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2011

The Harsh Sting of Rejection: Rejection Sensitivity, Attachment Styles, Autobiographical Memory, and Why Some Feel the Sting More Than Others

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The Harsh Sting of Rejection: Rejection Sensitivity, Attachment Styles, Autobiographical

Memory, and Why Some Feel the Sting More Than Others

A thesis presented by

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To the Department of Psychology

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts

Connecticut College

New London, Connecticut

April, 2011

Acknowledgements

I would first and foremost like to thank my advisor, Professor Jefferson Singer. As my major advisor as well as my thesis advisor, he has always presented me with support and enthusiasm for my decisions and ideas. His intelligence and knowledge on these topics are invaluable and helped me challenge myself and learn and grow through this experience.

I would like to thank my readers, Professor Stuart Vyse and Professor Jennifer Gorman, for taking the time to provide me with feedback on this project. I would also like to thank Professor Joan Chrisler for mentoring me my junior year in the seminar class and providing valuable feedback on earlier sections of the thesis and helping me to formulate my ideas. I would like to thank Professor Singer's research group and in particular Mary Gover, Sarah Lamer, and Kathy Bentley for serving as second, third, and fourth raters and coding rejection memories in this study.

I would like to thank my family, friends, and Jamison Hermann for all of their wonderful encouragement and love throughout everything. I am lucky to have such a wonderful support system who helps me get through the stressful times and who celebrates the good times with me as well. Thank you all for listening to my various rants about my thesis research and being so engaging and genuinely interested in talking about it with me!

Abstract

Rejection sensitivity is the disposition to anxiously expect, readily perceive, and intensely react to rejection (Downey & Feldman, 1996). When highly RS people are rejected, they typically react with hostility and aggression against those who caused the perceived rejection and their intimate relationships are challenging because of this. College-age women and men (N=160) recorded three autobiographical memories of rejection, completed the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (RSQ), Relationship Questionnaire (RQ) to measure attachment styles, the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) to measure their overall happiness with their lives, and the Thinking About Life Experiences (TALE) questionnaire to measure how the participants used their rejection memories (either the self, directive, or social function). The three rejection memories were coded for themes in specificity, integration (meaning-making), and redemption or contamination. It was found that participants with high levels of rejection sensitivity rated their rejection memories to be significantly more important (p = .014), more negative (p < .001), less positive (p = .027), and more frequently thought about (p < .001) than participants with low levels of rejection sensitivity. Participants high in rejection sensitivity used the self (p = .004) and social (p = .005) functions of memory and had more specific (p = .030) and contamination (p = .025) and less redemption (p = .026) memory themes than participants low in rejection sensitivity. Participants with high rejection sensitivity had significantly lower satisfaction with life than participants low in RS (p < .001). These results indicate that the way highly rejection sensitive individuals respond and interpret their rejection memories strongly affects the way their sensitivity to rejection forms and thus their relationships with other people.

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The Harsh Sting of Rejection: Rejection Sensitivity, Attachment Styles,

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- *"It's not you, it's me. I'm sorry, but it's over."*

- *"Although your credentials are impressive, we are unable to offer you a position in this year's program. Due to the number of applications we received, we have had to reject applicants who in prior years might have been accepted into the program."*

- *"It is with sincere regret that I write to tell you that the Committee on Admissions has completed its selection of the class entering in September 2010, and has not been able to offer you a place."*

These types of statements each have the same message: rejection. No matter how much the harsh message is softened with apologies, regret, or excuses, the people reading these statements all have the same feeling of being rejected. We all are rejected at one point or another in our lives, whether it is by a person, a school, a sports team, an exclusive club, a prospective employer, or something or someone else significant to us. Rejection and coping with rejection are inevitable aspects of our social lives, but how well we cope with it depends on a myriad of factors. Some people may be able to easily overcome a rejection, but others may react in ways that can undermine their well-being and their intimate relationships.

What is Rejection Sensitivity?

Rejection Sensitivity is the disposition to anxiously expect, readily perceive, and intensely react to rejection (Downey & Feldman, 1996; Romero-Canyas, Downey, Berenson, Ayduk, & Kang, 2010a). It is easy to see how the threat of experiencing rejection is what rules rejection sensitive individuals' lives. Their involvement and interactions with family, friends, and even strangers, as well as their choice of activities, hobbies, and interests can and

will be affected by this anticipated fear of rejection. In highly rejection sensitive (HRS) people, the threat or actual experience of rejection causes extreme stress in their daily lives. When HRS people are rejected, they typically react with hostility and aggression against the agents of the perceived rejection. Not everyone shows the same intensity or behavioral manifestation of the reaction, but a feeling of hostility persists. Individuals high in RS selectively attend to cues of rejection and are more likely to experience those cues as more physiologically threatening (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010a).

The "sensitivity" portion of the RS model refers to individuals' heightened awareness in regard to their perception of possible rejection. Romero-Canyas et al. (2010a) described three components of this awareness. First, the person has a heightened vigilance for indicators of rejection and is on the constant lookout for signs of social rejection. Second, the person is able to detect differences between signals of rejection and other types of signals that occur in her or his social environment. Lastly, a HRS person's sensitivity occurs as a kind of "allergic reaction" to rejection, where he or she is able to mobilize his or her defensive resources quickly and respond forcefully through aggression or hostility. Activation of the RS system orients and prepares the individual to detect cues of social threat, to use his or her prior experiences to determine if the danger is personal, and to be ready to act to avoid the danger through self-defense or escape (Downey, Mougios, Ayduk, London, & Shoda, 2004). Highly RS people perceive more threat when the situation apparently or potentially involves the self, and even simply thinking about rejection makes people high in RS feel aggression (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010a).

Geraldine Downey and her colleagues, mostly from Columbia University, are the leading researchers on rejection sensitivity and have conducted extensive research on the

topic. Downey and Feldman (1996) created the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (RSQ) to assess people's generalized expectations and anxiety about whether intimate others will reject or accept them. Downey and her colleagues' recent overview on the topic discussed rejection sensitivity as a defensively motivated system that results from past rejection experiences (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010a). They described the rejection sensitivity system as a biological mechanism designed to defend the self from rejection and to maintain healthy social connections with others. The RS system is present to help the individual by triggering a quick defensive response when a social threat exists; however, this system becomes maladaptive once it is activated indiscriminately. Rejection sensitivity has been found to be a unique individual difference variable that is not redundant with measures of introversion, neuroticism, self-esteem, general attachment style, depression, social anxiety, or social avoidance (Downey & Feldman, 1996). However, co-involvement of these elements may cause a heightened experience of dissatisfaction for individuals high in RS.

The "Vicious Cycle" and Self-Fulfilling Prophecy of RS

Psychologist Karen Horney (1937), in the *Neurotic Personality of Our Time,* described a vicious cycle of anxiety about rejection. Those people anxious about rejection respond with anger to what they perceive as a rejection, but also to the mere possibility or anticipation of a rejection. Individuals high in RS have also been found to perceive more rejection from others, and therefore may respond to ambiguous signals from others as signs of negativity (Downey & Feldman, 1996). Because of their specific sensitivity, HRS individuals are likely to show apparently contradictory behavior toward their significant others. As an attempt to avoid the threat of rejection from their partners, HRS individuals tend to be attentive and accommodating at first, but if they feel that the rejection will occur,

or if it has already occurred, they are likely to lash out either in extreme hostility and negativity or in extreme withdrawal (Downey, Freitas, Michaelis, & Khouri, 1998a).

For example, a new romantic partner who is trying to appear cool and distant may cause the HRS individual to perceive this as possible rejection and consequently to withdraw or respond negatively. When HRS individuals react in hostile or aggressive ways because of their fear, this elicits actual rejection from their partners, which thus reinforces the HRS individuals' anxious expectations that rejection is an unavoidable and uncontrollable aspect of their lives. Thus begins the potential for a feedback loop that leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where the rejection sensitive individual caused the very outcome that he or she feared most (Downey & Feldman, 1996). Once RS is present within a person, the feared consequence of rejection itself often becomes inevitable (Pietrzak, Downey, & Ayduk, 2005).

Martson, Hare, and Allen (2010) have also found support for negative consequences of rejection sensitivity. Over a 3-year longitudinal study, it was found that rejection sensitivity in late adolescents was linked to a relative increase in depressive and anxiety symptoms. This was found even after accounting for the teens' baseline levels of social competence (Martson, Hare & Allen, 2010). In another study, Galliher and Bentley (2010) found support for the rejection sensitive individuals interpreting their actions more negatively and thus leading them to compromise their close relationships. Using a video recall procedure with 92 adolescent romantic couples, higher rejection sensitivity scores were related to higher aggression levels and lower relationship satisfaction (Galliher & Bentley, 2010).

How is a High Level of Rejection Sensitivity Formed?

Romero-Canyas et al. (2010a) developed a dynamic, process-oriented model of RS based on two main assumptions. The first assumption is that "acceptance-rejection is a privileged dimension of information processing that reflects the fact that humans need each other for survival" (p. 120). This posits that human co-existence is infused with the desire to gain acceptance and avoid rejection from one another, and that these remain as powerful motivational forces when people interact or even plan to interact with another person. The prospect of social connection can appear daunting because seeking acceptance from others means opening oneself up to the threat of rejection. The people who have the closest connection to an individual have the most power to cause painful rejection of her or him. The second assumption of this RS model is that rejection sensitivity is a product of our biopsychosocial history, and that humans have learned through experience to expect either acceptance or rejection. This implies that rejection anxiety may be situation specific and that people may learn to expect rejection from certain individuals or groups but to expect acceptance from others (Levy, Ayduk, & Downey, 2001). This expectation of rejection may manifest itself more specifically, such as a child anticipating rejection from one parent but not the other, or more broadly, such as a woman fearing discrimination from a stereotypically male-dominated workforce.

The Romero-Canyas et al. (2010a) model of RS is based in Mischel and Shoda's (1995) Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS) framework, which is concerned with understanding how personality processes surface in specific "Person x Situation" interactions. According to the CAPS framework, a person's behavior varies across situations, and this reflects that person's efforts to make sense of his or her experiences. This model could help explain why certain situations elicit a stronger than usual or a heightened reaction

of hostility or withdrawal from a HRS individual. These individual differences are key to understanding how rejection sensitivity is formed, maintained, and expressed. During childhood and formative years, experiencing rejection from family, friends, peers, teachers, or any other influential person may cause an anxious expectation that will be re-experienced in interactions with other similar people much later on. Romero-Canyas et al. (2010a) explained that people learn to associate rejection with certain situations and cues that then act as triggers that begin to activate the anxious expectation of rejection. Some experiences that may generate rejection sensitivity in individuals include exposure to family violence, emotional neglect, harsh discipline, and conditional love by parents (Downey, Bonica, & Rincon, 1999; Harper, Dickinson, & Welsh, 2006). Several studies have also supported the claim that authoritarian parenting styles increase levels of rejection sensitivity in offspring (Baumrind, 1991; Downey & Feldman, 1996; Erozkan, 2009). Prior research has suggested that rejection expectancies are formed as a result of repeated rejections from significant others (Feldman & Downey, 1994). Once the expectancy for rejection is formed in a person, this framework gets activated in any situation where rejection by a significant other is possible. This causes a hyper-vigilance for rejection cues and makes it more likely for the person to perceive ambiguous behavior as an act of intentional rejection.

Feldman and Downey (1994) explored whether the beginnings of anxious expectations of rejection lie in experiences of rejection from parents. They found that the participants who had been exposed to frequent and severe family violence during childhood anxiously expected rejection from current relationships. In a longitudinal study, Downey and her colleagues examined rejection experiences of fifth, sixth, and seventh graders through the Children Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (CRSQ), a children's version of the RSQ (Levy

et al., 2001). The children's primary caregiver responded to a questionnaire that assessed her or his use of hostile and rejecting behavior toward the child. A year later, the children completed the CRSQ again. It was found that primary caregivers' reports of harsh parenting predicted an increase in their children's defensive expectations of rejection. These data support a link between exposure to parenting styles that communicate rejection and the development of rejection sensitivity.

Highly RS Individuals in Romantic Relationships

High levels of RS have been linked to a slower entry into romantic relationships and fewer such relationships during the college years. College students high in RS are also prone to more distress and social avoidance, and these aspects were reported independently from symptoms of borderline personality disorder and depression. The defense processes associated with RS may manifest in different forms depending on the stage of the relationship and the threat cue in question (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010a). Therefore, a first date may result in a highly RS individual avoiding rejection by being attentive or by hiding facts about her or himself. But once these individuals are rejected by their dates, they may react in forms of aggression and hostility, such as sarcastic comments or attempts to damage the date's reputation. This course of action links back to the concept of a self-fulfilling prophecy for HRS individuals. For example, hiding or distorting facts about oneself may come across badly to a potential partner, which might therefore lead to an actual rejection.

Ayduk, Downey, Testa, Yen, and Shoda (1999) used a daily diary method to gain a more naturalistic understanding of how RS affects people's relationships. The researchers asked dating college couples to complete a daily diary for 28 days. It was found that, although interpersonal conflict was equally frequent among low and high RS individuals,

those higher in RS showed greater relationship conflict on days following feelings of rejection. Behaviors that resulted from the rejection included losing one's temper in a partner interaction; insulting, swearing, or yelling at the partner; saying something spiteful; and threatening to end the relationship or to "get back at the partner" for perceived wrongs. This phenomenon was not evident among the individuals low in RS (Ayduk et al., 1999). This study is indicative of the likelihood that high RS people often get in more conflicts with their romantic partners when they feel rejected than low RS people do.

Kang et al. (2009) studied cohabitating couples in the 3 weeks preceding one partner's completion of the bar exam. Each evening, participants were asked to record their feelings about the relationship and indicate whether they had sought and received proper support from their partner. It was found that, on days when participants sought support from their partner but did not receive it, those high in RS evaluated the relationship more negatively than did those low in RS. In addition, Downey et al. (1998a) found that couples that include one highly rejection sensitive person are nearly three times more likely to break up within a year than are those couples without a rejection sensitive person. All of this research on rejection sensitivity shows clearly how detrimental RS can be for the person and that person's relationships.

Is RS a Permanent Condition?

Supportive relationships would logically be expected to be at least somewhat effective in counteracting expectations of rejection. London, Downey, Bonica, and Paltin (2007) found preliminary evidence for this in a study with an early adolescent sample of children first entering into middle school. Peer likeability of boys and girls (as measured by peer nominations) predicted a reduction in anxious rejection expectations over a 4-month

period. Kang (2006) examined how positive relationships affect RS in college students (see Romero-Canyas et al., 2010a). Anxious expectations of rejection were assessed at the beginning of students' first, second, and third years of college. The participants who reported more satisfying relationships had a decrease in RS over time, and the participants who reported less satisfying relationships did not significantly change in their levels of RS. These results may indicate the power of forming strong, healthy, supportive relationships with others to affect one's well-being.

One proposed approach to interrupting the RS cycle is to replace the HRS person's interpretation of ambiguity in hostile terms with alternative explanations, such as situational attributions and plausible alternatives for a partner's actions (Levy et al., 2001). Hudley and Graham (1993) designed a social cognitive intervention to decrease 10-12-year old boys' hostile attributional biases in social encounters of ambiguous, casual origins. Over a 4-month period, the boys role-played less violent and more adaptive responses to both hypothetical and laboratory simulations of peer aggravation. Children were taught how to respond to negative outcomes without hostility, and, over the experimental period, the boys' tendency to attribute hurtful intent to ambiguous peer provocations was, at least temporarily, restrained. This type of intervention could prove useful for HRS individuals who react with hostility to ambiguous actions from others. Re-evaluation of the true meaning behind the ambiguity would be a good first step to reducing rejection sensitivity.

The timing of an intervention for rejection sensitivity is also essential to consider. Early inventions have been shown to be the best for improving social, cognitive, and academic outcomes of at-risk youths (Ramey & Ramey, 1998). Although an early intervention program may not always be feasible or available to those at risk for forming

HRS, research has also shown that intervention may be possible during times of environmental or experimental change. Ruble's phase model of transitions (1994) suggests the possibility for preexisting beliefs and expectations to be challenged and altered during times of change. These changes might include transition to a new school, to a new workplace, to a new religion, to a new country, and much more. Ruble proposed three core phases of transitions: construction, consolidation, and integration. When a transition occurs, it prompts a construction phase in which people actively seek information to understand changes. In the consolidation phase, information seeking continues as new conclusions about the self and others are included in one's knowledge structure. Finally, the integration phase consists of new conclusions that become part of one's identity. Following Ruble's model, it may be possible for HRS people to try to redefine themselves, remove old expectations, and potentially change their perception of rejection during a time of transition.

Hostility, Violence, and RS

Links between interpersonal difficulties and rejection sensitivity have been found in children, adolescents, and adults. For example, economically disadvantaged middle-school students with high levels of RS were found to have more disruptive behaviors and disengagement from school, and high levels of RS predicted domestic violence among low-income women (Downey, Lebolt, Rincon, & Freitas, 1998b; Romero-Canyas et al., 2010a). College students high in RS reported having considered or attempted suicide (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010a). RS was also found to be a risk factor for other self-harmful behavior, such as that seen in individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder (Ayduk et al., 2008). In general, highly rejection sensitive individuals have higher personal risk factors than others do.

There is a great deal of evidence that RS is correlated with hostility and aggression. For example, Ayduk et al. (1999) examined how rejection cues automatically prime hostile thoughts among highly RS individuals using a sequential priming-pronunciation paradigm. Participants were presented with a word on a computer screen that was quickly replaced by a second word, and they were told to pronounce the second word as fast as they could. The words were chosen to convey rejection (e.g., *abandon*), negative thoughts (e.g., *vomit*), hostility (e.g., *hit*), or neutral images (e.g., *chalk*). The extent to which the hostile target words were facilitated by rejection primes, as compared to the other primes, was examined. It was found that individuals high in RS were significantly faster to pronounce the hostility words when they were first primed with rejection words. They were not significantly faster when primed with neutral or negative words, and there were no significant differences for the individuals who were low in RS. These findings support other evidence for a unidirectional link between rejection and hostility.

