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**Object Relations and Attachment: A Comparison of Rorschach
Responses and Adult Attachment Classifications**

by

DANIEL N. ROTHSTEIN

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Psychology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.**

1997

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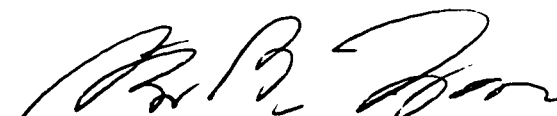
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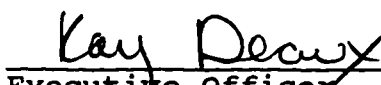
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This manuscript has been read and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

**Object Relations and Attachment: A Comparison of Rorschach
Responses and Adult Attachment Classifications**

by

Daniel N. Rothstein

Adviser: Professor Steven B. Tuber

This study investigated the association between the constructs of mental representation of interpersonal relationships posited by object relations theory and attachment theory, in an effort to contribute to the dialogue between psychoanalytic and attachment researchers.

A nonclinical sample of 39 middle-class primiparous women were administered the Rorschach Inkblot Test and the Adult Attachment Interview (Main & Goldwyn, 1985) in their third trimester of pregnancy. Rorschach tests were scored with two object relations measures: Urist's (1977) *Mutuality of Autonomy Scale*, and Blatt et al.'s (1976) *Developmental Analysis of the Concept of the Object Scale*. It was hypothesized that securely attached subjects would have more structurally complex and more autonomous object representations on the Rorschach when compared to insecurely attached subjects. With attachment classifications as the

independent variables, a series of one-way ANOVAs were performed: none of the planned tests for the hypotheses found significant differences in quality or developmental level of object representations among subjects grouped by security of attachment.

A post hoc independent t-test of subjects grouped by minimizing and maximizing affective styles (Cassidy, 1994), rather than attachment category, indicated that affective minimizers had a greater number of Urist scale malevolent scores than affective maximizers. This post hoc finding is discussed as one indication of overlap, in the realm of affect regulation, between each theories' construct of object representations.

The nonsignificant results for the planned hypotheses are discussed in terms of the degree of sensitivity of the Rorschach scales for use in a nonclinical population, as well as the effects of pregnancy on subjects' Rorschach responses. The significance of different modes of representation of thought is also addressed. Image and linguistic modes of representation, which were highlighted by the Rorschach and the Adult Attachment Interview, respectively, are compared. The question is raised whether differences in developmental level of object representations among attachment categories in a normal adult population are to be found in narrative representations, as opposed to image-based representations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation is the culmination not only of this research project, but also of the long journey through graduate school. I could not have arrived here without the caring and support of a number of advisors and friends. My chair, Dr. Steven B. Tuber, has been extremely generous throughout this process. He has been an inspiring teacher and a supportive advisor, and his faith in my abilities I have valued greatly. Dr. Arietta Slade gave me the gift of her enthusiasm and warmth, her humor and incisive comments. She devoted valuable time and thoughtfulness at crucial moments. I thank them both for making this project possible. I wish to thank Dr. I.H. Paul, Dr. Diana Diamond and Dr. Katherine Oram for their time and interest in the project, and their very thoughtful comments.

I have been blessed with the friendship of David Abrams, Sharone Bergner, Jeanne Blaustein, Peter Bokor, Amy Comerchero, Dr. Ilene Green, Roland Jones, Dr. Sherri Kauderer, Dr. Elizabeth H. Pike, Carlos Prieto, Madeline Rhum, Margaret Spier and Skye Wilson. They have been there for me both in times of doubt, as well as enthusiasm, and I am deeply thankful to them all.

I give extra thanks to Jeanne Blaustein, Dr. Sherri Kauderer, Margaret Spier and Skye Wilson for the time they devoted to reading the manuscript and for their invaluable

comments and encouragement. For helping to score the data, I thank Lisabeth Weinstein, who in addition to lending her talent and hard work to the task, helped make it fun.

Dr. Elena E. Skolnick has been a constant source of support, wisdom, and caring. She has been helpful to me in ways that go beyond words.

Finally I wish to thank my mother Freyda, my father Philip, and my brother Aron for their understanding throughout this often trying process, for their faith in me and for their love.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

...the childhood shows the man,
As morning shows the day.

- John Milton, 1671

A large part of life is spent in our imaginations, and much of the richness of mental life lies in our ability to feel intimately connected to those who are important to us--even when they aren't there. When we turn from the train departing with a dear friend, that friend stays with us in our thoughts. We represent relationships in our minds.

If in a moment of anger or of joy, we react to a child or a spouse with the uncanny feeling of having a parent speaking through us, we have the sense that these internal relationships guide us in profound ways (Fraiberg et al., 1975). This study will explore the ways in which we represent interpersonal relationships internally, as formulated by two different psychological theories: object relations theory within psychoanalysis, and attachment theory, within the domain of developmental psychology.

For both theories, internal representations include cognitive, affective, and experiential components slowly built up over the course of development (Doane & Diamond,

1994; Slade & Cohen, 1996; Stern, 1985). The importance of early experience for both theories lies in the view that the representations formed in childhood become the templates that guide our subsequent interpersonal relationships. They can thus be either adaptive, or limiting, depending on the quality of one's early experience.

Although there are many points of convergence in the two theories, and although both attachment theory and object relations theories have their origins in psychoanalytic theory, they took different roads to their current state of development, largely in isolation from one another. They speak different languages, and until recently, attachment theory has largely concerned itself with "normal" development, while object relations theories have developed through the effort to understand psychopathology (Slade & Aber, 1992). There have been a great many recent efforts to examine the points of convergence and divergence between the two theories (Diamond & Blatt, 1994; Levine & Tuber, 1993; Silverman, 1991; Slade, 1993, 1994, 1995; Slade & Aber, 1992), with the view that a dialogue between the theories can be mutually enriching. The attachment research has developed instruments that have shown impressive predictive ability--a weak point in psychoanalysis--regarding the future behavior of a child before birth, by assessing the internal representations of the infant's mother (Main et al., 1985). Object relations theories, on the other hand,

which have a longer history, have much to offer the attachment researchers regarding affect regulation, defensive mechanisms and the role of fantasy in both normal and pathological development.

The current study seeks to contribute to this dialogue through empirical measures. The measurement of internal representation, however, presents a number of challenges. It is not possible to "see" an internal representation inside someone's head. A subject must somehow describe or report it. And what becomes more difficult for both theories, is that while at times these internal object relations, or "internal working models" (Main et al., 1985) (the term used by attachment theorists) may be conscious for a person, they are for the most part considered to operate unconsciously. So what a person can tell us or show us is often a symbol for, an indication of, unconsciously operating representations. For each theory, then, the postulation of an internalized object relation or an internal working model of attachment must always be at a level of inference from some behavioral correlate.

The assumption that internal representations operate at an unconscious level is reflected in the design of the two measurement instruments to be used in this study: the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) (Main & Goldwyn, 1985) and the Rorschach Inkblot Test. The responses given to the stimuli-- interview questions, for the AAI, and inkblots, for the

Rorschach--are not taken at face value; they must be interpreted by the scorer.

Construct validity of these measures has been established by associating scores on the measures with the *observable* behaviors the theories originally sought to explain. As will be seen in the following literature review, the adult classifications that are scored from the AAI were originally based on consistencies in behavior by the adults' infants in a laboratory experiment called the Strange Situation, which explores the effects of separation on children (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

Object relations theory has largely developed out of the need to explain psychopathology. Construct validity for the Rorschach scales has been established by demonstrating strong associations between the scores and the patterns of behavior that are observed as symptoms in patients suffering from mental illness.

The present study is a type of construct validity experiment at one more level of remove (Debra Coates, personal communication, 1995). As part of a larger ongoing research project at The City College of the City University of New York, under the direction of Arietta Slade, Ph.D., 39 primiparous women were given both the AAI and the Rorschach in their third trimester of pregnancy. Through a scoring of the Rorschach test with two object relations measures, I examined the relationship of the object relations measures

to the subjects' attachment status as scored on the AAI. The main tenet of this study is that the internal representations postulated by attachment theory and object relations theory are related in fundamental ways. A significant statistical association between the AAI and the object relations scales for the Rorschach would support the hypothesis that the scales are measuring related constructs. The results may help highlight some areas of convergence and divergence between the two bodies of theory.

In the following literature review, I will first give a historical background of object relations and attachment theories. This will be followed by a review of the measures to be used in the study. Finally, a discussion of recent empirical investigations relevant to the present study will be presented.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Object relations theory

As with all contemporary psychodynamic theories, the road for object relations theory leads back to Freud. Implicit in Freud's early work (1905, 1915) is a theory of representation. Unconscious fantasies, wishes and memories of interactions with others are represented in the mind, and color a child's, and then the adult's, actual experience. The significance of these representations--in dreams, waking fantasies or expressed as physical symptoms--lies in the underlying wish or desire. Wishes are fueled by the sexual and (later) the aggressive drives (Freud, 1920). The drives seek discharge: the infant has the urge to suck, tension builds up, and pleasurable discharge of the tension is achieved when the breast is found. This breast is the "object" of the drive. At this early stage the objects are parts of people, but over time, and with the increased cognitive abilities of the child, these objects coalesce into images of whole people. Thus the awkward term "object relations" signifies relations with people, or initially parts of people (e.g., the breast), slowly forming over time from experiences of pleasurable drive satisfaction (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1984). Objects for Freud are always secondary to the drives; the object is important because it makes satisfaction possible (Freud, 1915).

Actual interactions with one's parents at this early stage of Freud's theorizing take a back seat to the biologically driven need for discharge. As Freud's later "structural theory" took shape, with the postulation of the ego, id and superego, he began to address the growing capacity of the ego and its relation to the reality factors of the outside world. In the formation of the superego, which is the result of the resolution of the Oedipus complex, a theory of internalization took shape that addressed more directly how the child forms a representation of the parent, significantly shaped by the parent's actual characteristics (Freud, 1923). As Greenberg and Mitchell (1983) point out, this move toward a greater importance of the parent-child relationship in Freud's theory remained in conflict with his original formulation of drive as the basic motivation. As we will see below, the theoretical conflict between the view of a reality created by internally arising wishes, as opposed to a reality shaped by the behavior of one's primary caretakers, has been a continual source of tension within the psychoanalytic community, and was in part responsible for the gulf that grew between attachment and psychoanalytic researchers.

Melanie Klein is generally considered the first true object relations theorist (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983). Klein concentrated her clinical work on children. Unable to do the talk therapy typical for psychoanalysis with adults,

Klein observed her child patients, and interpreted their symbolic play. Unlike Freud, who largely neglected the influence of the mother, Klein saw the importance of mother as central. However, her emphasis was not on the actual parent but rather the fantasied one. While Klein's work was instrumental in elaborating the idea of the internally represented object, her work moved far away from the reality aspects of the parents. She did this by embracing and elaborating the drive aspects of Freud's theory (Klein, 1928; Segal, 1964). Drives remain central for Klein, but the object is essential to their expression, not merely their means for discharge, as it was for Freud. This essential connection is expressed psychically through fantasy.

For Klein, the young infant, even in the first six months of life, is motivated by, and actively having fantasies about, part-objects: specifically, mother's breast and the insides of the mother's body (Klein, 1928). These part-objects (as distinct from whole people) are inseparable from libidinal and aggressive drives. The child may have fantasies, for example, of the good, satisfying breast, which is nurturing and pleasure-giving. At the same time she may have angry feelings about the "bad breast" when it is not there, not satisfying and withholding of milk. Or the child might feel envy of the good things imagined inside the mother's body.

These highly elaborate objects are not the result of the imprint of experience; like Freud's drives they are part of the biological inheritance of the child. In her writings, Klein (1937, 1940) does discuss the importance of the actual mother, in her general ability to contain the child's aggressive drives. Through good mothering, where the mother can withstand the child's aggression and contain those feelings without retaliation, the child learns that her hateful feelings do not overwhelm her loving feelings, and she can slowly build up, from the "good" and "bad" part-objects, an image of the whole mother, who is both good and bad.

Although the mother looms large in Klein's theoretical work, it is the fantasy mother who took center stage. It was D.W. Winnicott (1960, 1963, 1971) who elaborated the parenting aspects implicit in Klein's work and formulated such now widely held concepts as the "good-enough mother", and the "holding environment." The holding environment is an elaboration of the idea that the mother must create a safe place for the infant to express both love and hate; the infant needs to be held both physically and emotionally. The mother-infant dyad takes on central importance in Winnicott's (1971) work, where he explored the importance of maternal empathy, and the complex ways the child learns to understand the relations between her own internal world and the minds of others.

While Winnicott strayed from the spirit of Freudian and then Kleinian drive theories (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983), W.R.D. Fairbairn made a complete break with it. Fairbairn (1952) thought that the fundamental human motivation is to seek contact with other human beings. For Freud, objects serve the function of drive discharge; for Fairbairn, bodily needs serve the more fundamental need to relate to others (Prieto, 1995). At the opposite extreme from Klein, Fairbairn sees the child as reality-oriented from the start, needing love and caring from the parents. It is when the parents fall short that the child sets up internalized objects as compensation. This happens to a greater or lesser degree for all children, but for Fairbairn, an extreme dependence on internalized objects is a sign of pathology rather than normal development.

Dependence and autonomy become important concepts in Fairbairn's work. He outlined the child's gradual move from dependence to autonomy, separating from both the real parents and the internalized parental objects that were set up as compensation (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983). The ease with which the child is able to make these separations is dependent on the quality of her early parenting: the child must feel she has been loved and valued.

As can be seen from this sketch, the beginnings of the concentration within psychoanalytic theory on object

relations are quite varied, with very different emphases. Important to all, however, is the way human relationships are represented in the mind. They are all developmental theories: the representations become increasingly complex and elaborated as the child matures. What helps define such disparate ideas as psychoanalytic is the idea that in the adult, these core representations remain largely *unconscious*; and that these unconscious representations shape the way the adult relates to others in the "real" world.

Contemporary object relations theories are no less varied: there is no unified theory, and the points of convergence and divergence among the theorists are often obscured because of combative stances taken according to political allegiances within the (broadly defined) psychoanalytic community. However, it is the burden of this literature review to arrive at a schematic outline of a contemporary theory of object relations that can be addressed by the Rorschach scales to be used in this study.

Mahler produced one of the most influential contemporary syntheses of object relations theory (Mahler et al., 1975). The theory's main emphasis is on separation and individuation of the infant's self. Early on the infant experiences a merged symbiotic tie with her mother. Although the child is related to an object, she does not quite know it--she has the experience of being part of a

"dual unity." Slowly, through various stages, the infant's and then child's self gains a sense of separateness, individuality and autonomy. It is a slow process, with starts and stops, and is intricately connected to the physical and cognitive development of the child. For example, in the physical realm the ability to locomote, by crawling and then walking, allows the child to physically separate from the mother. With this physical separateness and newfound ability to explore the world, along with the cognitive capacity to represent in the mind what is not directly perceived, comes the realization by the child that the mother, and the child herself, are distinct entities. The child becomes ambivalent: in the ensuing "rapprochement" crisis, she wants to move toward autonomy and independence but does not want to lose the closeness and sense of invulnerability that came from having such a close bond with the mother. It becomes a challenge for both child and mother to tolerate and contain the child's anger that results from this conflictual situation.

