14

Culture, Attachment Style, and Romantic Relationships

ELAINE HATFIELD and RICHARD L. RAPSON

CONTENTS

Researchers have proposed that culture and attachment style may have a profound impact on the way people think, feel, and behave in love and sexual relationships. Scholars interested in this topic have generally examined three factors: (a) cultural background (see Schmitt, 2008); (b) cultural values (whether participants are individualistic or collectivist in orientation; see Doherty, Hatfield, Thompson, & Choo, 1994); and (c) participants' love schemas, a measure designed to assess six popular attachment styles (see Hatfield & Rapson, 2005). Scholars have discovered that in a wide variety of cultures and ethnic groups, with people possessing diverse cultural values, people's attachment styles have a profound impact on their romantic preferences, their comfort when facing serious

romantic commitments, the dynamics of romantic and marital relationships, and how people react when romantic and marital relationships fall apart.

HABITS OF THE HEART

In an influential theoretical paper, Hazan and Shaver (1987) proposed that childhood attachments may have a profound impact on men's and women's later romantic and sexual attachments. In the subsequent two decades, a number of scholars have amassed a plethora of evidence in support of Hazan and Shaver's contention that people possess a variety of cognitive schemas concerning the nature of love. Most theorists consider the three attachment styles, originally proposed by Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (1978) and later applied by Hazan and Shaver, to be of crucial importance, but some scholars have proposed that people possess four, five, or even six attachment styles (see Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Hatfield & Rapson, 2005; and Hazan & Shaver, 1987, for a description of these various theoretical perspectives). In an attempt to integrate these perspectives and to allow scholars to talk about theorists' diverse research within a single framework, we proposed the following integrative model, referred to as the love schemas model (Hatfield & Rapson, 2005). We hope that scholars who prefer one or another theoretical perspective will have no trouble translating the findings we present into their own terminologies.

Love Schemas

Developmental theorists point out that, as important as infancy is, young people may learn even more about passionate love and intimacy in adolescence. Erikson (1982) observed that infants, children, adolescents, and adults face a continuing series of developmental tasks. Generally, attachment theorists have focused primarily on infants' first developmental task: attachment (in Hazan & Shaver's, 1987, terms) or learning to trust (in Erikson's, 1982, terminology). But there is more learning to come. In early, middle, and late childhood, children learn to know their own minds, to develop a sense of purpose, to take initiative, and to work hard. The next two stages are those in which we are primarily interested. In adolescence, teenagers must develop some sense of their own identity. Only when they have formed a relatively stable, independent identity are they able to tackle the next developmental task—to learn how to love someone and to become deeply intimate with them. Mature relationships, according to Erikson, involve an ability to balance intimacy and independence. In the love schemas model, we placed people into six possible categories, depending on how comfortable they are with independence and intimacy.

> Secure—The secure are comfortable with both emotional closeness and independence. They may be swept up in romantic love affairs, but they know that if things fall apart, they will survive. Some attachment theorists have labeled such people as securely attached.

Clingy—The clingy desire a great deal of closeness but feel uneasy when forced to be independent. Such people have been labeled the preoccupied, the socially absorbed, the anxious, or the fearful.

Skittish—The skittish desire a great deal of independence, but if forced to get too close, they may feel smothered and flee. Such people have been labeled as dismissing, socially individuated, and avoidant.

Fickle—The fickle are uneasy with closeness or independence. They yearn for what they do not have. They tend to fall in love with people who are not interested in them. If they finally succeed in capturing the other's interest, they soon get bored, irritated, anxious, and eventually bolt. Should the other begin to forget them or get involved with someone else, however, they often conclude they have made a terrible mistake and begin courting, sometimes desperately, the other again. And so it goes, on and on and on. Such people have been labeled as ambivalent.

Finally, there are two types of people who are simply not much interested in relationships.

Casual—The casual are only interested in relationships that are problem free.

Uninterested—The uninterested are simply not interested in relationships, romantic or otherwise, with anyone or at anytime. As some clinicians point out, "Emotional intimacy is not for everyone" (Marcus, 2006, p. D5). Such people have been labeled as dismissive-avoidant.

Hatfield and Rapson (2005) designed the Love Schema (LS) scale to measure these six attachment styles. For information on the reliability and validity of this measure see Bachman (1996a, 1996b); Choo, Levine, and Hatfield (1996); and Stephan, Singelis, Bachman, and Choo (1999).

SECURE ATTACHMENT: A CULTURAL UNIVERSAL?

In a landmark study, Schmitt (2008) interviewed 17,000 men and women from 56 nations. As predicted, he found that in most cultures, most people claim to possess a secure attachment style. The author argues that secure caretaker–child bonds (and later attachments) are near universal in human psychology. (For a discussion of the similarities and differences in cross-cultural patterns of attachment, see Imamoglu & Imamoglu, 2006; van IJzendoorn & Sagi, 1999; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006).

