculation. The other implication remained that fathers' romantic attachment was unrelated to their parental caregiving system. As yet, there existed an absence of studies on fathers' caregiving systems (George & Solomon).

Alternative explanations. Several researchers proposed an ecological or contextual explanation for the various factors that were associated with parent/child relationships (Belsky & Fearon, 2008; Newland et al., 2008; J. H. Pleck, 2007). J. H. Pleck evaluated several theories to explain father involvement, and he dismissed attachment theory by focusing on contextual factors, such as parenting practices, material resources, and community influences. Included within community, cultural and gender role socialization may have impacted fathers' development. The marginally significant result indicated an association between gender role beliefs and anxiety. How did gender role socialization and attachment theory fit together? How could gender role socialization influence IWMs and intergenerational transmission? Gender role socialization and attachment appeared to be another area for future research.

Implications for Research

Partner by Caregiver Types Design

It remained unclear if caregiver types were an important factor in understanding fathering. The present study would say no, yet the analyses done in the original thesis

project (Siciliano, 2005) with an alternate design found that the interaction of partner by caregiver types provided insight to fathers' parenting processes. The recommendation would be to continue utilizing the partner by caregiver design in future fathering research. Additionally, the use of biological relatedness provided the operational definition of a father. The design offered a way to organize fathering research and view fathers as a whole. To view fathers as a whole, investigators needed to examine father groups, such as traditional, SAHF, noncustodial, and custodial within the same study. Shannon et al. (2005) recommended examining fathers as a whole rather than in isolation from each other. The few fathering studies that attempted to find between group differences were fairly successful at showing both similarities and differences to fathering contexts (e.g., Bauserman, 2002; DeGarmo, 2010; DeGarmo et al., 2008; Siciliano, 2005). The partner by caregiver types design was a new contribution to parenting and attachment research.

Improvements and Assessments

For recruitment and sample characteristics, researchers may want to utilize random sampling techniques to achieve a sample that may generalize to the population at large. Fathers were particularly difficult to recruit for studies (Honig, 2008; Siciliano, 2005). Approaches to solving recruitment problems included the utilization of online recruiting and an online study rather than traditional methods (Siciliano). A drawback to online recruitment and implementing a study was the absence of low income fathers. An alternative would have included recruiting fathers through local school districts. Additionally, since low income fathers may have lacked access to a computer, in the

future, fathers would need access to the study either through a portable computer or paper and pencil assessments.

I encountered skepticism and distrust by unpartnered and some minority fathers (Siciliano, 2005). Fathers expressed concern about a possible feminist agenda of a female researcher from a woman's university conducting research on fathers. These suspicions seemed to be the product of fathers' experiences with former partners, lawyers, and officials of the family court system. To help avoid this issue, future studies could address fathers' concerns about the intentions of researchers during the recruitment phase. Additionally, men may be seen as more credible or trustworthy researchers with this population, and could be called upon to further this research agenda.

A possible improvement on the current study would be to utilize attachment assessments from the same domain to better capture the construct of intergenerational transmission (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998). With adolescents and parents, researchers might implement the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA; Armsden & Greenberg, 1987) and the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI; George et al., 1996) to better examine the intergenerational transmission of attachment styles. Of course, implementing the IPPA and AAI would require additional cost and time. Families would need to be recruited. Adolescents could possibly enter the answers to the IPPA on a computer. In contrast, the AAI was an interview rather than a self report. An easier and less expensive approach to the previous suggestion would be to administer the ECR (Brennan et al., 1998) across three generations in an online study. Either approach would

require great efforts to recruit families and preventive steps would need to be taken to reduce social desirability effects.

Other possible improvements to the current study would include assessing fathers' attachment styles across several partners and adding an assessment for gender role beliefs. By assessing fathers' attachment across romantic relationships, researchers would be able to examine stability of IWMs. Also, by adding a gender role assessment, researchers may gain insights to differences between father statuses, fathers' attachment styles, and gender role socialization. One particular instrument for the assessment of male gender socialization was the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS; O'Neil et al., 1986). The GRCS could be administered online.