According to research on violent, rejection sensitive men by Downey, Feldman, and Ayduk (2000), rejection sensitivity is a vulnerability factor for two distinct maladaptive styles of coping with intimate relationships. One style includes rejection sensitive men who may attempt to prevent anticipated rejection by reducing their investment in intimate relationships altogether. The second style includes rejection sensitive men who may become highly invested in intimate relationships in search of an unconditionally supportive partner who will never reject them. However, their low threshold for perceiving and overreacting to rejection heightens the possibility that they will act aggressively to their partners' negative or ambiguous behavior. Downey and her colleagues' research supported these theories: Rejection sensitive men who reported relatively low investment in romantic relationships had

reduced involvement in close relationships with romantic partners and friends and had increased avoidance of social situations. On the other hand, rejection sensitive men who reported relatively high investment had higher levels of dating violence. Their research thus links certain types of men (low investment men) to avoidance and other types of men (high investment men) to the potential for committing violence against their dating partners. The reason why some men avoid relationships and others seek them, yet are at risk for violence, will be discussed later on, but a concrete reason has not yet been discovered and thus needs further examination.

One trigger of violence against romantic partners could be partner rejection (Downey, Feldman, & Ayduk, 2000). Barnard, H. Vera, M. Vera, and Newman (1982) showed that a wife's rejection of her husband was the most common precipitant of a fatal murder by the husband. Violent men have been found to fear abandonment and to hold insecure working models of relationships such as the Fearful and Preoccupied attachment styles (Dutton, Saunders, Staromski, & Bartholomew, 1994). Fearing abandonment from an intimate partner is a form of fearing rejection from others. Previous research has also shown that college men who anxiously expect rejection show increased feelings of hurt, anger, and jealousy when presented with hypothetical scenarios of partner rejection (Downey, Feldman, & Ayduk, 2000). The partners of these types of men also report them to be more jealous and controlling (Downey & Feldman, 1996). These types of feelings in rejection sensitive men have been shown to increase the likelihood of violent acts being committed against intimate partners (Downey, Feldman, & Ayduk, 2000).

Downey and her colleagues' research on violent men and rejection sensitivity has given clues to the detrimental effect that rejection sensitivity can have on a relationship.

Although they found a connection between rejection sensitive men, particularly those who are highly invested in intimate relationships, and violence, this does not mean that all of those men will always react with violence when they perceive rejection. As Downey and her colleagues (2000) explained it, "The likelihood that these thoughts and feelings will be expressed in physical aggression may depend on their self-regulatory competencies, the ways in which they have learned to express their anger in their families, and the prevailing social norms about violence against women" (p. 58). The mediators of rejection sensitivity and dating violence need to be examined further to discover the precise reason for this link.

Approach-Avoidance Motivation

Downey, Feldman, and Ayduk's (2000) research on rejection sensitive men prone to violence is also important when considering reasons for patterns of avoidance. Whereas, on one end of the RS spectrum, men who had high investment in relationships were at risk for violence, on the other end of the spectrum one finds men who had low investment in relationships. According to these researchers' theory, avoiding intimate relationships altogether decreases the risk of getting rejected. Indeed, the researchers did find that men who were high in rejection sensitivity and low in romantic investment reported fewer serious dating relationships and fewer close friends. Those men were also more distressed in, and tended to avoid, social situations. Their wariness about social relationships reflects the concept of approach-avoidance motivation and goals.

Elliot (2006) defines avoidance motivation as "the energization of behavior by, or the direction of behavior away from, negative stimuli (objects, events, possibilities)" (p. 112). There are five aspects of this definition that encompass the whole understanding. First, both the energization and the direction of the behavior are key. Energization is the initial

instigation (though the person is viewed as perpetually active) that an individual takes in relation to what she or he is interacting with. Direction refers to the guiding of a behavior in a precise way. Second, approach-avoidance motivation involves physical or psychological movement. Positively evaluated stimuli are brought close or sought out, whereas negatively evaluated stimuli are pushed or kept away, either literally or figuratively. Third, the initial presence or absence of a stimulus is significant: Approach motivation encompasses promoting new positive situations or maintaining existing positive situations, and avoidance motivation encompasses preventing new negative situations or escaping from existing negative situations. Fourth, "positive" and "negative" are presumed to take on slightly different meanings in different contexts, including beneficial/harmful, liked/disliked, and desirable/undesirable. However, given their considerable comparability, they are viewed as functionally equal dimensions that are all part of the greater positive/negative rubric. Lastly, "stimuli" is meant to represent an essentially limitless amount of focal endpoints, from concrete observable objects, events, and possibilities to abstract representations of these phenomena (Elliot, 2006).

Connecting avoidance motivation to rejection sensitivity is valuable in that it may help to explain why some highly RS individuals opt to avoid intimacy with others. Downey and her colleagues (2000) have not been able to pin down a particular, empirically-based reason for why some highly RS individuals pursue intimate relationships and others avoid them, in other words what distinguishes high relational investment individuals from low relational investment men. Attachment theorists have hypothesized that consistent rejection causes a person to avoid relationships, whereas intermittent rejection causes a person to have an ambivalent preoccupation with relationships, but empirical support for this is mixed (see

Downey et al., 2000). Downey and her colleagues (2000) have speculated that temperamental or personality characteristics may be a main factor in whether rejection sensitive individuals end up avoiding relationships or not. One question that is necessary to answer in order to further our understanding of the nature of RS is what causes some HRS individuals to approach relationships and other HRS individuals to avoid relationships.

It is unclear why some HRS individuals still choose the obvious risk of forming intimate relationships with others when this act threatens the possibility of their most-feared feeling of rejection. According to Elliot's model, this type of action is representative of an approach motivation – forming a relationship is generally viewed as a positive stimulus. However, a person with higher levels of RS intrinsically follows more patterns of avoidance than approach in order to prevent potential rejection. What the connection is between being high in RS and tending to seek out or stay away from intimate relationships remains unsolved. Park (2010) theorized that having low self-esteem, being avoidantly attached, and having high level of RS leads to an increase in avoidance-motivated goals for the purpose of preventing negative outcomes. Whether the push for avoiding or approaching relationships comes from personality type, from low self-esteem, from attachment styles, from past experiences, or from some other factor has yet to be discovered, but will be explored in the current thesis.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory was formulated by John Bowlby and describes the dynamics of long-term relationships between human beings, particularly with regard to close friendships, family dynamics, and romantic relationships. The theory focuses on the impact that parenting has upon an infant and how these monumental moments impact an individual's approach or

avoidance of attachment with others (Bowlby, 1982). The patterns of communication and negotiation of need satisfaction that form between an infant and his or her caregiver are relatively stable in a person's lifetime (Davis et al., 2006; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Whether a healthy or unhealthy type of attachment emerges depends on the success of the caregiver at attending to the infant's needs. Attachment styles in adults were originally divided into three categories of secure, anxious/ambivalent, or avoidant. Hazan and Shaver (1987) proposed that attachment style would influence romantic relationships and were able to find trends supporting this.

Mary Ainsworth reinforced Bowlby's theory in the 1960s and 1970s with her work on the concept of a secure base. From Ainsworth's famous "Strange Situation," where she monitored attachment behaviors between infants and their primary caregivers, she divided attachment into three dimensions of secure, avoidant, anxious, and later, disorganized. Presently, the adult attachment style dimensions most researchers work with are broken down into Secure, Anxious-Preoccupied, Dismissive-Avoidant, and Fearful-Avoidant based on the models of how individuals view themselves and how they view others (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Adults with Secure attachment style have positive views of themselves as well as positive views of their partners and relationships. They balance and feel comfortable with intimacy and independence in their relationships. Preoccupied adults become overly dependent on others because they seek high levels of intimacy and approval from their partners. Preoccupied adults tend to worry about their relationships and they have less positive views about themselves and about their partners (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Individuals who are high on the anxiety-attachment dimension (e.g. Preoccupied) tend to exaggerate the perceived threats in a given situation and

intensify their negative emotional states (Besser & Priel, 2009; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Dismissive adults often avoid attachment altogether because they desire a high level of independence. They tend to suppress their feelings and view themselves as not needing close relationships. Fearful adults, like Dismissive adults, tend to seek less intimacy and suppress their emotions, but they have mixed feelings about close relationships instead of generally not wanting them. They also view themselves as unworthy of their partners but also do not generally trust their partners (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Individuals who are high on the avoidance-attachment dimension (e.g. Fearful) are more likely to distance themselves from emotional situations. (Besser & Priel, 2009; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Research has demonstrated that insecure attachment styles have various negative influences on intimate relationships. For example, Brennan and Morris (1997) found differences among attachment styles on self-esteem and relationships. Fearful and Preoccupied individuals scored higher on low-self liking, and if a relationship was going poorly, these individuals were more likely to turn to self-blame and loathing. Because both of these attachment styles have a negative view of self, they tend of take the blame for the failure of their relationships (Brennan & Morris, 1997). Secure individuals, unlike the other attachment styles, have been demonstrated to have positive automatic responses to their partners (Dainton, 2007; Zayas & Shoda, 2005).

Previous literature has found significant relationships between rejection sensitivity and attachment styles (Erozkan & Komur, 2006; Kennedy, 1999). Erozkan (2009) found that rejection sensitivity levels of participants who had a Fearful attachment style were significantly higher than those of others. It was also found that all of the attachment styles

had a significant effect on rejection sensitivity, where rejection sensitivity levels of participants with the Secure attachment style were found to be lower than rejection sensitivity levels of participants with the Fearful, Preoccupied, or Dismissing attachment styles. There was also a significant negative relationship between rejection sensitivity and the Secure attachment style and rejection sensitivity was positively correlated with Fearful, Preoccupied, and Dismissive (Erozkan, 2009). In a study by Besser and Priel (2009), it was found that participants high on the attachment anxiety dimension were particularly vulnerable to the threat of romantic rejection. It was also found that high levels of attachment anxiety were associated with low self-esteem (Besser & Priel, 2009).

Downey and her colleagues see Bowlby's attachment theory as the foundation for their model of rejection sensitivity, as Bowlby focuses on expectations about whether significant others will satisfy their needs or will be rejecting. Their model of RS draws on Bowlby's attachment theory that when parents meet their children's expressed needs with rejection, the children become sensitive to rejection. These individuals develop an expectation of rejection from significant others and they work to avoid such rejection. (Downey & Feldman, 1996). Feldman and Downey (1994) found that young adults with insecure attachment styles were more rejection-sensitive than young adults with Secure attachment styles. Examining attachment styles in conjunction with rejection sensitivity levels may shed light on why some rejection sensitive individuals are approach oriented in relationships and others are avoidance oriented in relationships.

The Power of Autobiographical Memories

Research on autobiographical memories (AM) has focused mainly on how much and how accurately people remember their past (Bluck, Alea, Habermas, & Rubin, 2005).

However, Bluck and her colleagues find particular importance in the precise *function* for reminiscing and retelling certain memories. They have raised questions about why humans remember both mundane and significant life events often over long periods of time and why certain memories are retained better than others. Pillemer (1992) described the formulation of AM as having directive, self, and communicative/social functions. The directive function is used to plan for present and future behaviors, the self function is used for personal self-continuity, self-understanding, and the integration of identity, and the social function is used for social bonding with others. In rejection sensitive individuals, the directive and self functions in particular may be useful to examine further as ways through which RS individuals shape their concepts of rejection.

Cohen (1998) has argued that, in the directive function, AM can serve as a way to solve problems and develop opinions and attitudes. Robinson and Swanson (1990) considered this function of AM from a more social-cognitive perspective. They suggested that the purpose of AM is to help people to use their past experiences to construct models that allow them to understand the inner world of others, and therefore to predict their own and others' future behavior. The data from the Bluck et al. (2005) study suggest that the directive function might be broader than originally conceptualized. Pillemer (2003) has discussed how AM serves a directive role in a variety of ways; from anchors for personal values, to inspiring certain decisions, to turning points that redirect one's life path. If the directive function seems to serve as a way for meaning-making about one's life path, then memories of rejection used through this function could potentially affect the direction that one's life path takes. Avoidance of relationships to prevent rejection may be an indicator that past negative memories have affected a person's perception of intimacy. On the other hand,

the behavior of a HRS person seeking out relationships to find the unconditional, never-rejecting mate could also be related to the directive memory function and the meanings that this type of person has interpreted from his or her rejection-based memories.

Conway (1996) stated that autobiographical memories support and promote continuity and development of the self. Bluck et al. also hypothesized that the function of AM is that it is used to form a sense of a coherent and stable person over time (Bluck et al., 2005). If people who have been consistently been rejected in their lives return to and ruminate over these memories, this pattern of thought might influence the way they internalize concepts of their self-worth and their likelihood of developing rejection sensitivity. People who have been frequently rejected may use their memories of rejection as a way to draw conclusions about themselves (i.e., that others will always reject them, no matter what they do). These types of people may be more likely to follow a relationship avoidance path (e.g. Fearful attachment style), as this would deter any chance of being rejected by others.

Ayduk, Gyurak, and Luerssen (2009) focused on the link between self-concept clarity (SCC) and rejection sensitivity, which could be valuable in explaining how the self function of autobiographical memories affects the development of RS and the likelihood of approaching or avoiding relationships. SCC captures the extent to which self-knowledge is clearly and confidently defined, internal and consistent, and stable (Campell, 1990). According to Downey and her colleagues' model of RS development, humans need to be accepted by others in order to have adequate feelings of social connection (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010a). Therefore, being rejected by others could potentially have negative consequences for a HRS person's self-concept.

Ayduk et al. (2009) found lower SCC among HRS individuals. The second part of their study, which used the daily diary method, showed that, in ongoing relationships, occurrence of conflicts with partners accentuated the relation between high levels of RS and low SCC. This study shows that rejection has a role in reducing HRS individuals' SCC. The concept of SCC parallels Bluck et al.'s (2005) self concept function of AM, as a way to develop the self through continuity. Ayduk et al. (2009) discussed how the links between RS and other maladaptive and behavioral responses such as anger, jealousy, aggression, and violence may be attributed to low SCC. These types of responses may be the result of the HRS person expressing the need to regain some form of consistency in his or her life. The rejection-related memories used for the self function may be contributing to feelings of instability in a HRS individual's identity.

An examination of what kind of function the rejection-related memories of HRS people have in relation to the outcome of either seeking or avoiding intimate relationships is a main investigative topic of this thesis. Based on Bluck et al.'s (2005) research on autobiographical memories, it can be speculated that a person's memories of past rejection experiences may affect the way they predict likely future outcomes. Based on Downey, Feldman, and Ayduk's (2000) research on violent men, the way those men recalled and used memories of rejection might have been a factor in whether they became high or low in relationship investment, and thus have led to either an approach or avoidant path. Rejection memories may affect how a HRS person internalizes his or her opinions and attitudes about relationships and thus the likelihood of either clinging to intimate relationships in the search of an everlasting, unconditional partner incapable of expressing rejection or the likelihood of avoiding intimate relationships altogether so as to prevent any chance of it occurring.

Previous research by Downey and her colleagues has clearly highlighted the causal link of previous rejection experiences and the development of rejection sensitivity as well as avoidant behaviors in relationships. The current project sought to elaborate that link by demonstrating that highly rejection sensitivity individuals and/or individuals manifesting more avoidant attachment styles would be more likely to display a pattern of relying on memory narratives of past rejection as sources of self-concept and guidance in their lives. In other words, autobiographical memories may be critical sources of narrative meaning-making with regard to their own sense of identity and their understanding of social interactions in the world (McAdams, 2001; Singer, 2004).

In examining the role of how memories might function within the personality, previous research has focused on four key dimensions of autobiographical memory narratives – content, structure, affect, and meaning-making (Blagov & Singer, 2004; Singer, Rexhaj, & Baddeley, 2007). Narrative content refers to either implicit or explicit themes that run through a narrative (Singer & Blagov, 2004). When there is a large sample of autobiographical memories, there are several larger themes that seem to be applicable to the memory samples. While all rejection narratives are about a rejection-related experience, who the rejection is from is something that varies across the memories. The memory could have a romantic theme, a family-oriented theme, a peer theme, or an achievement theme. The narratives also could vary from whether the rejection occurred from an individual person, a group of people, or an organization or institution.

The affective sequence of a memory narrative has a theme or message about what the narrator expects out of life in general. McAdams, Diamond, de St. Aubin, and Mansfield (1997) identified two types of affective sequences: redemption and contamination.

Redemption sequences have a movement from good to bad and imply an optimistic outlook on life in general. Contamination sequences have a movement from bad to good, and imply a pessimistic attitude that good things in the narrator's life will eventually turn bad. Redemption sequences support generative action and well-being, and contamination sequences do not support generativity and well-being (McAdams et al., 2001)

The detail and structure of a memory narrative can be divided into two main categories: either specific or summary. A specific memory narrative is that which occurs uniquely over the course of less than 24 hours (Singer & Blagov, 2000-2001). Williams (1996) found that specific narratives anchored in a particular moment in time were associated with higher levels of emotional well-being and lower levels of defensiveness than overgeneral or summary memories. Blagov and Singer (2004) found that specific self-defining memories did not correlate with distress, however, elements of repression may be related to the way in which the narrator structures their narrative (i.e. specific or summary). Keeping details and imagery out of the story can be seen as a safeguard against anxiety and a preservation of self-esteem (Bruhn, 1984; McAdams, 1998).

According to McLean and Thorne (2003), meaning refers to "what one gleans from, learns, or understands from the event" (p. 636). It requires a stepping back from the event in order to reflect on its future implications regarding self-understanding, goals, and values (Pillemer, 1992). Meaning-making and integrated narratives are a way for people to gain insights and learning lessons from a memory and also serve as coping strategies for negative emotions (Blagov & Singer, 2004). Blagov and Singer (2004) have developed a coding scheme that measures explicit, self-reflective statements where the narrator is clearly stepping back from and interpreting the events in the memory.

As stated earlier, rejection sensitivity has been described as a defensively motivated system that results from past rejection experiences (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010a). If we conceptualize these past experiences in the form of autobiographical memories, the formation of rejection sensitivity becomes more defined. If an individual has specific memories of rejection that still affect her or him currently, it is possible that this person will have a higher level of rejection sensitivity. Their past experiences and memories of rejection, and how this person views her or his memories, are likely to play an important role in defining RS.