Sprecher et al. (1994) interviewed Americans, Russians, and Japanese. They found that in all three cultures, men and women generally identified themselves as secure in their love relationships. In all three, similar percentages of men and women identified with the various categories on the LS scale as well. For example, similar percentages considered themselves to be clingy, skittish, and so forth. Doherty and his colleagues (1994), who interviewed Americans of Chinese, European, Japanese, and Pacific Islander ancestry, secured similar results.

SECURE ATTACHMENT: CULTURAL VARIATIONS

Culture does, however, have some impact on how men and women classify themselves. Sprecher et al. (1994), for example, found that American men are more likely to possess a secure schema than are Russian or Japanese men. American and Japanese women are more likely to possess secure schemas than are Russian women. Soon and Malley-Morrison (2000) argue that, in general, East Asians' orientations are less individualistic and more collectivist than are their Western peers. They are more likely to strive for self-acceptance via the approval of highly valued others. Thus, we argue, East Asians should be particularly prone to preoccupied (i.e., clingy) romantic attachments. In his study of 56 nations, Schmitt (2008) found that this was so. In East Asian cultures, the preoccupied style was particularly prevalent. As Schmitt predicted, insecure romantic attachments were also most prevalent in high-stress social environments (i.e., societies where there was a great deal of political or religious turmoil, where life was harsh, disease prevalent, and life expectancy low).

Chisholm (1999), among others, attempted to provide an evolutionary explanation for societal differences in people's love schemas. He argued that in cultures with abundant resources, people can afford to possess long-term temporal horizons. In such societies, the optimal strategy is to invest in secure romantic attachments, monogamy, and a few high-quality offspring. By contrast, in cultures of poverty, people are forced to adopt short-term temporal horizons. In these societies, the optimal mating strategy is to engage in promiscuous sexual affairs, to reproduce often and early, and to invest minimally in any single relationship (see Brumbaugh & Fraley, 2006, for a further discussion of the evolution of attachment in adult love relationships).

Scholars have also predicted that culture and gender might interact in shaping men's and women's attachment styles. Useful insights as to the impact of culture on men's and women's attachment styles in various cultures may also be gleaned from historical research into private lives, which has expanded greatly in the past two decades (see Coontz, 2005; Hatfield & Rapson, 1993; and Stone, 1990, for an overview of this research). Historians contend that throughout most of time, gender inequality prevailed. Women were profoundly oppressed and often considered to be of less value than farm animals, especially horses. In such circumstances, women were almost always dependent upon fathers, husbands, and mates for survival. By necessity and circumstance, they clearly would have fallen into the clingy or dependent love category. Men, on the other hand, probably filled the ranks of the casual and uninterested. Historians also contend that the global movement toward gender equality will be a significant factor in encouraging men and women to think of themselves as secure and deserving the same benefits as their partners. In those parts of the world today where gender inequality still prevails, female dependency and male casualness and indifference in love may still prevail. However, times are changing in many places, though hardly everywhere. Thus, in time scholars might expect existing gender differences in attachment to decrease.

Culture, Love Schemas, and Romantic Behavior

Cultures differ greatly in values (Schwartz, 1992), self-schemas (Marcus & Kitayama, 1991), and cultural orientations (Triandis, 1992; Triandis, McCusker, &

Hui, 1990). Researchers have proposed that culture and people's love schemas may have a profound impact on their romantic attitudes and behavior. Specifically, cultural factors may shape romantic preferences, young people's comfort when faced with serious romantic commitments, the fate of romantic and marital relationships, and the ways people react to separation and the termination of romantic and marital relationships (Choo et al., 1996; Hatfield, Rapson, & Martel, 2007; Hatfield, Singelis, et al., 2007). We will discuss evidence in support of these contentions in the next few sections.

Culture, Love Schemas, and Romantic Preferences

Social psychologists have amassed considerable evidence that in a variety of cultures and ethnic groups, people's attachment styles may have a profound impact on their romantic preferences. In a study at the University of Hawaii, for example, Hatfield, Singelis, et al. (2007) invited 204 men and women to participate in a study of dating relationships. As is typical of Hawaii's multicultural population, the respondents came from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. They identified their ancestry as African, Chinese, European, Filipino, Hawaiian, Japanese, Korean, Samoan, Spanish/Mexican, and Vietnamese. The participants also identified with an array of religious groups and varied markedly in socioeconomic status and educational attainment.

In this study, Hatfield, Singelis, et al. (2007) told participants they were crafting a computer matching service similar to e-Harmony.com, PerfectMatch.com, or Chemistry.com. Participants were told they would be paired up with suitable partners, which would give scientists a chance to determine how well various types of matches worked out. To this end, participants were given a set of six personality profiles, which were designed to make it clear that potential dates differed in their love schemas. Respondents were asked to rank the profiles in order of preference and to indicate how appealing each of the potential dating partners was on a 10-point scale, ranging from 10 (extremely appealing) through 1 (not at all appealing), to 0 (would not consider this person).