As a means toward being able to tolerate increased separateness from the mother, the child's internally represented object relation with her must continue to develop. If this internal object relation is to be a means of comfort, self-esteem and emotional self-regulation, the child must eventually join the good and bad representations of mother--love and hate, libido and aggression--into one

"libidinally constant" object. This is no small achievement and requires, for the most advantageous outcome, that the libidinal drives predominate over the aggressive ones. This can be the result of both constitutional factors in the child, and the ability of the mother to have been sufficiently "holding" to the child. The child must have felt both loved and that her hate had not overwhelmed the mother.

One of many possible results of the process going awry--if the child's aggression had not been sufficiently contained by the mother--is the child's inability to join the split between the good and bad representations of her, in an effort to protect the "good mother" from the overwhelming hate. A fairly benign result of this split might be stereotypy in the child's and later adult's relationships. In addition to a lack of complexity in internal representations (which are always guiding actual perceptions in interpersonal interactions) she may tend to idealize and/or denigrate others and herself (Kohut, 1966). In more extreme cases this lack of integration of good and bad representations can lead to borderline personality disorders (Kernberg, 1985), one of the hallmarks of which is extreme affective lability.

Joining of the split between good and bad through modulation of aggression leads to an ability to be comforted by benign internal objects. Concurrently, an increased

capacity in the cognitive realm for self-reflection (Fonagy, 1994; Fonagy et al., 1993a; Fonagy et al., 1993b) allows the child to perceive herself and others with greater subtlety, as distinct, autonomous selves with their own intentions. This ability creates the groundwork for, among other things, the ability to empathize. The development of language is an important cognitive component, both in the ability for self-reflection and as a means for symbolizing affects. The symbolizing function of language becomes an important part of the ability to modulate both positive and negative affects (Diamond & Blatt, 1994).

If we were able to take snapshots of the child's internal world along the developmental continuum, one could imagine that cognitively/visually one would initially see part-objects (e.g., a breast, a hand), gradually becoming a whole person, and then becoming increasingly complex in terms of the perceptual attributes (Blatt, et al., 1976). Affectively, one would expect to see some of these objects at first as all good, others as violently destructive, with a gradual softening of the aggression into more modulated, sublimated and verbally represented acts (e.g., fantasies of murder developing toward an aggressive verbal debate). Finally, the pictures of the adult's internal world might have self and other representations that are distinct, individual and empathic toward one another (Krohn & Mayman, 1974).

Psychoanalytic theory in general asserts that the child can become stuck at any number of points along the developmental continuum, resulting in various forms of pathology; and the adult who may have arrived at the optimum stage of development, may, under various stresses, regress to earlier stages of development. The entire developmental story remains in the unconscious. It can make itself known through mental illness, during psychotherapy or, importantly to the present project, through projective testing.

This outline of a theory retains both a Kleinian influence--drives, aggression, splitting, part and whole objects--and the Winnicottian and Fairbairnian emphasis on the importance of early experience with the actual caretaker.

It is these aspects of internal representations of object relations--the capacity to integrate libidinal and aggressive drives; autonomy, distinctness and complexity in self and other representations--that the object relations rating scales for the Rorschach must address. Before reviewing the Rorschach rating scales, I will present an outline of attachment theory, followed by a discussion of the relationship between theories.

B. Attachment Theory

Attachment theory now finds itself in the province of developmental psychology, but its founder, John Bowlby, was a psychoanalyst in Great Britain, a contemporary of Winnicott. Psychoanalysis was his starting point, and the current interest in attachment theory by the psychoanalytic community is an effort, in a now different intellectual climate, to reconsider what it had so vehemently rejected.

Although Bowlby's theory seems closest in spirit to Fairbairn's perspective, Fairbairn, living and writing in Scotland, was outside the mainstream psychoanalytic community in Great Britain (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983). Bowlby instead received his training from the Kleinian school. Early on he strongly reacted against some of Klein's positions. As reported in Robert Karen's (1994) book on attachment theory, Bowlby clashed with his supervisor Melanie Klein over the issue of whether to involve the mother in the psychoanalytic treatment of a child. Bowlby was dissatisfied with Klein's downplaying of the ongoing importance of maternal caretaking and her almost exclusive interest in the child's internal world. This difference in focus was the beginning of Bowlby's eventual estrangement from the psychoanalytic community.

Bowlby had been developing an interest in delinquent children, which led him into the world of behavioral research. He studied 48 antisocial boys and found they

consistently had early loss of a parenting figure (Karen, 1994). To further study the effects of early separation on children, he hired an assistant who captured on film the effects of parental separation on two-year-old children during hospital stays. At that time in England parents were not allowed to sleep in the hospital with their children, who might have had to stay anywhere from overnight to a number of weeks. Visiting hours were also quite restricted. The distress of these children upon being left, and then the indifference that set in, followed by long difficult periods of readjustment at home, led Bowlby to rethink what is central to infant health.

Intrigued by the mother-infant bond, Bowlby explored the ethological theories of Konrad Lorenz and his work on imprinting. Bowlby developed the Darwinian notion that the infant, as a survival mechanism, must above all else find ways to stay close to the mother (Bowlby, 1969). Like Fairbairn, Bowlby saw the primary human motivation as a need to seek human contact; but Bowlby couched his ideas in evolutionary theory. This intricate "attachment system" was needed because the human infant has an exceptionally long period of dependence on her caretakers and must have intricate strategies to stay close to them. Sucking, smiling, clinging, crying and following all are utilized to maintain proximity to the parent (Bowlby, 1969).

The psychoanalytic community found this all too behaviorally based; the Kleinians in particular felt Bowlby was neglecting the inner world of the child, especially the world of fantasy and distortion that the child brings to the relationship with the caretaker. Additionally, Bowlby's research methods themselves were taking a different turn. Unlike the psychoanalytic theorists, whose research focused on case studies that were unverifiable due to the private nature of the interviews, Bowlby's research was staying close to the easily observable (Karen, 1990).

Attachment theory squarely left the world of psychoanalysis with the work of Mary Ainsworth (Ainsworth et al., 1978), a colleague of Bowlby's, who was a personality and developmental psychologist. Ainsworth made naturalistic observations of mothers and their infants in Uganda, and later performed a controlled longitudinal study of American mother-infant dyads in the home. Immersed in the ideas of Bowlby regarding the effects of separation on children, and influenced by one her professors, William Blatz, who theorized that a child with a "secure base" will more easily explore the world (Karen, 1994), Ainsworth focused her attention on different styles of mothering. These styles of mothering appeared to be related to the way the child dealt with separations and reunions. She theorized that she was observing different styles of attachment, some more secure

than others (Ainsworth et. al., 1978). In order to test more carefully her hypotheses, she developed a controlled laboratory experiment called the "Strange Situation" (Slade & Aber, 1992; Ainsworth et. al., 1978).

In Bowlby's theory the "attachment system" is something that can be activated or deactivated. When the child feels distressed, in need of proximity and comfort, the system is activated and the infant will use various strategies to stay close to the mother. When the child feels safe and secure, by being in close proximity to the mother, it can be deactivated (Slade & Aber, 1992). The Strange Situation was designed to put the child in a stressful situation, where she finds herself alone, and then again in the comfort of the mother. This would allow the observer to watch the way the attachment system is switched on and off.

The following is a sketch of the strange situation described by Slade & Aber (1992):

During the Strange Situation procedure, the infant and his or her mother are brought to a playroom equipped with two chairs and a number of toys. After an initial warm up and free play period, a stranger enters the room. Shortly afterwards, the mother leaves and the child is left with the stranger. Then, the mother returns. After reuniting with her child, she departs a second time. The child is left alone briefly, at which point the stranger enters and attempts to engage the child. Finally, the mother returns. Each episode of the preseparation play, separation and reunion lasts 3 minutes and each separation can be terminated by the parent anytime she wishes (p. 156).

Ainsworth found three distinct patterns of behavior (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Slade & Aber, 1992), which were

most clearly defined in the child's reunion behavior with the mother (Slade & Aber, 1992):

- category B, Securely Attached (65-70% of U.S. "normal" samples), where a child registers the mother's departure by crying or looking for her, but then becomes reinvolved in play. Upon reunion with the mother after separation, the child shows distress, and then fairly quickly is able to take comfort from the mother and return to play, now securely in her presence.
- category A, Anxious Avoidant (20-25% of normative U.S. samples), where the child appears overall less distressed upon being left, often as if it did not matter at all. Upon reunion the child tries to avoid contact with the mother either by staying away, or, if taken in her arms, by averting gaze and shifting body posture to maintain distance.
- category C, Anxious-Resistant (less than 10%), where an infant is distressed with the novelty of the situation even in the presence of the mother, "falls apart," usually crying uncontrollably when she leaves, unable to become absorbed in play. Upon the mother's return, the infant acts ambivalently, alternating between clingy proximity-seeking and angry avoidance, and overall does not easily derive comfort from the mother after her return.

Ainsworth found, from the extensive observations in the home, that parents of securely attached infants were

sensitive and responsive to the needs and cues given by their infants; parents of anxious-avoidant children were notably rejecting or unresponsive when their children sought comfort; and parents of anxious-resistant children were unpredictable, sometimes comforting and empathic, while at other times unresponsive and rejecting (Slade & Aber, 1992). Future research would attempt to refine and investigate the precise mode of parent-child interactions that determine the different attachment styles.

Although studies in Germany and Japan showed different percentages of the population falling into the three categories, the existence of the three distinct patterns were replicated across cultures, giving preliminary suggestion that there is universality to the types of attachment strategies employed by infants (Grossmann et al., 1985; Karen, 1994). The Strange Situation proved to have predictive ability as well: the attachment status at twelve months was found to be stable over time (Slade, 1987; Main & Goldwyn, 1984; Kobak & Sceery, 1988).

The securely attached infants have been found to be more successful in their cognitive development and in the development of peer relations as toddlers (Slade & Aber, 1992). Although the samples of the Ainsworth study were "normals," and attachment theory was developing as a theory of normal, as opposed to pathological, development, in the clinical realm investigators were finding that secure

attachment reduced the risk of the development of later psychopathology (Erikson et al., 1985).

While exciting, relatively easy to replicate and increasingly predictive of the child's development in other areas, the empirical research by Ainsworth and her colleagues had moved far from its psychoanalytic beginnings. What was being observed was behavior. Because there was consistency over time for the attachment styles, one could, however, infer that the child was internally representing the relationship of herself and her mother. And Bowlby (1969) had continued to develop his theory to address just such a representational model. He postulated that the infants develop "internal working models" (IWMs) based on the history of the relationship with the mother. But it was the work of Mary Main and colleagues (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1985; Main & Goldwyn, 1985; Main & Cassidy, 1988; Main, Kaplan & Cassidy, 1985) that provided the empirical link to internal representation of the attachment relationship and brought it closer to the object relations theories of psychoanalysis.

C. The Adult Attachment Interview

Main and her colleagues developed the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI)--an 18 question, semi-structured interview, taking about 40 minutes to 1 1/2 hours to administer--and gave it to adults whose children had been tested on Ainsworth's Strange Situation. The interviewer asks questions about the adult's relationship with her or his parents, and seeks to obtain a picture of what the adult's attachment status was both as a child and currently. Using eight 9-point scales, judging both the content of the interview, and, importantly, the narrative consistency of the interview (which is audiotaped and then transcribed), Main and colleagues (Main & Goldwyn, 1985) proposed three adult attachment classifications analogous to the Ainsworth Strange Situation categories:

- Secure/Autonomous (corresponding to "securely attached" infants): These transcripts are characterized as being coherent, with the subject having good access to memories of childhood and an objective appraisal of the parents without idealization.
- Insecure/Dismissing (corresponding to "anxious-avoidant"): Here the adult actively dismisses or devalues relationships and might state that she has little or no memories of childhood. Additionally, what the adult reports may lack coherency. For example, the adult might give an idealized view of parents--e.g., "they were always there for me when I

needed them"--but then provides specific memories that directly contradict that view--"I remember my mother just let me cry and wouldn't hug me."

● Insecure/Preoccupied (corresponding with "anxious-resistant"): The adult here is preoccupied currently by her relationships with parents and shows a great deal of ambivalence. A subject usually has many memories, oscillates between good and bad evaluations of the parents, and often reports intense anger.

An important finding was that in about 75% of the cases, the adults' children had attachment ratings, based on Ainsworth's Strange Situation measure, that could be predicted from the mother's corresponding rating on the AAI (George et al., 1985; Fonagy et al., 1993; Ward & Carlson, 1993). This supports the construct validity of the AAI. The interview could predict the child's behavior in the Strange Situation, which had provided a strong empirical foundation for the theory. Future longitudinal studies will be able to follow children who had been tested in the Strange Situation and then later administer to them the AAI. These studies could then address both the stability of the attachment system and the theory of the internal working model, and add to the validity of the AAI as a measure of attachment.

The original work by Main and colleagues (George et al., 1985) delineated three categories. However, a fourth

category has emerged named U, designating "unresolved loss" (Adam, 1993; Slade & Aber, 1992). In both Ainsworth's studies of infants in the Strange Situation and Main's studies of the AAI, certain subjects were classified as "unscorable." Ainsworth found that these infants could be reliably scored in separate categories, which she named A/C, avoidant and resistant, for children who seemed to use both strategies in a confused way; and D for "disorganized," for those infants who seemed completely dazed and confused by the procedure. These infants, it was discovered, had experienced either very early separations through loss of a parent or had suffered some type of abuse (Slade & Aber, 1992).

Main, in looking for the correlates in the AAIs which were given to the parents, found that some parents who suffered early loss or abuse did not have A/C or D children. If the child's attachment mirrored the mother's attachment, she reasoned, then the existence of loss or abuse in the parent's history was an insufficient marker for this fourth type of attachment configuration. To explain this she examined the AAI transcripts, and what she found caused her to hypothesize that the determinants were not the loss or trauma itself but the degree to which the emotions surrounding the events were *unresolved* by the adult. Coding the AAIs this way could predict which parents had children with an A/C or D classification on the Strange Situation

(Slade & Aber, 1992). The current scoring manual for the AAI now scores unresolved mourning or loss (U).

This U score, however, is not considered a fourth attachment category. If a protocol is scored U, it is also given the best fit for one of the original three categories: Secure/autonomous F; Insecure/Dismissing D; and Insecure/preoccupied E. Thus a person with generally secure attachment style can be found to have unresolved mourning, though this is thought to be relatively rare. In general, the U classification has so far been found to occur more frequently in the insecure categories (Adam, 1993). It is hypothesized that the U classification is more prevalent in clinical samples (Adam, 1993).

The original study conducted by Main (Main & Goldwyn, 1985) opened a whole new area of exploration of the intergenerational transmission of attachment style. The transmission of parenting style had been addressed in the psychoanalytic world through the now seminal paper of Selma Fraiberg, *Ghosts in the Nursery* (Fraiberg, et al., 1975). Main's experiments added powerful empirical evidence of transmission.

Most importantly for this study's purposes, because the AAI was not measuring behavior per se but rather the adult's internally represented relationships with his or her parents, attachment theorists could further elaborate the

theory of Internal Working Models of Attachment (Main & Goldwyn, 1985; Main, Kaplan & Cassidy, 1985).