If possible, the addition of multiple informants and methods to assess fathers' parenting interactions would be better than a self report measure. Although the PCRI (Gerard, 2000) had a social desirability scale, the possibility remained that fathers' perceptions of their parent/child relationship may have been positively skewed. In Siciliano's original study, two fathers answered the parenting questionnaire as if they were in relationship with their children. The data had to be discarded, since the fathers had no contact with their children. The current study design did not allow for the inclusion of absent fathers. For absent fathers, it may be necessary to collect mother reports; however father/child relationships would remain difficult to assess with accuracy. Absent fathers could participate in a study that examines fathers' attachment.

The current study design could be extended to other populations. Researchers might consider extending this study to minority and gay fathers, since there was an underrepresentation of diversity in the fathering literature (Leite & McKenry, 2006; Saracho & Spodek, 2008; Smiler, 2004). The current design may work well with studies of mothers. Also, the partner by caregiver design could be utilized with a sample of mothers and fathers. By combining mothers and fathers, researchers would be investigating on a level that has never been done before. By examining mothers and fathers within the partner by caregiver design, researchers would be examining biological parents as a whole. Of course, the design could be extended to parent figures as well.

Implications for Training

Psychologists in practice and training may benefit from increased awareness about various fathering contexts. Oftentimes, training programs have focused on ethnic and racial diversity without considering the contexts of Caucasian males. In 2003, the American Psychological Association (APA) published the Guidelines for Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists. In the guidelines, APA recognized that all human beings have cultural backgrounds and multiculturalism included many variables, such as gender, sex, race, and socioeconomic status. From the literature review, the four father statuses described varying experiences of men. For primary caregiver fathers, several studies indicated possible social stigma and bias in their fathering roles (e.g., Bloir, 2005; Merla, 2008; Rochlen et al., 2010). In the current study sample of predominantly Caucasian males, the results indicated a need

for increased sensitivity to unpartnered fathers, which was supported by previous research (e.g., Kalmijn, 2007; Kruk, 2010; Troilo & Coleman, 2008). These fathering contexts need to become a part of multicultural education and training for psychologists. Psychologists need to increase their awareness of fathering contexts for White men, as well as for ethnically and racially diverse men, gay fathers, fathers with disabilities, or any number of other aspects of social location and identity

Implications for Practice

An important finding from the current study was the pattern of insecure adult attachments. The outcomes indicated that unpartnered fathers were probably struggling in their adult relationships. Outcomes indicated negative views of self; additionally for currently unmarried fathers, there were negative views of others (i.e., Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Previous findings warned of possible risk factors for children from nonintact families (i.e., Amato & Sobolewski, 2004; Day & Padilla-Walker, 2009; Feeney & Monin, 2008) and those who had parents with insecure attachments (Bretherton & Munholland, 2008; Van IJzendoorn, 1992). For family disruptions, fathers and their children could possibly benefit from specific interventions, specialized programs, and systemic changes.

Counseling and Clinical Psychology

There are multiple interventions such as individual, group, and family therapies that psychologists could recommend to distressed fathers and their families. Fathers may need counseling, support, and parenting interventions as protective measures in life

events (Palkovitz & Palm, 2009). Men seemed to have a history of resisting help and may have gone reluctantly to counseling at the urging of others (Brooks, 2010; Levant & Wimer, 2010). For low income fathers, low cost counseling needs to be made available; otherwise, therapy costs could be a barrier to seeking treatment.

Individual therapy. In individual therapy, mental health providers may assist fathers with transitions in their lives. Palkovitz and Palm (2009) argued that fathers need more help with life events during fatherhood than transitions to fatherhood. Researchers stated that multiple roles and activities in fathers' lives compete with fathers' time, energy, and resources, which may decrease fathers' involvement with family. Palkovitz and Palm encouraged new understandings of fathers' development and life courses to support men in their roles as fathers.

From the current findings, the results suggested that fathers' role in romantic relationships are possibly separate from their roles as parents. In the current study, unpartnered fathers may have struggled in adult relationships. Yet, the unpartnered fathers appeared to have engaged in appropriate parenting skills. However, unpartnered fathers and their children faced transition challenges and were at risk for negative outcomes from family disruptions. Levant and Wimer (2010) suggested an ecological approach to treating men and especially minority men in therapy. When men attended counseling sessions, therapists needed to employ interventions such as using strength-based approaches and creating a male-friendly environment to engage male clients (Levant & Wimer). Since unpartnered fathers were identified as having negative views of

self, they would probably benefit from strength-based approaches that help to build their self-esteem.