As predicted, men and women generally preferred potential dates who possessed an "ideal" love schema. Specifically, they preferred potential dates and mates who possessed a secure love schema. Men's first choice was the secure woman (77% of the time); women's first choice was the secure man (91% of the time). Similar results were found by Latty-Mann and Davis (1996). In the event that an ideal partner was unavailable, men and women were most willing to settle for potential dates or mates whose love schemas matched their own. Cultural analyses made it clear that these preferences held true for people in all ethnic groups.

Culture, Love Schemas, and the Intensity of Passionate Love

In a variety of cultures and ethnic backgrounds, people's attachment styles have been found to influence how likely they are to fall in love and how passionately they love their romantic partners. Doherty et al. (1994), for example, interviewed 308 men and women from the University of Hawaii, who identified with four different

ethnic backgrounds (Chinese, European, Japanese, or Pacific Island ancestry). First, participants were asked to complete the Individualism/Collectivism (I/C) scale developed by Triandis and his colleagues (Triandis, 1992; Triandis et al., 1990). The I/C scale is designed to assess individualism (idiocentrism) and collectivism (allocentrism). As predicted, Hawaii students of differing ancestry possessed very different orientations toward life. The European Americans were most individualistic, the Japanese Americans and Pacific Islanders were intermediate in I/C, and the Chinese Americans were the most collectivist in their orientations.

Respondents from the various ethnic groups also differed in how likely they were to be in love. When asked: "Are you in love with anyone right now?" Pacific Islanders were most likely to be currently in love, and the European Americans were least likely to be in love. Men and women from the various ethnic groups, or who were more or less individualistic or collectivist, did not differ in the intensity of their love, however. What turned out to be important in predicting men's and women's feelings were not culture, ethnicity, or I/C score, but their love schema profiles. Students who rated themselves as secure, clingy, or skittish were asked to fill out the Passionate Love Scale (PLS), which assesses how wildly in love people are, and the Companionate Love Scale (CLS), which measures how much people love and like their partners. As predicted, it was the clingy who loved most passionately. They were most likely to be in love at the present time and to score higher on the PLS than did any other group. As before, it was the skittish who were the least likely to have ever felt passionately about another. A look at men's and women's CLS scores adds a missing piece to the puzzle. Those who felt secure about love were most likely to love and like their partners. They were more committed to them, and their relationships were more intimate, than were those of their peers. Not surprisingly, it was the skittish who secured the lowest CLS scores.

Similar results were secured by Singelis, Choo, and Hatfield (1995), who interviewed 235 men and women from the University of Hawaii. As before, participants came from a variety of ethnic and socioeconomic groups. As in the previous study, the authors also asked men and women to complete the LS scale and assessed how much they loved and liked their partners. As predicted, they found that the more strongly people endorsed the clingy schema (and to some extent the secure schema), the more susceptible they were to love's ecstatic heights and agonizing abysses (i.e., the higher their scores on the PLS). The casual and uninterested were the most resistant to falling in love. Secure men and women received the highest scores on the CLS. Men and women who were skittish, fickle, casual, or uninterested in closeness, also shied away from close, intimate involvements. They received fairly low scores on the CLS. A number of studies have been conducted with samples from a variety of cultures (Cassidy & Shaver, 2008; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Briefly what researchers find is that regardless of culture or ethnicity, certain patterns of relationships between love schemas and romantic behaviors tend to hold. These conclusions could change, of course, once research is conducted in a wider array of cultures. Let us now review some of these results.

The secure—The secure are susceptible to the charms of passionate love. Yet, a steady personality does not guarantee smooth sailing in romantic waters. Love is difficult for everyone and the vast majority of love affairs fail (Hatfield, Pillemer, O'Brien, & Le, 2008). Nonetheless, the secure do seem to do better than most at negotiating stable, companionate, intimate love relationships (see Doherty et al., 1994, and Hazan & Shaver, 1987, for evidence in support of these contentions).

The clingy—Researchers generally find that those who are clingy are most vulnerable to neurotic love. The clingy have low self-esteem, but idealize their romantic partners and obsess about the other's feelings. They often criticize their partners for their failure to make a commitment and to take care of them in the way they yearn to be cared for. Because they are so focused on what they want from an affair, they are oblivious to the fact that others might have different feelings and needs. They are addicted to relationships and are dependent on them, and they are often viewed as on an emotional rollercoaster: elated one minute then anxious, frightened, and lonely the next. They have trouble finding a stable, committed, companionate relationship, and their insatiable demands tend to drive others away. For evidence in support of these propositions, see Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), Collins and Read (1990), Feeney and Noller (1996), Hazan and Shaver (1987), Shaver and Hazan (1993), and Singelis et al. (1995).

The skittish—The skittish seem to fear romantic intimacy. They are pessimistic about love and avoid intimate social contact, especially emotional confrontations. Instead, they focus their attention on their work or on nonsocial activities. If their partners disclose too much, they become uncomfortable. They prefer uncommitted sexual relationships, and their love relationships rarely go well. However, breakups are usually not terribly upsetting to them. The work of a variety of researchers leads us to these conclusions (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Shaver & Hazan, 1993; Singelis et al., 1995).