Independent Judgment of Measures

Reliance of self-report measures alone is often not the most accurate way to determine a relationship between two or more variables. Because rating oneself subjectively is difficult, it often has been proved valuable to have a second, independent rater determining the same aspects. It can be valuable to have an independent judgment of the individual from a peer in order to gain a separate perception from the internalized image individuals have of themselves. With both ratings together, a more cohesive conclusion can be drawn.

Other studies have demonstrated the benefit of having a peer rating accompanying ratings made by the original participant. Kolar, Funder, and Colvin (1996) argued that peer ratings are often superior to self-reports as a source of personality assessments because the peers are able to combine an external perspective with information gathered over many different interactions. Validity of peer ratings of personality has been demonstrated by peer-peer and peer-self agreement (McCrae, 1982). Ho (2010) conducted a study using pooled peer ratings, self-ratings, and estimates of peer ratings of therapeutic communication and popularity. It was found that pooled peer ratings had superior validity over self-ratings, which strengthens the case for a relational methodological approach that assesses how one

views oneself and others, how one is viewed by others, and discrepancies between these perceptions (Ho, 2010). Another study by McCrae et. al (1998) used peer ratings of Chinese participants to confirm their finding that exposure to Canadian culture increases factors on the NEO-PI-R such as openness, cheerfulness, and prosocial behavior and attitudes.

In Downey and Feldman's (1996) study, research was conducted to examine the partners of highly RS individuals' perceptions of their relationships. Highly RS individuals showed more concern about being rejected by their partners, but this did not always match up with their partners' self-reported commitment to the relationship. The partners of highly RS individuals generally perceived them to be insecure in the relationship and were less satisfied with their relationship than were partners of low RS individuals. For women dating highly RS men, the jealous and controlling behavior of the men accounted for one third of the overall reasons for the women's relationship dissatisfaction. For men dating highly RS women, the women's hostility and lack of support accounted for one third of the men's relationship dissatisfaction. Having these couples rate each other's relationship satisfaction and rejection sensitivity proved useful to drawing conclusions about the healthiness and strength of the relationships.

In the present study, the purpose of giving questionnaires to a friend of the participant was to observe if the friend's perceptions of the participant's anxiety towards rejection matched the participant's own perception of him or herself. The data from the friend survey were planned to be used to as a second confirmation (or disconfirmation) of the original participant's responses to their levels of rejection sensitivity and how they classified their attachment styles.

The Present Study

The present study sought to examine more closely how autobiographical memory narratives of social rejection might be an important correlate of rejection sensitivity and avoidant attachment style. By measuring individuals' self-rated and peer-rated levels of rejection sensitivity and avoidant attachment, as well as collecting a set of rejection memory narratives, relationships among these variables could be analyzed and interpreted.

More specifically, it was hypothesized that the more rejection sensitivity individuals displayed (as through self-report and/or peer ratings), the more important, the more negative, the more frequently thought about, and more integrated into their sense of identity their social rejection memories would be. Further, higher rejection sensitivity individuals would be more likely to employ their rejection memories for self-understanding (self-function) and direction and guidance in their lives (directive function). Parallel predictions were made for avoidant attachment style, with a particular emphasis on the Fearful attachment style, since it combines both a negative view of self and a negative view of others.

With regard to content of memories, it was predicted that individuals higher in rejection sensitivity and more prone to Fearful attachment would display a larger number of parental and peer rejection memories than individuals (since these are likely to be more formative of these relational styles) than individuals with lower levels of RS and Secure attachment. In addition to exploring the relationship of rejection sensitivity, attachment style, and memory narratives, the thesis looked at how rejection sensitivity might be linked to overall life satisfaction and the degree to which the tendency to ruminate over social rejection memory narratives might be connected to lower levels of this variable.

Method

Participants

Undergraduates at Connecticut College and other volunteers, mainly college-aged men and women, served as participants for this research study (130 women, 30 men, M_{age} = 19.8 years, SD = 1.48, range = 18 – 25). The sample included 84% Caucasian participants (N = 135), 3% African American participants (N = 5), 6% Latino/a participants (N = 9), 3% Asian American participants (N = 5), and 4% mixed race participants (N = 6). The sample also included 90% heterosexual participants (N = 144), 3% homosexual participants (N = 5), 6% bisexual participants (N = 9), and 1% of participants who classified themselves "unsure" of their sexual orientation (N = 2). Regarding the participants' parents' marital status, two-thirds of participants had married parents, 17% had divorced parents, 3% had separated parents, 8% of participants had parents who had never married, and 4% had one parent widowed.

One-third of participants were currently in a romantic relationship and two-thirds were not. For the participants in a romantic relationship, the mean length of the relationship was 14.51 months (SD = 12.77, range = 1 – 60). The mean overall number of relationships that participants had had in their lives was 1.60 (SD = 1.42, range = 0 - 6). The mean number of friends the participant reported was 7.62 (SD = 4.2, range = 2 - 35). The mean amount of friends the participants reported contacting at least once every two weeks was 4.78 (SD = 2.82, range = 0 - 15). There were 126 participants who attended Connecticut College. Examples of other colleges and universities participants attended are University of Maryland, College Park (N = 4), Gettysburg College (N = 2), Montgomery College (N = 2), University of Toronto (N = 1), Oberlin College (N = 1), and Boston University (N = 1).

Students from Connecticut College were recruited through the Psychology 101 and 102 classes received 45 minutes of course credit for their participation. Sign-up sheets in Bill Hall asked psychology students to provide their emails so that the link to the questionnaire could be sent to them to fill out. Other students were encouraged to participate through the use of a Facebook page that invited members of the college community, as well as men and women from other colleges, to participate in this study.

Each participant was asked at the beginning of the study to nominate a friend of theirs to respond to questions about the participant (78 total - 64 women, 14 men, M_{age} = 19.9 years, SD = 3.09, range = 18 - 44). The sample included 81% Caucasian participants, 0% percent African American participants, 9% Latino/a participants, 1% Asian American participants, and 9% mixed race participants. The sample also included 97% percent heterosexual participants, 1% homosexual participants, and 1% bisexual participants. The mean length of friendship between the participant and the participant's friend was 56.03 months (SD = 62.87, range = 2 – 240). The mean level of closeness the participant's friend rated to the participant on a scale of 1 (not at all close) to 5 (best friends) was 4.6 (SD = .566). The participant's friend estimated that the participant had a mean amount of 5.61 friends (SD = 2.94, range = 1 - 20). The participant's friend estimated that the on a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently), the participant feared rejection from others at a mean level of 2.77 (SD = .999). The participant's friend estimated that on a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently), that the participant feared rejection from the friend at a mean level of 1.96 (SD = .932).

The friend received a Demographics sheet as well as modified Rejection Sensitivity (RSQ) and Relationship (RQ) questionnaires and responded based on how he or she thought

the participant would think about or act in the situation. This was an optional part of the study, but Connecticut College Psychology students received an additional ten minutes of research credit if their friends did participant. The friends themselves received 15 minutes of research credit. The friends were contacted via email with a link to the study.

Measures

Demographics. (See Appendix B). The demographics sheet asked for information about age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, current school of enrollment, class year, parent's current marital status, number of romantic relationships lasting three months or longer, involvement in close friendships, and current romantic relationship status. The involvement in close friendships was operationalized by the responses to two questions from the Social Network Index (Cohen, 1991): (1) "How many close friends do you have? (People you feel at ease with, can talk to about private matters, and can call on for help); (2) "How many of these friends do you see or talk to on the phone at least once every two weeks?" (0 = none; 1 = one or two friends; 2 = three to five friends; 3 = six to nine friends; 4 = 10 or more friends).

Satisfaction with Life Scale. (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985; see Appendix C). The SWLS is a 5-item measure of general life satisfaction. Respondents were asked to respond on a 7-point Likert Scale to the questions (1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree). A sample question is, "The conditions of my life are excellent." Initial and subsequent studies have examined the internal consistency of the SWLS and alpha coefficients have repeatedly exceeded .80 (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Cronbach's alpha for the SWLS in this study was .88.

Relationship Questionnaire. (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; see Appendix D). The RQ asks participants a series of five questions to determine their attachment style. Participants were asked to circle the letter that most accurately describes the way they are in a relationship (e.g., "I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me."). Participants were then asked to rate on 7-point Likert scale how each of the relationship styles matches their pattern of interaction in relationships from 1 ("not at all like me") to 7 ("very much like me"). Ratings of the four attachment patterns using the RQ have shown moderate stability over an eight-month test re-test period (Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994). The RQ was used to determine if a person's attachment style, which indicates their likelihood of avoiding or approaching relationships, is connected to the function of their rejection-related memories.

Thinking About Life Experiences questionnaire - Revised. (Bluck et al., 2005; see Appendix E). The TALE questionnaire assesses the three theoretical functions of autobiographical memory (AM): the directive function, the self function, and the communicative/social function through 28 questions. The questionnaire is designed to focus on both remembering specific events and on how past events and larger life periods are connected with the present. All questions are responded to on a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranges from "almost never" (1) to "very frequently" (5). The stem statement for each item is "I think back over or talk about my life or certain periods of my life…" followed by certain statements that correspond to each of the three functions. Examples of some of the statements include: (1) "When I think about my future goals," (2) "When I believe that thinking about the past can help guide my future" and (3) "When I want to develop a closer relationship

with someone." The TALE's alpha level is .86 (Bluck & Alea, 2010) For this study, nine

questions from the TALE were chosen based on highest factor loadings and were presented

after each of the three rejection memories the participants were asked to report. The

questions were broken up into three questions determining the self function, three questions

determining the directive function, and three questions determining the social function.

Overall each participant responded to 27 TALE questions. In this study, Cronbach's alpha for

the self function was .75 across the three memories, .78 for the directive function across the

three memories, and .78 for the social function across the three memories.

Rejection Memories Prompt. (See Appendix E). The participants were asked to

answer three open-ended questions about a vivid memory of an experience of rejection. The

prompt stated that this experience of rejection could have happened from a family member,

friend, love interest, group of people, institution, or anyone or anything else significant to

them. The prompt asked for one memory to be specifically from childhood (age 11 or

younger) and the other two memories could be from any other time period in the individual's

life. After each memory, the participants were asked to report on a scale of 1 (very

unimportant) to 5 (very important) how important they consider the memory to be today. The

participants were also asked to report how recalling the specific memory makes them feel.

There were two rating scales with this, measuring from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much) how

negatively and positively they felt about the particular memory. The participants were also

asked to report the age they were when the memory occurred. The participants were asked

how often (1 = almost never to 5 = very frequently) they recalled this particular memory

before. Finally, the participants were asked to respond to nine questions based on the TALE

questionnaire in order to examine if any one particular function appears to be consistent in

the rejection memories (Bluck et al., 2005). These were the three questions from each of the three function categories (directive, self, and communicative).

Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire. (Downey & Feldman, 1996; see Appendix F). The RSQ measures an individual's levels of personal rejection sensitivity with 18 questions. The RSQ presented a series of interpersonal situations in which the participant is asked to think of a hypothetical situation where he or she makes some sort of request of someone who matters to her or him. This request leaves the participant vulnerable to possible rejection from that valued other. For each RSQ situation presented, respondents made two ratings, one that assessed expectations of rejection in the situation and one that assesses the level of anxiety they would feel in the situation. An example of a question is: "You ask your boyfriend/girlfriend to move in with you." This is followed by "How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not the person would want to move in with you?" The response is on a Likert scale of 1 (very unconcerned) to 6 (very concerned). The next item states" I would expect that he/she would want to move in with me" followed by another Likert scale of 1 (very unlikely) to 6 (very likely). A total RSQ score is computed by obtaining the mean scores across the various rejection situations. The test-retest reliability of the RSQ is 0.83 and the internal consistency is 0.81. The Cronbach's alpha for RSQ in this study was .87.

Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire Subscale - Friend. (Downey & Feldman, 1996; see Appendix G). This version of the RSQ subscale consists of 8 questions from the complete RSQ and was re-worded so that the friend of the participant may answer how he or she would predict the participant to react in each situation. The subscale is formatted exactly the same as the 18-question RSQ, and measures the same variables. Instead of asking how

"you" would feel, the friend versions asked how "your friend" would feel or react in each scenario that was presented. The eight items in this version of the RSQ were chosen from the items with the highest factor loading from the full 18-item version (α = .77, M = 7.68, SD = 3.61) (Downey, 2008).

   Relationship Questionnaire - Friend. (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; see Appendix H). This version of the RQ asked the friends of participants a series of five questions to determine how they categorized the participant's attachment style. This was used as a comparison to the participant's own interpretation of his or her own attachment style. The questions were rephrased so that "you" was replaced with "your friend."

Procedure

   Participants were able to fill out the questionnaires in the privacy of their own dorm room or another location of their choice using the online websites, Survey Monkey (2001): www.surveymonkey.com for the main participants and Qualtrics (1997): www.qualtrics.com for the friends of the participants. Navigation of the questionnaire requires only minimal computer skill on the part of the participant: ability to use the mouse and to type responses to particular questions presented in the survey. Information on Survey Monkey and Qualtrics is password protected; only the researcher and assistants have access to the data.

   The participants first read a consent form and check either "agree" or "disagree" (see Appendix A for the Participant Informed Consent Form and Appendix K for the Friend Informed Consent Form). If they agreed, they then completed the Demographics, Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS), Relationship Questionnaire (RQ), Thinking About Life Experiences Questionnaire - Revised (TALE), the open-ended Rejection Memories Prompt, and the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (RSQ). The Debriefing form was presented

online at the end of the questionnaires and Connecticut College psychology students also received copies in their school mailboxes (see Appendix I for the Participant Debriefing Form and Appendix L for the Friend Debriefing Form). Participants self-reported levels of rejection sensitivity as well as responded to three different autobiographical memory prompts asking them to record three detailed memories of rejection in their lives. Participants determined which autobiographical memory function (self, directive, or social) was most prominent for each of the three rejection memories. Participants also responded to approach-avoidance oriented questions to determine whether they approach or avoid close relationships with others. These questions included asking how many relationships the participant had had, how many friends the participant had, and how often they spoke to these friends over a two week basis.

Once the memory coding scheme was developed, two independent raters scored the rejection memories (See Appendix J). Rejection memories were coded for the type of memory (romantic, family, peer, or achievement), who the rejection occurred from (an individual, a group of people, or an organization/institution), whether the memory was specific or summary, whether the memory was integrated or non-integrated, and whether the memory was redemption, contamination, or neither redemption nor contamination. Kappa inter-rater reliability was 87.1. Sample memories from this study can be found in Appendix M.

Results

Characteristics of Variables

The mean level of rejection sensitivity of the participants in this study was 10.51 (*SD* = 4.1, range = 2.67 – 24.11). The mean of the RSQ in other studies has been reported as 9.69 (*SD* = 3.07) (Downey, 2008). The mean level of satisfaction with life of participants in this study was 4.96 *(SD* =1.25, range = 1 – 7). Forty-three point eight percent of participants rated themselves as the Secure attachment style, 27.8% rated themselves as the Fearful attachment style, 21% rated themselves as the Preoccupied attachment style, and 7.4% rated themselves as the Dismissive attachment style. On a scale from 1 (Almost Never) to 5 (Very Frequently), the mean of participant's memory functions were 2.74 for the self function (*SD* = .71), 3.00 for the directive function (*SD* = .79), and 2.15 for the social function (*SD* = .77). On a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), the means of participants' memory qualities were 3.22 for memory importance (*SD* = .87), 3.16 for memory negativity (*SD* = .89), 2.16 for memory positivity (*SD* = .76), and 3.20 for how frequently the memory was thought about (*SD* = .76). The friends of the participants rated the participants to have an average rejection sensitivity level of 8.43 (*SD* = 3.73, range = 1.13 – 18.38). The friends broke down the participants' attachment styles as 43% Secure, 25% Preoccupied, 23% Fearful, and 9% Dismissive.

One-fourth of participants' rejection memories were coded as from a romantic peer, about 9% of the rejection memories were coded as from a family member, 42% were coded as from a peer of the participant, and about another one-fourth of the memories (24%) were coded as memories involving achievement. Almost half (49%) of participants' rejection memories were coded as being caused by an individual, about thirty percent of participants'

memories were coded as being caused by a group of people, and 21% were coded as being from an organization or institution. The participants' rejection memories were coded as 31% specific, 22.18% integrated, 12% redemption, and 15% contamination.

Pearson Correlation Analyses

Relationship of Rejection Sensitivity and Attachment Styles

Presented in Table 1, it was found that the higher participants rated themselves as Secure, the lower their levels of rejection sensitivity were, $r = -.329$, $p < .001$, and the higher participants rated themselves as Fearful, the higher their levels of rejection sensitivity were, $r = .238$, $p = .002$. A significant positive correlation was found between the Preoccupied attachment style and higher rejection sensitivity levels, $r = .161$, $p = .041$. No significant relationship was found between the Dismissive attachment style and levels of rejection sensitivity. Participants who rated themselves as more Secure also had higher overall satisfaction with life than those who were less Secure, $r = .396$, $p < .001$. Participants who rated themselves as more Fearful had lower overall satisfaction with life than those who were less Fearful, $r = -.348$, $p < .001$. No significant relationships were found between the Preoccupied and the Dismissive attachments styles and overall satisfaction with life.

Rejection Sensitivity and Memory Functions

It was hypothesized that individuals with higher rejection sensitivity levels would use the self and directive memory functions for their rejection memories. Presented in Table 1, the data supported the hypothesis for HRS individuals using their rejection memories for the self function, $r = .227$, $p = .004$, but the data did not support that individuals higher in RS used their rejection memories for the directive function. However, a significant correlation was found between individuals with higher RS and the social function, $r = .218$, $p = .006$.