The IWMs are internalizations of attachment relationships formed when the child is young. These images, or schemas, tend to shape the growing child and adult's relationships with others. Essentially, what worked to bring the parent close and ensured safety in the past will be tried with others in the future. This elaboration of IWMs brings attachment theory in important respects close to the domain of internal object relations in psychoanalytic theory.

D. Relation of the two theories

For most object relations theorists, object representations are considered unconscious. Some theorists, such as Greenberg & Mitchell (1983), broaden the definition to include conscious representations of interpersonal relationships; however, there remains an assumption that the conscious representations are rooted in, and determined by, the unconscious object representations. IWMs can be conscious or unconscious, though attachment theorists do not seem so concerned with the distinction (Bretherton, 1985; Main, Kaplan & Cassidy, 1985). However, the scoring and interpretation of the AAI is based on the assumption that the IWM is not conscious. That is, scores are based on the consistencies and inconsistencies of the responses, rather than their manifest content, to use a psychoanalytic term. Thus subjects who answer a direct question about what their relationship with their parent was like with "wonderful, they were loving and kind" but then give specific examples that directly contradict that statement--"my mother would often beat me for breaking a rule"--are scored for the inconsistency, not the conscious representation of the relationship. The adult's lack of conscious awareness of painful experiences as a child is, in fact, one of the hallmarks of avoidant attachment in adults. Thus the importance of *unconscious* representation, is, at least implicitly, shared by the two theories.

IWMs and the object representations postulated by object relations theorists are different, however, in important respects. As formulated by the attachment theorists, IWMs are based on actual experiences with caretakers. In object relations theory, the actual experiences are important (the relative weight given to the reality of the environment varies with each theorist), but the internal representations are formed through the interplay of reality and the *distortions* of reality originating from within the child. Depending on which object relations theory one ascribes to, the distortions created by the child can occur through fantasy or by the press of the sexual and aggressive drives (e.g., Klein and Freud), or as compensations for what was lacking in the relationship with the actual parents (e.g., Fairbairn). Attachment theory is thus almost entirely environmentally based, while object relations theory addresses the interplay of environment and inborn, or internally arising, factors.¹

The object relations theory of psychoanalysis is a more longstanding, elaborated developmental theory, originally evolving as a means to explain psychopathology. The IWM hypothesis of attachment theory has been more limited in scope, originally holding to normal rather than pathological

¹Some attachment researchers have addressed the issue of the child's inborn temperament as a causal factor, but their general point of view is that temperament is not easily teased out, as the relationship with the mother begins at birth (Karen, 1994; Cassidy, 1994).

development, and related more specifically to the attachment system (Slade & Aber, 1992). However, recent work in the attachment domain (Adam, 1993; Cassidy, 1994; Diamond & Blatt, 1994; Fonagy, 1994; Fonagy et al., 1993a; Fonagy et al., 1993b; Rosenstein & Horowitz, 1993; Slade, 1993; Slade, 1994; Slade & Cohen, 1996; van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 1996) has addressed attachment categories and their relation to psychopathology, cognitive development and affect regulation.

Although insecure attachment is not thought to be a specific measure of psychopathology, clinical populations are increasingly being found to have a higher proportion of insecurely attached patients as compared to the general population (Slade, 1994; van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 1996). Adam (1993) found that suicidal risk in adolescents was significantly related to preoccupied attachment status. Rosenstein and Horowitz (1993) found that adolescent inpatients with a preoccupied attachment organization were more likely to have an affective disorder, obsessive-compulsive, histrionic, borderline or schizotypal personality disorder. Those showing a dismissing attachment organization were more likely to have a conduct or substance abuse disorder, narcissistic or antisocial personality disorder. Although the two insecure categories above subsume fairly broad categories of psychopathology, and up to this point have limited clinical utility when compared to

object relations measures (Levine & Tuber, 1993), future work may be able to use the subcategories assigned within each attachment category to further delineate the attachment styles associated with particular clinical disorders. Adam (1993), for example, cites a study by Patrick et al. (1993) that found a strong relationship between the E_3 (a subcategory of preoccupied attachment) and borderline personality organization. This speaks to the increasing perception within the attachment literature that the insecure attachment styles may expose one to increased vulnerability to psychopathology (Fonagy, 1994; Fonagy et al., 1993a; Fonagy et al., 1993b; Slade, 1993; Slade, 1994; Slade & Cohen, 1996). The object relations measures for the Rorschach have shown their greatest strength in distinguishing types of psychopathology. Thus the potential of the AAI to address psychopathology lends credence to the main tenet of this study--that the AAI and object relations scales are tapping related phenomena.

The object relational view considers affects, and the defensive mechanisms used to both ward off and to regulate them, as central. In Kernberg's view (1976) all affect states are bound with internalized object relations. The object relations themselves are representations of self in interaction with an object, always under the sway of a specific affect (Doane & Diamond, 1994). Healthy object

relations thus require successful ways to regulate affect. Psychopathology highlights the defensive mechanisms--such as repression, denial and isolation of affect--used by all people to regulate threatening, unacceptable, anxiety-provoking thoughts and affects.

Recent work in the attachment realm has focused on affect (Cassidy, 1994; Kobak, 1987; Slade, 1993) and contributed to the dialogue between the two disciplines. The two insecure attachment styles that emerged from Ainsworth's Strange Situation are distinguished behaviorally by different displays of emotion. The avoidant infants tend to be affect "minimizers" (Cassidy, 1994; Slade, 1993), looking seemingly unperturbed, showing little distress by crying or displaying overt signs of anger. In a study by Dozier and Kobak (1993, cited in Cassidy, 1994), designed to test whether minimizers were emotionally aroused, minimizing adolescents had their galvanic skin response measured while discussing attachment-related subjects. The authors found that while the subjects looked calm, their skin response indicated emotional arousal. This suggests that minimizers have learned to inhibit the display of negative emotions, in an adaptive effort to get along as best as possible--or stay in close proximity--to a parent who was unresponsive to their needs for comfort. Cassidy (1994) suggests that not only negative affects are dampened as a result; happiness or

joy are also inhibited, because like anger or crying, they are ways of joining and sharing in an intimate, related way.

Conversely, ambivalent infants, and the preoccupied adults that many of them grow into, are emotional "maximizers." They show great displays of affect and have less capacity to defend against them. Because showing distress has become their means of relating to others, they appear to have a lesser capacity to self-regulate affects. Cassidy (1994) has proposed that they may be the obverse of the minimizers: the minimizers feel more than they show, and the maximizers, she hypothesizes, may well show more than they feel. Slade (1993), a psychoanalytically oriented attachment researcher, suggests that the psychoanalytic formulations of obsessional and hysterical styles may capture the defensive styles of affect management of the minimizers and maximizers, respectively. Slade (1993) further suggests that the concept of "mixed neurosis" may help elucidate the fact that some individuals seem to mix the two insecure strategies--they are two sides of the same coin. Slade writes: "Minimization is an attempt to keep intense feelings separate from the self; when these efforts fail, individuals feel flooded and overwhelmed. Maximization is a strategy aimed at keeping negative feelings heightened; however, there are times when such people clamp down and become very rigid and cut off from their feelings" (p.7).

In an informal study using a subset of the Rorschach data used in the present study, Slade and Tuber (Slade, 1993; Slade et al., 1992) analyzed Rorschachs of both dismissing and preoccupied adult women in their third trimester of their first pregnancy. They found that on traditional Rorschach variables dismissing women had protocols characterized by higher indications of repression, less expressed anxiety and more ideational defenses. A higher incidence of thought-disordered responses suggested that unintegrated, dissociated negative affects sometimes broke through, causing breaks in reality testing. By contrast, preoccupied women "had higher indices of anxiety than either secure or dismissing women, and they had little access to ideational defenses. They were clearly more at the mercy of their feelings than were either of the other two groups. Secure women had flexible structures for managing affect, anxiety was minimal and affects were expressed freely" (Slade, 1993, p.5).

Thus, attachment researchers are clearly finding that the two insecure styles are less adaptive. From an object relations perspective, developmentally it would seem that having an insecure attachment style may be related to a difficulty in developing the capacity to integrate and have free access to negative emotions--as in the case of dismissing adults--or a reduced capacity to regulate, and

control against these affects, leading to a heightened state of anxiety and arousal--as seen in preoccupied adults.

In the realm of cognitive development, Fonagy and colleagues (Fonagy, 1994; Fonagy et al., 1993a; Fonagy et al., 1993b) have found, in their study of the modes of transmission of attachment style from parent to child, a link in the developmental story. Elaborating on one of Main's rating categories for the AAI--metacognitive functioning--they developed the Reflective Self Scale for scoring the AAI. They found that the ability of a parent to self-reflect was at least as predictive of the child's future attachment rating as the traditional three attachment categories scored on the AAI. They hypothesized that the ability to reflect on one's self, and then the ability to imagine the mind of another, which is essential to empathy, is a crucial developmental achievement for security of attachment in children and adults. Fonagy suggests that an essential part of the attachment need is the need to be understood, and the result of the child's being seen by the parent is her ability to see herself. The child's discovery of her own mind leads to the discovery that others also have discrete minds. Fonagy suggests that the lack of this capacity in people suffering from borderline personality disorder, for example, can account for their capacity for cruelty; they cannot empathize with suffering in another.

Language is undoubtedly an important component in the ability to symbolize, for both the self-reflective function and the capacity to regulate affects. Diamond and Blatt (1994), after reviewing the literature on the AAI, suggest that insecure patterns of attachment as measured on the AAI reflect a lower level of symbolization, as demonstrated in language. The linguistic incoherency, together with a lower self-reflective capacity in the AAI narratives that are characteristic of the insecure adults, suggest that the development of affect regulation and cognitive means for symbolization are intimately related.

In sum, the dialogue between the two disciplines has become increasingly rich. Theoretical work by researchers fluent in the languages of attachment theory, psychoanalysis and cognitive areas of developmental psychology have, in applying their ideas to the attachment data, helped elaborate the developmental picture of the internal world regarding affects and cognition. By using two object relations scales on the Rorschach, which will tap aspects of affect regulation, ability for empathy and developmental level of object representations, and comparing them to the subjects' attachment status as determined by the AAI, the current project will attempt to add more evidence that both fields of inquiry are addressing related aspects of the internal world.

E. Assessment methods of object relations

As we have seen, representations of object relations are largely unconscious (Stricker & Healy, 1990)--their existence can only be inferred. In object relations theory, psychopathology has been conceived of as an indicator of problems in development of object relations (Blatt et al., 1976a). The striking behaviors observed in mentally ill patients, and the thoughts and feelings reported by them, have been seen as windows into early stages of development that otherwise remain obscured from view. For projective measures of object representation, the ability to discriminate different types of psychopathology within clinical populations, and discriminate them from non-clinical populations, has been their measure of construct validity.

Although there has been a plethora of relatively new projective measures developed specifically to measure object relations, such as parental descriptions (Blatt, Wein, Chevron & Quinlan, 1979), measures based on dreams (Krohn & Mayman, 1974) and early memories (Mayman & Faris, 1968), much of the research to date has used the Rorschach and the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) (Striker & Healy, 1990). The Rorschach and the TAT have been used for years in psychological testing, interpreted according to classical and ego psychological theory. Researchers have developed new scoring methods for these instruments, to tap and

delineate object representations according to a specific theory of object relations.

The Rorschach has been used more frequently as a research tool by object relations theorists than the TAT (Kuhn, 1992). The TAT asks the subject to create stories when shown photographs and drawings of people alone and in interaction in highly ambiguous poses. While the TAT demands that the participant supply his or her own story to the stimuli, the more highly ambiguous stimuli of the Rorschach inkblots requires a greater reconstructive effort and is thought to call up deeper levels of unconscious material. Mayman's (1967) description of the Rorschach test captures the demands of the task nicely:

When a person is asked to spend an hour immersing himself in a field of impressions where amorphousness prevails and where strange or even alien forms may appear, he will set in motion a reparative process the aim of which is to replace formlessness with reminders of the palpably real world. He primes himself to recall, recapture, reconstitute his world as he knows it, with people, animals and things which fit most naturally into the ingrained expectancies around which he has learned to structure his phenomenal world...[A] person's most readily accessible object-representations called up under such unstructured conditions tell much about his inner world of objects and about the quality of relationships with these inner objects toward which he is predisposed (p. 17).

While labor-intensive to administer and score, the Rorschach, which has been used extensively in clinical settings, has proved to be effective in tapping unconscious levels of a subject's internal world (Striker & Healy, 1990).

F. Two object relations scales for the Rorschach

Two different scoring systems for the Rorschach have been chosen for this study. Although there is some measure of overlap between the scales, the first scale to be discussed, the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale (Urist, 1977), addresses the content of the responses and is strongest in tapping the quantity and quality of aggression. The second scale, the Developmental Analysis of the Concept of the Object Scale (Blatt et al., 1976a), addresses the structural aspects of the responses and is a better indicator of developmental level.

The Mutuality of Autonomy Scale (MOAS) (Urist, 1977) was developed by Urist based on the theoretical writings of Kernberg and Kohut (Stricker & Healy, 1990). It can be used on both animal and human figures, and it is based on interactions. It thus necessitates either two figures in interaction, or one figure and an implied other (e.g., "a squashed bug" implies a squasher). The MOAS is a 7-point scale with the highest level of development reflected in scale point 1, which is given for two figures in mutual interaction, showing some degree of empathy, or the acknowledgement of another's internal state (e.g., "two girls enjoying dancing with one another"). The scale goes next to parallel action (2), a figure dependent on another (3), one figure mirroring another (4), a figure trying to

hurt another (5), a figure seriously damaging another (6), and finally, total undifferentiated destruction (7) (Urist, 1977).

Urist and Shill (1982) found that MOAS scores correlated significantly with independent clinical ratings (interpersonal behavior and diagnosis) of a sample of adolescent inpatients and outpatients. Using various clinical populations, the scale has been able to differentiate separation-anxiety disorder (Goddard & Tuber, 1989), depression (Goldberg, 1989), borderline pathology and attention-deficit disorder (Thomas, 1987), gender identity (Tuber & Coates, 1989; Coates & Tuber, 1989), children anticipating surgery (Tuber, Frank & Santostefano, 1989), and predict later hospitalizations (Tuber, 1983). In a nonclinical child sample, Ryan, Avery, and Grolnick (1985) found significant correlations with reports of interpersonal functioning and grades.

While the MOAS was designed to show a developmental progression of internalized object relations, and as such should be able to distinguish various age groups, there has been no evidence supporting this aspect of its design (Tuber, 1992; Blatt, Tuber & Auerbach, 1990). Tuber (1992) concludes that the MOAS is "an ordinal scale depicting differing modes of object experience of varying severity" (p. 189).

The Developmental Analysis of the Concept of the Object Scale (DACOS) (Blatt et al., 1976a, 1976b) will be used in order to assess the developmental level of object representations. The scale concentrates more on the formal aspects of the Rorschach responses rather than the content of responses, which is measured by the MOAS. While developed along the lines of psychoanalytic theory, it incorporates the cognitive developmental theories of Werner and Piaget. The DACOS uses 7 categories to judge a Rorschach response; within each of the categories scores are assigned reflecting increasing levels of developmental complexity.