In individual therapy, counselors may consider working with fathers on relationship skills, feelings of isolation (Bloir, 2005), confronting gender role beliefs (Tillitski, 1992), and addressing mental health issues related to insecure attachments. From the current study, the results indicated that unpartnered fathers may have struggled in their romantic relationships. Counselors may incorporate attachment theory into interventions with distressed fathers. By identifying fathers' attachment styles, fathers' may gain increased awareness about how they tend to respond to partners. With increased awareness to insecure attachment styles, fathers' may increase their understanding of themselves and patterns with significant others in their lives. Distressed fathers' may benefit by changing ineffective interaction patterns and increasing healthy relationship skills. Fathers may increase and implement healthy relationship skills with partners to forge good co-parenting relationships. In addition to relationship skills, Tillitski recommended that therapists help fathers to question the validity of gender roles as well as confront discrimination in the judicial system. There may be occasions when fathers with insecure attachments experience mental health issues. Dozier, Stovall-McClough, and Albus (2008) reported that some adults with insecure attachments may have experienced heightened levels of anxiety and possibly dissociation.

Group therapy. Fathers' with insecure attachments may benefit from group therapy, since group therapies tended to increase awareness of interpersonal skills and

social support from others. Brooks (2010) recommended men-only group therapy for male clients to confront traditional gender role beliefs. Brooks stated that male group therapies provided men with the following opportunities: overcoming vulnerable feelings, communicating in a leisurely style, making self disclosures, learning interpersonal relationship skills, receiving social support, and feeling inspired by other men who were successful at change. In particular, unpartnered fathers, such as those in the present study, may have benefitted from social support (Warshak, 1988).

Fathers may need assistance in finding resources that target their particular needs. From the current study, the currently unmarried fathers were more likely to earn less, have lower education levels, live apart from their children, and pay child support than the currently married fathers. McBride and Lutz (2004) reported that many special programs and interventions have been developed for noncustodial fathers. Researchers listed specific groups, such as noncustodial fathers, incarcerated fathers, low-income fathers, teen fathers, minority fathers, fathers of children with developmental issues, and biological fathers vs. father figures, to be targeted for special interventions (McBride & Lutz, 2004). Fathering programs have shown effectiveness in increasing positive father involvement in father/child relationships (Kocayörük & Sümer, 2009; Saleh et al., 2005). Therapists would benefit noncustodial fathers by being aware of specific programs in their area.

Family therapy. An additional treatment for unpartnered or other fathers with insecure attachments and their children may include family therapy. Family therapy may

be an approach to help fathers and their families' transition from intact to non-intact family structures. Family and multisystemic therapies have been shown to be effective forms of treatment and considered best practices for all types of families (Sexton, Alexander, & Mease, 2004). Fathers' insecure attachments may have been activated due to the loss of their partners (Feeney & Monin, 2008), so fathers with unhealthy coping skills may have needed support to ease transitions. Therapists may provide disrupted families with psycho-education regarding transition and recovery processes. Family therapy may help to open up communication and emotional expression with family members. Families may develop plans on how to proceed forward with their new lives. Through counseling, researchers suggested that fathers may work on building a parenting alliance with their children's mothers (Warshak, 1988). Therapists may encourage a supportive co-parenting relationship between former partners. Good co-parenting relationships facilitated fathers' involvement with their children (Carlson et al., 2008). Thus, family therapy may help to minimize stressors related to family disruption and promote healthy relationship skills.

Forensic Psychology and Legal System

The current findings have applications to forensic psychology and the legal system regarding fathering contexts and fathers' parenting processes. In the current sample, father statuses appeared relatively similar regarding father/child relationships. In the literature, it appeared that unpartnered fathers' endured stressors brought on by societal and possible legal biases in the current system (i.e., Kruk, 2010; Levy, 2010;

McNeely, 1998; Moon & Hoffman, 2008; Riggs, 2005; Sagi & Dvir, 1993; Vatsis, 2001).

The current system seemed to be inducing unnecessary stress on some fathers, children, and families.