The fickle—The fickle suffer terribly in their fleeting love relationships. They experience little joy and a great deal of anxiety, sadness, and anger in their passionate encounters (Singelis et al., 1995).

The casual and uninterested—The casual and the uninterested find the bittersweet emotion of passionate love to be a matter of some indifference. Caught up in a passionate affair, these two groups rarely feel joy. Instead, if anything, they are more likely to feel sadness and anger. Perhaps it is not surprising that these types tend to shy away from romantic encounters (Singelis et al., 1995).

Culture, Love Schemas, and Sexual Fantasies, Desires, and Behavior

Research suggests that people with different love schemas differ markedly in their sexual fantasies, desires, and behavior (see Davis et al., 2006; Feeney, 1999; Stephan

& Bachman, 1999). Stephan and Bachman (1999), for example, interviewed men and women from New Mexico State University. The students came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds: American Indian/Alaskan native, Asian/Pacific Islander, African American, European American, and Hispanic. Respondents were asked to complete the following assessments: a Partner Characteristics scale, which assesses what young people desire in a sexual partner; the Sociosexual Orientation Inventory, which assesses the extent to which they feel comfortable with unrestricted/restricted sexual activity; a Love Obsession scale, which measures people's desire for love and tendency to jealousy; the Emotionless Sex scale, which measures participants' interest in romantic love versus casual sex; a Low Commit/High Fantasy scale, which assesses people's sexual fantasies for "forbidden" sexual partners; a Bad Lover scale, which measures the extent to which people are willing to risk engaging in sexual behavior destructive to a relationship; and a Sexual Exploration measure, which assesses people's sexual experience and willingness to take sexual risks. As predicted, the authors found clear evidence that men's and women's love schemas (i.e., their six LS scores) had a considerable impact on sexual fantasies, desires, and behaviors as measured by the preceding scales. For a review of work linking attachment style and sexual jealousy, see Levy, Kelly, and Jack (1996). Once again, cultural analyses revealed that in all ethnic groups, the same relationships between love schemas and sexual fantasies, desires, and behaviors were found.

In a Web-based study, Davis and her colleagues (2006) attempted to determine the impact of secure/insecure attachment style on sexual communication and sexual satisfaction. They interviewed 1,999 men and women from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. As predicted, the secure experienced the most emotional and physical satisfaction in their relationships. The clingy suffered from sexual anxiety, deferred too much to their partners needs, and sacrificed their own wishes. The skittish were poor communicators. As a consequence, both the clingy and the skittish found their sexual relationships to be unsatisfying. A number of other scholars have explored the link between culture, attachment style, and sexuality. For a comprehensive review of this research, see Cooper et al. (2006) and Feeney (1999).

Culture, Love Schemas, and Commitment

Let us now move to the second stage in the mate selection process—the point at which young men and women find themselves on the brink of making a serious commitment to another. There is considerable evidence that in a variety of cultures, participants' love schemas affect their cognitions, feelings, and behaviors when considering a serious romantic commitment. This appears to be true whether couples are heterosexual, gay, lesbian, or bisexual, although there is not so much evidence as scholars might wish concerning the dynamics of these latter groups in love relationships. See Diamond (1996) and Mohr (1999) for a review of existing research.

Hatfield, Singelis, et al. (2007) interviewed 242 men and women from the University of Hawaii. As is typical of Hawaii's multicultural population, respondents

came from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. Participants were asked whether they had ever been "right on the brink of making a serious commitment to someone they loved (thinking about, say, going steady, living together, becoming engaged, or married)" (p. 14). The vast majority of people described a heterosexual commitment. Only a few described a homosexual attachment. The authors then asked respondents about their reaction at this juncture via the Reactions to Commitment scale. The authors proposed that regardless of cultural background, participants' love schemas would shape how calm and confident (as opposed to anxious, insecure, fearful, and trapped) young people felt when faced with a serious romantic commitment. As predicted, the scholars found that whatever their cultural background, the more secure men and women were (as assessed by the LS scale), the more calm and confident they felt when facing a commitment. Endorsement of any of the other schemas (clingy, skittish, fickle, casual, or uninterested) was negatively correlated with feelings of calm and confidence, and positively associated with feeling fearful and trapped when finding themselves on the brink of commitment. The clingy, for example, tended to experience considerable anxiety when faced with the possibility of a serious commitment. They reported: "I tried desperately to win his/her approval"; "I felt compelled to have sexual relations with my partner in order to keep him/her satisfied"; "I became extremely anxious whenever _____ failed to pay enough attention to me"; "I was constantly jealous" (p. 15).

The skittish admitted they went to great lengths to avoid commitment. When faced with the necessity of making a serious commitment, they admitted to two serious concerns: "I often worried that I was making a big mistake by getting so involved so soon" and "I often felt trapped; I needed a lot more time to be alone" (Hatfield, Singelis, et al., 2007, p. 15). Not surprisingly, the fickle, casual, and uninterested expressed such concerns as well. One finding is of special interest. The fickle appeared to be plagued with the problems that both the clingy and the skittish faced (i.e., they desired what they did not have, but fled from what lay within their grasp). When commitment loomed, they felt both anxious and wary of commitment. They felt trapped and worried that it was too much, too soon.