Unlike the MOAS, the original study by Blatt (Blatt et al., 1976a) lent validity to the claim that the scale is developmentally based. Blatt found significant developmental changes in a sample of 37 normal subjects from whom Rorschach records were collected over a 20-year-period at four intervals, beginning at age twelve. As with the MOAS, the DACOS has proven to be a sensitive instrument for distinguishing psychopathology. Differences were found among the following diagnostic categories: restricting and bulimic anorexics (Piran, 1988; Piran & Lerner, 1988); narcissists and borderlines (Farris, 1988); normals and patients (Blatt et al., 1976a); neurotics, outpatient borderlines, inpatient borderlines and schizophrenics (Lerner & St.Peter, 1984); schizophrenics and borderlines

(Spear, 1980; Spear & Sugarman, 1984); and psychotic and nonpsychotic patients (Ritzler, Zambianco, Harder, & Kaskey, 1980).

Both the DACOS and the MOAS can distinguish among many clinical syndromes with considerable subtlety. This discriminative ability gives a picture of the types of object representations in the particular diagnostic categories, and can lead to insight into the problems in development for a particular illness.

A drawback to these scales is that they have been used most frequently with a clinical population, whereas the AAI has been used with nonclinical samples. As we have seen, although the insecure attachment categories may expose an individual to a somewhat higher risk of developing psychopathology, insecure attachment itself is not a measure of psychopathology. A high percentage of the normal population is insecurely attached. However, as has been discussed above in section D, insecure attachment styles may reflect a less developed level of object relations--which is also the claim for differing types of psychopathology. Whether the two Rorschach Scales are subtle enough to detect differences in object representations among these subgroups of a normal population is unknown, as it has yet to be applied in this context.

G. Previous studies

During the last few years, a number of research projects conceived along similar lines to the present one have sought to investigate the relation of attachment classification to either object relations theory or other psychoanalytic approaches (Diamond & Doane, 1994; Edwards, 1994; Frank et al, 1994; Kaplan, 1992; Haft & Slade, 1989; Levine et al., 1991; Levy et al., in press). There have been various measures and scales used for both the attachment classification of adults and the psychoanalytic formulations.

A study by Levy et al. (in press) assessed the attachment status of 196 undergraduates using two self-report measures, Hazan & Shaver's (1987) checklist and Bartholmew's measure (1990). They compared the subject's attachment status to object representations assessed through written descriptions of parents, as scored by Diamond and Blatt et al.'s (1992) scale for object relations representations. This scale scores structural as well as content dimensions of linguistic descriptions along similar conceptual lines as the DACOS Rorschach scale used here. They found that securely attached young adults had more differentiated parental representations than the insecurely attached subjects. Although the results of this study are encouraging for the present one, it should be noted that the self-report attachment measures used in the Levy et al.

study do not have as clear construct validity as the AAI, as they were not validated using the standard of Ainsworth's strange situation procedure. The following studies used the AAI as the attachment measure.

A study by Edwards (1993) used the AAI and Blatt et al.'s (1988) version of assessing qualitative and structural dimensions of object representations in five-minute written descriptions of self and parents. With a sample of 57 women, he found that security of attachment correlated positively with conceptual level of object representation. Further, those classified as preoccupied were found to have higher conceptual levels of object representation than subjects classified as dismissing of attachment. This study has a similar design to the present one but used a different projective instrument for the object relations measurement.

Levine et al. (1991) administered the AAI to 42 pregnant adolescents. After scoring the AAI on the traditional attachment scales, the authors applied the Krohn scale (Krohn & Mayman, 1974), an object relations measure originally formulated for reports of dreams, to the same AAIs. Collapsing the AAI categories into two, secure and insecure, they found a positive relation between security of attachment and developmental level of object relations as measured on the Krohn scale, a scale that rates content along similar theoretical lines as the MOAS scale to be used in the present study. Although the results of their study

are encouraging for the present design, the researchers discuss that a limitation to their study was that the same instrument (AAI) was scored by two different scoring systems. It is possible that the high correspondence between the two rating scales may have been due to the fact that they were applied to the same measure. The present study will avoid this problem.

In both the Levine et al. (1991) and the Edwards (1993) studies, both the object relations measures and attachment measures were applied to narratives. While the Krohn scale used in the Levine et al. (1991) study does not rate narrative coherence per se, the highly subjective rating method, where the rater is encouraged to immerse him or herself in the feel of the subject's object world, may be influenced by narrative consistency. In the structural realm, symbolic ability as expressed in language seems one important component, but not the only component, of highly developed object relations. One advantage of using the Rorschach is that while the subject reports her responses to the visual stimuli through language, the rating scales score the perceptual qualities and the content of the representations with minimum regard to linguistic presentation. This may avoid a confounding influence of linguistic presentation in determining a developmental level of object representation. It may highlight as well, differences in modes of representation of thought between

the language-based AAI and the more image-based Rorschach test (Horowitz, 1978).

A study by Frank et al. (1994) used a subset of 25 of 39 Rorschachs to be used in the present study. The scoring method used for the Rorschach was the Holt (1977) primary-process scale, based on classical psychoanalytic drive theory and psychoanalytic ego psychology. The scores on the Holt scale were compared to the security of attachment of the subjects' infants as measured by the Strange Situation at one year. The scale measures adaptive regression, the ability to have free access to affectively laden, primary-process material without overwhelming the subjects' defenses. The study found that "greater ease of access to well-regulated primary process fantasy during pregnancy is significantly, positively related to infant security of attachment at one year" (p.57). The study did not compare the mothers' own state of mind regarding attachment to the Rorschach measure; however, the Strange Situation has been so strongly correlated with the adult's attachment status as measured by the AAI, that it is likely that similar results would have been found had Frank compared, as in the present study, the Rorschach measure to the parents' attachment category. In greater contrast to the present study, the Rorschach scoring method was not constructed upon object relations theory and was not limited to scoring representations of human or human-like objects. The Holt

scale does, however, measure the subjects' ability to access and to integrate affectively charged material. As has been discussed above, success in tolerating and integrating strong affects is intimately connected to adaptive object relations, both internally represented and interpersonally manifested. At a minimum, for the purposes of the present study, Frank et al.'s research shows that the Rorschach can be used as a sensitive instrument to distinguish attachment-related phenomena.

In sum, while the present study is not a direct replication of any of the above studies, it builds upon them. As a measurement of adult attachment status, the AAI is unrivaled in terms of its construct validity. The Rorschach has the advantage of producing data less dependent on verbal coherency, which may help avoid a confounding influence of a subject's verbal presentation.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study is a construct validity study, in which the same subject was given two different measures of personality --the Rorschach Inkblot Test and the Adult Attachment Interview--each constructed upon different bodies of theory. It was a snapshot of the subject's internal world; both measures were administered within a short time-frame. This section will describe the sample characteristics, the procedures used and the hypotheses generated prior to the scoring of the measures.

A. Subjects

The subjects for this study were 39 primiparous women who were part of a larger ongoing longitudinal research project (N=66), The Pregnancy Project, conducted at the Department of Psychology of City College, the City University of New York, under the direction of Arietta Slade, Ph.D. The Pregnancy Project's overarching purpose is to study the relationship of attachment styles of mother and child, including the modes of transmission of attachment-related behaviors and personality characteristics.

The mothers were recruited for the project through fliers placed in childbirth education classes, private

obstetricians' offices, exercise classes and maternity shops. The intent was to collect a "normal," non-psychiatric pool of subjects. Participation was voluntary, with remuneration given for transportation costs. Efforts were made to guarantee confidentiality: all data were stored by code number rather than name, and researchers were changed at each of the mothers' visits.

The subsample used in the present study was 39 middle-class women, pregnant with their first child. All but one were white, all were married or cohabitating in long-term relationships. Their ages ranged from 26 to 37, with a mean age of 31 years old. Ninety-one percent had completed college, 44 percent had begun or completed graduate training. All but two subjects were employed, working as professionals or in business or the arts.

The aims of the present study do not specifically address the developmental stage of pregnancy. As there are no known prior Rorschach studies of pregnant women utilizing nonpregnant controls, and as the present study did not utilize a nonpregnant control group, there are significant limitations to the generalizability of the study. These limitations will be examined in the discussion section below.

B. Procedure

There were two distinct phases of data collection in the larger project: pregnancy and infancy. The data for this study were collected from the pregnancy phase of the project. Mothers made three visits during pregnancy to the Pregnancy Project lab at City College, which consists of playrooms and a comfortable conference room for interviewing and testing. Data for the present study were collected during the second visit (30-32nd weeks of pregnancy) and third visit (32-34th weeks of pregnancy). The Rorschach was administered during the second visit; the Adult Attachment Interview during the third.

C. Measures

The Rorschach: The Rorschach test consists of a standard series of ten inkblot cards. Upon presentation of the first card, the subjects were asked: "What does this look like to you? What might this be?" Responses to card I were followed by the prompt "Anything else?" There were no prompts during the remaining nine cards. After the ten cards were presented, the examiners began inquiry with card I, with the card visible to the subject. Inquiry departed from standard procedure developed by Klopfer et al. (1954) for movement responses: if a subject responded, for example, with "I see a bat flying," the inquiry would include "flying as if..?" (Tuber, 1989). This specialized inquiry was used

to gain adequate detail for scoring a response using the MOAS scale. The Rorschach tests were administered by four doctoral-level students in clinical psychology.

Rorschach Scales

The Rorschach protocols were scored using the Urist Mutuality of Autonomy Scale (MOAS) (Urist, 1977) and the Developmental Analysis of the Concept of the Object Scale (DACOS) (Blatt et al., 1976a). They will be discussed separately.

MOAS: The MOAS is a 7-point scale that rates the content of both human and animal movement responses in a Rorschach protocol. The human or animal figures must be in interaction, or implied interaction, with another object. The following is a summary of the seven scale points with examples for each type of response (Tuber, 1989; Kuhn, 1992):

1: The most adaptive response, in which interacting figures show a reciprocal, autonomous relationship. "Two girls dancing and sticking their tongues out at each other" (Kuhn, 1992).

2: Parallel interaction, with mutuality neither denied, or stressed. "Two animals climbing on a mountain" (Tuber, 1989).

3: Figures lean or hang on one another as a means for support. "A little kid dangling from his father's hand" (Kuhn, 1992).

4: One figure is a reflection or imprint of the other and would not exist without the other. "A tiger and its reflection in the water" or "Bigfoot's imprint."

5: One figure's autonomy is violated when another exerts malevolent control over it. "A witch casting a spell on a victim."

6: Here the malevolence extends to violence or the threat of violence that seriously compromises the integrity of the other. "A shark attacking a turtle" or "a leech sucking up the blood of that man."

7: Overwhelming catastrophic destruction by inhuman forces. "Something being consumed by fire. Can't even see what it is, just a raging fire."

Conceptually, the scale points fall into three groupings. Scale points 1 and 2 are the most benign, highest levels of object-relatedness. Scale points 3 and 4 reflect a gradual loss of autonomy, reflecting dependency and narcissistic issues, respectively. Scale points 5, 6 and 7 reflect not only loss of capacity for separateness but increasingly malevolent object relations. Although our knowledge of object experience is too tentative to assume that there are equal intervals among scale points on a

object relationship continuum (Tuber, 1983), the use of a mean score on a given protocol has been shown to be able to distinguish between different types of pathology; it was hoped that it would be a subtle enough measure to distinguish different configurations of object relations in this nonclinical sample. Additionally, the single most adaptive score (lowest number on this reverse scale), and single least adaptive score (highest number) has been shown as a valuable predictor of psychopathology (Tuber, 1983).

For the present study the following scores were calculated for the data analysis: the mean score, the most adaptive score and the least adaptive score. The number of scale point 3 responses and 4 responses were also individually calculated, specifically to examine dependent and narcissistic object representations across the three attachment groups as scored by the AAI.

Reliability with the MOAS in previous studies has ranged from .70 to .90 for exact agreement, and above .85 for 1-point discrepancies (Tuber, 1989; Stricker & Healy, 1990). In the present study, the 39 Rorschach protocols were scored by a clinical psychologist who had demonstrated good reliability with the scale on numerous prior studies. The author scored one-third of the sample, on which percent agreement was calculated. The two scorers agreed on 87 percent of the scores (exact hits), while there was 96 percent agreement on scores falling within one scale point

of one another. The more experienced rater's scores were allowed to stand when there were disagreements. Both scorers were aware of the overall aims of the study but were blind to the subjects' attachment status as determined by the AAI.

DACOS: This scale is based heavily on the structural and perceptual aspects of human responses on the Rorschach, in contradistinction to the MOAS, which relies solely on content. Human responses, either static or with movement, are rated on the following categories (Blatt et al., 1976b):

Accuracy of response (F+ or F- form level)

Differentiation (Human, Quasi-human, Human detail,
Quasi-human detail)

Articulation - perceptual (was size, clothing, or
posture specified by the subject)

Articulation - functional (was sex, age, role, or
specific identity specified)

Degree of articulation (number of features
articulated/number of responses)

Motivation of action (no action, unmotivated, reactive,
or intentional)

Integration of object and action (fused, incongruent,
non-specific or congruent)

Nature of interaction (active-passive, active-reactive,
active-active)

Content of interaction (Malevolent or benevolent)

Each category is assigned a weighted score, theoretically based on a conception of a developmental continuum (e.g., for the category differentiation, quasi-human detail = 1; human detail = 2; whole quasi-human figure = 3; whole human figure = 4). Each response is summed across categories, and then three summary scores are calculated for each protocol, corrected for response productivity (Kalter & Marsden, 1970):

OR+: This represents the weighted scores for all human or human-like Rorschach percepts that have good form. This is viewed by the authors of the scale as "...indicating the capacity for investment in satisfying interpersonal relationships" (Blatt & Berman, 1984, p. 231). The sums have a positive value, reflecting "good" or "positive" form level.

OR-: This represents the weighted scores for all human or humanlike Rorschach percepts that have poor form, and is "...viewed as an indication of the tendency to become invested in autistic fantasies rather than realistic relationships" (Blatt & Berman, 1984, p. 231). The sums have a negative value, reflecting "poor" or "negative" form level.

SumDACOS: This score adds the OR+ and OR- scores together, creating a single score indicating an overall

developmental level for the protocol (Fritsch & Holstrom, 1990). This reflects the position that the more "healthy" subject will have fewer poor form level responses, and that those responses that are of poor form level will be less elaborated and therefore receive a lower negative score.

Blatt et al. (1976a) found that in an inpatient clinical population with psychotic disorders, OR- scores reflected a higher developmental level than their own OR+ scores, and were at a higher level than OR- scores of a nonclinical sample. This suggested to the authors that psychotic patients were able to experience better object relations when they retreated into their autistic worlds. Although the current study examined a nonclinical sample, it was an intriguing (although unlikely) possibility that the insecurely attached adults in the current sample would have had higher scores on poor form level responses (OR-), suggesting more highly developed object representations when removed from the anxieties evoked by the reality constraints of the inkblots.