There needs to be a dissemination of the literature and current findings to those involved in custody cases. Custody recommendations may have been contaminated with bias in favor of mothers (Kruk, 2010; Levy, 2010; Sagi & Dvir, 1993). Although some progress has been made towards equality (Meyer & Garasky, 1993; Ver Steegh, 2008) in child custody determinations, fathers appeared to lag behind mothers (Kruk; Levy; Pisarra, 2011; Smith, 2003; Vatsis, 2001). Meanwhile, there were signs of change. Recent findings showed that individuals in the general public preferred an equal share of time with children between parents (Braver, Ellman, Votruba, & Fabricius, 2011). However, if one parent provided more care than the other parent, then participants were in favor of giving more time to the primary caregiver, regardless of gender (Braver et al.). Additionally, participants reported their beliefs that the current system tends to be biased against fathers, and participants said that they would award fathers more time than was believed to be currently awarded in the system (Braver et al.). There seemed to be a shift in public opinion and court processes. Some changes were being made to balance the scales and revolutionize the divorce and custody process (Ver Steegh). New approaches to changing the divorce process included the utilization of mediation, parent coordination, parent education, and an evaluation by legal experts (Ver Steegh). Legal and helping professionals may have encouraged couples to utilize mediators and parent

coordinators to minimize the negative effects of the divorce process on the family.

Mediation has shown to be a quicker and less expensive alternative to litigation, which empowered parents and supported co-parenting relationships (North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts, 2010; Ver Steegh). Also, parent coordinators worked with parents to reduce conflict and develop co-parenting skills with the intention of improving child outcomes (American Psychological Association, 2010; Henry et al., 2009). Parent coordination has shown to reduce the filing of motions in relitigation cases (Henry et al.). For low income families, communities need to make either financial assistance available or provide low cost divorces to ease financial burdens to families

Societal and Systems Applications

Gender biases are deeply rooted within our culture and need to be challenged. Several studies supported that society remained mostly traditional with respect to mothers being seen as primary caregivers (Moon & Hoffman, 2008; Riggs, 2005). Parents who violated traditional caregiver roles experienced social stigma (e.g., Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005; Rochlen et al., 2010). Even with public policies in place for family leave, employers failed to support fathers' leave from work (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2007, Seward et al., 2002) and fathers were reluctant to take leave (Russell & Hwang, 2004). In healthcare matters, custodial mothers appeared to have more decision-making power for the medical care of offspring than noncustodial fathers (Isacco & Garfield, 2010). Noncustodial fathers were the most negatively perceived group of fathers above all other father types for living away from their children (Troilo & Coleman, 2008). It was time to

challenge traditional thinking regarding parental roles (Fathers, Families, Fairness, 2011; Pisarra, 2011), and evidence existed that societal views are beginning to change (e.g., Braver et al., 2011; Ver Steegh, 2008).

Thinking needs to change regarding unpartnered fathers. E. H. Pleck (2004) summarized the history of noncustodial fathers as being perceived as deadbeat dads due to not providing financially. While society seemed to want to maintain fathers in primary breadwinner roles, society also seemed to expect fathers to fill the new father role of being involved with their children's care (Brooks, 2001; Levant & Wilmer, 2010). As a society, men received mixed messages about their gender roles (Brooks, 2010; O'Neil, 2008). It was time to view fathers in context (Newland et al., 2008; J. H. Pleck, 2007; Siciliano, 2005). In spite of personal difficulties, unpartnered fathers managed to enact parenting processes similar to partnered fathers. Perhaps unpartnered fathers could be viewed with empathy and given support in their roles as fathers. Truly, there was a need and call for action (Fathers, Families, Fairness, 2011; Kruk, 2010).

Study Limitations

This study has several limitations. Limitations existed with the recruitment of fathers and the resulting demographics of the sample. Although several means of recruitment were employed, many fathers were recruited from the Internet. Participants were drawn from Internet sources and may have been very interested in fathering issues. Fathers who viewed parenting websites may have been more involved in their children's lives than fathers randomly selected from the general population. As such, there were

possible limitations with the sample due to self-selection (Heppner, Kivlighan, & Wampold, 1999).

Another limitation to the study was the short time frame of the study. The study was a one-time snapshot of fathers' lives and occurred six years ago. In the current study, there was no way to determine whether or not fathers' attachment and parenting processes might have changed over time. A better alternative to the current study would be a longitudinal study. For unpartnered fathers, recent relationship losses may have contributed to emotional and parenting instability. With a longitudinal study, researchers would better determine the stability of fathers' attachment styles and parenting processes overtime.