Table 1

Correlations between Rejection Sensitivity, SWL, and Attachment Styles, Memory Functions, Memory Themes, Memory Qualities, and Close Relationship Variables (N = 156)

	Rejection Sensitivity	Satisfaction with Life
Secure	-.33**	.40**
Fearful	.24**	-.35**
Preoccupied	.16*	-.15
Dismissive	.10	-.08
Self	.23**	-.12
Directive	.11	-.02
Social	.22**	-.08
Specific	.17*	-.07
Integrated	.04	-.02
Redemption	-.18*	.21**
Contamination	.18*	-.09
Importance	.20*	.00
Negativity	.27**	.02
Positivity	-.18*	.21**
Thought Freq.	.31**	-.10
# Relationships	-.16*	.02
# Close Friends	-.13	.24**
Friend Contact	-.08	.27**

*p < .05 **p < .01

Rejection Sensitivity and Memory Themes and Narratives

Table 1 presents the relationships of rejection sensitivity to memory specificity, integration, redemption, and contamination themes. The data partially supported the hypotheses for these variables. It was found that individuals with greater RS had more specific memory themes, $r = .171$, $p = .030$; they also had more contamination themes in their rejection memories, $r = .176$, $p = .025$. No significant correlation was found between integration or non-integration and rejection sensitivity levels. In addition, it was found that higher RS individuals also had significantly fewer redemption rejection memory themes, $r = -.175$, $p = .026$. It was also found that the higher a participant's overall satisfaction with life, the more their rejection memories displayed redemption themes, $r = .210$, $p = .007$. Redemption memory themes were also significantly more integrated into the individuals' overall identity, $r = .272$, $p < .001$.

Rejection Sensitivity and Memory Qualities

Individuals with higher RS were predicted to find their rejection memories to be more important, more negative, and less positive; they would also show more frequent thoughts about these memories. Presented in Table 1, data supported this: The higher the participants' level of rejection sensitivity, the more important they found their rejection memories to be, $r = .195$, $p = .014$, the more negative they found their rejection memories to be, $r = .274$, $p < .001$, the less positive they found their rejection memories to be, $r = -.176$, $p = .027$, and the more frequently they thought about their rejection memories $r = .306$, $p < .001$. It was also found that participants who had lower satisfaction with life rated their rejection memories as more negative $r = -.193$, $p < .015$, and less positive, $r = .214$, $p < .007$. The data also revealed that the more important the rejection memory was to the participant, the more it was rated

negatively, *r* = .307, *p* < .001 and the more frequently it was thought about, *r* = .554, *p* < .001.

Relationship of Rejection Sensitivity and Satisfaction with Life

It was hypothesized was that individuals higher in rejection sensitivity would have lower overall satisfaction with life. The data supported this hypothesis: individuals with higher rejection sensitivity had lower overall scores on the SWLS, r (162) = -.349, *p* < .001.

Rejection Sensitivity and Close Relationships

Turning from the memory narratives to individuals' ratings of their peer relationships, it was hypothesized that individuals higher in RS would have fewer close friendships, fewer romantic relationships, and less contact with their friends. Presented in Table 1, the data only showed that individuals higher in RS has fewer romantic relationships than individuals lower in RS, *r* = -.160, *p* = .044. Significant correlations were found between higher overall satisfaction with life and the amount of close friends the participant had, *r* = .242, *p* = .002, and with having more contact with their friends, *r* = .265, *p* < .001.

Attachment Styles and Memory Functions

Presented in Table 2, it was found that individuals who rated themselves as more Fearful Fearful used their rejection memories for the self, *r* = .315, *p* < .001, directive, *r* = .195, *p* = .014, and social functions, *r* = .192, *p* = .015.

Attachment Styles and Memory Themes and Narratives

Presented in Table 2, it was found that individuals who rated themselves as more Fearful had more integrative rejection memories, *r* = .206, *p* = .009.

Attachment Styles and Memory Qualities

Shown in Table 2, it was found that the Secure attachment style participants found

their rejection memories to be significantly less important $r = -.160$, $p = .046$, less negative, $r = -.170$, $p = .034$, and less frequently thought about, $r = -.196$, $p = .014$. It was also found that participants who rated themselves as more Fearful found their rejection memories to be significantly more negative, $r = .201$, $p = .012$, and more frequently thought about, $r = .163$, $p = .042$.

Attachment Styles and Close Relationships

As might be expected, it was found that the Securely attached participants had significantly more romantic relationships, $r (158) = .194$, $p = .014$, more close friends, $r (160) = .202$, $p = .010$, and more contact with their friends, $r (160) = .215$, $p < .006$, while the Fearfully attached participants had significantly less contact with their friends, $r (160) = -.155$, $p = .051$.

Memory Functions and Memory Qualities

Presented in Table 3, it was found that the more important the rejection memories were to the participants, the more the participants used them for the self, $r = .413$, $p < .001$, directive, $r = .380$, $p < .001$, and social functions, $r = .245$, $p = .002$. It was also found that the more negative the rejection memories were to the participants, the more the participants used them for the self, $r = .226$, $p = .004$, and social functions, $r = .178$, $p = .026$. It was also found that the less positive the rejection memories were to the participants, the more the participants used them for the social function, $r = -.160$, $p = .046$. It was also found the more frequently the rejection memories were thought about by the participants, the more they used them for the self, $r = .517$, $p < .001$, directive, $r = .424$, $p < .001$, and social functions, $r = .402$, $p < .001$.

Memory Qualities and Memory Themes and Narratives

Table 2

Correlations between Attachment Styles and Memory Functions, Themes, and Qualities (N = 156)

	Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissive
Self	-.09	.32**	.13	-.05
Directive	-.01	.20*	.09	-.01
Social	.00	.19*	.14	.04
Specific	-.07	.07	-.03	.07
Integrated	-.09	.21**	.02	.00
Redemption	.02	-.06	-.01	.01
Contamination	-.10	.07	.00	-.10
Importance	-.16*	.11	.02	.02
Negativity	-.17*	.20*	.15	-.15
Positivity	.04	-.04	-.01	.14
Thought Freq.	-.20*	.16*	.05	-.11

*p < .05 **p < .01

Table 3

Correlations between Memory Functions and Memory Qualities (N = 156)

	Importance	Negativity	Positivity	Thought Frequency
Self	.41**	.23**	-.14	.52**
Directive	.38**	.14	-.01	.42**
Social	.25**	.18*	.17*	.40**

*p < .05 **p < .01

Table 4

Correlations between Memory Narratives and Memory Qualities and Functions (N = 156)

	Specific	Integrated	Redemption	Contamination
Importance	.02	.19*	-.06	.26**
Negativity	.15	.08	-.26**	.16*
Positivity	-.16	.01	.35**	-.07
ThoughtFreq	-.10	.25**	-.11	.26**
Self	-.11	.12	-.13	.21**
Directive	-.13	.12	-.03	.23**
Social	-.04	.13	-.12	.18*

*p < .05 **p < .01

Shown in Table 4, it was found that the more important the rejection memories were to the participant, the more their memories were coded as integrated, $r = .193$, $p = .016$, and contaminated, $r = .256$, $p < .001$. It was found that the more negative the memories were to the participant, the more their memories were coded as contamination, $r = .164$, $p = .041$, and the less they were coded as redemption, $r = -.257$, $p < .001$. It was found that the more positive the memories were to the participant, the more their memories were coded as redemptive, $r = .345$, $p < .001$, and marginally as less specific, $r = -.156$, $p = .052$. It was also found that the more frequently the memories were thought about, the more they were coded as integrated, $r = .249$, $p = .002$, and contaminated, $r = .257$, $p < .001$.

Memory Functions and Memory Themes and Narratives

Shown in Table 4, it was found that participants whose memories were coded as contaminated also used these memories for the self, $r = .212$, $p = .007$, directive, $r = .231$, $p = .003$, and social functions, $r = .184$, $p = .020$.

Participant's Self-Reported Measures and Friends' Ratings of the Participant

The friends' data were used to gauge if a close friend's perceptions of the participant's anxiety towards rejection matched the participant's own perception of him or herself. Presented in Table 5, it was found that the friends of the participant were reasonably accurate at matching the participant's RS level, $r = .295$, $p = .010$. The more the friend thought the participant would fear rejection from other people, the higher the participant's self-reported RS level, $r = .273$, $p = .016$. It was found that the more friends the friend assumed the participant had, the higher the participants' self-reported SWL, $r = .267$, $p = .017$, and the less the friend reported the participant fearing rejection from him or her, $r = -.243$, $p = .032$.

Participant-Rated and Friend-Rated Attachment Styles

Presented in Table 6, the friends' ratings of participant attachment styles did not line up significantly with participant self-ratings of their own attachment styles. Participants' self-ratings of Secure levels had a positive, non-significant relationship with friends' ratings of participants' Secure levels, $r = .153, p = .181$. Participants' self-ratings of Dismissive levels had a positive, non-significant relationship with friends' ratings of participants' Dismissive levels, $r = .167, p = .145$. It was found that when participants rated themselves as Fearful, the friends rated the participant as being Preoccupied, $r = .407, p < .001$. It was also found that when participants rated themselves as Preoccupied, the friends rated the participants as being Fearful, $r = .245, p = .031$.   It was also found that participants who rated themselves as Fearful had friends who rated their friendships as significantly closer, $r (78) = .265, p = .019$.

Participant-Rated Memory Functions and Friend Ratings

Friends' ratings of the participants' levels of rejection sensitivity correlated significantly with participants self-reported use of the self function, $r (156) = .227, p = .49$, and directive function, $r (156) = .295, p = .010$. In other words, friends' perceptions of the participants' vulnerability to rejection was linked to how much the participants use rejection memories for self-understanding and direction in their lives.

Participant Coded Memory Themes and Narratives and Friend Ratings

Friends' ratings of the participants' levels of rejection sensitivity correlated significantly with participants' tendencies to attach contamination themes to their rejection memories, $r (76) = .349, p = .002$. This means that participants who are inclined to see rejection experiences as enduringly negative are more likely to be rated as rejection sensitive

by their friends. Similarly, participants who were rated as more Fearful by their friends showed higher numbers of contamination, r (78) = .274, p = .015. It was marginally significant for friends' ratings of participants as highly rejection sensitive to have more integrative memories r (76) = .223, p = .053.

Participant-Rated Memory Qualities and Friend's Ratings

Presented in Table 7, friends' ratings of the participants' levels of rejection sensitivity correlated significantly with how much the participant considered their rejection memories to be important, r = .366, p <.001, how negative they found their memories to be, r = .364, p < .001, and how frequently they thought about their memories, r = .231, p = .045. With regard to attachment styles, friend ratings of participants as Fearful correlated positively with how negative the participants saw their rejection memories, r = .330, p = .003 and correlated negatively with how positive they saw their rejection memories, r = -.368, p < .001. It was also found that friend ratings of participants as Preoccupied correlated with how negative the participants saw their rejection memories to be, r = .245, p = .031. Friend ratings of participants as Dismissive correlated negatively with how important the participants saw their rejection memories, r = -.312, p = .005. These patterns of correlations suggest a strong linkage between friends' perceptions of participants' insecure attachment and participants' tendencies to assign more importance to, as well as think and feel more intensely about their past rejection experiences. Interestingly, as well, the more Dismissive participants were rated by friends, the less emphasis participants themselves put on their rejection memories.

Regression Analyses

Memory Functions and Rejection Sensitivity

As presented in Table 8, rejection sensitivity scores were regressed on the self,

Table 5

Correlations between Friend Ratings and Participant Ratings (N = 76)

	Rejection Sensitivity (P)	Satisfaction With Life (P)
Rejection Sensitivity (F)	.30**	-.19
Rejection Fear From Others (F)	.27*	-.19
Rejection Fear From Friend (F)	-.03	-.25*
# Friends (F)	-.03	.27*

*p < .05 **p < .01   (P) = Original Participant, (F) = Nominated Friend of Participant

Table 6

Correlations between Participant and Friend Attachment Style Ratings (N = 76)

	Secure (P)	Fearful (P)	Preoccupied (P)	Dismissive (P)
Secure (F)	.15	-.21	.01	-.03
Fearful (F)	.03	-.06	.25*	-.29*
Preoccupied (F)	-.18	.41**	-.16	.18
Dismissive (F)	-.15	.00	.07	.17

*p < .05 **p < .01 (P) = Original Participant, (F) = Nominated Friend of Participant

Table 7

Correlations between Participant Memory Qualities and Friend Ratings (N = 76)

	Importance (P)	Negativity (P)	Positivity (P)	Thought Freq. (P)
RS (F)	.37**	.36**	-.16	.23*
Secure (F)	.05	-.18	.09	.01
Fearful (F)	.20	.33**	-.37**	.05
Preoccupied (F)	-.02	.25*	-.16	.05
Dismissive (F)	-.31**	-.07	-.03	-.12

*p < .05 **p < .01   (P) = Original Participant, (F) = Nominated Friend of Participant

directive, and social functions as well as on the SWL scores. These four predictors accounted for about fifteen percent of the variance in the rejection sensitivity scores (R^2 = .171, adjusted R^2 = .150), which was significant, $F(4, 159)$ = 8.0, $p < .001$. None of the memory functions were significant predictors of the rejection sensitivity scores but SWL was a significant predictor, (β = -.33, $p < .001$).

Memory Narratives and Themes and Rejection Sensitivity

As presented in Table 9, rejection sensitivity scores were regressed on the memory coding of specific, integrated, redemption, and contamination and on SWL. These five predictors accounted for about seventeen percent of the variance in the rejection sensitivity scores (R^2 = .173, adjusted R^2 = .146), which was significant, $F(5, 159)$ = 6.4, $p < .001$. Only the specific memory theme was a marginally significant predictor of the rejection sensitivity scores, (β = .13, p = .088), aside from SWL, (β = -.31, $p < .001$) meaning that controlling for other memory narrative themes, the presence of specific themes in rejection memories is the strongest predictor of rejection sensitivity in individuals.

Memory Qualities, SWL, and Rejection Sensitivity

As shown in Table 10, rejection sensitivity scores were regressed on memory importance, memory negativity, memory positivity, memory thought frequency, and SWL. These five predictors accounted for about 22% of the variance in the rejection sensitivity scores (R^2 = .218, adjusted R^2 = .192), which was highly significant, $F(5, 155)$ = 8.4, $p < .001$. Both the frequency of thought (β = .21, p = .023) and the satisfaction with life scores (β = -.32, $p < .001$) were significant predictors of the rejection sensitivity scores.

Attachment Styles and Rejection Sensitivity

As presented in Table 11, rejection sensitivity scores were regressed on the Secure,

Table 8

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Rejection Sensitivity (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Self	.840	.62	.146	1.355	.177
Directive	-.278	.51	-.054	-.541	.589
Social	.701	.50	.130	1.418	.158
SWL	-1.080	.24	-.327	-4.420	.001

$R^2 = .171$, adjusted $R^2 = .150$

Table 9

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Rejection Sensitivity (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Specific	.552	.32	.128	1.715	.088
Integrative	.268	.37	.056	.732	.465
Redemption	-.602	.53	-.091	-1.146	.254
Contamination	.735	.46	.120	1.599	.112
SWL	-1.040	.25	-.314	-4.168	.001

$R^2 = .173$, adjusted $R^2 = .146$

Table 10

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Rejection Sensitivity (N = 156)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Importance	.211	.42	.044	.505	.615
Negativity	.555	.47	.119	1.181	.239
Positivity	.099	.52	.018	.193	.847
ThoughtFreq	1.149	.50	.211	2.296	.023
SWL	-1.057	.25	-.320	-4.315	.001

$R^2 = .218$, adjusted $R^2 = .192$

Fearful, Preoccupied, and Dismissive attachment styles. These four predictors accounted for

about 14% of the variance in the rejection sensitivity scores ($R^2 = .135$, adjusted $R^2 = .113$),

which was highly significant, $F(4, 159) = 6.0$, $p < .001$. Only the Secure attachment style ($\beta =$

-.25, $p = .006$) was a significant predictor of the rejection sensitivity scores. This suggests

that the Fearful attachment style may be independently related to rejection memories,

regardless of one's self-perceived rejection sensitivity.

Fearful and Preoccupied Attachment Styles and Rejection Sensitivity

As presented in Table 12, rejection sensitivity scores were regressed on the Fearful

and Preoccupied attachment styles. These two predictors accounted for eight percent of the

variance in the rejection sensitivity scores ($R^2 = .084$, adjusted $R^2 = .072$), which was

significant, $F(2, 159) = 7.2$, $p < .001$. Both the Fearful ($\beta = .24$, $p = .002$) and the Preoccupied

($\beta = .16$, $p = .041$) attachment styles were significant predictors of the rejection sensitivity

scores.

Fearful Attachment Style and Memory Functions

As presented in Table 13, Fearful attachment style scores were regressed on the self,

directive, and social memory functions. These three predictors accounted for ten percent of

the variance in the Fearful attachment scores ($R^2 = .100$, adjusted $R^2 = .082$), which was

highly significant, $F(3, 159) = 5.8$, $p < .001$. Only the self memory function ($\beta = .32$, $p = .004$)

was a significant predictor of the Fearful attachment style scores. Other attachment style

regressions did not yield significant results. When SWL was added into the regression, the

self function remained a significant predictor of the Fearful attachment style scores ($R^2 =$

.193, adjusted $R^2 = .172$, $F(4, 159) = 9.2$, $p < .001$, $\beta = .27$, $p = .012$). SWL was also a

significant predictor of RS in this regression ($\beta = -.31$, $p < .001$).

Table 11

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Rejection Sensitivity (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Secure	-.624	.23	-.250	-2.763	.006
Fearful	.230	.19	.104	1.189	.236
Preoccupied	.266	.16	.127	1.649	.101
Dismissive	.117	.18	.050	.652	.515

$R^2 = .135$, adjusted $R^2 = .113$

Table 12

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Rejection Sensitivity (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Fearful	.525	.17	.237	3.101	.002
Preoccupied	.332	.16	.158	2.064	.041

$R^2 = .084$, adjusted $R^2 = .072$

Table 13

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Fearful Attachment Style (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Self	.700	.28	.269	2.536	.012
Directive	.027	.23	.011	.117	.907
Social	.005	.22	.002	.024	.981
SWL	-.459	.11	-.308	-4.225	.001

$R^2 = .193$, adjusted $R^2 = .172$

Table 14

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Fearful Attachment Style (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Specific	.081	.15	.042	.555	.580
Integrative	.453	.17	.209	2.721	.007
Redemption	-.115	.24	-.038	-.481	.631
Contamination	.117	.21	.042	.561	.576
SWL	-.477	.11	-.320	-4.217	.001

$R^2 = .161$, adjusted $R^2 = .133$

Fearful Attachment Style and Memory Themes

As presented in Table 14, Fearful attachment style scores were regressed on the specific, integrative, redemption, and contamination memory themes. These four predictors accounted for six percent of the variance in the Fearful attachment scores (R^2 = .064, adjusted R^2 = .040), which was significant, $F(4, 159) = 2.6$, $p = .036$. Only the integrative memory theme (β=.24, $p = .004$) was a significant predictor of the Fearful attachment style scores. Other attachment style regressions did not yield significant results. When SWL was added into the regression, the integrative theme remained a significant predictor of the Fearful attachment style scores (R^2 =.161, adjusted R^2 = .133, $F(5, 159) = 9.2$, $p < .001$, β=.21, $p = .007$). SWL was also a significant predictor of RS in this regression ($\beta = -.32$, $p < .001$).