As was observed earlier, when reviewing this research, a cultural researcher cannot help but wish that more cross-cultural research linking culture, attachment style, and reactions to commitment existed. In societies with arranged marriages, for example, when there is no possibility except submitting to one's fate, are people relatively calm when commitments loom or are people in such situations as concerned as anyone else? Does attachment style affect one's reactions? As yet scholars do not know.

Culture, Attachment Styles, and the Nature of Intimate Relationships

Only a few cultural or cross-cultural theorists have investigated the impact of couple's love schemas on long-term intimate relationships, in spite of the fact that many sociologists and social psychologists have studied this topic. Theorists have, however, conducted a great deal of research in the West, with a wide variety of ethnic groups, that suggests that people's schemas may well have a profound impact

on how they think, feel, and behave in their most important romantic relationships (see Charania & Ickes, 2007; Collins & Read, 1990; Cooper et al., 2006; Davis, Shaver, & Vernon, 2004; Schachner & Shaver, 2004; Schmitt, 2008). Scholars have found, for example, that in a variety of Western ethnic groups (including American Indian/Alaskan native, Asian/Pacific Islander, African American, European American, and Hispanic) the following relationships hold true.

The secure and perhaps the clingy are far better communicators than their peers. They are more likely to engage in open communication and sharing (Bachman, 1996a, 1996b; Feeney, 1999; Mohr, 1999). Their messages are more supportive and, in turn, they are more likely to receive support from lovers, friends, and family (Bachman, 1996a, 1996b). Bachman (1996a, 1996b), for example, found that in a variety of ethnic groups, the secure score higher on self-disclosure to their intimate partners than do their skittish, fickle, or casual peers. They are more able to talk about their hopes, dreams, and fears than are their peers.

The secure tend to be trusting and caring (Bachman, 1996a, 1996b), and more emotionally supportive, less emotionally abusive, and more responsive to their partners' needs than their peers (Collins, Guichard, Ford, & Feeney, 2006; O'Hearn & Davis, 1997). They also perceive others as more emotionally supportive than do their peers (Bachman, 1996a, 1996b). A number of scholars have also conducted studies linking attachment styles to emotional and physical violence (Mikulincer, Shaver, & Pereg, 2003; Rholes, Simpson, & Stevens, 1998). Bachman (1996b), in a study at New Mexico State University with participants from a variety of ethnic groups, asked students to complete a Social Support Appraisal Scale. He found that the secure felt more cared for—more liked, loved, and valued by their partners and more convinced that their needs were likely to be met—than were most of their peers.

The secure tend to be more satisfied in their relationships than their peers (Feeney, 1998; Kirkpatrick & Hazan, 1994; Mohr, 1999). Additionally, the secure's intimate relationships are more stable and longer lasting than are those of their peers (Belsky, 1999; Kirkpatrick, 1997; Kirkpatrick & Hazan, 1994; O'Hearn & Davis, 1997).

Culture, Attachment Styles, and Relationship Endings

People differ in how they react to the breakup of love relationships. Some mend quickly when a love affair falls apart. Others never fully recover. As one might expect, in a variety of cultural and ethnic groups, men's and women's attachment styles have been found to have a profound impact on how upsetting a breakup is, and in the strategies men and women employ to cope with loss.

Choo et al. (1996) interviewed 250 men and women from the University of Hawaii, who came from diverse ethnic backgrounds (African, Chinese, European, Filipino, Hawaiian, Japanese, Korean, and mixed ethnic backgrounds). Respondents were asked if they ever had the experience of being passionately in love, dating for a while, and then breaking up, and if so, how had they reacted emotionally to the breakup. They were also asked what strategies they had employed to cope with

their tumultuous feelings and with the practical problems they faced in the week or two after the breakup. Men and women were found to differ somewhat in their reactions to breakups. Men were less likely to report experiencing joy or relief immediately after a breakup than were women. Men and women also relied on somewhat different coping strategies for dealing with a breakup. Although men and women were equally critical of their own roles in breakups, women were more likely to blame their partners than were men. Men were more likely to bury themselves in work or sports. No ethnic group differences were found in the strategies men and women used, however.

Love schemas were also correlated with reactions to breakups. Once again, regardless of respondents' ethnicity, the same patterns tended to hold true. These patterns are described next.

The secure—The more secure people found it easier to cope and were less likely than their peers to blame themselves or their partners for their predicament. They were also less likely to cope with the end of an affair by drinking or taking drugs than were others.

The clingy—Not surprisingly, it was the clingy who suffered the most after a breakup. After a love affair ended, they felt less joy and relief, and more sadness, fear, and anger than did their peers. They tended to blame themselves for breakups and were more likely than their peers to describe the following behaviors: "I spent a great deal of time trying to figure out what I might have done wrong"; "I spent a great deal of time trying to figure out what I could do to save our relationship"; "I spent a great deal of time talking to my friends, trying to figure out what I had done wrong"; and "I spent a great deal of time talking to my friends, trying to figure out if there was anything we could do to save the relationship" (Choo et al., 1996, p. 149).