In addition to a small sample size of 68 fathers, sample characteristics may not have generalized well to the general population. Most participants were predominately Caucasian with some college education and high incomes. There were few minority fathers. Also, it was unknown whether gay fathers were represented in the sample. The majority of the sample had two years or more of college. As the study was conducted online, it may have fallen short in the recruitment of low income fathers, possibly due to participant difficulties in gaining access to personal computers and the Internet. Also, the proportion of primary caregiver fathers was disproportionately high in comparison to the general population. Results from the sample may not have extended well to the general population due to targeting specific groups of fathers via the Internet, demographic makeup of participants, and lack of access to the study.

The use of self report measures was another limitation to the study (Heppner et al., 1999). Although efforts were made to reduce social desirability effects for use of self report measures, some social desirability responding may have occurred on measures. The possibility existed that some participants wanted to be viewed in a positive light. During the data analysis, one participant clearly provided social desirability responding on the parenting measure's validity scale (Siciliano, 2005). Additionally, two other fathers responded as if they were in relationships with their children (Siciliano). As a result, three sets of data were discarded. Additionally in the current study, the PCRI (Gerard, 2000) reliabilities were low on two subscales, which were Autonomy and Social Desirability. On the demographic questionnaire, two fathers gave contradictory responses about their level of involvement with their children's care, which indicated possible attempts to appear more involved in daily care than was probably factual (Siciliano, 2005).

Another possible limitation to the study involved the potential validity of the demographic questionnaire. This measure was an author-generated measure and never previously utilized. There was a mix of quantitative and qualitative questions. The questionnaire design allowed fathers to type some short and long responses to some open-ended questions. One particular open-ended question asked about the percentage of daily care fathers provided to their children. As mentioned previously, two fathers' responses indicated that they provided 55% of their children's care, which did not match

with their other demographics. The utilization of a forced choice question for percentage of care may be an alternative to the open-ended question.

I had to make determinations about fathers' caregiver type based on fathers' responses to multiple questions. The open-ended responses for the two fathers who reported 55% daily care created a dilemma about how to categorize the two fathers by caregiver type. Although I utilized a priori criteria for categorizing fathers, which was described in the Original Study Design section, the contradictory data created an unexpected situation. Due to deviating from the criteria to determine caregiver types, these decisions may have created an issue of reliability regarding the assignment to caregiver type. An alternate solution would have been to discard the two participants' data.

Study Strengths

The study strengths included the design, use of the Internet, and insights to fathers' attachment styles. The partner by caregiver design allowed for the examination of fathers from various contexts in a single study. Past studies examined father groups separately or partially in comparison to other father and mother groups (e.g., Bernier & Miljkovitch, 2009; DeGarmo, 2010; Frascarolo, 2004; Lovas, 2005). The current design allowed for the examination of differences between father groups. By doing so, fathers were investigated within context and shown to be both different in their attachment styles and similar to each other in their parenting processes. Another strength was the utilization of the Internet to obtain father participation. The Internet offered a simple and easy

avenue for fathers' to participate in research. The final strength of the study was the examination of fathers' attachment styles and parenting processes. Although researchers have begun to examine ways that fathers' attachment style and caregiving system influences their offspring (Dalton III et al., 2006; Newland et al., 2008; Roelofs et al., 2008), a lack of associations between unpartnered fathers' attachment and parenting processes indicated that unpartnered fathers may be relatively similar to partnered fathers in their parent/child relationships (e.g., Amato, 2000; DeGarmo, 2010; Olivas & Stoltenberg, 1997). Additionally, the current study offered evidence that fathers' caregiver type appeared unrelated to their attachment style. By examining fathers' attachments, this investigation expanded upon previous research and provided new insights into fathering.

Conclusions

The current study examined fathers' contexts, attachment styles, and parenting processes. The literature review illustrated vast differences in fathers' lives due to their contexts and roles, such as traditional fathers, SAHFs, custodial fathers, and non-custodial fathers. Each of these fathering contexts offered fathers' various opportunities and challenges, such as parenting responsibilities and expectations about gender role fulfillment. Yet, regardless of fathers' attachment styles and contexts, they seemed to enact similar parenting processes. As a society, supporting men in their fathering roles seems to remain a challenge. As such, efforts need to be made in homes, the legal system,

and society in general to encourage fathers' positive involvement with their children (e.g., Kruk, 2010; Levy, 2010).

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APPENDIX A
Demographic Page

Main Survey

Participant Demographic Information

For all demographic information, please answer all questions about your biological child/children for ages 3-18 years only. If you have several biological children, please answer questions that are worded, “your child” with the same biological child in mind.