Fearful Attachment Style and Memory Qualities

As presented in Table 15, Fearful attachment style scores were regressed on memory importance, negativity, positivity, and thought frequency. These four predictors accounted for six percent of the variance in the Fearful attachment scores (R^2 = .059, adjusted R^2 = .034), which was marginally significant, $F(4, 155) = 2.6$, $p = .054$. Only memory negativity (β=.25, $p = .025$) was a significant predictor of the Fearful attachment style scores. Other attachment style regressions on memory qualities did not yield significant results. When SWL was added into the regression, memory negativity remained a significant predictor of the Fearful attachment style scores (R^2 = .168, adjusted R^2 = .140, $F(5, 155) = 6.1$, $p < .001$, β=.21, $p = .046$). SWL was also a significant predictor of RS in this regression ($\beta = -.34$, $p < .001$).

Memory Functions Regressed on RS and Fearful Attachment

As presented in Table 16a-c, the memory functions were regressed on the Fearful

Table 15

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Fearful Attachment Style (N = 156)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
Importance	.067	.19	.031	.347	.729
Negativity	.437	.22	.209	2.008	.046
Positivity	.448	.24	.182	1.877	.062
ThoughtFreq	.176	.23	.072	.758	.450
SWL	-.503	.11	-.339	-4.430	.001

$R^2 = .168$, adjusted $R^2 = .140$

Table 16a

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Self Function (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
RS	.028	.01	.160	2.074	.040
Fearful	.106	.03	.276	3.585	.001

$R^2 = .123$, adjusted $R^2 = .112$

Table 16b

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Directive Function (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
RS	.013	.02	.068	.846	.399
Fearful	.076	.03	.178	2.214	.028

$R^2 = .042$, adjusted $R^2 = .030$

Table 16c

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Social Function (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
RS	.034	.02	.181	2.285	.024
Fearful	.061	.03	.148	1.866	.064

$R^2 = .068$, adjusted $R^2 = .056$

attachment style and rejection sensitivity scores. For the self function, these two predictors accounted for twelve percent of the variance in the rejection sensitivity scores (R^2 = .123, adjusted R^2 = .112), which was significant, $F(2, 159)$ = 11.0, $p < .001$. Both the Fearful attachment style scores (β=.28, $p < .001$) and the rejection sensitivity scores (β=.16, p = .040) were significant predictors of the self scores. For the directive function, these two predictors accounted for four percent of the variance in the rejection sensitivity scores (R^2 = .042, adjusted R^2 = .030), which was significant, $F(2, 159)$ = 3.47, p = .034. Only the Fearful attachment style (β=.18, p = .028) was a significant predictor of the directive function scores. For the social function, these two predictors accounted for seven percent of the variance in the rejection sensitivity scores (R^2 = .068, adjusted R^2 = .056), which was significant, $F(2, 159)$ = 5.73, p = .004. Only rejection sensitivity (β=.18, p = .024) was a significant predictor of the social function scores.

Memory Themes Regressed on RS and Fearful Attachment

As presented in Table 17, the memory narratives and themes were regressed on the Fearful attachment style and rejection sensitivity scores. Rejection sensitivity and the Fearful attachment style scores were not significant predictors of the specific, redemption, and contamination theme scores. For the integrative theme, these two predictors accounted for four percent of the variance in the rejection sensitivity scores (R^2 = .043, adjusted R^2 = .030), which was significant, $F(2, 159)$ = 3.49, p = .033. Only the Fearful attachment style (β=.21, p = .010) was a significant predictor of the integrative theme scores.

Memory Qualities Regressed on RS and Fearful Attachment

As presented in Table 18a-c, the memory qualities were regressed on the Fearful attachment style and rejection sensitivity scores. These two predictors accounted for four

percent of the variance in the memory importance scores (R^2 = .042, adjusted R^2 = .030), which was significant, $F(2, 155)$ = 3.4, p = .036. Rejection sensitivity scores (β=.18, p = .032) were significant predictors of the memory importance scores. These two predictors accounted for nine percent of the variance in the memory negativity scores (R^2 = .093, adjusted R^2 = .082), which was significant, $F(2, 155)$ = 7.9, p < .001. Rejection sensitivity (β=.24, p = .003) was a significant predictor of the memory negativity scores. These two predictors accounted for ten percent of the variance in the memory thought frequency scores (R^2 = .104, adjusted R^2 = .092), which was significant, $F(2, 155)$ = 8.86, p < .001. Rejection sensitivity was a significant predictor of the memory thought frequency scores (β=.29, p < .001).

Rejection Sensitivity and Fearful Attachment Regressed on SWL

Shown in Table 19, the Fearful attachment style and rejection sensitivity scores were regressed on Satisfaction With Life scores. These two predictors accounted for twenty percent of the variance in the rejection sensitivity scores (R^2 = .195, adjusted R^2 = .185), which was significant, $F(2, 159)$ = 19.0, p < .001. Both the Fearful attachment style scores (β= -.27, p < .001) and the rejection sensitivity scores (β= -.29, p < .001) were significant predictors of the SWL scores.

Friend Ratings Regressed on RS and Fearful Attachment

As presented in Table 20a-b, the friend ratings were regressed on the participant-rated Fearful attachment style and participant-rated rejection sensitivity scores. These two predictors accounted for eleven percent of the variance in the friend-rated rejection sensitivity scores (R^2 = .110, adjusted R^2 = .086), which was significant, $F(2, 75)$ = 4.5, p = .014. The participant-rated rejection sensitivity scores (β=.26, p = .025) were significant

predictors of the friend-rated rejection sensitivity scores. These two predictors accounted for seventeen percent of the variance in friend-rated Preoccupied attachment (R^2 = .167, adjusted R^2 = .145), which was significant, $F(2, 77)$ = 7.5, p < .001. Participant-rated Fearful attachment (β=.42, p < .001) was a significant predictor of friend-rated Preoccupied attachment.

MANOVA Analysis

MANOVA of Memory Qualities and Participants' Levels in Fearful and RS

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine the effect of the four combinations of high and low on Fearful and RS (low in RS and low in Fearful, low in RS and high in Fearful, high in Fearful and low in RS, and high in Fearful and high in RS) on the four dependent memory quality variables (importance, negativity, positivity, and thought frequency). This was computed using the lowest and highest quartiles for both Fearful and RS and then creating a new variable that separated these into the four different categories. Significant differences were found among the four Fearful/RS combinations on the dependent measures, Wilks' λ = .68, $F(4, 51)$ = 1.779, p = .057, η^2 = .12, which indicated that overall, the participants' scores differed significantly on the memory quality variables. Table 21 presents the means and standard deviations of the dependent variables for the four Fearful/RS combinations.

Univariate analyses of variance (ANOVAs) for each dependent variable were conducted as follow-up tests to the MANOVA. The ANOVA of memory importance was significant, $F(3, 57)$ = 2.928, p = .042, η^2 = .14. The ANOVA of memory negativity was also significant, $F(3, 57)$ = 6.341, p < .001, η^2 = .26. The ANOVAs based on memory positivity and memory thought frequency were nonsignificant. Tukey post-hoc analyses

revealed that participants high in both Fearful and in RS differed from participants low in both Fearful and in RS on memory importance and memory negativity. No other significant differences between groups were found.

Table 17

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Integrative Theme (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
RS	-.004	.02	-.017	-.216	.829
Fearful	.097	.04	.210	2.608	.010

$R^2 = .043$, adjusted $R^2 = .030$

Table 18a

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Memory Importance (N = 156)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
RS	.037	.02	.178	2.170	.032
Fearful	.032	.038	.069	.840	.402

$R^2 = .042$, adjusted $R^2 = .030$

Table 18b

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Memory Negativity (N = 156)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
RS	.051	.02	.238	2.992	.003
Fearful	.067	.04	.140	1.762	.080

$R^2 = .093$, adjusted $R^2 = .082$

Table 18c

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Memory Thought Frequency (N = 156)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
RS	.053	.02	.288	3.634	.001
Fearful	.037	.03	.089	1.130	.260

$R^2 = .104$, adjusted $R^2 = .092$

Table 19

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for SWL (N = 160)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
RS	-.087	.02	-.289	-3.909	.001
Fearful	-.182	.05	-.271	-3.674	.001

R^2 = .195, adjusted R^2 = .185

Table 20a

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Friend-Rated RS (N = 76)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
RS	.217	.10	.260	2.293	.025
Fearful	.322	.23	.156	1.377	.173

$R^2 = .110$, adjusted $R^2 = .086$

Table 20b

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Friend-Rated Preoccupied Attachment (N = 76)

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig. (p)
RS	-.018	.05	-.039	-.360	.720
Fearful	.465	.12	.416	3.845	.001

$R^2 = .167$, adjusted $R^2 = .145$

Table 21

Means and Standard Deviations of Fearful/RS Levels for Memory Qualities

	Low in RS, Low in Fearful		Low in RS High in Fearful		High in RS, Low in Fearful		High in RS, High in Fearful	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Importance	2.83	1.00	2.98	.80	2.93	1.13	3.67	.91
Negativity	2.50	.92	2.85	.91	3.30	.96	3.67	.74
Positivity	2.31	.80	2.23	.69	1.85	.69	1.90	.54
Thought Frequency	2.98	.87	3.13	.79	3.39	.90	3.30	.81

Discussion

This study attempted to answer several questions regarding the behavior of highly rejection sensitive individuals: Why is it that some people linger on rejection more sensitively? How have individuals higher in RS stored their experiences of rejection in the past, and is this different from individuals lower in RS? Do those individuals higher in RS make use of their rejection experiences?

Individuals who were higher in rejection sensitivity used the self and the social functions for their rejection memories, but not the directive function. The self function of autobiographical memory is intended to maintain continuity of identity and a sense of being the same person over time (Conway, 2005; Bluck & Alea, 2009). The social function of autobiographical memory includes the retrieval of memory in order to develop, maintain, and enhance social bonds with others (Alea & Bluck, 2003). This indicates that individuals higher in RS are using their rejection memories to develop their sense of identity as people who feel inclined to relate to or react to rejection experiences in a particular way, or as people who are likely to be rejected. It also indicates that individuals higher in RS are using their rejection memories to explain to others about themselves and their life experiences with the hopes of bonding and becoming closer to those they share the rejection memories with. When people higher in RS explain themselves to others, it seems that they often bring up rejection-related topics that they have experienced. The directive function, which individuals higher in RS did not significantly use, involves using past experiences to guide present and future behaviors and thoughts. Past studies have found that people can solve their current problems by using their autobiographical memories in order to guide their actions (Bluck & Alea, 2002; Cohen, 1998). Because individuals higher in RS did not conclusively use the

directive function, this indicates that using their rejection memories to guide their future thoughts and behaviors about rejection experiences is not necessarily the primary concern. Individuals higher in RS are more involved directly with using their rejection experiences to form their self-concept and also explain and share these experiences with others close to them.

In past studies of self-defining memories, specific self-defining memories were more common than nonspecific ones (Blagov & Singer, 2004; Pillemer et al., 1986; Singer & Moffitt, 1991-1992). However, this study found the opposite effect with more summary memories (69%) than specific memories (31%). This pattern could have emerged because self-defining memories have an open prompt format and this study's memory prompt asked about rejection experiences only. Individuals higher in RS were found to have more specific rejection memories with less redemption and more contamination themes. It has been speculated that because greater effort is required to reach for specific detail in autobiographical memories, that there is a working memory deficit (due to a cognitive-emotional disturbance) that may impair the retrieval of the memory and therefore cause a lack of specificity (Moore, Watts, & Williams, 1988; Williams & Broadbent, 1986). An alternative explanation is that overgeneral memories may be linked to a defensive avoidance of emotional arousal that is caused by remembering a more specific and detailed memory (Singer & Salovey, 1993; Blagov & Singer, 2004). In this study, it seems that most people (regardless of RS level), either for reasons of a working memory deficit or for the avoidance of painful emotional arousal, told their rejection memories in a summary format. Because individuals higher in RS told their rejection memories in a specific format, this could mean that they are much more used to recalling these memories because the memories resonate

more with them. This can be confirmed because individuals higher in RS use their rejection memories both for self function for identity formation as well as for social bonding. Individuals higher in RS may remember these rejection memories more frequently or are used to telling them to others in order to explain themselves.

McAdams (2005) has found that contamination sequences are not as commonly told in memory accounts as redemption sequences. In this study, the amount was fairly equal, although there were slightly more contamination sequences (15%) than redemption sequences (12%). The reason for this is again probably attributed to the topic of rejection. Being rejected is more likely to end negatively than end positively, unless the memory teller views the rejection as a positive experience. McAdams (2005) has found that contamination sequences are associated with depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, psychological distress, as well as low levels of life satisfaction, happiness, and sense of life coherence. Contamination themes are also negatively associated with generativity (McAdams, 2005). Because individuals higher in RS found their memories to be contaminated, this may reinforce the idea that rejection sensitivity is associated with variables of life dissatisfaction. This idea can be independently confirmed by the strongly significant correlation between having a lower satisfaction of life and a higher level of rejection sensitivity. The more rejection sensitive a person is, the lower his or her overall satisfaction with life is.

The memory quality variables of importance, negativity, positivity, and thought frequency were created for the purpose of measuring how affected participants were by their rejection memories. It was found that participants with higher levels of RS found their rejection memories to be significantly more important, more negative, less positive, and more frequently thought about than individuals lower in rejection sensitivity. This confirms that

interpretations of experiences of rejection are indeed a major part of having and maintaining rejection sensitivity. Because individuals higher in RS found more negativity in their memories, this is a way of independently confirming the experience of contamination in their rejection memories, as contaminated memories have a negative experience attached to them. When a regression was performed on the memory qualities and on SWL, it was found that SWL as well as the frequency of thought of the rejection memories remained significant while the other qualities did not. This indicates that regardless of a highly rejection sensitive person's satisfaction with life, they think frequently about their rejection memories. Returning back to finding specific themes in highly rejection sensitive person's rejection memories, this would also help to explain why their memories were more specific; possibly because they think about them more frequently and therefore they are more prominent in their minds.

Individuals in this study with higher levels of RS were positively connected to the Fearful and Preoccupied attachment styles and were negatively connected to the Secure attachment style. This finding was similar to that of Erozkan (2009) except no connection was found between the Dismissive attachment style and rejection sensitivity. A regression revealed that rejection sensitivity scores only predicted the Secure attachment style scores. Because participants higher in Fearful had significant correlated relationships between the memory variables, this may indicate that the Fearful attachment style has an independent relationship to the rejection memories they shared in this study, aside from their levels of rejection sensitivity.

Having a more Secure attachment style seemed to negate the chances of being high in rejection sensitivity. Secure participants also had overall higher levels of satisfaction with

life. Regarding the relationship to their rejection memories, Secure participants found their rejection experiences to be significantly less important, less negative, more positive, and less frequently thought about. There were no other significant values that emerged from the relationship between Secure and the memory themes and functions, but general trends did occur for having summary memories and for not using the self function. Despite statistical significance, this may indicate that Secure participants do not attach their rejection memories to their self-concept as much as other attachment styles do.

Participants with more Fearful attachment had a close relationship to rejection sensitivity levels, a finding similar to Erozkan (2009). Fearful participants had higher RS levels and lower SWL levels. Their rejection memories were significantly integrated and they used them for both the self and the directive memory functions, but not the social function. Fearful participants also reported their rejection memories to be significantly more negative and more frequently thought about. Because the attachment style regression did not yield a significant relationship between being Fearful and having rejection sensitivity, the Fearful attachment style may also have a unique relationship to their rejection memories, apart from their RS levels. Regression analyses confirmed this for memory negativity, the directive function, and memory integration. These results indicate that for Fearfully attached participants, regardless of their RS level, the level of negativity in their rejection memories is particularly strong with increasing Fearful attachment. The indication that the Fearful attachment style uses both the directive function and has integration in their rejection memories (aside from RS level) indicates that there is a learning and meaning-making process that they are gaining from their rejection experiences. The question is, what are these Fearfully-attached participants learning and what are they directing themselves to do in

future rejection scenarios? This question will be discussed in more depth below.

Preoccupied individuals had significantly higher levels of rejection sensitivity, but did not have significantly higher or lower levels of SWL. In regressing Fearful and Preoccupied on RS, both remained significant predictors. There were no significant results for memory functions, qualities, or themes. There were trends for more memory negativity as well as more social and self function use. It is difficult to draw conclusions about what this attachment style is using their rejection memories for. They are sensitive to rejection, but they do not have a conclusive relationship to their rejection memories, which may indicate that the memories they shared do not have a significant impact on the formation and maintenance of their rejection sensitivity.

The Dismissive individuals had no significant connection to any variable in this study. Because Erozkan (2009) found that Dismissive individuals were also significantly rejection sensitive, this is something that should be studied in further depth. In this study, the issue may have arisen from not enough of a sample size for participants who classified themselves as high in Dismissive.

The Fearful attachment style falls under the avoidance-attachment dimension and is characterized by negative thoughts of the self as well as negative thoughts of others. They worry that by getting too close to others, they risk getting hurt and have trouble trusting others completely (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). It is easy to see how these characteristics can be expanded to an avoidance of being rejected. The risk of getting hurt from others often entails an experience of being rejected by someone that one cares about. Regardless of RS level, the Fearful attachment style is characterized by avoidant tendency to prevent unpleasant experiences, including rejection, that are caused by significant others.