The skittish—The skittish were most likely to feel good after a breakup, experiencing both joy and relief. They were unlikely to blame either themselves or their partners for the breakup. Typical comments included the following: "I spent a great deal of time thinking about how badly my partner had treated me" and "I spent a great deal of time talking to my friends—almost all of them agreed that my partner was really the one who had problems" and "I told myself 'I'm lucky to have gotten out of that relationship'" (Choo et al., 1996, p. 149). The skittish (and the fickle) tended to drink or take drugs. It is probably not too encouraging for those men and women, who go to a singles' bar in the hope of finding someone to casually date or spend a relaxing night with, to discover that they may well bump into the skittish and the fickle recovering from their last blighted love affair.

Other researchers have also found attachment styles to be important in shaping reactions to separation and breakup, regardless of participants' ethnicity (Bachman, 1996a, 1996b; Birnbaum, Orr, Mikulincer, & Florian, 1997). It seems logical to argue that culture and gender ought to interact in shaping men's and

women's reaction to a breakup. In some cultures divorce is impossible; or men may divorce their wives but not vice versa. In some societies, where women are confined to family and home, divorce may be virtually a death sentence for women. In such circumstances, culture and attachment style may have profoundly different dynamics on reactions to a breakup. Scholars can only hope that such cultural research will be conducted in the near future.

CONCLUSIONS AND CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

Unfortunately, the scholarly research exploring the impact of culture, gender, and attachment style on romantic relations remains sparse. Ideally, we would know a great deal about people's visions of love in profoundly religious communities (such as Iran) and secular ones (such as Norway, Sweden, and Denmark); in communist and socialist countries (such as Cuba, North Korea, and Laos) as well as fiercely capitalist ones (such as Singapore and Taiwan); in peaceful communities and in warlike ones; in urban and rural communities; and in affluent and poor countries. Given the tremendous popularity of attachment style research, however, the current neglect of culture is bound to change and the change will be for the good. Cross-cultural attachment research could contribute significantly to our understanding of the attachment process.

Currently, a few scholars argue that attachment style is a cultural universal. As we have seen, there is considerable evidence for their contention. Researchers and clinicians generally find that in a wide variety of cultures, the attachment paradigm is a surprisingly good predictor of how men and women will think, feel, and behave in their love relationships. In this chapter, for example, we have seen that in an array of cultural and ethnic groups, people's love schemas do appear to influence their romantic attitudes and behavior. Specifically, in all of the cultures studied, men and women's love schemas were found to shape romantic preferences, the comfort of young people when faced with serious romantic commitments, the fate of romantic and marital relationships, and the way people react to separation and loss. Such consistency provides clinicians with an increased confidence in the validity of the basic attachment paradigm. However, as we study a wider range of cultural groups, if we find impressive cultural differences in the way love schemas shape romantic attitudes, preferences, and behaviors, that confidence would be shaken. Consequently, as clinicians encounter cultural groups that do not adhere to the norms of attachment theory, they must be sensitive to such differences.

In truth, it would not come as a surprise to discover that in different societies, people's attachment prototypes differ as a consequence of their different childhood experiences. As historians point out, culture and time often have a dramatic impact on the way children are raised, and clinicians need to be particularly responsive to these impacts when working with their clients. In some tribal societies, for example, it does take a village to raise a child. In the West, before the 15th century, children were generally considered miniature adults. There is only scant evidence to suggest that childhood was even considered a separate stage in the life cycle. Children were often raised by wet nurses, strangers, or left to fend

for themselves, and almost as soon as they could walk, they were sent out to work alongside adults. Even as recently as the early 1900s, psychologists such as J. B. Watson were advising mothers that infants should never be coddled or touched, and that such coddling would make them clingy and dependent, and expose them to killer infections. A few years decades later, pediatricians like Dr. Benjamin Spock were counseling mothers that it was impossible to spoil infants, and the more love and attention children received, the better (Blum, 2002).

The cultural and historical work of the future should provide some ideas of the importance of culture versus the biological "wiring" of humankind in shaping behavior. If scholars secure large cultural differences, that would suggest that humans are indeed protean and flexible, even in these most fundamental areas of human behavior. If we find that in most cultures caretaker–child relationships follow much the same patterns, that will say a great deal about the architecture of the mind laid down during humankind's long evolution. At the moment, most historians emphasize change through time and differences between cultures. However, they are not of one mind with those conclusions, and many see the emergence of a common global culture (Rapson, 2007; Stone, 1977).

Currently, we can only wish that cultural researchers and clinicians will devote more time and energy to this topic and attempt to fill the gaps in the literature. In this chapter, we were often forced to speculate about cultural differences based on studies conducted in the West with various ethnic groups. We need hardly say that while this is a beginning, it is not good enough—not by a long shot. We can only hope that this paucity of evidence is remedied in the future. We suspect it will be, given the importance of this fascinating topic, including insights that open a window on how culture and biology interact in shaping humanity's deepest of relationships.