- 1) ID Number:
- 2) Upon completion of the study and via email, would you like to receive a summary of the results of this study?
Yes
No
- 3) Race or Ethnicity:
African/ African American/ Black, non-Hispanic
Asian/ Asian American
Biracial
Caucasian/ European/ White, non-Hispanic
Hispanic/ Latino
Native American/ Pacific Islander/ Eskimo/ Aleutian
Other
- 4) Biracial (describe)
- 5) Education
Less than a high school diploma or GED
High school diploma or GED
Two years of college or specialized training school
Four years of college (undergraduate degree)
Four or more years at the graduate level
- 6) What is your employment?
- 7) How many hours are you employed per week?
- 8) If you have a spouse, how many hours is your spouse employed per week?
Otherwise please type NA for not applicable.
- 9) Annual Household Income:
Under \$15,000
\$15,000 to \$30,000
\$30,000 to \$45,000
\$45,000 to \$60,000
\$60,000 to \$75,000

\$75,000 to \$90,000

\$90,000 and above

- 10) Number of biological children
- 11) Please list all of your biological child/children's genders and ages.
- 12) What is the gender and age of your specific biological child between 3-18 years old that you will keep in mind while answering questions that are worded, "your child"?
- 13) What is your current marital status?
 - Married
 - Divorced
 - Separated
 - Widowed
 - Never Married
- 14) Regarding your specific biological child, what is your marital status to your biological child's mother?
 - Married
 - Divorced
 - Separated
 - Widowed
 - Never Married
- 15) How long in your biological child/children's lives have you been either divorced, separated, or widowed from their mother?
- 16) If never married, do you live with your biological child/children's mother?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable
- 17) If no, how long in your biological child/children's lives have you been separated from their mother?
- 18) Do you and your biological child/children live in the same household full-time?
 - Yes
 - No
- 19) If no, with whom do your biological child/children reside?
- 20) If applicable, how were your biological child/children's living arrangements determined? Otherwise, please state not applicable.
- 21) If applicable, what is your custody arrangement? Otherwise, please state not applicable.
- 22) Do you pay child support?

Yes

No

Not applicable

23) Do you receive child support?

Yes

No

Not applicable

24) How many hours per week do you spend with your biological child/children?

How many hours per month?

25) Do you provide directly more than 50% of your biological child/children's daily care, such as feeding, dressing, school involvement, medical appointments, sports activities, homework, etc.?

Yes

No

26) If no, who provides this care?

27) What percentabe of the time do you directly provide your child/children's daily care?

28) What types of activities do you and your child/children do together?

29) How many hours per week are you engaged in those activities? How many hours per month?

APPENDIX B

Parent Child Relationship Inventory

Parent Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI) Sample Items

For the Support subscale, “When it comes to raising my child, I feel alone most of the time.

For the Satisfaction with Parenting subscale, “Being a parent isn’t as satisfying as I thought it would be.”

For the Involvement subscale, “I am very involved with my child’s sports or other activities.”

For the Communication subscale, “When my child has a problem, her or she usually comes to me to talk things over.”

For the Role Orientation subscale, “A father’s major responsibility is to provide financially for his children.”

Sample items from the *Parent-Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI)* copyright © 1994 by Western Psychological Services. Reprinted by C. Avila, Texas Woman’s University, for scholarly display purposes by permission of the publisher, WPS, 12031 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90025, U.S.A. Not to be reprinted in whole or in part for any additional purpose without the expressed, written permission of the publisher (rights@wpspublish.com). All rights reserved.

APPENDIX C

Experiences in Close Relationships

Adult Relationship Questionnaire

Instructions: The following statements concern how you feel in adult romantic relationships. For this study, please think about how you generally experience adult relationships, not just in what is happening in a current relationship. Respond to each statement by indicating how much you agree or disagree with it. Enter the number in the space provided, using the following rating scale:

1 Disagree Strongly

2 Disagree

3 Somewhat Disagree

4 Neutral/mixed

5 Somewhat Agree

6 Agree

7 Agree Strongly

1. I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down.
2. I worry about being abandoned.
3. I am very comfortable being close to romantic partners.
4. I worry a lot about my relationships.
5. Just when my partner starts to get close to me I find myself pulling away.
6. I worry that romantic partners won't care about me as much as I care about them.
7. I get uncomfortable when a romantic partner wants to be very close.
8. I worry a fair amount about losing my partner.
9. I don't feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners.
10. I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him/her.
11. I want to get close to my partner, but I keep pulling back.
12. I often want to merge completely with romantic partners, and this sometimes scares them away.
13. I am nervous when partners get too close to me.
14. I worry about being alone.
15. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner.
16. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.
17. I try to avoid getting too close to my partner.
18. I need a lot of reassurance that I am loved by my partner.
19. I find it relatively easy to get close to my partner. (R)
20. Sometimes I feel that I force my partners to show more feeling, more commitment.