Reliabilities on the DACOS in prior studies have ranged from 75% to 96% (Stricker & Healy, 1990; Fritsch & Holstrom, 1990). In the present study, the 39 Rorschach protocols were scored by the author, with a graduate student in clinical psychology scoring one-third of the protocols to establish reliability. Both scorers learned the scale from the detailed scoring manual (Blatt et al., 1976b), and

established acceptable reliability prior to scoring protocols from the present sample by scoring 28 Rorschach protocols collected from another study. Percent agreement for each of the subcategories of the scale for the present sample ranged from 80 percent (in the category integration) to 97 percent (for the categories differentiation and content), with overall agreement averaged across subscales at 88 percent. Disagreements in scores were resolved through conference between the scorers. The author was blind to the attachment categories of subjects as determined by the AAI. The second scorer was additionally blind to the overall aims of the present study.

Adult Attachment Interview:

The Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) (George et al., 1985) is a semi-structured interview. While it follows the format of a questionnaire, in that it has precise phrasing and sequencing of questions (Director, 1991), the interviewers memorize the questions and probes to provide a conversational atmosphere to allow the subjects time to think about and expand on their answers. Subjects are first asked to think of five adjectives to describe their relationships with both parents, and then they are asked to provide an example to support each adjective they chose. Probes are aimed at eliciting memories of early separations,

rejections, means of seeking comfort and feelings of closeness to the parent (George et al., 1985).

The entire interview is tape-recorded and then transcribed. It is evaluated in its entirety and rated on eight nine-point scales, some of which assess the subject's probable experience as a child with each parent, while others assess their current state of mind regarding the parents. The interview is designed to elicit two kinds of memories: semantic memories (general descriptions) and episodic memories (biographical episodes). The coherency scale assesses security of attachment not by the descriptions of types of experience but on the degree of coherency between the semantic and episodic memories. Other scales that assess the current state of mind of the subject regarding attachment are the degree of idealization in the subject's attitudes towards his or her parent; the extent of the subject's memory for his or her childhood; the degree of anger that the subject expresses towards his or her parents. Probable experience in childhood of the subject is rated on the extent to which the subject's parents are judged to have been loving; rejecting; or role-reversing/involving. Finally the subject is assessed on evidence of lack of resolution of trauma (Main & Goldwyn, 1988).

The subject is then classified, based on the profile that emerges, into one of the following categories:

Secure/autonomous, F, where the subject values attachment relationships, presents a coherent account of her life, and views her parents currently in a realistic manner.

Dismissing, D, where the subject devalues attachment relationships, often has few memories for childhood experience, or else presents an idealized view of childhood with conflicting episodic memories.

Preoccupied, E, where the subject is overly involved or enmeshed in her attachment relationships, and has a confused and disorganized account of early life.

The transcript is also assessed on lack of resolution of mourning/trauma, U. If it receives a high score on this category, the transcript is given a primary U classification, and at the same time the best fitting F, D, or E category. Thus, although the U classification has most often been associated with insecure attachment (Adam, 1993), it is possible to have a U transcript with a secure (F) overall rating.

Within each of the three main attachment categories, there are variations in attachment style, and subjects are assigned to a subcategory (F_{1-5} , D_{1-4} , E_{1-3}). For the present study, no hypotheses were generated prior to the data analysis regarding attachment subcategories.

The AAls were administered by graduate students in clinical psychology. The verbatim transcripts were scored by psychologists who had been trained to reliability by Mary

Main. In cases where the transcripts were difficult to classify, the ratings were decided by conference. Both the interviewers and raters of the transcripts were blind to the aims of the present study and had no knowledge of the Rorschach scores for the subjects.

D. MAIN HYPOTHESES

This study examined the relationship between the object relations scores on the MOAS and DACOS Rorschach scales, and the adult attachment classifications as determined by the AAI. The attachment classifications were considered the independent variables, while the various scores of the object relations scales were the dependent variables.

The following hypotheses, formulated prior to the scoring of the measures, are first stated in their theoretical form. They are followed by their operational forms, which refer to the specific scoring categories of the Rorschach measures.

DACOS and AAI:

Hypothesis 1:

The secure attachment group will have a higher developmental level of object relations than either of the insecure groups of subjects.

A) SumDACOS, the composite of the good and poor form level scores (OR+ and OR-) of the DACOS measure, will have a higher mean for the AAI F group than for the E or D groups.

The differences between groups can be further examined by comparing the developmental level of the good and poor form level responses separately. As the SumDACOS score is the simple addition of the OR+ and OR- scores, a lower score for SumDACOS for a subject could be a reflection of lower developmental level of positive form level responses (OR+), and/or more elaborated responses with poor form level (OR-). Thus there are additionally the following two hypotheses:

B) OR+, the weighted sums of the good form level responses, will be higher for the F group when compared to the E and D groups.

C) OR- scores, the weighted sums of the poor form level responses, will be higher for the insecurely attached subjects. This hypothesis is more speculative. OR- is not a measure of poor form level only. It is a measure also of how highly developed are the human representations. It would be an intriguing finding if the insecurely attached subjects, in particular the dismissing subjects, had more elaborate object representations when they had retreated from the reality constraints of the blot. This might reflect a capacity for satisfying, self-soothing internal objects when free from anxiety-provoking intimacies the subject may experience in the "real" world.

MOAS and AAI:**Hypothesis 2:**

The secure group will have more autonomous object representations than the insecure groups, reflecting a more benign, balanced object world, with more adaptive integration of aggressive impulses.

A) The AAI F group will have a more adaptive mean score, better most adaptive score and less extreme least adaptive score than either the D or E groups.

Hypothesis 3:

The preoccupied group will have more dependent object representations. This would reflect the continued entanglement and preoccupation with unmet early needs, as well as undifferentiated self representation.

A) The AAI E group will have a higher frequency of MOAS scale point 3 scores (leaning/dependent) than either the F group or the D group.

Hypothesis 4:

Both insecure attachment groups will have more "narcissistic" object representations than the secure groups. This would reflect an aspect of character style where the subject has strong needs for affirmation and mirroring that were unmet by an unavailable, or inconsistently available caretaker in infancy.

A) The D and E AAI groups will have more MOAS scale point 4 scores (reflection images) than the F group.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The relationships between the attachment classifications as determined by the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) and the object relations scores for the Rorschach test are presented in this section. First the results of the AAI scoring are presented. This is followed by the tests for the hypotheses stated in the methods section above.

A. Adult Attachment Classifications

The results of the scoring for the AAIs for the 39 subjects yielded the following distribution among the three attachment categories: 18 subjects (46%) were secure (F); 9 subjects (23%) were dismissing (D) ; 12 subjects (31%) were preoccupied (E). These percentages differ from norms established from prior studies. Van IJzendoorn and Bakermans-Kranenburg (1996) performed a meta-analysis across a number of AAI studies of nonclinical mothers (N=584) and found the following percentages: 58% secure; 24% dismissing; and 18% preoccupied. Thus, while the percentage of dismissing mothers in the current sample was similar to the normative data, there were notably fewer secure mothers (46% as compared to 58%) and notably more preoccupied mothers (31% as compared to 18%).

Eleven subjects (28%) were assigned a primary unresolved (U) rating. As described in the methods section, subjects given a primary unresolved or U rating were assigned to their underlying AAI category: F, D or E. The proportion of Us (28%) in the current sample is higher than the 19% reported by Van IJzendoorn and Bakermans-Kranenburg (1996). The bulk of the Us had underlying E attachment status. The breakdown of the 11 Us is as follows: 7 E; 3 F; and 1 D.

B. Tests for the Main Hypotheses

The above three AAI attachment groups were considered the independent variables, while the Rorschach object relations measures were the dependent variables. One-way ANOVAs were calculated to examine differences among AAI groups on the Rorschach measures. The two Rorschach object relations measures--DACOS and the MOAS--will be presented separately in order of the hypotheses proposed in chapter III, section D.

DACOS MEASURE

Hypothesis 1: Developmental level of object relations by attachment category

The three summation scores for the DACOS Rorschach scale, SumDACOS, OR+ and OR-, were calculated for each subject and then grouped by attachment category. Means for

each group were then compared using a series of one-way ANOVAs. As a measure of relationship between developmental level of object relations representations and attachment classifications, it was hypothesized that:

A) The SumDACOS scores would be higher for the AAI F group than for either the E or D groups.

B) OR+, the weighted sums of the good form level responses, would be higher for the F group when compared to the E and D groups.

C) OR-, the weighted sums of the poor form level responses, would be higher for the insecurely attached subjects.

The means, standard deviations and F values are presented in Table 1. As can be seen from the table, there were no significantly different means among attachment groups for any of the three DACOS summation scores. The developmental level of object relations representation as measured by this Rorschach scale were statistically the same for the three attachment classifications. Thus hypothesis 1 was not confirmed.

Table 1

Comparison of Subjects' DACOS Summary Scores among Three Attachment Categories

<u>DACOS SCALE</u>	<u>Attachment Category</u>			df=2,38
	<u>F</u> n=18	<u>D</u> n=9	<u>E</u> n=12	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<u>F</u> value
SumDACOS	55.89 (34.22)	61.44 (47.06)	65.33 (33.91)	.24
OR+	67.83 (40.61)	79.67 (57.79)	70.67 (31.08)	.23
OR-	11.94 (13.45)	18.22 (24.13)	5.33 (9.22)	1.80

*p< .05

Although the two insecure attachment classifications reflect markedly different character styles, there is precedent, when group sizes are unequal and small, for combining D and E groups together into one insecure category (e.g., Director, 1991; Levine et al., 1991). Independent t-tests were performed using the three DACOS summation scores to compare the secure group with the collapsed dismissing and preoccupied groups. The results can be examined in Table 2. None of these tests revealed significant differences between groups.

Table 2

Comparison of Subjects' DACOS Summary Scores between Two Attachment Categories: Secure and Combined Insecures

<u>DACOS SCALE</u>	<u>Attachment Category</u>		
	Secure	Insecure	
	<i>F</i> : n=18	<i>D & E</i> : n=21	df= 37
	Mean	Mean	<u>t</u> value
	(SD)	(SD)	
SumDACOS	55.89 (34.22)	63.67 (39.02)	.66
OR+	67.83 (40.61)	74.52 (43.45)	.49
OR-	11.94 (13.45)	10.86 (17.96)	.21

*p< .05

Post hoc test with DACOS

One post hoc test was performed using a subscale of the DACOS scale, "degree of articulation." The DACOS measure is composed of subscales that primarily assess the structure of the human representations. However, some subscales do rate the content of the representation where there is movement between two objects. In an effort to examine the developmental level of purely structural aspects of the object representations, one structural measure was teased out from the summation scores reported above. The degree of articulation subscore is the subject's average number of

specifications of the following qualities, on any human or human-like object, regardless of whether there is movement or not: size, clothing or hairstyle, posture, sex, role, age or specific identity. The results can be seen in Table 3. There was no significant difference among the attachment group means on this measure.

Table 3

Post Hoc test for DACOS: Comparison of Degree of Articulation Scores among Three Attachment Categories

<u>DACOS SCALE</u>	<u>Attachment Category</u>			
	<i>F</i> n=18	<i>D</i> n=9	<i>E</i> n=12	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<i>F</i> value df=2,38
Degree of Articulation	2.23 (.63)	1.73 (.65)	2.07 (.76)	1.66

* $p < .05$

MOAS Scale

Hypothesis 2: Degree of Autonomy of the object relations representations

Three scores were calculated for each subject on the MOAS scale to test hypothesis 2: the mean MOAS score, the single most adaptive score, and the single least adaptive score. The MOAS is a 'reverse' scale, so that for the 7

points of the scale, the lower the number, the more adaptive the response. A series of one-way ANOVAs were calculated to examine differences among attachment group means for the above MOAS scores.

It was hypothesized that:

A) The F group would have more adaptive mean scores (lower numerical value) than either the E or D groups.

B) The F group would have higher single most adaptive scores (lowest numerical value) than either the E or D groups.

C) The D and E groups would have more extreme single least adaptive scores (higher numerical value) than the F group.

An examination of Table 4 reveals that there were no significant differences among group means for any of the above three scores. The hypothesized relationships were not confirmed.

TABLE 4

Comparison of Subjects' Mean, Least Adaptive and Most Adaptive MOAS Scores among Three Attachment Categories

<u>MOAS SCALE</u>	<u>Attachment Category</u>			df=2,38
	<i>F</i> n=18	<i>D</i> n=9	<i>E</i> n=12	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<u>F</u> value
Mean Score	2.82 (.59)	3.09 (.73)	2.95 (1.03)	.38
Single most adaptive	1.22 (.43)	1.00 (0)	1.33 (.89)	.89
Single least adaptive	5.27 (.96)	5.56 (1.24)	5.00 (1.48)	.56

* $p < .05$

All three groups showed a similar range of scores (single least adaptive and single most adaptive). Subjects in all three attachment groups saw statistically equivalent numbers of representations of two objects that were in benign interaction, with some recognition of their distinctness and autonomy (scale point 1).

Hypothesis 3: Dependent object representations

It was hypothesized that the AAI E group would have a greater frequency of 3 (leaning/dependent) scores than either the F or D group. Table 5 shows the mean number of 3

scores for each attachment classification group. There was no significant difference among the means of the three attachment groups. The hypothesis was not confirmed.

Hypothesis 4: Narcissistic object representations

It was hypothesized that both insecure attachment groups, E and D, would have a higher frequency of MOAS 4 scores than the F group. Table 5 shows the mean number of 4 scores for the three attachment groups. There was no significant difference among groups. The hypothesis was not confirmed.

Table 5

Comparison of Subjects' Dependent and Reflection MOAS Scores among Three Attachment Categories

<u>MOAS SCALE</u>	<u>Attachment Category</u>			df=2,38
	<i>F</i> n=18	<i>D</i> n=9	<i>E</i> n=12	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<u>F value</u>
3 scores	1.56 (1.38)	1.56 (1.51)	1.08 (1.38)	.47
4 scores	1.22 (1.31)	1.22 (1.20)	0.50 (.67)	1.71

*p< .05

Independent t-tests were also calculated for hypotheses 2, 3 and 4 comparing the F group with the collapsed D and E

groups. The results can be seen in Table 6. None of the tests yielded significant differences between groups.

Table 6

Comparison of Subjects' MOAS Object Relations Scores between Two Attachment Classifications: Secure and Combined Insecures

<u>MOAS SCALE</u>	<u>Attachment Category</u>		
	Secure	Insecure	
	<i>F</i> : n=18	<i>D & E</i> : n=21	df=37
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<u>t</u> value
Mean Score	2.82 (.59)	3.01 (.90)	.79
Single low	5.27 (.96)	5.24 (1.38)	-.10
Single high	1.22 (.43)	1.19 (.68)	.89
3 scores	1.56 (1.38)	1.29 (1.42)	.60
4 scores	1.22 (1.31)	.81 (.98)	1.12

*p< .05

Post hoc tests with the MOAS

Use of the mean MOAS score, the single most adaptive score and single least adaptive score, had been chosen

because of the prevalence in the literature of the success of these measures in discriminating between clinical and normal populations, as well as between different diagnostic categories within clinical populations. Another method of calculating scores was used post hoc to evaluate hypotheses 2, 3 and 4 based on the conceptual design of the scale. As discussed in the methods section above, scale points 1 and 2 are indicative of a benign interaction between two objects that are separate and autonomous. Scale points 3 and 4 reflect a gradual loss of autonomy, highlighting dependency and narcissistic themes. They can be grouped together as reflecting a degree of a merged or "symbiotic" relationship. Levels 5, 6 and 7 reflect a loss of autonomy of one object, with increasing degrees of malevolence. A post hoc analysis of the data was performed by comparing the means across attachment groups of the frequency of each of these three new MOAS scoring categories: benign, symbiotic and malevolent. A similar method of grouping MOAS scale points is suggested by Moby and Giacono (in press). However, they used this grouping for proportional nonparametric analyses rather than the parametric tests used in the present study.