REFERENCES

Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bachman, G. F. (1996a). *"Do you come here too?" "Gee, Did I forget to say goodbye?" Attachment styles and strategies in initiating and terminating romantic relationships* (Unpublished master's thesis). New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM.

Bachman, G. F. (1996b). *Love schemas, perceived social support, and self-disclosure in romantic relationships.* Paper presented at the 4th annual Arizona State University Communication Studies Student Conference, Tempe, AZ.

Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 61,* 226–244.

Belsky, J. (1999). Modern evolutionary theory and patterns of attachment. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment* (pp. 141–161). New York: Guilford Press.

Birnbaum, G. E., Orr, I., Mikulincer, M., & Florian, V. (1997). When marriage breaks up: Does attachment style contribute to coping and mental health? *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 14,* 643–654.

Blum, D. (2002). *Love at Goon Park: Harry Harlow and the science of affection.* New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Brumbaugh, C. C., & Fraley, C. (2006). The evolution of attachment in romantic relationships. In M. Mikulincer & G. S. Goodwin (Eds.), *Dynamics of romantic love* (pp. 71–101)*.* New York: Guilford Press.

Cassidy, J., & Shaver, P. R. (2008). *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford Press.

Charania, M. R., & Ickes, W. (2007). Predicting marital satisfaction: Social absorption and individuation versus attachment anxiety and avoidance. *Personal Relationships, 14,* 187–208.

Chisholm, J. S. (1999). Steps to an evolutionary ecology of the mind. In A. L. Hinton (Ed.), *Biocultural approaches to the emotions* (pp. 117–149). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Choo, P., Levine, T., & Hatfield, E. (1996). Gender, love schemas, and reactions to a romantic breakup. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 11,* 143–160.

Collins, N. L., Guichard, M. C., Ford, M. B., & Feeney, B. C. (2006). In M. Mikulincer & G. S. Goodwin (Eds.), *Dynamics of romantic love* (pp. 149–190)*.* New York: Guilford Press.

Collins, N. L., & Read, S. J. (1990). Adult attachment, working models, and relationship quality in dating couples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 58,* 644–663.

Coontz, S. (2005). *Marriage: A history.* New York: Viking.

Cooper, M. L., Pioli, M., Levitt, A., Talley, A. E., Micheas, L., & Collins, N. (2006). Attachment styles, sex motives and sexual behavior: Evidence for gender-specific expressions of attachment dynamics. In M. Mikulincer & G. S. Goodman (Eds.), *Dynamics of romantic love: Attachment, caregiving, and sex* (pp. 243–274). New York: Guilford Press.

Davis, D., Shaver, P. R., & Vernon, M. L. (2004). Attachment style and subjective motivations for sex. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 30,* 1076–1090.

Davis, D., Shaver, P. R., Widaman, K. F., Vernon, M. L., Follette, W. C., & Beitz, K. (2006). "I can't get no satisfaction": Insecure attachment, inhibited sexual communication, and sexual dissatisfaction. *Personal Relationships, 13,* 465–483.

Diamond, L. M. (1996). How do I love thee?": Implications of attachment theory for understanding same-sex love and desire. In M. Mikulincer & G. S. Goodwin (Eds.), *Dynamics of romantic love* (pp. 275–292)*.* New York: Guilford Press.

Doherty, R. W., Hatfield, E., Thompson, K., & Choo, P. (1994). Cultural and ethnic influences on love and attachment. *Personal Relationships, 1,* 391–398.

Erikson, E. (1982). *The life cycle completed: A review.* New York: Norton.

Feeney, J. A. (1998). Adult attachment and relationship-centered anxiety: Responses to physical and emotional distancing. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 189–218)*.* New York: Guilford Press.

Feeney, J. A. (1999). Adult romantic attachment and couple relationships. J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 355–377)*.* New York: Guilford Press.

Feeney, J. A., & Noller, P. (1990). Attachment style as a predictor of adult romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 58,* 281–291.

Feeney, J. A., & Noller, P. (1996). *Adult attachment.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hatfield, E., Pillemer, J. T., O'Brien, M. U., & Le, Y. L. (2008). The endurance of love: Passionate and companionate love in newlywed and long-term marriages. *Interpersona: An International Journal of Personal Relationships, 2,* 35–64*.* Retrieved January 1, 2009, from http://www.interpersona.org/issues.php?section=viewfulltext&issue=3&area=14&id=int485ee26d5859b&fulltextid=14&idiom=1

Hatfield, E., & Rapson, R. L. (1993). *Love, sex, and intimacy: Their psychology, biology, and history.* New York: Harper/Collins.

Hatfield, E., & Rapson, R. (2005). *Love and sex: Cross-cultural perspectives.* Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Hatfield, E., Rapson, R. L., & Martel, L. D. (2007). Passionate love and sexual desire. In S. Kitayama & D. Cohen (Eds.), *Handbook of cultural psychology* (pp. 760–779). New York: Guilford Press.