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

APPENDIX D
Informed Consent

Informed Consent

Texas Woman's University

Consent to Participate in Research

Title: Fathering Characteristics

Investigator: Connie Siciliano, B. A.

Phone number

Email Address

Advisor: Misty Hook, Ph.D.

Texas Woman's University

PO Box 425470

Denton, TX 76204-5470

Phone number

MHook@twu.edu

Explanation and Purpose of the Research

You are being asked to participate in a research study for Ms. Siciliano's Thesis at Texas Woman's University. The purpose of this research is to investigate differences in fathering characteristics between father groups. Father groups will be determined by marital status in relationship to your child/children's biological mother. Additionally, fathers will be grouped by caregiver status, such as primary, secondary, and joint, in relationship to your child/children's daily care.

Research Procedures

For this internet based study, the investigator will ask you to provide identifying information, such as name and address, which will allow the research to contact you in the future to inquire about voluntary participation in a possible follow-up, dissertation study. Also, the investigator will ask you to answer demographic information along with two questionnaires regarding your adult and father/child relationships. You will be asked to provide your ID number, which you obtained from Connie Siciliano, on the

demographic and questionnaire surveys only but not on your identifying information. Psychdata.com is an internet company that will collect, store, and transmit your data to the investigator.

Potential Risks

You will risk loss of time, since participation in the study will take maximally 45 minutes to complete. If you quit in the middle of the study, you will need to start over in order to complete the study.

Potential risks related to your participation in the study may include loss of confidentiality/privacy. Psychdata.com protects user's privacy as follows:

- Secure Survey Environment (SSE): prevents surveys/responses from being viewed by third parties and retrieved on the actual computer used to supply the data.
- Secure Socket Layer (SSL) Technology: encryption of both the questions and responses. Encryption key known only to Psychdata.
- Server security: data stored on isolated database, server has 24/7 monitoring, biometric/intrusion sensors, card readers, and environmental sensors. Data is backed up daily and typically overwritten after seven days. Once an investigator has deleted data, it will be permanently deleted from Psychdata backups in about one week.
- Identifying data: stored separately from the demographic and questionnaire data. ID numbers will not be entered by you for identifying information, so identifying information cannot be traced to other data.
- IP addresses: will not be collected by the investigator; Psychdata will collect IP addresses to examine in aggregate form and neither sell nor disclose to others.

Once the investigator downloads the identifying and research data from Psychdata, identifying and research data will be stored in separate files with password protection on the investigator's personal computer. Also, the investigator will create backup CDs and store the identifying information and research data in separate drawers of a locked filing cabinet within the investigator's home. Additionally, identifying information will be deleted from the investigator's personal computer after the backup CD is made: identifying information will never be printed on paper copies, and all paper copies of research data will be locked within the filing cabinet. Only the investigator will have access to files stored in the personal computer and filing cabinet. Upon final completion of the study, all computer files will be deleted from the personal computer. All paper documents will be shredded and disposed of in the trash. And the CDs containing identifying information and research data will remain locked within separate drawers of the filing cabinet until the completion of a follow-up dissertation, which would occur within the next six years. After completion of a follow-up study, all identifying

information will be destroyed by cutting the CDs up into pieces and disposing of in the trash. Finally, only the investigator, her advisor, and Psychdata.com will have access to your identifying information, demographic information, and questionnaire data; identifying information will never be connected to demographic and questionnaire data. Psychdata employees do not examine your data unless requested by the investigator; employees are trained in research ethics involving human participants.

In order to further protect your confidentiality/privacy, the investigator encourages you to complete the study within a private location, such as your home, so others may not view your personal data on your computer screen. Also, any online study is at risk for loss of confidentiality/privacy when information is transmitted over the internet through emailing, downloading, and internet transactions.