Table 7 shows the results of this analysis. As can be seen from the table, for scale points 1 and 2 (benign) and 3 and 4 (symbiotic), there were no significant differences among means for the attachment groups. On the scale point 5, 6 and 7 score (malevolent), there was a significant

difference between means ($p < .05$). A post hoc Sheffé test indicated that the mean for the dismissing of attachment group (D) was significantly higher than both the secure group and the preoccupied group, and that the secure group was not significantly different from the preoccupied group. Thus this finding suggests that the dismissing group D showed a greater number of malevolent MOAS responses.

Table 7

Post Hoc Comparison of Subjects' MOAS Scores among Three Attachment Classifications

<u>MOAS SCALE</u>	<u>Attachment Category</u>			df=2,38
	<i>F</i> n=18	<i>D</i> n=9	<i>E</i> n=12	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<u>F</u> value
BENIGN (1,2 scores)	5.06 (2.92)	4.78 (2.54)	4.25 (2.34)	.33
SYMBIOTIC (3,4 scores)	2.61 (1.82)	2.78 (1.92)	1.58 (1.56)	1.58
MALEVOLENT (5,6,7 scores)	1.56 (1.10)	2.89 (1.69)	1.42 (1.08)	4.32*

* $p < .05$

A further examination of the data revealed that within the D group, the greater portion of the responses were scale point 5 responses, indicating that while this group had more malevolent responses, they were not primarily in the more

pathological range indicated by 6 and 7 scores. Thus the finding suggests an overall tendency for the dismissing of attachment group to report a greater number of *moderately* malevolent object relations on the Rorschach test than either the securely attached group or the preoccupied group.

Due to the post hoc nature of this finding, which loses significance when the confidence level is adjusted for the overall number of tests run, its meaning must be interpreted with caution.

Summary of Results

Statistical tests of the original hypotheses found no significant relationships between subjects' attachment categories and their object representations as captured by the Rorschach. Thus none of the planned hypotheses were confirmed.

On one post hoc test using the MOAS scale, a significant difference was found between the means of the three attachment categories for the frequency of the malevolent scores (scale points 5, 6 and 7). It was found that the dismissing category had more malevolent responses than either the secure category or the preoccupied category. The secure category and the preoccupied category were not significantly different from one another. Although statistically significant at the .05 confidence level when taken in isolation, this post hoc finding loses significance

when adjustments are made for the overall number of tests that were performed.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

A. Introduction

This study examined whether representations of object relations as measured by the Rorschach were related in significant ways to an adult's attachment status as measured by the Adult Attachment Interview. The hypotheses were based on the assertion that the two underlying theories address related constructs. Prior empirical studies developed along similar theoretical lines, but using different measures, also suggested links between the theories. It was hoped that a significant relationship between the measures would help illuminate ways in which interactions with caretakers in childhood, focused through the lens of the child's own needs and fantasies, become represented in the adult's mind.

As described in the results section above, the tests of the hypotheses as originally planned and operationalized did not yield significant results. The developmental level and degree of autonomy of the object representations, as measured by the DACOS and the MOAS, were statistically similar for the subjects across their three groupings of secure, dismissing and preoccupied attachment. One post hoc test did show a significantly greater number of malevolent

responses on the MOAS for the dismissing group of subjects, when compared with the secure group and the preoccupied group. The significance of this trend in the data will be discussed below. However, it is the primary burden of this discussion section to explore why an empirical investigation of hypotheses resting on an elaborate theoretical base may not have born fruit.

When things do not work out as planned, as in the present study, there are three main areas to explore in searching for explanations:

- 1) The hypotheses may have been wrong.
- 2) There may have been problems with the sample characteristics, including bias in selection of subjects and insufficient sample size.
- 3) There may have been flaws in the measurement instruments, either in their design and appropriateness for the present study, or in their administration.

Regarding the Rorschach instruments, this was the first time these scales were used to measure personality differences within a normal adult population. In prior studies the scales discriminated well between groups of patients with different psychiatric diagnoses, as well as between the psychiatric groups and normal controls. The impairments in interpersonal functioning that are the hallmark of severe psychopathology reflect fairly gross impairments in the internal object world. But like the

first telescopes, which allowed better examination of the planets and major constellations--but left in darkness much else--these newer Rorschach scales may lack the capacity to discern the more subtle differences in object representations among attachment styles in a normal population. The following discussion will address the above considerations in the context of the findings for the individual hypotheses.

B. Discussion of findings

Hypothesis 1: Developmental level on the DACOS

The DACOS scale had been chosen to tap structural aspects of subjects' object relations representations in an effort to determine whether security of attachment was related to the degree of structural complexity of human representations seen on the Rorschach. The underlying rationale for this first hypothesis was that securely attached adults would have had, as children, greater interchange between their own internal worlds and those of their parents. When in proximity to the mother, the child was free to experience her full range of emotions, thoughts and fantasies with a minimum of anxiety. The child's secure mother was able to tolerate a fuller range of her own emotions, including love, anger, moments of dependency, as well as the ability to be alone. The child would have been invited into this rich and complex inner world, less often

rebuffed by the mother's defensive maneuvers. Mother could mirror her child, reflecting back a fairly accurate, validating picture of the child's experience (Fonagy et al., 1993b; Winnicott, 1960). The insecurely attached child, by contrast, would have had less anxiety-free space in which to play in the presence of the mother, less access to her mother's full range of balanced, modulated emotions. Consequently the child would have had a more difficult time coping with her own thoughts and feelings.

It was hypothesized that the result of this freer interchange would be reflected both in the affect world of the secure child, and cognitively in the structure of the Rorschach representations. Structurally this would have been evidenced by a difference in the complexity of the images. The dismissing adult, for example, having dampened a part of her affect world, might have had more stereotyped, bland images. The preoccupied adult, having had an inconsistent parental object, may have had less success in joining conflicting object representations into one whole, stable image. She thus might have had, as one possibility, fewer whole object representations.

The following two Rorschach responses to card III are illustrative of different developmental levels of representation. The following is from the protocol of a subject I will call Donna:

It could be two tribesmen playing drums, facing each other, dressed in black, drums are black. Little red

things are like headdress or feathers. The red object in the middle may be just light, not significant...at least to me not significant. [As if?] Like they're hearing some kind of pow-wow or ceremony.

This is a good form-level response that gets a high OR+ rating. It has whole human objects, elaborated by specifications of clothing, posture, sex, role; and their activity is mutually active, benevolent,² congruent with their role. Compare Faye's response to the same card:

Part of a lady, the top red things would be her hair. You can see her chin, neck and dress line. That's all.

This response is a part-object, sparsely elaborated, with no movement. The form level is poor, making it an OR- response.

As detailed in the results section, the hypotheses using the DACOS were not confirmed. The averaged developmental levels were the same overall between groups, and all groups showed a wide range of response types. The more highly developed response above was from Donna, who was scored as dismissing of attachment on the AAI. The second response was from Faye, a securely attached adult. And typically within one subject's protocol were responses with opposite valences and complexity. Here is a more highly developed response by Faye to card VII:

²Although the DACOS does include content dimensions in the summary scores, one post hoc test described in the results section--"degree of articulation"--assesses purely structural elements. This test as well showed equality among the means of the attachment groups.

Two female dancers in an Indian type of dance--Indian from India--and I think they're both pregnant. They're involved with each other, their hands are making Indian-like movements [she puts her hands out at her sides "Egyptian Style"]. The dresses are pulled in tight at the waist and the stomachs are knocking up against each other.

In order to consider the significance of the finding that in the structural realm, all three attachment groups showed an equal developmental level of their object representations, it will be worth considering the nature of the modes of representation tapped by the Rorschach and the AAI.

The task of the Rorschach is complex, and involves a number of modes of representation (Schachtel, 1966). The subject is asked, "What does it look like to you," which defines it as a task of perception. But the communication of the images to the tester is typically linguistic, or less frequently enactive, as in Faye's response above where she demonstrates "Indian-like" movements with her hands. The DACOS, however, is designed to evaluate the Rorschach responses not on the style of the verbalization but on the nature of the reported image itself. If Faye had been unable to find the word "Indian-like," and indicated the movement only with her hands, her representation still would have received a score for "posture" in the articulation category.

As discussed in the review of prior studies in chapter II section G, the difference in modes of representation

between the Rorschach and the AAI was considered an advantage in avoiding a possible confounding influence of a subject's verbal style. For example, in the Levine et al. (1991) study, the Krohn object relations scale was applied to the AAI and then compared to the AAI classifications. The same type of verbal coherency so crucial to determining the AAI classification may have unduly influenced the scoring of the Krohn scale. The Krohn scale was originally designed to rate dreams, which, it could be argued, rely heavily on image-based representations like the Rorschach.

However, as I will argue below, the current finding that the subjects grouped by attachment category had equal structural levels of Rorschach representations may highlight that in the cognitive realm, it may in fact be in the nuances of language where the differences lie. Prior studies that specifically compared object relations representations to attachment categories have used narratives for the object relations measure (e.g., Edwards, 1993; Levine et al., 1991; Levy et al., in press).

Is a picture worth a thousand words?

Diamond and Blatt (1994) point to the importance of language as a means of symbolizing affects in an adaptive way. They argue that cognitively, the ability to represent affectively charged, attachment-related experiences coherently is a developmental achievement. They refer to

the work of Horowitz (1978) to outline the epigenetic sequence of the modes of representation of thought. I will take a short detour to outline Horowitz's model.

Horowitz (1978) proposed that the development of modes of representation precedes through three stages. The first is the *enactive* mode, where movement dominates. As an example, a child reaching for the forbidden cookie jar might grimace and then grab one hand with the other--representing her mother's presence (Horowitz, 1978). The second stage is the *image* mode where, to use the same example, the child, rather than making bodily movements, has an image of her mother scolding her. This image can have a strong affective charge (fear, guilt), and may have auditory (mother's voice), olfactory (mother's perfume), gustatory (the cookie) and tactile (mother's restraining hand) components. The image mode is particularly effective in representing degree and quality of emotion with immediacy. The final stage is the *lexical* mode. Here the little girl, after having a yearning for a cookie, might have any number of thoughts, including "I'm a good girl, I follow mommy's rules." The lexical mode, because subject ("I") must be defined, forces the use of a self representation.

In Horowitz's view the progression is not only linear; increased lexical capability might help further organize imagistic thought. The three modes remain active and interactive throughout life. For example, one could listen

to someone describe a car accident (lexical mode), picture the scene (imagistic), which might then lead to a shudder (enactive). In the other direction an adult might learn to ski, then practice the bending motions in her living room (enactive), daydream about the movements, with all the emotions, sounds and smells of the slope (imagistic), and then describe the motions (lexical) if she were to teach someone else how to ski.

As we have seen, the subject's reporting of the Rorschach response may utilize all three modes of representation. However, the representation itself is primarily image-based.³ The structural subscales of the DACOS measure the complexity of object representations in this image-based mode, including enactive aspects contained within the image (e.g., posture and nature of movement).

We have seen in chapter II the importance of lexical coherence for assessing the adult's current state of mind regarding attachment on the AAI. Diamond and Blatt (1994) show a careful reading of Main et al.'s (1985) original validation study of the AAI, in order to highlight that it may be differences in the lexical mode, in contrast to the image or enactive modes, which become the marker for attachment status as the child matures. As part of Main's study, six-year-olds were asked to view photographs (image

³ Subjects do infrequently report dialogue between two human or animal representations.

mode) of families in which separations were depicted. The group of children who were rated as secure at 12 months in the Strange Situation (enactive mode), later at age six showed a much greater facility to use words to describe attachment-related experiences evoked by the photographs, when compared to the insecure groups. There were no differences in general language ability or fluency among the groups. It appeared to be a specific capacity to symbolize in language the emotionally complex, attachment-related scenario that distinguished the secure from insecure children.

The current finding suggests that in a normal population children and the adults they grow into have reached the same developmental level, in terms of the complexity of objects in the image mode of representation, regardless of attachment style. This lends support to the contention that in the *cognitive* realm, in a normal population, it may be specifically the linguistic level of symbolization--as opposed to the symbols in the image mode tapped by the Rorschach--that distinguishes a secure working model of attachment from an insecure one.⁴ The DACOS does

⁴A clear-cut demarcation between lexical and image modes of representation is artificial. It may be the case that for an adult, a thought expressed in words always has an image somewhere connected to it. Conversely, conscious awareness of an image may always carry with it some word representation. A detailed investigation of this would take the discussion too far afield. For the current discussion, when one or the other mode is referred to, it should be assumed that while one mode predominates, it does not

not address subtle nuance in language use, and thus does not appear to be a sensitive instrument for distinguishing attachment categories.

In sum, by highlighting the success of prior studies which rated the complexity of object representations in narratives, this finding adds to the developmental picture of what, cognitively, may help an adult achieve the most adaptive type of attachment style. It contributes to the underlying rationales for ongoing attachment and object relations research using narratives.

Hypothesis 2: The content of object relations interactions.

Two Rorschach scales were chosen in this study because of their sensitivity to different aspects of the representations. As we have seen, the DACOS taps most sensitively the structural complexity of the images. By contrast, the MOAS rates the content of human or animal representations: it examines what the humans or animals are doing. As I will examine in detail, the scale is particularly sensitive to the affect of the represented figures. In light of the previous discussion regarding modes of representation, it is worth considering whether the image mode would be a good means for assessing the ways a subject handles affect.

exclude the other.

We have seen in Main's work that securely attached children and adults have a good facility for translating affects into language--thus contributing to the subject's conscious awareness of her feelings. This is less so for the insecurely attached child or adult. The defensive maneuvers required by the dismissing subject, for example, to avoid *consciously* experiencing negative emotions are reflected in the inability coherently to put emotions into words. However, from a psychoanalytic perspective, *unconsciously* that affect world may yet be intensely animated. What is repressed does not disappear. If image-based thought predates the lexical mode, the *content* of the Rorschach images should be, in theory, a particularly rich means of assessing models of object relatedness that have been internalized early on in the adults' development.

As Horowitz (1978) suggests, images are free from the language constraints of specifying subject and object--and consequently they are free from some of the defensive operations used to avoid attributing unacceptable thoughts and feelings to the "I" or self. This may allow a more fluid interaction between objects, which may predate, in the developmental scheme, the consolidation of a self representation organized by language. As Horowitz states,

The fluidity and ambiguity of identification in image representation may be one reason that this system may have a greater escape from censorship than the lexical system. Other reasons may be the development of image systems before solidification of superego functions and

the relative privacy of a mode not given to easy communication. (Horowitz, 1978, p.91).