Hatfield, E., Singelis, T., Levine, T., Bachman, G., Muto, K., & Choo, P. (2007). Love schemas, preferences in romantic partners, and reactions to commitment. *Interpersona: An Interdisciplinary Journal on Personal Relationships, 1,* 1–24. Retrieved January 1, 2009, from http://www.interpersona.org/issues.php?section=view&issue=1&area=6&id=int466c8cee6e240

Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 52,* 511–524.

Imamoglu, S., & Imamoglu, E. O. (2006). Relationship between general and context-specific attachment orientations in a Turkish sample. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 146,* 261–274.

Kirkpatrick, L. A. (1997). Evolution, pair-bonding, and reproductive strategies: A reconceptualization of adult attachment. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 353–393). New York: Guilford Press.

Kirkpatrick, L. A., & Hazan, C. (1994). Attachment styles and close relationships: A four-year prospective study. *Personal Relationships, 1,* 123–142.

Latty-Mann, H., & Davis, K. E. (1996). Attachment theory and partner choice: Preference and actuality. *Journal of Personal and Social Relationships, 13,* 5–23.

Levy, K. N., Kelly, K. M., & Jack, E. L. (1996). Sex differences in jealousy: A matter of evolution or attachment history? In M. Mikulincer & G. S. Goodwin (Eds.), *Dynamics of romantic love* (pp. 128–148)*.* New York: Guilford Press.

Marcus, E. N. (2006, November 21). Cases: Like a fish needs a bicycle: For some people intimacy is toxic. *New York Times.*

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review, 98,* 224–253.

Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2007). *Attachment in adulthood: Structure, dynamics, and change.* New York: Guilford Press.

Mikulincer, M., Shaver, P. R., & Pereg, D. (2003). Attachment theory and affect regulation: The dynamics, development, and cognitive consequences of attachment-related strategies. *Motivation and Emotion, 27,* 77–102.

Mohr, J. J. (1999). Same-sex romantic attachment. In J. Cassidy, & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 378-394)*.* New York: Guilford Press.

O'Hearn, R. E., & Davis, K. E., (1997). Women's experience of giving and receiving emotional abuse. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 12,* 375–391.

Rapson, R. L. (2007). *Magical thinking and the decline of America.* Philadelphia: Xlibris.

Rholes, W. S., Simpson, J. A., & Stevens, J. G. (1998). Attachment orientations, social support, and conflict resolution in close relationships. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 166–188). New York: Guilford Press.

Schachner, D. A., & Shaver, P. R. (2004). Attachment dimensions and sexual motives. *Personal Relationships, 11,* 179–195.

Schmitt, D. P. (2008). Attachment matters: Patterns of romantic attachment across gender, geography, and cultural forms. In J. P. Forgas & J. Fitness (Eds.), *Social relationships: cognitive, affective, and motivational processes* (pp. 75–100). New York: Psychology Press.

AU: provide page numbers for newspaper article or URL.

Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In M. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 25, pp. 1–65). San Diego: Academic Press.

Shaver, P. R., & Hazan, C. (1993). Adult romantic attachment: Theory and empirical evidence. In D. Perlman & W. Jones (Eds.), *Advances in personal relationships* (Vol. 4, pp. 29–70). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Singelis, T., Choo, P., & Hatfield, E. (1995). Love schemas and romantic love. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 10,* 15–36.

Soon, H., & Malley-Morrison, K. (2000). Young adult attachment styles and intimate relationships with close friends. A cross-cultural study of Koreans and Caucasian Americans. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 31,* 528–534.

Sprecher, S., Aron, A., Hatfield, E., Cortese, A., Potapova, E., & Levitskaya, A. (1994). Love: American style, Russian style, and Japanese style. *Personal Relationships, 1,* 349–369.

Stephan, C. W., & Bachman, G. F. (1999). What's sex got to do with it? Attachment, love schemas, and sexuality. *Personal Relationships, 6,* 111–123.

Stephan, C. W., Singelis, T., Bachman, G. F., & Choo, P. A. (1999). *Adult attachment styles: Measurement according to the unified theory of love schemas.* Unpublished manuscript, New Mexico State University.

Stone, L. (1977). *The family, sex, and marriage: In England 1500–1800.* New York: Harper & Row.

Stone, L. (1990). *Road to divorce: England 1530–1987.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Triandis, H. C. (1992). *Individualism and collectivism manual.* Unpublished manuscript. (Available from Prof. Harry C. Triandis, 603 E. Daniel St., Champaign, IL 60820)

Triandis, H. C., McCusker, C., & Hui, C. H. (1990). Multimethod probes of individualism and collectivism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 59,* 106–1020.

van IJzendoorn, M. H., & Sagi, A. (1999). Cross-cultural patterns of attachment: Universal and contextual dimensions. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 713–734). New York: Guilford Press.

Wang, D. C., & Mallinckrodt, B. S. (2006). Differences between Taiwanese and U.S. cultural beliefs about ideal adult attachment. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 53,* 192–204.