Possibly, you may experience some slight emotional discomfort and mild fatigue while answering the questionnaires. If you experience emotional discomfort and/or fatigue, you may contact either the investigator or her advisor. Additionally, a list of Dallas/Fort Worth area therapist will be provided at the end of the online study along with a web link to locate a therapist in your area at www.findatherapistnow.com

Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. It is anticipated that the results of this study will be published in the investigator's thesis and possibly dissertation as well as in other research publications; however, no identifying information will be included in any publication.

The researcher will try to prevent any problem that could happen because of this research. You should let the researcher know at once if there is a problem and she will help you. However, Texas Woman's University does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you are taking part in this research.

Participation and Benefits

One possible direct benefit of this study to you is an opportunity to win through a drawing and receive via US Postal mail one of four \$50.00 cash prizes for participation. Additionally at the completion of this study and upon your request, you may receive via email a summary of the results.

Your involvement in this research study is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue your participation in the study at any time without penalty. If you discontinue your participation in the study, you will still be entered into the drawing for an opportunity to win one of four \$50.00 cash prizes for study participation.

Questions Regarding the Study

If you have any questions about the research study, you may ask the researcher; her phone number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. You may print the contact and therapist information at the end of the online study. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact Texas Woman's University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 940-898-3378 or via email at IRB@twu.edu.

To indicate your acceptance of these terms and give your informed consent to participate in this study, please click the "Submit" button; otherwise please exit from this study.

ID Number _____

How old are you? _____

Do you have biological children ranging from 3-18 years old?

Yes ____

No ____

Please click on "Submit"

"Submit"

APPENDIX E

Identifying Information

Identifying Information

Name

Address

Phone

Please click on “Submit”

Submit

APPENDIX F
Debriefing Page

Main Survey

This is the end of the study. Feel free to print this page. Upon completion of this study, you will be entered into a drawing for the chance to win one of four \$50.00 cash prizes, which will be mailed to winners via US Postal mail. Also, if you elected to receive a summary of the results from this study, you will receive the results via email.

If you need to contact a therapist, you may find a therapist in your area at www.findatherapistnow.com

Dallas/Fort Worth area therapists:

Robert P. Littlefield Ph.D., ABPP

Family Psychology Inst.

5925 Forest Lane, Ste. 422

Dallas, TX 75230

Phone: (972) 934-3858

Email: fampsy@aol.com

Carmen Cruz Psy.D.

The Counseling Group

501 South Carroll Blvd., Suite F

Denton, TX 76201

(940) 381-0019

Kathy DeOrnellas Ph.D.

Cognitive Therapy Center

3509 Hulen, Suite 109

Fort Worth, TX 76109-6800

Phone: (817) 738-9009

Email: deornellas@cognitivetherapycenter.net

Lisa S. Wechsler Ph.D., LPC

17304 Preston Road, Suite 800

Dallas, TX 75252

Phone: (214) 438-3838

Listening2u@comcast.net

If you have any feedback regarding this study, you may contact the following;

Investigator: Connie Siciliano, B. A.

(XXX) XXX-XXXX

Email

Advisor: Misty Hook, Ph.D.

Texas Woman's University

PO Box 425470

Denton, TX 76204-5470

(940) 898-2303

mhook@twu.edu

Thank you for participation in this study.

APPENDIX G

IRB Approval Letter



Institutional Review Board
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
P.O. Box 425619, Denton, TX 76204-5619
940-898-3378 Fax 940-898-3416
email: IRB@twu.edu

March 16, 2011

Ms. Connie M. Siciliano Avila

Dear Ms. Avila:

Re: *Fathers' Attachment Styles and Father/Child Relationships by Partner and Caregiver Types*
(Protocol #: 16601)

The above referenced study has been reviewed by the TWU Institutional Review Board (IRB) and was determined to be exempt from further review.

If applicable, agency approval letters must be submitted to the IRB upon receipt PRIOR to any data collection at that agency. Because a signed consent form is not required for exempt studies, the filing of signatures of participants with the TWU IRB is not necessary.

Any modifications to this study must be submitted for review to the IRB using the Modification Request Form. Additionally, the IRB must be notified immediately of any unanticipated incidents. If you have any questions, please contact the TWU IRB.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rhonda Buckley, Co-Chair
Institutional Review Board - Denton

cc. Dr. Dan Miller, Department of Psychology & Philosophy
Dr. Sally D. Stabb, Department of Psychology & Philosophy
Graduate School