On the MOAS, autonomy refers to the freedom, at the most adaptive end of the scale, of both figures to be separate, independent and distinct. Toward the middle of the scale, the figures are dependent on one another, or are reflections of one another. Toward the less adaptive end of the scale, autonomy is compromised by one figure controlling, or at its worst, destroying the other. I will briefly refer to some of the underlying assumptions of the MOAS.

Affects are intertwined with degree of autonomy. The MOAS is most sensitive to aggression. This is particularly clear on scale points 5, 6 and 7, where hate or aggression in some form is driving one figure to hurt or control another. Images rated scale point 1 through 4 may be somewhat neutral or show love and affection, but they may also show aggression. For example, a scale point 1 response could be a representation of "two people heatedly arguing with one another over a political issue" (Tuber, 1992). The aggression here does not threaten the autonomy of either of the two people. The aggression is modulated and sublimated. The developmental background to this achievement is that for full separation/individuation (*autonomy* here) to take place, good and bad images of the mother would have been joined

into a single, constant object that could comfort the child in mother's absence (Kernberg, 1985; Mahler, 1975). In order for this to take place, aggression would have to become modulated enough so that it did not overwhelm the good object. It was hypothesized that insecurely attached adults would have had a more difficult time achieving this balanced internal object because of the difficulties encountered in sharing with their mothers the full range of affects when they were children.

As described in the results section, autonomy of the object representations as measured by the mean score, the single most adaptive score and the single least adaptive score failed to distinguish between attachment classifications. All groups showed the same *range* of benign and malevolent scores--scale point 1 was well-represented in all groups, and at the malevolent end of the scale the three groups had means falling between scale point 5 and 6. On the post hoc test, which grouped the seven scale points into three categories--benign, symbiotic and malevolent--there was a significantly higher *frequency* of malevolent scores for the dismissing group when compared with the secure and preoccupied groups.

I consider below some interpretations for the equality among groups of the single best score as well as the combined benign score in the post hoc test. I then consider the significant post hoc result for the malevolent scores.

Symbiotic scores (dependent and reflection) will be considered under the heading for hypotheses 3 and 4.

On the Rorschach one of the hallmarks of image representations as postulated by Horowitz--"...the relative privacy of a mode not given to easy communication (1978, p.91)"--becomes one of the difficulties in its interpretation. The Rorschach instructions, "What does this look like to you. What might this be?" asks specifically for the subject to perceive an image. It does not ask for a report of the feelings involved, or for the subject to tell a story about the images. Traditional methods of Rorschach scoring utilize stimulus characteristics of the inkblots themselves to make hypotheses about the subject's handling of affect. For example, certain cards have color in them; others, pronounced textures created by the ink. The accuracy of the responses to these cards and the frequency of a subject's explicitly naming color or texture have been used to evaluate a subject's handling of affect.

The MOAS scale is less dependent upon these types of inference. The response is scored solely on the content that is reported. Because so much of the affect and intent of the representations may be private to the subject, the special inquiry for a response with movement was added--"As if?" (Tuber, 1989)--to help elicit more content. The

following response to card VI is from the protocol of Faye, the secure subject from above:

A wicked witch. [Inquiry] Here's the profile of the wicked witch, the nose, the overhanging eyebrows. Here's her hand. She's riding on a broomstick. [As if?] She's up to no good, she's about to do some evil thing.

It takes the first, standard inquiry to elicit that it is a movement response, and then the special inquiry to elicit the evil intent to an implied other. This response earns a MOAS score of 5. Clearly, this inquiry must be done sensitively, and only when movement has been volunteered by the subject, to avoid leading the subject on. In this instance it helped elicit what was a private, affectively malevolent fantasy with which Faye had imbued this representation.

In general, malevolence seen in the 5, 6 and 7 score range, where an aggressive act by one object threatens the autonomy of another, is fairly easily represented, particularly at the extreme end. At the more adaptive end of the scale--points 1 and 2--there is a limit to the ability to represent a high level of autonomy.

Compare the following two responses to card III from the two subjects we met previously: Faye, a securely attached subject, and Donna, a dismissing subject. Faye:

Two waiters carrying empty trays at their sides. [inquiry] Wearing black tail coats, they have very rigid postures, looks like they're on duty. It looks like they've finished serving and are waiting back in the kitchen.

This response receives a MOAS score of 2, for parallel action--the two waiters are not threatening to one another, nor are they dependent on one another. At the same time there is no acknowledgement that they recognize one another as separate beings. Developmentally this could be likened to children's parallel play. Donna's response, which we already encountered above, achieves a MOAS 1 score:

It could be two tribesmen playing drums, facing each other, dressed in black, drums are black. Little red things are like head dress or feathers. The red object in the middle may be just light, not significant...at least to me not significant. [As if?] Like they're hearing some kind of pow-wow or ceremony.

What distinguishes this as a reciprocal, autonomous relationship is the phrase "facing each other." It is the words "each other" that imply two distinct, separate selves communicating.

It could be argued that qualifications for scale point 1 are not a very stringent test for a high level of autonomy. For a severely mentally ill population, however, such a level of mutual interaction might be an unusual achievement. But in this normal population there may be limited subtlety captured by the phrase "each other." This may well be the primary explanation for the finding that all three attachment groups had similar group means for their best score: all groups showed high numbers of 1 scores. In the post hoc measure as well, which grouped 1 and 2 scores

together ("benign" responses), the frequency means among groups was again equivalent.

Scale point 2, as we saw in Faye's response, shows two human objects in parallel, physically autonomous interaction. Scale point 1 makes a departure from the rest of the scale, because whereas scale points 2 through 7 rate primarily the *physical* autonomy of the representations, scale point 1 requires an indication of the *psychical* distinctness or autonomy of the two objects. It attempts to assess whether the mind of one object acknowledges the mind of another--the starting point for the capacity for empathy (Fonagy, 1994). And it is a lexical marker, most frequently the word, "each other", that is the tip-off to this higher level of autonomy in the representations. The MOAS, like the DACOS, is not designed to capture subtlety in the language realm. The special inquiry "as if" may be sufficient to indicate that a basic degree of autonomy is there, but it may not elicit enough information to do full justice to the representation. There may indeed be differences among attachment groups in degree of autonomy (and by implication capacity for empathy) but it appears that all three groups reached the scale's ceiling.⁵

⁵It is interesting to speculate whether the difficulty in assessing a degree of empathy is due to the privacy of the image during the Rorschach testing, or whether the image mode itself is capable of representing empathy. In other words, is there a limit to the ability of an image to *represent* empathy, without words? If empathy is an emotional response that could be bound with the image, then

In summary, on the basis of the data it seems fair to conclude that in this normal population all three attachment groups had achieved a fundamentally healthy level of object representations, as indicated by the scale point 1 representations. This adaptive level of object relations is reflected in the sample's overall high level of functioning indicated by their career achievement and ability to maintain committed, long-term relationships.

Other studies using object relations scales that rate narratives have supported the underlying theoretical assumption of the present hypothesis: that security of attachment is related to autonomy of object relations representations. The MOAS appears to lack the required degree of sensitivity at the most adaptive end of the scale to discern these differences in a normal population. The following discussion will consider the post hoc result suggesting that the MOAS may be more sensitive at the least adaptive end of the scale.

perhaps it is possible. For example, in Faye's image of the tribesmen there may be a whole host of feeling-tones distinguishing the two men and their reactions to one another. On the other hand, one might argue that a high degree of empathy, with the acknowledgement of two distinct selves, requires representation in language (Fonagy, 1994; Fonagy et al., 1993a; Fonagy et al., 1993b). In that case the paucity of lexical material that is generally elicited by the Rorschach makes the test limited for this assessment of object relations, regardless of type of scale.

The Post Hoc finding

The dismissing group showed a significantly higher mean than the other groups for the frequency of the least adaptive MOAS scores--scale points 5, 6 and 7 (see Table 7). The hypotheses had predicted that the insecure groups would have more malevolent representations. Thus the finding for the dismissing group was in the expected direction. It is surprising, however, that on a test that could sensitively distinguish at least one group from the others, the secure group and the preoccupied group had similar means. The following discussion will address first the elevated mean of the dismissing group. I will then consider the similarities between scores for the secure and preoccupied groups.

As outlined in the literature review, a difficulty in expressing "negative" emotion is one of the hallmarks of dismissing attachment in adults. The child who developed an avoidant attachment style learned that inhibiting distressing affects--anxiety, fear, sadness and anger--made it easier to stay close to the caretaker. These children and the adults they grow into are emotional "minimizers" (Cassidy, 1991; Slade & Aber, 1992). As we have seen on the AAI, the dismissing-of-attachment adult either downplays the importance of caretakers generally--repressing memories and the painful affects bound with them--or alternatively isolates specific unpleasant memories of parents from a

general idealized view of them. Underlying both of these defensive styles is the need to avoid the emotions underlying the experience of an unavailable, uncomfortable and nonempathic caretaker. From the attachment perspective it is likely that the child internalized a schema based on actual interactions with a withholding caretaker, perhaps punitive in response to the child's dependent needs. From the psychoanalytic perspective the internalizations would have been imbued as well with the child's own frustrated wishes and fantasies, and so might include anger at the caretaker and fantasies of retaliation.

In psychoanalytic theory what is repressed and dissociated does not disappear. And what is kept from consciousness cannot be reorganized, modulated or sublimated as the child grows into an adult. On the AAI the incoherency of the dismissing adult's account of childhood highlights strong defensive maneuvers. What is seen here in the Rorschach may be the content of at least one aspect of what the subjects are defending against--malevolence of one person against the other.

Although we can only tentatively interpret this post hoc finding, it suggests that in this narrowly defined area these two measures--the MOAS and the AAI--are addressing related constructs. The specific attachment-related representations of subjects scored from the AAI are reflected more generally in a person's unconscious object

relations, as seen on the open-ended task of the Rorschach. More specifically, from the attachment perspective, dismissing subjects tend to avoid negative affects. This is seen behaviorally in their restraint in expressing anger directly at others (Cassidy, 1994). Analyses on the AAI suggest that these subjects also attempt to keep negative affects from themselves, by keeping them out of consciousness. The post hoc results suggest that these subjects, possibly as a result of their greater success at repression, have a somewhat more malevolent unconscious object world.

Psychoanalytic theory postulates that unconscious affects will usually find some means of expression, however indirect. It would be interesting area of future exploration to measure defensive mechanisms (psychoanalytically defined) of dismissing subjects. It might be the case, for example, that dismissing subjects have a greater tendency to project aggression onto others, or that they express their anger in more passive-aggressive behaviors, when compared to subjects with other attachment styles.

If we are to give credence to the post hoc finding that the dismissing group had a greater number of malevolent object representations, then it would appear that the MOAS is a sensitive enough instrument to assess malevolence and lack of autonomy in this normal pool of subjects. We are

then left, however, with another finding that complicates matters: the other insecure group--preoccupied--had a mean frequency of malevolent scores that was equal not to the dismissing category, but rather to the secure category.

It had been hypothesized that *both* insecure groups would have had less autonomous object representations when compared to the secure group. It remains to be explained why the secure group and the preoccupied group might resemble one another. The key to this may lie in affective style, considered separately from security of attachment.

As we have seen, the underlying goal of an attachment strategy is to allow the child to stay close to the caretaker. The dismissing child used the strategy of minimizing her emotional displays. For the preoccupied adults, when they were ambivalent infants, it was the display of negative emotions that elicited responsive behavior from the caretaker--they were emotional "maximizers."

In terms of affective style, the distinctions between secure and insecure attachment are not so clearly delineated. Although the AAI assigns one of three main attachment styles, each subject is assigned to a subcategory as well. The subcategories suggest a broad continuum of functioning with more extreme forms becoming less adaptive. For the secure group, there are five subcategories: F_1 and F_2 share characteristics of the dismissing category; F_3 is

the most distinctly secure of the secure group; while the F_4 and F_5 categories share characteristics of the preoccupied group.

The infant attachment classifications from the Strange Situation have subcategories as well.⁶ On certain measures of emotional responding, $B_{1,2}$ (secure) sub-categories resembled the avoidant (dismissing) babies, while $B_{3,4}$ (secure) infants resembled the ambivalent (preoccupied) infants--more than the two secure subgroup clusters resembled one another (Frodi & Thompson, 1985, cited in Frank, 1992). This indicated that in some respects, styles of minimizing or maximizing emotions could be more distinctive than security of attachment. Frank (1992) as well, in her study comparing infant classifications to mother's Rorschach responses (described above in chapter II, section G) found that dividing the groups of infants into minimizing or maximizing affective style, rather than by security of attachment, showed significant correspondence with one of her Rorschach measures.

These considerations suggested an examination of the subcategories of the secure group in the present study. Table 4 shows the breakdown of the secure group of the current sample into subcategories. Based on a correspondence between infant classifications and AAI

⁶The secure infant group (B) has only four subcategories, compared to the five subcategories of secure attachment on the AAI.

classifications, the subjects were grouped into emotional minimizers (D and F_{1-2}) and emotional maximizers (F_{3-5} and E)⁷. As can be seen from Table 8, 16 of the 18 secures were toward the preoccupied end of the continuum.

Table 8

Subjects' Attachment Classifications Grouped by Affective Style

Minimizers n= 11			Maximizers n= 28			
D	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃	F ₄	F ₅	E
9	2	0	6	9	1	12

A post hoc independent t-test was calculated, grouping the subjects into minimizing and maximizing affective styles and comparing them using the frequency of malevolent scores of the MOAS. The results can be seen in table 9. When compared to the post hoc ANOVA under discussion ($F(2,38)=4.32, p<.05$), this t-test becomes more highly significant. Thus the similarity between affective styles of the secure group and preoccupied groups may account for

⁷The F_3 subcategory was grouped with F_{4-5} following Main & Goldwyn's (1988) manual for the AAI, which assigns expected conjunctions of the five AAI secure subcategories with the four secure infant subcategories. Even if the F_3 subcategory is kept apart from assignment to either a minimization or maximization group, the sample shows a high number of F_{4-5} subjects, weighting the secures toward the pre-occupied group.

the similarity in their means for frequency of malevolent scores.

Table 9

Post Hoc Comparison of MOAS Malevolent Scores between Subjects Grouped by Affective Style

<u>MOAS SCALE</u>	<u>Affective Style</u>		
	Minimizers	Maximizers	
	n=11	n=28	df= 37
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	<u>t</u> value
MALEVOLENT (5,6,7 scores)	2.82 (1.54)	1.43 (1.07)	3.22 *

*p< .004

These considerations are suggestive that the MOAS may have discerned differences in general affective style of expressing negative affects, rather than security of attachment.⁸ Visualizing the secure group in the center (as in Table 8) we can see a continuum of affective style which trails off at both ends into insecure attachment. It may

⁸This question will have to be answered by future studies with larger N sizes. Looking at Table 8, one can see that there are only two "minimizing" secure subjects (F₁ category). Future studies would need equal representation in the subcategories, so that tests of significance could be run comparing MOAS scores with subjects grouped both by attachment category and affective style, and then compared to see which grouping accounted for a greater portion of the variance.

take less subtlety for a Rorschach scale to discern general affective style of managing aggression than to measure a degree of autonomy that can distinguish between secure and insecure attachment.