Returning back to approach-avoidance tendencies, it could be argued that individuals who are both Fearful and rejection sensitive represent the population of participants in past studies who have RS and avoid relationships (e.g., Downey, Feldman, & Ayduk, 2000).

On the other hand, the Preoccupied attachment style falls under the anxiety-attachment dimension. Preoccupied people have negative thoughts of themselves and positive thoughts of others. Preoccupied people are uncomfortable without close relationships but they often feel that those they are close to do not value themselves as much as the Preoccupied people value their close relationships. Preoccupied people often are seen as clingy by their partners and friends because they greatly value intimacy (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Because Preoccupied people have higher levels of rejection sensitivity, it is clear that they are anxious and worried about the threat of rejection from others. Experiencing a rejection would confirm a Preoccupied person's fears that they are not worthy of their significant others' love, care, and attention. Preoccupied people want to form close relationships with others and tend to cling to others with the hopes of avoiding rejection and risk losing a relationship. It could be argued that people who are both Preoccupied and rejection sensitive represent the population of participants in past studies who have RS and approach relationships (e.g., Downey, Feldman, & Ayduk, 2000).

Evidence of a relationship between attachment styles and emotional self-regulation has been found in research on adult attachment (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Mikulincer, Shaver, & Pereg, 2003). From this perspective, attachment styles can be viewed as "organized rules that guide the individuals' responses in situations of distress" (Besser & Priel, 2009, p. 289). With this definition in mind, it can be understood how Fearful and Preoccupied participants respond to situations of rejection with their respective coping

mechanisms of avoidance for Fearful individuals and approach for Preoccupied individuals. The results from the friend study are useful for shedding light on the accuracy of the premise that individuals who are higher in both Fearful and in RS avoid relationships in order to prevent the threat of rejection and individuals who are higher in both Preoccupied and in RS approach relationships in order to form a close bond that would minimize the threat of rejection. The friends were significantly accurate at guessing the participants' levels of rejection sensitivity. Also, when the friends guessed that the participants had higher levels of rejection fear from other people, the participants had higher self-ratings of RS levels. These two findings indicate that rejection sensitivity is something that can potentially be perceived by other people. The friends' ratings of the participants' rejection sensitivity levels confirmed that individuals who apply rejection memories to themselves (use the self function) and who have more contamination themes in their rejection memories are perceived as more rejection sensitive by their friends. Similarly, the more importance and negativity they assign to their memories and the more they think about them, the more likely their friends are to perceive them as rejection sensitive.

An interesting and unexpected finding was between the self-rated attachment styles of the participants and the friend-rated attachment styles of the participants. The Secure and Dismissive attachment styles had non-significant, positive relationships between self and friend ratings. However, whenever participants rated themselves as more Fearful, the friends of these participants would rate the participant as more Preoccupied. The opposite pattern happened as well – whenever participants rated themselves as more Preoccupied, the friends of these participants were more likely to rate the participants as more Fearful. This finding indicates that with regard to attachment styles, there may be some compensation (or rather,

over-compensation) occurring between the Fearful and the Preoccupied attachment styles to appear differently than how they perceive themselves.

The Fearful participants, who are unsatisfied with their lives, may recognize that they are insecurely attached and make attempts to change this by seeking high amounts of approval and responsiveness in their close relationships. A finding that confirms this is that the friends of self-rated Fearful participants rated their friendships as significantly closer. It seems that despite Fearfully-attached participants' tendencies to avoid relationships, that the relationships they do form are close because they want to appear less Fearful and actively work to cause this change to occur. However, this overcompensation causes their friends to view them as slightly over-invested in the relationship. The friends still sense that there is insecurity about the self within these participants, but they misread these participants' self-ratings and see them as more positive and anxious to please others than these more Fearful participants actually feel inside. It is possible that these friends do feel valued and closer to these participants because in the friendships that Fearfuls do have, they work to maintain them and have some semblance of normality and health.

Self-rated Fearfully attached participants also have lesson learning and meaning making experiences from their rejection memories, as demonstrated through the significant levels of integrated and directive memories. It is possible that what they are learning from their rejection memories is how to act in future interactions with close relationships that involve the threat of rejection. The Fearful participants may be learning to act as if they have positive views of others, particularly their close relationships, and attempt to open up to them more. One way in which highly RS people typically try to prevent rejection is to change themselves. This can happen in a number of ways, such as silencing their thoughts and

emotions or by ingratiating to the preferences of their partners (Ayduk et al., 2003; Purdie & Downey, 2000). Because Fearfully attached participants use both the directive and the self function, but not the social function, this can explain why their friends perceive them as Preoccupied. First, they use the self function to understand that they react to rejection situations in ways that are typical of RS individuals (hostility, aggression, anger) and that are typical of their attachment style. They form their identities through their rejection experiences and are self-aware of the way they behave and act in rejection scenarios. Second, they use the directive function to learn from their past experiences of rejection. They attempt to compensate for their Fearful and rejection sensitive tendencies by placing more trust in those who are already close to them. They attempt to open up to their friends and maintain trust and honesty. Third, they do not use the social function to explain to others about their rejection experiences. They do not share their rejection experiences with others because this would reveal their true Fearfully-based attachment style, which may be an element of shame and dislike for them, due to their lower satisfaction with life. Fearfully attached participants, with or without RS, may be attempting to change themselves for their close relationships in order to prevent rejection.

It is unclear why Preoccupied participants would be perceived by their friends as Fearful, aside from similar reasoning that has been touched upon previously. Previous research supports the hypothesis that anxiously attached (e.g. Preoccupied) people's self-worth is particularly dependent on others' approval. There is a tendency for these individuals to repeatedly seek reassurance from others. The Preoccupied participants may therefore have a self-awareness of their attachment insecurity and may attempt to compensate for this by appearing more aloof and having lower views of others (Besser & Priel, 2009). However,

with regard to rejection, the Preoccupied attachment style appears to have no other connection to their rejection memories other than having a higher level of RS. Because of this, it is difficult to draw conclusions about how rejection experiences in Preoccupied participants' lives affect their interpretations of rejection and further decision making patterns with regard to avoiding rejection in interpersonal relationships.

Further regression analysis on the friend data revealed significant connections between attachment styles, rejection sensitivity, and friend ratings. Because the Fearful attachment style and rejection sensitivity levels seem to be so closely related and interlinked, several regressions were performed in order to determine which of these two variables had the strongest relationship to other variables. Regression analysis revealed that the participants' self-rated rejection sensitivity levels, as compared to their self-rated Fearful levels, had a significant relationship to the friend-rated rejection sensitivity levels. This means that the friends are actually perceiving the participants' rejection sensitivity levels as opposed to perceiving manifestations of the particiants' Fearfully-based behaviors. This again confirms that RS is more easily perceived by other people, whereas a person's attachment style is more difficult to perceive.

Another regression revealed that the pattern of friends perceiving the participants as more Preoccupied when the participants self-rated themselves as more Fearful is predicted by the participants' self-rated attachment style as more Fearful and not from the participants' self-rated rejection sensitivity levels. This suggests that there is something unique about how the Fearfully-attached participants are acting, regardless of their RS levels, that causes their friends to perceive them as Preoccupied. A regression analysis revealed that the friends' perception of the participants' level of fear of rejection from others was influenced by the

participants' actual level of RS and not the participants' level of Fearful attachment. This suggests that the Fearfully attached participants are either hiding their attachment-based fear of rejection from others or that being highly rejection sensitive instills an obvious element of fear that trumps any fear that occurs due to the Fearful attachment style alone.

Both individuals who were higher in RS and higher in Fearful attachment had significant relationships to SWL levels and to using the self function. Regressions with both RS and Fearful revealed that RS was the only predictor of memory importance, negativity, and thought frequency. However, a MANOVA revealed that individuals who were high in both Fearful attachment and in rejection sensitivity had significantly higher reports of memory importance and memory negativity than individuals low in both variables. This may indicate that being high in both Fearful and RS leads to an even more powerful connection to the placement of importance as well as on negativity in their rejection memories than if they were just high in one of these variables or if they were high in neither.

Prior research has documented links between rejection sensitivity and exposure to authoritarian and rejecting parenting in childhood (Feldman & Downey, 1994). Drawing on Bowlby (1980), Downey and her colleagues' model follows that when parents meet their children's expressed needs with rejection, these children form rejection sensitivity (Downey & Feldman, 1996). In the present study, no link was found between childhood family-oriented rejection memories and RS levels. In fact, the type of rejection memory (romantic, family, peer, or achievement) and who the rejection was caused from (an individual, a group of people, or an organization/institution), was remarkably similar across the three memories for individuals lower in RS and individuals higher in RS. While this may contradict previous findings, it can be interpreted that the participants with higher levels of RS in this study did

not have different types of rejection, but rather interpreted their rejection experiences more maladaptively than individuals lower in RS. Their interpretations of their rejection memories shaped their anxiety and fear over rejection.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

A larger sample size would be ideal for any type of follow-up study. With regard to attachment styles, it is difficult to draw conclusions with such a small sample size. While previous research demonstrated that Dismissive and rejection sensitivity are connected, this study was unable to replicate this finding (Erozkan, 2009). The background and diversity of the participants was limited. The participants were majority Caucasian, female, and from educated backgrounds. This makes it difficult to apply these findings to broader populations. Gender differences were not analyzed because there were not enough men who completed the study. The study was also set up online through SurveyMonkey and Qualtrics and because of this, it is impossible to tell how focused the participants were on actually completing the study accurately.

Self-report based studies always have the limitation of being unsure of how well the participants are able to accurately represent their behaviors. It is difficult to tell if participants answered questions in ways that they would have liked to be perceived as, instead of how they actually are. This was reconciled by including friend-ratings of participants' rejection sensitivity levels and their attachment styles, but this also has its drawbacks. The friend may perceive the participants' RS and attachment styles differently depending on their personal relationship. It could be that a parent or a different friend of the participant would have a completely different rating. For example, Wang, Wong, and Kwong (2010) found that raters who are in a peer rating context as opposed to a nonpeer rating context do use different rating

tactics to achieve specific goals. This follows the goal-directed perspective of performance appraisal, which suggests that raters with different goals will give different ratings. For future studies, it would be advantageous to have another, separate person who knows the participant rate his or her levels of RS and attachment styles.

The attachment style measure that was provided, the Relationship Questionnaire, was very brief with only five questions (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). This was decided on because of the desire for a shorter length of overall survey time. However, because of all of the interesting correlation and regression data that came out of this study regarding attachment styles, it would have been beneficial to have a measure of attachment based in a longer set of questions, such as the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Adult Attachment Questionnaire (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000).

Future research should examine the relationship the participants had with the person who caused the rejection after the rejection occurred. A recent article from Romero-Canyas et al. (2010b) has suggested that after harsh rejection experiences that are considered important and self-defining, a highly rejection sensitive individual is more likely to ingratiate. To apply this finding to a study like this, it is necessary to examine the personal relationship between the rejector and the rejectee both before and after the rejection occurred. A longitudinal study would be ideal to examine how relationships change between individuals higher in RS and their close relationships after a self-defining rejection. Future studies should examine the differences and similarities between the Fearful attachment style and rejection sensitivity more closely. Why are some rejection sensitive individuals lower in the Fearful attachment style?

Conclusion

Rejection is an inevitable part of everyone's life. How one reacts and interprets rejection experiences shapes how he or she interacts with the world around him or her. Findings from this study indicate that autobiographical rejection memories not only contribute to one's sensitivity to rejection, but are also linked to the Fearful attachment style. Fearfully attached participants, regardless of their rejection sensitivity levels, found their rejection memories to have meaning-making and lesson learning elements to them. The data suggest that Fearfully attached people use their rejection memories to direct them toward acting less Fearful around their close relationships in order to avoid rejection. The people they are close to view them as Preoccupied because the Fearful people overcompensate for their insecurity about others and end up appearing too clingy.

Although by definition the Fearful attachment style avoids relationships and the Preoccupied attachment style approach them, it seems that when their close relationships are already formed, these tendencies may be flipped. Both attachment styles overcompensate for their rejection-based attachment style tendencies and end up appearing more like each other than appearing Secure. The Fearful attachment style may approach the close relationships they have in order to avoid rejection because it is part of their compensation to open up and act trusting towards their significant others. The Preoccupied attachment style may avoid the close relationships they have in order to avoid rejection because it is part of their compensation to appear less engaged and involved in their intimate others' affairs. Both attachment styles desire to avoid rejection and fear it, and in order to do this, they are attempting to change their outward presentation to be more like what they assume their close friends want out of them.

The data from this study points to rejection sensitive and Fearfully-attached people

using their past rejection-related experiences to both form a sense of identity and also guide their interactions with others. The way these people interpret and use their rejection memories seems to create a risk for a self-perpetuating pattern that hinders their ability to have healthy relationships. For rejection sensitive individuals, their lower satisfaction with life can be at least partially attributed to their obsession with their rejection experiences and tying these to their identity. For the Fearful participants, their lower satisfaction with life can be at least partially attributed to their apparent need to change themselves and their rejection-related behaviors in order please their close friends. Because rejection is something that everyone experiences and goes through, it is important to have a safe and productive outlet for discussing rejection and how to cope with it. Through proper support from friends, family, schools, and community groups, people can learn how to move past their negative experiences productively and recognize that their rejection experiences do not define who they are.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent

I hereby consent to participate in Aili Weeks' research about rejection sensitivity and rejection-related memories, supervised by Professor Jefferson Singer of the Connecticut College Psychology Department. I understand that this research will involve completing a series of questionnaires. I understand that this research will take about 40 minutes to complete at my leisure. I have been told that I will be contacted again at the end of the semester to complete a short follow-up questionnaire. I understand that I will not see my friend's responses to his or her questionnaire about me and I understand that I am not to discuss my responses with him or her. I have been told that there are no known risks or discomforts related to participating in this research. I have been told that Aili Weeks can be contacted at aweeks1@conncoll.edu if I have any questions or concerns with the study. I understand that I may decline to answer any questions as I see fit, and that I may withdraw from the study without penalty at any time. I understand that all information will be kept confidential.

I understand that this research has been approved by the Connecticut College Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB). I understand that this study is not meant to gather information about specific individuals and that my responses will be combined with other participants' data for the purpose of statistical analyses. I consent to publication of the study results as long as the identity of all participants is protected. All identifying data will be destroyed at the completion of this study.

Concerns about any aspect of this study may be addressed to the chair of the Connecticut College IRB, Professor Jason Nier (jason.nier@conncoll.edu or 860-435-5057).

I am at least 18 years of age, and I have read these explanations and assurances and voluntarily consent to participate in this research about rejection sensitivity.

I agree to participant in this study. _____
I do not agree to participate in this study. _____

Appendix B

Demographics

1.) Age: _____

2.) Gender: _____

4.) Sexual Orientation: _____

5.) Name the College or University you are currently enrolled at, if applicable: _____

6.) What is your current class year?
    a.) Freshman
    b.) Sophomore
    c.) Junior
    d.) Senior
    e.) I do not currently attend school
    f.) Other (please specify) _____

7.) Ethnic group (please check all that apply):
    a. Caucasian
    b. African American
    c. Latino/a
    d. Asian/Pacific Islander
    e. Native American
    f. Other (please specify) _____

8.) Are you currently in a relationship?
    a. Yes
    b. No

7). If you answered "yes" to the previous question, how long have you been in the relationship? _____

8.) How many long-term relationships have you had in your life? (duration longer than 3 months)

9.) What is your parent's current marital status?
    a.) Married
    b.) Divorced
    c.) Separated
    d.) Never married
    e.) One parent widowed
    f.) Other, please specify: _____

10.) How many close friends do you have? (People you feel at ease with, can talk to about private matters, and can call on for help). _____

11.) How many of these friends do you see or talk to on the phone at least once every two weeks? _____

Appendix C

Satisfaction With Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985)

DIRECTIONS: Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number in the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

1. In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. The conditions of my life are excellent.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. I am satisfied with my life.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix D

Relationship Questionnaire (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991)

Following are descriptions of four general relationship styles that people often report. Please read each description and click the letter corresponding to the style that best describes you or is closest to the way you generally are in your close relationships.

   A. It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't worry about being alone or having others not accept me.

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

   C. I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don't value me as much as I value them.

   D. I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me.

***

Please rate each of the following relationships styles according to the extent to which you think each description corresponds to your general relationship style.

A: It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't worry about being alone or having others not accept me.

Not at all   Somewhat   Very much
like me   like me   like me

------1--------------2----------------3-------------4--------------5-------------6------------7--------

B: I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others

Not at all   Somewhat   Very much
like me   like me   like me

------1--------------2----------------3------------4-------------5------------6-----------7---------

C: I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don't value me as much as I value them.

Not at all	Somewhat	Very much
like me	like me	like me

------1--------------2----------------3------------4-------------5------------6-----------7---------

D: I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me.

Not at all	Somewhat	Very much
like me	like me	like me

------1--------------2----------------3------------4-------------5------------6-----------7---------

Appendix E

Rejection Memories Prompt/ TALE questionnaire -revised

Rejection Memory #1 Prompt
Think back to a time during your childhood (age 11 or younger) where you felt rejected. This act of rejection could have been caused by a friend, a parent, a love interest, a group of people, an institution, or anything else significant to you. Recall a specific rejection-related memory and describe in detail the events of that particular rejection and what the significance of this memory is to you today.

Rejection Memories #2 and #3 Prompt
Think back to another time in your life where you felt rejected. This memory can be from childhood, adolescence, or more recent adulthood. This act of rejection could have been caused by a friend, a parent, a love interest, a group of people, an institution, or anything else significant to you. Recall a specific rejection-related memory and describe in detail the events of that particular rejection and what the significance of this memory is to you today.

Each memory is then followed with these questions:

1.) What age were you when this memory occurred? _____

2.) How important do you still consider this memory to be today?

1	2	3	4	5
very unimportant				very important

3.) How negatively do you currently feel about this memory?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all negative				very negative

4.) How positively do you currently feel about this memory?

1	2	3	4	5
not at all positive				very positive

5.) How often have you thought about this specific memory in the past?

1	2	3	4	5
almost never	seldom	sometimes	occasionally	very frequently

**Each memory is also followed with the TALE (Thinking about Life Experiences) questionnaire. **

Please circle one response on each scale to indicate how often you associate the following

scenarios with this specific rejection memory you just described. This can occur by just thinking about the memory or if you are telling this memory to someone else. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not hesitate to use any of the points on the scale. If you never think back over your life for this reason, circle "Almost never."

I think or talk about this specific rejection memory…

1.) When I want to understand how I have changed from who I was before.
Almost never   Seldom   Occasionally   Often   Very Frequently

2.) When I want to develop more intimacy in a relationship.
Almost never   Seldom   Occasionally   Often   Very Frequently

3.) When I want to remember a lesson I learned in the past.
Almost never   Seldom   Occasionally   Often   Very Frequently

4.) When I am concerned about whether I am still the same type of person that I was earlier.
Almost never   Seldom   Occasionally   Often   Very Frequently

5.) When I hope to also learn more about another person's life.
Almost never   Seldom   Occasionally   Often   Very Frequently

6.) When I want to try and learn from my past mistakes.
Almost never   Seldom   Occasionally   Often   Very Frequently

7.) When I am concerned about whether my beliefs have changed over time.
Almost never   Seldom   Occasionally   Often   Very Frequently

8.) When I want to develop a closer relationship with someone.
Almost never   Seldom   Occasionally   Often   Very Frequently

9.) When I believe that thinking about the past can help guide my future.
Almost never   Seldom   Occasionally   Often   Very Frequently

Appendix F

Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (Downey & Feldman, 1996)

Each of the items below describes things college students sometimes ask of other people. Please imagine that you are in each situation. You will be asked to answer the following questions:

1) How concerned or anxious would you be about how the other person would respond?
2) How do you think the other person would be likely to respond?

1. You ask someone in class if you can borrow his/her notes.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not the person would want to lend you his/her notes?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that the person would willingly give me his/her notes.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

2. You ask your boyfriend/girlfriend to move in with you.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not the person would want to move in with you?
very unconcerned very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that he/she would want to move in with me.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

3. You ask your parents for help in deciding what programs to apply to.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your parents would want to help you?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that they would want to help me.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

4. You ask someone you don't know well out on a date.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not the person would want to go out with you?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6
I would expect that the person would want to go out with me.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

5. Your boyfriend/girlfriend has plans to go out with friends tonight, but you really want to spend the evening with him/her, and you tell him/her so.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your boyfriend/girlfriend would decide to stay in?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that the person would willingly choose to stay in.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

6. You ask your parents for extra money to cover living expenses.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your parents would help you out?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that my parents would not mind helping me out.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

7. After class, you tell your professor that you have been having some trouble with a section of the course and ask if he/she can give you some extra help.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your professor would want to help you out?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that my professor would want to help me out.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

8. You approach a close friend to talk after doing or saying something that seriously upset him/her.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your friend would want to talk with you?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that he/she would want to talk with me to try to work things out.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

9. You ask someone in one of your classes to coffee.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not the person would want to go?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that the person would want to go with me.

very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

10. After graduation, you can't find a job and ask your parents if you can live at home for a while.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your parents would want you to come home?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect I would be welcome at home.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

11. You ask your friend to go on a vacation with you over Spring Break.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your friend would want to go with you?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that he/she would want to go with me.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

12. You call your boyfriend/girlfriend after a bitter argument and tell him/her you want to see him/her.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your boyfriend/girlfriend would want to see you?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that he/she would want to see me.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

13. You ask a friend if you can borrow something of his/hers.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your friend would want to loan it to you?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that he/she would willingly loan me it.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

14. You ask your parents to come to an occasion important to you.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your parents would want to come?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that my parents would want to come.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

15. You ask a friend to do you a big favor.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your friend would do this favor?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6
I would expect that he/she would willingly do this favor for me.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

16. You ask your boyfriend/girlfriend if he/she really loves you.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your boyfriend/girlfriend would say yes?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6
I would expect that he/she would answer yes sincerely.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

17. You go to a party and notice someone on the other side of the room and then you ask them to dance.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not the person would want to dance with you?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6
I would expect that he/she would want to dance with me.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

18. You ask your boyfriend/girlfriend to come home to meet your parents.
How concerned or anxious would you be over whether or not your boyfriend/girlfriend would want to meet your parents?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

I would expect that he/she would want to meet my parents.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

Appendix G
Rejection Sensitivity Subscale – Friend Version

Each of the items below describes things college students sometimes ask of other people. Please imagine that your friend is in each situation. Select which answer best represents your friend's behavior and characteristics. You will be asked to answer the following questions about your friend:

1) How concerned or anxious would my friend be about how the other person would respond?
2) How would my friend assume or think the other person would be likely to respond?

1. My friend asks his or her parents for help in deciding what programs to apply to.
How concerned or anxious would my friend be over whether or not his or her parents would want to help him or her?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

My friend would expect that his or her parents would want to help him or her.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

2. My friend approaches a close friend to talk after doing or saying something that seriously upset the close friend.
How concerned or anxious would my friend be over whether or not the close friend would want to talk with him or her?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

My friend would expect that the close friend would want to talk with him or her to try to work things out.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

3. After graduation, my friend can't find a job and asks his or her parents if he or she can live at home for a while.
How concerned or anxious would my friend be over whether or not his or her parents would want you to come home?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

My friend would expect that he or she would be welcome at home.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

4. My friend calls her or his boyfriend/girlfriend after a bitter argument and tells the boyfriend/girlfriend that she or he wants to see him/her.
How concerned or anxious would my friend be over whether or not her or his boyfriend/girlfriend would want to see him or her?
very unconcerned   very concerned

1   2   3   4   5   6

My friend would expect that his or her boyfriend/girlfriend would want to see him or her.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

5. My friend asks his or her parents to come to an occasion important to him or her.
How concerned or anxious would my friend be over whether or not his or her parents would want to come?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

My friend would expect that his or her parents would want to come.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

6. My friend asks a friend to do her or him a big favor.
How concerned or anxious would my friend be over whether or not her or his friend would do this favor?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

My friend would expect that he/she would willingly do this favor for her or him.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

7. My friend asks his or her boyfriend/girlfriend if he/she really loves him or her.
How concerned or anxious would my friend be over whether or not his or her boyfriend/girlfriend would say yes?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

My friend would expect that he/she would answer yes sincerely.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

8. My friend goes to a party and notices someone on the other side of the room and then asks that person to dance.
How concerned or anxious would my friend be over whether or not the person would want to dance with him or her?
very unconcerned   very concerned
1   2   3   4   5   6

My friend would expect that he/she would want to dance with him or her.
very unlikely   very likely
1   2   3   4   5   6

Appendix H

Relationship Questionnaire – Friend Version
(Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991)

Following are descriptions of four general relationship styles that people often report. Please read each description and select the letter corresponding to the style that best describes your friend or is closest to the way your friend generally is in his or her close relationships.

E. It is easy for my friend to become emotionally close to others. My friend is comfortable depending on them and having them depend on him or her. My friend doesn't worry about being alone or having others not accept him or her.

F. My friend is uncomfortable getting close to others. My friend wants emotionally close relationships, but he or she finds it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. My friend worries that he or she will be hurt if he or she allows him or herself to become too close to others.

G. My friend wants to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but he or she often finds that others are reluctant to get as close as he or she would like. My friend is uncomfortable being without close relationships, but my friend sometimes worries that others don't value him or her as much as he or she values them.

H. My friend is comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to my friend to feel independent and self-sufficient, and my friend prefers not to depend on others or have others depend on me.

***

Please rate each of the following relationships styles according to the extent to which you think each description corresponds to your friend's general relationship style.

A: It is easy for my friend to become emotionally close to others. My friend is comfortable depending on them and having them depend on him or her. My friend doesn't worry about being alone or having others not accept him or her.

Not at all	Somewhat	Very much
like my friend	like my friend	like my friend

------1--------------2----------------3------------4-------------5------------6-----------7---------

B: My friend is uncomfortable getting close to others. My friend wants emotionally close relationships, but he or she finds it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. My friend worries that he or she will be hurt if he or she allows him or herself to become too close to others

Not at all   Somewhat   Very much
like my friend   like my friend   like my friend

------1--------------2----------------3------------4-------------5------------6-----------7---------

C: My friend wants to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but he or she often finds that others are reluctant to get as close as he or she would like. My friend is uncomfortable being without close relationships, but my friend sometimes worries that others don't value him or her as much as he or she values them.

Not at all   Somewhat   Very much
like my friend   like my friend   like my friend

------1--------------2----------------3------------4-------------5------------6-----------7---------

D: My friend is comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to my friend to feel independent and self-sufficient, and my friend prefers not to depend on others or have others depend on me.

Not at all   Somewhat   Very much
like my friend   like my friend   like my friend

------1--------------2----------------3------------4-------------5------------6-----------7---------

Appendix I

Debriefing Form

Thank you for participating in our research on rejection sensitivity and rejection-related memories. In individuals higher in rejection sensitivity, it has been found that there are two main coping paths they take: Some individuals approach relationships in the search of an uncondional partner who will never reject them, and other individuals avoid intimacy and close relationships to prevent the threat of rejection from occurring. The results from this study will help to provide insight into what causes some highly rejection sensitive individuals to approach relationships and others to avoid them. Autobiographical memories, like the ones you have shared in this study, provide information about how a person defines him or herself and expresses his or her identity. The rejection-related memories will provide a valuable way to examine how they help to shape a person's comfort with intimate relationships.

I assure you that your identity will be kept confidential at all times, and if the results of this study are published, participants will be identified with a code, and not with their name or any other element that may disclose their identity to the public.

If you have any questions or are interested in this topic, please contact the researcher, Aili Weeks (aweeks1@conncoll.edu) or Professor Jefferson Singer (jasin@conncoll.edu, 860-439-2343). Concerns about any aspect of this study may be addressed to Professor Jason Nier, Chairperson of the Connecticut College IRB (jason.nier@conncoll.edu).

If you have experienced any distress or discomfort from reflecting on rejection-related memories or from any other aspect of this study, I encourage you to contact a professional counselor or therapist.

Listed are below are some sources you may want to consult to learn more about this topic:

Bluck, S., Alea, N., Habermas, T., Rubin, D. C. (2005). A Tale of three functions: The self-reported uses of autobiographical memory. *Social Cognition, 23,* 93-117.

Downey, G., Feldman, S., & Ayduk, O. (2000). Rejection sensitivity and male violence in romantic relationships. *Personal Relationships, 7*, 45-61.

Elliot, A. J. (2006). The hierarchical model of approach-avoidance motivation. *Motivation and Emotion, 30*, 111-116.

Appendix J

Coding Manual

Honors Thesis: Aili Weeks

Fall 2010 – Spring 2011

Thank you for deciding to help code the memories for this project. There are over 150 participants who have each completed 3 memories of rejection. The first memory is always from the participant's childhood, which is defined as age 11 or younger. The second and third memories can be from any point in the participant's life, whether that is childhood, adolescence, or more recent adulthood. The prompt for the rejection memories is the following (the childhood memory specifies this):

"Think back to a time in your life when you felt rejected. This memory can be from childhood, adolescence, or more recent adulthood. This act of rejection could have been caused by a friend, a parent, a love interest, a group of people, an institution, or anything else significant to you. Recall a specific rejection-related memory and describe in detail the events of that particular rejection and what the significance of this memory is to you today. Write as much as you feel."

Before coding each memory, please take some time to thoroughly read the memory in its entirety. After reading the memory, browse through the various coding categories and begin labeling sentences, sections of the memory, or the entire memory with one or more label per category. Remember to re-read through the memories to see if anything was missed.

Coding Labels

Section 1: Types of Rejection

Four different categories of rejection have been defined. For each memory, please choose one of these categories which best describes the rejection: Romance, Family, Friend, or Achievement. Additionally, three categories of Individual, Group, and Abstract further define whom the rejection was from.

1.) Romance Rejection

In a romance rejection memory, the rejection occurs from a romantic interest of the participant. The romantic interest can be a current relationship, a previous relationship, or a person that the participant was romantically interested in but never was officially in a relationship with. The participant should have some sort of romantic feelings for the person this rejection was from.

Ex 1. The other day, I was talking to my girlfriend of 3 years and we had a fight. I took a couple of hours to cool down and I told her I'd talk to her later. When I called

her, she didn't answer and texted me back "I'm out." I asked here where she was and told her I wanted to talk about our fight. She replied, "I'm at a bar and I don't want to talk to you." I felt rejected and hurt by the girl I loved so much.

Ex 2. *When I was a high school freshman, I was in love with a senior boy. We were in show choir together. I knew he was unattainable and definitely out of my league, but I decided to go for him anyways. After 3 months of pursuing him, he actually asked me to homecoming. I was shocked but so ecstatic to go with him. He picked me up and we took pictures and all that was normal, but once we got to the dance, he spent absolutely no time with me. He even hooked up with another girl at the dance. I was so humiliated and couldn't understand what was wrong with me.*

Ex 3*. I thought a guy liked me and I had the courage to ask him out on a date but he flat out refused. He didn't even make up an excuse. I guess I read all his signals wrong.*

2.) Family Rejection

In a family rejection memory, the rejection occurs from a member of the participant's family. This can include immediate or extended family members.

Ex 1. *Having gone camping with my family; my older brother and cousin were leaving to go fishing with my grandfather. When I got in the car my brother and cousin both asked me to leave, insisting they did not want to spend the day with me. My uncle (who was driving us to the boat) forced my brother and cousin to let me come.*

Ex 2*. My mother constantly tells me I'm fat and it makes me feel so insecure about my body. My friends tell me I'm not fat, so I try to believe them over my mom, but it's hard.*

Ex 3. *My cousins and I on my dad's side of the family are all about the same age. For some reason, I've never gotten along with them as well as they all have with each other. It makes me feel awkward and alone at family functions and I really wish I could connect to them better.*

3.) Peer Rejection

In a peer rejection memory, the rejection occurs from a friend or a peer of the participant.

Ex 1. *When I was a junior in high school, a friend of mine thought it would be funny to pants me (pull down my pants) in front of my entire class. I was so mortified and couldn't believe he thought that would be funny. I was on my period, too, to make the entire situation even worse. I decided to press charges against him and it ruined our friendship forever, but I didn't care because he didn't take my feelings into account before purposefully embarrassing me.*

Ex 2. I was 12 when my parents told me we were moving to Boston. Every day at lunch I sat with the same group of friends but one kid in particular was really rude to me. When I told him and everyone at the table that I thought I was moving, he replied, "I'm glad you're moving."

Ex 3. I am a huge fan of Star Wars and I have a lot of Star Wars fan stuff. One day I was wearing my Star Wars shirt and I went to Home Depot to pick up some tools. When I was checking out, there was an older man behind the register and he looked me up and down and said, "You look like you work with computers." I went through a series of comebacks in my head but then decided to just say nothing, pay, and walk away. I still regret not saying something back to him.

4.) Achievement Rejection

In an achievement rejection memory, the rejection occurs from some sort of organization or institution. The participant attempted to achieve something or obtain a goal and failed to do this and felt rejected from this. Examples include being rejected from an academic group, sports team, or a prospective employer.

Ex 1. I applied to 15 colleges and only got accepted to one. I went over and over in my head what I could have done wrong and why I wasn't even waitlisted anywhere else. I was even rejected by my safety schools.

Ex 2. I believe that I am a good actress and have much experience with acting. When I tried out for my local community production of Hairspray, I was flat out rejected. I had prepared immensely for the audition and cried for days afterwards as I really saw it as a flaw in myself for not making it.

Ex 3. I applied to the National Honor Society and was rejected. I was depressed because I thought I had qualified to be part of the society and felt that I had given a lot to my school.

Section 2: Individual, Group, and Organizational/Institutional Rejection

1.) Individual Rejection

This rejection occurs from one specific person only. The participant can name who the rejection was from and has or had some sort of relationship with him or her.

Ex 1. My best friend Jessica started talking about me behind my back to all of our mutual friends.

2.) Group Rejection

This rejection occurs from two or more people. An example includes feeling rejected by a person's group of friends.

Ex 1. *My parents both decided that I was too young to move out on my own, even though I felt that I was mature enough to take this step and had rationally made an argument for this.*

Ex 2. *When I was 10, I had moved to a new town and started at a new school. At first, I thought I had made a lot of friends, but when one girl had her birthday party, I wasn't invited and my other friends were. When I talked to my friends about it, none of them were sympathetic towards me.*

3.) Organizational/Institutional Rejection

This rejection occurs from an institution or organization that can be named but there is no individual face behind the rejection. It is unclear who personally rejected the participant, as the institution or organization collectively caused the rejection. An example includes receiving a rejection letter from a college.

Ex 1. *I was rejected from a prestigious summer internship opportunity at Yale University.*

Ex 2. *I applied for a tour guide position at my college and found out that I was not selected.*

Section 3: Time and Rejection Memories

Please classify if each memory is a specific or a general memory with its description of the event(s) that occurred.

1.) Specific Memory

This is a rejection memory of a specific event. The memory is defined as one day and time and does not have indication of the memory lasting longer than this moment. This specific memory narrative has at least one statement of the single event. The rejection must be classified as a unique occurrence and must have a brief duration of less than one day.

Ex 1. *I think I was about 11 years old. It was a nice summer day and I had just finished swim team practice. Since I was 6 years old, competitive swimming was my entire life - it defined me. I had a good group of friends on the swim team…After practice we were all waiting on each other to finish and pack up. My friends started shuffling plans around about a sleepover and all the cool things they were going to do... and I asked, ""Oh! When is it?"" They all responded, ""Er... it's tonight. Guess you weren't invited."" Up until that day in my life, I have never felt so miserable about friendships. It made me think to myself, ""Wow... Am I just not wanted?"" The thought began to infest my mind. I remember going home, crying and asking my mom, ""Do people really talk about how much they don't like me behind my back? Why would anyone do that?"" It's such a horrible thing, finding out your 'best friends' blatantly exclude you. Definitely a stab to the heart…*

Ex 2. *I remember the day when my boyfriend broke up with me so vividly. It was ironically a sunny, warm summer day when he showed up at my house and was already crying. He had cheated on me and didn't want to make it work.*

Ex 3. *I opened the college small, thin envelope already knowing I had been rejected. But reading that I had made it so much worse. I cried the entire day at the loss of getting into my dream school, but soon I made the best of it and decided that there were plenty of other good schools I could go to.*

2.) Summary Memory

This is a rejection memory that spans over a longer period of time. The rejection can span over one main event, such as a vacation week, or it may have several general rejections that combine into one story line. An example would be junior year of high school.