It had been hypothesized that security of attachment is a reflection of autonomy in the object world, indicated, in part, by the ability to represent human or human-like objects that are distinct and empathic. This in theory is addressed by the more adaptive end of the MOAS. We have seen that the MOAS lacked the ability at the adaptive (benign) end of the scale to distinguish among groups, so we were unable to confirm this hypothesis. The current finding highlights that affective style is not synonymous with attachment style. It must be left to future studies to investigate the intricate ways in which affective style and security of attachment are related to one another.

To briefly revisit the discussion above regarding the handling of aggression in the dismissing group, it may appear paradoxical that the newly defined maximizing group, which includes insecurely attached maximizers (the preoccupied group), should have had a lower mean number of malevolent object relations representations. After all, they are defined by showing a great deal of negative emotion. From the attachment perspective this might be addressed by Cassidy's (1991) assertion that minimizers feel more than they show; while, conversely, maximizers show more

than they feel. The display of negative emotion, at least for preoccupied maximizers, may have become one of the main currencies of interpersonal exchange. Yet like the histrionic displays from someone with an hysterical character style, the affect may lack depth.

The psychoanalytic perspective, as has been previously discussed, might postulate that the maximizers, whether secure or insecure, allow anger to be consciously felt and expressed. Minimizers, by contrast, keep negative affects repressed and unvented, leaving the affects more subject to projection onto others. This greater tendency to project aggression appears to have been tapped by the MOAS.

D. Hypotheses 3 and 4: Symbiotic responses

The hypotheses for MOAS scale points 3 and 4 asserted that the insecure categories would have a higher frequency of "symbiotic" responses. The preoccupied group it was thought would have a greater number of dependent "leaning scores," reflecting the dependency implicit in the preoccupied adult's continued enmeshment with attachment figures. It was proposed that scale point 4 scores--reflection responses--would be more prevalent in both the dismissing and preoccupied subjects. A greater number of 4 responses it was thought might betray the unmet need for affirming mirroring that was inconsistently available from the parents of these adults, when they were children.

As examples, consider a scale point 4 response to card I from Donna, the dismissing subject we met earlier:

Looks like it could be an animal on a mirror so you can see the reflection... so maybe it's walking on ice, that's why you see the reflection.

and one from Faye, a secure subject, to card VII:

A lady pushing open a door to go into a department store.... Yes, it's a glass door because her reflection is so clear.

As an example of scale point 3 responses, consider the following two from Elaine, a preoccupied subject:

Looks playful, because of hair flying, these look like noses. If not sisters they're very good friends, there's something alike about them. I guess the way they're wrapped together, looking straight at each other. There's a kind of mutual dependency--they can lean into each other.

and:

I think there's a figure in here that's pulling or helping some fellow creatures up. Kind of a helping hand. Some sense here that all the elements are pulling together, trying to transcend. These animals are climbing up, and this creature of the forest is pulling the other ones.

As described in the results section, there were no differences between attachment groups for the frequencies of these two scale points when analyzed separately, as well as when grouped together in the post hoc comparisons. Although there are no normative data for adult populations, it is my impression that if compared with other samples, the current sample would have a high number overall of these scale points. The strong representation of these scale points

across groups, as well as the specific, well-defined nature of the images, makes it likely that if there were a difference among groups, it would have emerged. In order to consider a possible explanation for this negative finding, it will be helpful to take a detour to consider an important aspect of the current population sample: pregnancy.

This study did not set out to ask or answer questions about the effect of pregnancy on attachment status or Rorschach responses. The study's inability to address this question, having neither nonpregnant controls, nor follow-up measures with the same subjects after pregnancy, can be considered one of its major weaknesses. It was hoped that by taking a cross-sectional moment in the subject's life, the focused question of the present study could nonetheless be addressed. Underlying this were two assumptions that bear scrutiny:

- 1) Both IWMs and object relations representations as measured by the AAI and Rorschach are stable over time, regardless of stress.
- 2) If internalized object relations are not stable under the stress of pregnancy, then changes in object relations representations (the dependent variable) would vary in attachment-specific ways.

The rationale for the second assumption is that IWMs (the independent variable) have been considered to be highly stable in adulthood barring unusual mutative experiences.

The overarching pregnancy project had designed a control to measure stability of the AAI classifications: a second AAI was administered to subjects fourteen months after their child was born. The data are not yet available for the second set of AAIs. The following speculative discussion will make the assumption that postpregnancy AAIs will show a high degree of concordance with the pregnancy AAIs used in the present study. Preliminary data from a similar pregnancy study supports this view (Dominique Treboux, personal communication, 1996).

No postpregnancy Rorschach tests were administered to the present sample, so the stability of Rorschach object relations representations during pregnancy will remain unknown until addressed by future studies. However, object relations theorists, like attachment theorists, generally consider an adult's internal object world to be relatively stable. The relative difficulty psychotherapists find in helping adult clients change relationship patterns can attest to this stability.

Psychotherapy can cause a change in object representations, however. A study by Kavanaugh (1985) found that a course of psychotherapy in a clinical sample was related to a change in their object relations representations on the Rorschach. Subjects tested pre and post psychotherapy on the Rorschach scored with both the MOAS and DACOS had subtle changes in their object relations

scores, resulting in higher developmental level on the DACOS and more benign scores on the MOAS. And as we have seen in the original DACOS study by Blatt et al. (1976a), object representations became increasingly complex from early adolescence to adulthood. Like the period of adolescence and the mutative processes in psychotherapy, pregnancy is a potentially momentous developmental period for a woman (Benedek, 1959; Bibring, 1959). Pregnancy involves major physiological and emotional upheavals. It could be argued that pregnancy is both a strong enough stress to cause transient effects on the Rorschach,⁹ as well as being the beginning of a period of growth sufficiently mutative to cause longstanding object-relational changes.

The design of the measures as well may make object relations representations as measured by the Rorschach more susceptible to stress-related effects than the AAI. Unlike the AAI, which keeps the subject focused on attachment specific memories, the Rorschach is an open-ended, ambiguous task. Ungrounded in specific historical event schemas, the subject on the Rorschach may be freer to regress to more fluid, "primary process" experiences.

It might be expected then, that a pregnant sample would show more regressive themes in response to the emotional

⁹A study by Tuber et al. (1989) found that in children, anticipation of surgery affected their MOAS scores, making them more malevolent. Children's object-relations representations, however, might be expected to be less stable than those of an adult.

upheaval of pregnancy. Relevant to MOAS scale point 3, issues of dependency may be reawakened by pregnancy, with mothers' envisioning the current dependency of the fetus and future dependency of the child. These fantasies could reawaken the mother's own early experiences of dependency. Similarly with scale point 4 responses, seeing more images of reflection could be a result of the mother now having another person inside her. She has now literally become two rather than one (Frank et al., 1994), sparking unconscious fantasies of sameness, difference and reflections of herself.

It had been hypothesized--without regard to the state of pregnancy--that the dismissing group and the preoccupied group would have a higher number of scale point 3 and 4 responses than the secure group. I would like to suggest that the period of pregnancy might have affected the secure group in ways that made it look more like the insecure groups on these measures.

A study cited in the literature review (Chapter II section G) by Frank et al. (1994) examined a subset of 25 Rorschachs used in the present study and compared the ratings of the Holt adaptive regression scale for the Rorschach with the mother's infant's attachment status at 14 months after birth. The Holt scale is based on psychoanalytic ego psychology and does not rate object relations representations per se, but rather any

libidinally-charged Rorschach response, which may include object representations or not. The Holt scale measures the success with which a subject can adaptively regress "in the service of the ego": it compares the degree to which primary-process material (responses with sexual or aggressive content) fits the perceptual demands of the blot (i.e., the form level of the blot). Mothers of securely attached infants were able more easily to regress in the service of the ego. They also found that mothers of secure infants had a higher rate of pregnancy-related material in their responses, suggesting that they were better able to allow into consciousness the emotionally charged images evoked by pregnancy. A number of these pregnancy responses are scored MOAS scale point 3.

It may be that the ability for secure subjects to regress adaptively may have caused them to have more MOAS symbiotic responses than they would have had in a non-pregnant state. It is possible that the insecure groups, less flexible in their defenses, maintained their normal level of these type of Rorschach responses. Thus the secure group's mean frequency of these less autonomous MOAS scores might have been "lowered" down to the level of the insecure groups. This speculation could only be addressed by a future study with a pre and or postpregnancy Rorschach administration.

The more general point to be made here is that the emotionally turbulent period of pregnancy may have affected secure and insecurely attached subjects in unpredictable ways. This may have obscured differences in their object relations representations that would have been evident in a less emotionally charged period of a subject's life. This might apply not only to the hypotheses under immediate consideration here, but to all the object relations representations evaluated in this study as well.

E. Limitations of the Study

There are a number of limitations to the study, as follows:

As addressed directly above, the sample consisted of pregnant women without nonpregnant controls. As there are no prior studies that have examined the effects of pregnancy on Rorschach responses, it remains impossible to assess the effects of pregnancy in this study. Future studies would have either a pre or postpregnancy administration of both the Rorschach and AAI.

The implications of the study cannot be generalized to populations other than primiparous middle-class white women. As pregnancy was not a primary focus of the present study, the same design might be used with a nonpregnant sample, administering the measures to both men and women.

The sample was not randomly drawn from the population of primiparous middle-class white women in the U.S. Women had to volunteer considerable time and effort to participate in the study, thus showing unusual motivation to explore pregnancy-related issues. This may have caused unknown effects in the study, particularly for the dismissing group of subjects. Given their tendency to downplay the importance of attachment relationships, it might have been an uncharacteristic sample that showed the motivation to involve themselves in a psychological research project on pregnancy.

The sample size was small and had unequal group sizes. This provided extremely limited statistical power. Relationships might be found among the same measures in a study using a larger sample size with a more equal distribution among attachment groups.

Although scorers for the Rorschach scales were blind to the attachment status of the subjects, they were aware of the overall aims of the study, which is a potential source of bias. Future studies ideally would have all scorers blind to the aims of the study.

F. Summary and Concluding Remarks

The aim of this study was to help elucidate areas of convergence between object relations and attachment theories. The lack of significant statistical relationships

among measures precluded an empirical verification of relationships among specific object relations characteristics and attachment styles. The study did raise some questions regarding modes of representation as well as highlighting strengths and weaknesses of the measures. The difference between image-based representation and lexical representation--which are emphasized by the measures themselves--emerged as an important area of exploration.

The discussion of the DACOS measure suggested that relationships in the cognitive realm between Internal Working Models of attachment and object relations representations might be found in language rather than the image-based representations of the Rorschach. All three attachment groups had equally complex Rorschach images of humans. This adds empirical support to the contention that in the image mode of representation, attachment style does not reflect differing developmental levels. This could be a useful addition to the underlying rationales for ongoing attachment-object relations research using narratives.

The post hoc finding that the dismissing group had a greater number of malevolent responses than either the preoccupied group or the secure group suggested that in the management of negative affect, the AAI and MOAS are tapping related representations. The dismissing group--or possibly emotional "minimizers" more generally--had a greater tendency to project aggression onto their Rorschach images.

This should add further encouragement for future research regarding affect management. Psychoanalytic theories of defense--such as projection, repression, isolation of affect--add richness and complexity to the understanding of affect displays observed by attachment researchers. Observations of affective style in children, which are reflected in the AAI, add empirical data to long-standing psychoanalytic formulations of character style, and underlying unconscious object relations. It must be left to future empirical studies to refine the detailed points of convergence.

Limitations were found in the MOAS pointing to a lack of subtlety at the adaptive end of the scale for use in a normal adult population. Other content scales for the Rorschach may prove in the future to be more subtle when applied in this context. The MOAS remains a valuable scale, however, in that it is highly sensitive to pathology. As an example in the current sample, scale point 7 scores, which are often considered pathognomic of significant mental illness, were found in only four of the protocols, two of them preoccupied and of two of them dismissing.¹⁰ It is my

¹⁰Two examples, to card III and IV, respectively:

These are insect arms, these are the eyes, this is the mouth, the body--leaving a wake of blood and destruction in its path (subject laughs)."

and:

It could also be a hurricane or a tornado. [Inq] Well, it looks chaotic. The texture makes it look like the winds are blowing up the dust and dirt, making the air very black."

clinical impression that these four protocols were among the approximately five overall (Arietta Slade, personal communication, 1996) that evidenced significant character pathology.¹¹

A main focus of this study has been on object relations *representations* on the Rorschach. The underlying rationale for the MOAS and DACOS scales is that internalized object representations serve as a template for guiding a person's interpersonal life. They are not, however, the only data provided by the Rorschach. These object relations representations were a subset of a person's overall Rorschach responses, which typically include all types of animate and inanimate objects. The entire Rorschach protocol provides information about how the subject approaches the world, including how he or she might relate to real people--objects--in the external world.

A rich area for future research using the present data would be an exploration of thought-disorder responses compared to attachment categories. Evaluation of thought-disordered responses includes aspects of the coherence of the subject's verbalization. In light of the above

¹¹Although not statistically significant, the finding that the scale point 7 scores appeared only in protocols of insecurely attached subjects is consistent with research suggesting that insecure adults are at higher risk for mental illness (van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 1996).

discussion regarding the defenses operating between emotionally charged image-based thoughts and language, thought-disordered responses may open a particular window into the interaction of thought process and attachment style.¹²

Traditional measures on the Rorschach evaluate the entire Rorschach record. In addition to human or animal representations, the protocol is evaluated on measures assessing ego/cognitive functions, reality testing, introversion/extroversion and emotional reactivity, among others. All these aspects of character style provide rich areas for the conversation between psychoanalytic and attachment researchers. As we have seen, work by Frank et al. (1994) has highlighted a connection between ego flexibility and attachment style.

¹² Consider the following response of Donna, a dismissing subject, to Card X:

Maybe something dancing. The greenish part could be woman's dress--it's being held out. There's two of them. Where the head would be she's pretending to be a dragon. Here's fire coming out of her mouth. I guess that's not a common response.

This initially good form level response of a woman's dress becomes spoiled and confused as another percept, the malevolent dragon, is unconvincingly blended into the first part. Notable in the response is the peculiar language: "Where the head would be she's pretending to be a dragon." This incoherent verbalization made in an effort to put together incongruent percepts might be indicating a breakdown in the ability of language to help organize the intrusion of the affectively-charged dragon. A pilot study by Slade et al. (1992), using 15 of the current Rorschach protocols, suggested that there may be a higher incidence of thought disorder responses for the dismissing subjects.

Attachment researchers and object relations theorists took divergent roads many years ago, perhaps to their own benefit. But it was inevitable that they would come back in touch with one another. Object relations theorists, rich with metapsychological speculations regarding development, have gained new grounding over the past decades from infant research generally, which includes attachment research. Attachment researchers have had an increasing need to develop their theories of representation and affect management, to help make sense of their exciting behavioral findings. This mutually enriching dialogue is still in its infancy.

Our past relationships live on in the present, in our rich imaginations. And although poets and philosophers have remarked through the ages on the lasting influence of childhood, it speaks to the awesome complexity of our mental life that we have made only the very first steps in the empirical investigation of our internal representations. It is hoped that both through the questions raised discussing the theoretical underpinnings of the measures, as well as the flaws that emerged in the design, this study will provide guidance and spark new ideas for future researchers working collaboratively between disciplines.

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