Ex 1. *In third grade I was attending, for the first time, a private school. I only ended up going there for a little while, but what I remember most about it is not having had many friends and the 3 hour bus ride there and back. My mom had decided to try me at this private school because I was excelling at public school and the school told her I should be put into a school for the "gifted and talented." However, this was part way through the school year. The groups of friends had already been formed and I was the new girl. Plus, I was overweight. Any time I tried to make friends, I was unsuccessful. I don't usually have a problem making friends, but at that time it was hard for me. I was shy and overweight and what some would call a teacher's pet…*

Ex 2. *My sophomore year of high school there was a girl named Tori who made my life a living hell. I'm kind of quirky and weird and when I was that age I definitely lacked maturity, but I had a solid group of friends and I knew they all loved me. Tori somehow inserted herself into the picture and became friends with a lot of my good friends. She really hated me because she said she thought I was immature and ugly. My friends still hung out with me, but because Tori smoked and drank and I didn't and a lot of my friends were starting to experiment, I started losing touch with them. She did a series of horrible things over the year where she purposefully wanted me to feel rejected. Once she got on this boy's screename and told me (as if it was the boy) that he thought I was really stupid and ugly. I finally escaped all of this misery when her home life fell apart and she unexpectedly had to move to Colorado.*

Ex 3. *I have always had a fierce competition between my brother and I. Especially when it comes to sports, we are highly competitive. We typically play different sports (although my parents and he still tend to compare our successes), but one sport we share is soccer. However, whenever we play together, he always belittles me. And when he comes to watch my games, he tells me afterwards everything I did wrong. This has been going on my whole life and I don't know how to escape from feeling inadequate.*

Ex 4. *I've always felt like I was responsible for my parent's divorce. They divorced when I was 5 years old. This feeling has lingered til today and even though my*

parents have never flat out said that it was my fault, I know it is. I am their third child and before I was born, there were never any problems. My parents constantly argue about taking care of me and who is going to have me what holidays. My other siblings are much older and I think it's safe to say that I was a "surprise." My parents were getting along fine before I was born and then I put extra stresses on them and they fought all the time and now they aren't together.

Section 4: Rejection Memory Integration

Please classify if there is a statement of integration, or meaning, made during the memory.

1.) Integrative Rejection Memory
Integrative rejection memories contain statements that ascribe meaning to the memory described. The person may mention a lesson he or she learned from the rejection experience or draw a conclusion about him/herself or others. Often these statements are found at the end of the memory. You should be able to highlight the sentence where meaning is expressed.

> ***Ex 1.*** *I think I was about 11 years old. It was a nice summer day and I had just finished swim team practice. Since I was 6 years old, competitive swimming was my entire life - it defined me. I had a good group of friends on the swim team… After practice we were all waiting on each other to finish and pack up. My friends started shuffling plans around about a sleepover and all the cool things they were going to do... and I asked, ""Oh! When is it?"" They all responded, ""Er... it's tonight. Guess you weren't invited.""   Up until that day in my life, I have never felt so miserable about friendships. It made me think to myself, ""Wow... Am I just not wanted?"" The thought began to infest my mind. I remember going home, crying and asking my mom, ""Do people really talk about how much they don't like me behind my back? Why would anyone do that?"" It's such a horrible thing, finding out your 'best friends' blatantly exclude you….**Up until this day, I'm really sensitive about being excluded… It makes me second guess myself, even at times when I feel most confident or comfortable.   Overall, I really just want to leave a good impression on people. At the same time, I strive to nurture good relationships with all the people I meet and encounter. Essentially, I don't want people to experience the type of sadness or misery exclusion brings. I do my very best to make sure no one is ever excluded and I always make an effort for harmonious interaction amongst my peers.***

2.) Non-Integrative Rejection Memory
These memories may be filled with emotion and contain generalizations about the participant's personality, but the personality does not explain what the memory means to the participant.

> *Ex 1. Having gone camping with my family; my older brother and cousin were leaving to go fishing with my grandfather. When I got in the car my brother and cousin both asked me to leave, insisting they did not want to spend the day with me.*

My uncle (who was driving us to the boat) forced my brother and cousin to let me come.

Section 5: Memory Themes

Please classify whether each memory has a redemption (bad to good) or contamination (good to bad) theme.

1.) Redemption Theme

A redemption theme is a memory that starts off negative but ends positive. These memories would have a bad experience of rejection but then include a statement or theme at the end of the memory that twists the bad rejection experience into something good.

> *Ex 1. I worked at Outback Steakhouse as a waitress when I was in high school and when I came home for college breaks. I had worked there for 4 years when I was fired one day for not calling in when I didn't show up. I had made a mistake and forgot that I picked up a shift but I did not get a second chance. My boss that I had known for so long was really furious with me and told me that this was the type of thing he really could not accept from his employees. I was so embarrassed and felt unfairly treated. However, I decided that maybe it was time to move on anyway. I had worked at that place long enough and was ready to move on. I decided that I should work at a classier restaurant that paid me more. I applied for a position at a local restaurant and to my delight was hired. I look back at Outback as a time where I was able to learn waitressing skills and how to handle customers and now I don't even feel bad for being fired because I can use these skills at my new restaurant and get more money for it.*

> *Ex 2. When I was a first semester freshman in college, I received my very first failing grade on an assignment ever. I was devastated and feelings of rejection came to me as I doubted my ability to succeed at my school and as a student. (I have never gotten below a B- in my LIFE before, let alone a straight up F). At first, I blamed my professor and became angry and bitter at her for giving me such a bad grade. I tried to write off the class as BS and that it didn't matter. But then I had a wake-up call and realized there was still time to turn around my final grade. I decided to meet with my professor and tell her I was seriously struggling in the class. To my surprise, she was super nice and sympathetic to me and offered to meet with me on a weekly basis during her office hours, as well as recommending a tutor. Through our weekly meetings, I grew to know her well and I began to respect her a lot. We became close, and the next semester when I needed a recommendation for something, I even asked for one and she wrote me a great letter.*

2.) Contamination Theme

A contamination theme would be included in a memory that starts off positive but then ends negative. These memories begin with a more sunny and happy outlook but then turn into a statement or theme of negativity and focus on the bad part of the rejection.

Ex 1. *When I first met Andrew, it felt like a fairy tale for me. I remember it being the first high school football game I had ever been to, and I was incredibly excited and happy. That whole night I met new people, laughed and joked with my friends, and felt the cold rain hit my face…When I first saw him, he mentioned something about singing and playing in a band. This immediately caught my attention because I sing and play guitar. Normally I am not the kind of person who just randomly starts talking to someone, especially guys. The moment we started talking I felt different. He was smiling and I just felt a connection with him that I had never felt before. At the end of the night I gave him my phone number and my screen name online. As the days went by and we kept talking, we realized we both liked each other a lot. He then asked me to homecoming and I of course said yes…Subtly I started realizing my fairy tale had a deceiving twist to it. On Homecoming night, Andrew flirted with every girl in sight, sometimes completely ignoring me... I saw him with one girl in particular, Melissa. The more I saw them together, the more I became jealous of her. Rumors spread that he liked her and not me, and I did not know what to do. The night of homecoming he kept leaving me to be with her. The night after homecoming he told me he did not like me anymore at all. He said he never meant anything he said, and that now he liked Melissa. I could not believe the pain he brought me. My friends would come up to me and tell me all these insults he was saying about me, and I just could not stand it. I had thought it was love at first sight, one of those high school love stories that people wish would happen to them. It turns out my fairy tale went all wrong. We stopped talking completely, and seeing Melissa and Andrew together made my life miserable.*

Ex 2. *I had been best friends with the same girl since kindergarten named Elisa. We hung out together literally all the time, told each other our deepest secrets, and had a really open and honest relationship. My memories with her are really pleasant and happy – full of laughter and inside jokes and secrets. That is, up until we turned 13. The worst part of our friendship was really her mom, who I blame for ruining my friendship with Elisa. Her mom, for whatever reason, was really obsessed with Elisa's popularity. Elisa was pretty naturally, but her mom literally would make sure that her was perfectly blow-dried straight before school. Anyway, her mom planted the idea in Elisa's mind that I was not "cool" enough to hang out for her. At first, Elisa tried to bring me in to the popular group with her, but this epically failed as I had big puffy hair and blue braces. Elisa ultimately rejected me to be part of the popular group, and it really sucked. Best friends for all those years and then it was over in a matter of a few months. It's pretty disgusting what popularity can do to a person.*

Appendix K

Informed Consent - Friend

I hereby consent to participate in Aili Weeks' research about rejection sensitivity and rejection-related memories, supervised by Professor Jefferson Singer of the Connecticut College Psychology Department. I understand that this research will involve completing a series of questionnaires. I understand that this research will take about 10 minutes to complete at my leisure. I understand that I will be answering these questions with my observations and opinions of my friend's relationship style and rejection sensitivity. I understand that my answers about my friend will not be shared with him or her and will remain confidential. I understand that I am not to discuss my responses with my friend who is participating in the study. I understand that I will be contacted at the end of the semester as well to fill out another short questionnaire about my friend. I have been told that I can receive 15 minutes of research credit if I complete these questionnaires. I have been told that there are no known risks or discomforts related to participating in this research. I have been told that Aili Weeks can be contacted at aweeks1@conncoll.edu if I have any questions or concerns with the study. I understand that I may decline to answer any questions as I see fit, and that I may withdraw from the study without penalty at any time. I understand that all information will be kept confidential.

"I understand that this research has been approved by the Connecticut College Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB). I understand that this study is not meant to gather information about specific individuals and that my responses will be combined with other participants' data for the purpose of statistical analyses. I consent to publication of the study results as long as the identity of all participants is protected. All identifying data will be destroyed at the completion of this study. Concerns about any aspect of this study may be addressed to chair of the IRB, Professor Jason Nier (Jason.nier@conncoll.edu or 860-435-5057).

I am at least 18 years of age, and I have read these explanations and assurances and voluntarily consent to participate in this research about rejection sensitivity.

I agree to participant in this study. _____
I do not agree to participate in this study. _____

Appendix L

Debriefing Form - Friend

Thank you for participating in our research on rejection sensitivity and rejection-related memories. In individuals high in rejection sensitivity, it has been found that there are two main coping paths they take: Some individuals approach relationships in the search of an unconditional partner who will never reject them, and other individuals avoid intimacy and close relationships to prevent the threat of rejection from occurring. The results from this study will help to provide insight into what causes some highly rejection sensitive individuals to approach relationships and others to avoid them. Your friend has shared autobiographical memories of rejection, which offer information about how a person defines him or herself and expresses his or her identity. The rejection-related memories will provide a valuable way to examine how they help to shape a person's comfort with intimate relationships. The observations that you shared with us about your friend will help determine if your friend views him or herself similarly or differently from the way others do.

I assure you that your identity will be kept confidential at all times, and if the results of this study are published, participants will be identified with a code, and not with their name or any other element that may disclose their identity to the public.

If you have any questions or are interested in this topic, please contact the researcher, Aili Weeks (aweeks1@conncoll.edu) or Professor Jefferson Singer (jasin@conncoll.edu, 860-439-2343). Concerns about any aspect of this study may be addressed to Professor Jason Nier, Chairperson of the Connecticut College IRB (jason.nier@conncoll.edu).

If you have experienced any distress or discomfort from reflecting on rejection-related memories or from any other aspect of this study, I encourage you to contact a professional counselor or therapist. The Connecticut College Student Counseling Services may be reached at 860-439-4587.

Listed are below are some sources you may want to consult to learn more about this topic:

Bluck, S., Alea, N., Habermas, T., Rubin, D. C. (2005). A Tale of three functions: The self-reported uses of autobiographical memory. *Social Cognition, 23,* 93-117.

Downey, G., Feldman, S., & Ayduk, O. (2000). Rejection sensitivity and male violence in romantic relationships. *Personal Relationships, 7*, 45-61.

Elliot, A. J. (2006). The hierarchical model of approach-avoidance motivation. *Motivation and Emotion, 30,* 111-116.

Appendix M

Sample Memories

1.) "When I was eight years old my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. It was very hard on everyone in my family. My mother was at the hospital for almost a year, and I was unable to see her, being as I was so young, and could easily get her sicker. Because my Mother was gone so long my Father was left taking care of my sister and I. But, instead of him comforting us and being there he dropped us off with other families, and went off to have an affair with my church music teacher. Instead of being with his own children while our mother was dying he chose to have an affair with one of our teachers that was well aware of the situation. He is now married to this woman, who resents me for looking and being so much like my mother. I haven't had the same relationship with my father since then because he rejected me and my need for his love and comfort. I don't have a relationship with my father at all, and neither does my sister. I have talked to therapists and counselors over the years and the topic has always been about my fathers rejection. Whenever it came time for my father to talk to the counselor about what was going on with me, the counselor would tell him that he needed to take a bigger role in my life and actually be a father figure, and every time after he heard that, he would pull me out and put me in another. Every time year after year the same result."

2.) "My boyfriend from high school and I ended up going to the same college. We had been dating for almost two years, and our relationship was growing stronger and more intimate each day. We thought, however, that breaking up was what we were supposed to do upon coming to college. We thought we had to do this to prove to our parents we didn't pick the school based upon each other, and we also felt that we should establish our own set of friends. So we "broke up" right before college, but found it difficult to carry out this seeing as we still loved each other a great deal. We agreed that we could be together unofficially as long as we promised to tell the other person if we were falling out of love, or if we had interest in someone else. There was one morning where I saw him at breakfast. We hugged and said good morning. He seemed off in some way... quiet maybe.... but I attributed it to the fact that he was probably tired. A friend and I put our stuff down at his table and I went to get a glass of water. He followed me up there, and said we should hang out this afternoon. I gladly agreed. So after breakfast, we went back to my room and snuggled up under the covers to watch a movie. I thought it a little odd he wanted to watch a movie because we had had a busy week and hadn't gotten to see each other the past couple of days. But I nuzzled up to him and touched his face and lips as I always had. I thought at that moment how much I loved him and how I was beginning to feel I would never find someone I wanted to be with more. I got up to close the curtains, and as I came back under the covers, his shirt was just slightly lifted, revealing a hickey just above the waistband of his shorts. The hickey wasn't from me - I knew he hated them. I leaped back and demanded that he tell me who gave that to him. He just said let me explain, i can explain. There was nothing to explain. I was furious. I was humiliated. But most of all, I was hurt. I was hurt that he hadn't kept his promise to tell me when he was beginning to find interest in other people. I was hurt that he had let me snuggle up to him, when someone else had done the same just a few hours before. I felt rejected. I felt like I wasn't good enough for him. And I felt like that every day since that hickey."

3.) "When I was 15, I met a man who was 28 at an event. He was enigmatic, enchanting, and very physically attractive. I had never met a person who struck me as equally offbeat as I was. Feeling like we shared a common bond, I tried to get close to him. Of course, being 15, I knew

very few ways to get close to someone other than through flirting. So that's exactly what I did. We had an on-again/off-again fling for four years, always meeting in secluded and secretive places. I got the impression that he saw his attraction to me as dangerous, and threatening to his blooming career. It probably was, and my constant advances weren't helping him think about the situation any clearer. On the other hand, I had an equally hard time understanding exactly what was going on between the two of us, and if it was healthy. Both of us had other partners at the time, and both of us cheated on the other partners (with whom we had more stable relationships) in multiple moments of oversight. The second year of college, I saw him for the last time. We met at a secret location for dinner, and for the first time I felt like we were really being honest with each other. Rather than mysteriously flirting and making implications, we spoke openly about our lives and our strange relationship. I felt like I'd finally won him over, and he I. I was sure that the dynamic of our relationship would change. Instead, I never heard from him again. Though I tried calling, texting, e-mailing, and every other tactic I knew, he never responded. I played nonchalant, friendly, concerned, angry, curious, and dismissive all in separate attempts to re-live that feeling of intimacy we shared the last night together. Three years later, I still haven't heard a word back. Thinking back over this particular memory, I feel embarrassed. The manipulation that characterized my relationship with him is shameful, and it's not the sort of dynamic I want to rule my current relationship. Since my relationship with this man, I have promised myself I will no longer be the person I was, and that my relationships (romantic and otherwise) will be based on mutual honesty and trust."

4.) "I am a Theater major, and so I audition for the mainstage shows every semester. I hadn't gotten into any of the mainstage shows my Freshman year and was not right for the shows first semester Sophomore year. When second semester rolled around, I knew that my time had come. I was ready to be on the mainstage and wanted to be, more than anything, in Hair. I prepared my audition with a song from Spring Awakening and came to the auditions after having had an excellent practice session with a couple of friends. I got on stage and gave my sheet music to the pianist. He started playing much faster than I was used to doing the song, and, being a timid actor, I was afraid to stop and ask him to slow down, so I pushed through and began to sing the song. The pianist was playing so quickly that I ended up forgetting the order of the lyrics in the beginning of the song which made me screw up the melody of the song. I stopped and asked to start over. The director graciously said yes. I began again, asking the pianist to slow down; however, I was so thrown off by my first go around, I messed up the lyrics and melody again. I stopped and asked to start over again. The director, uncomfortably said yes. I started over once again, messing up at the same spot, so I moved over to the piano to look at the music while the pianist continued. I finished the song, my voice cracking, knowing that I was definitely not going to be in Hair. Callbacks were posted that night, and adding salt to the wound, I was not even called back for the straight play, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. I became incredibly depressed over the situation, knowing that I could have had a knockout audition, but I didn't when it really mattered, so there was nothing I could do now. I ended up being Assistant Stage Manager for the show which proved to be more difficult (emotionally) than I expected."