

Reaction paper on  
romantic love  
conceptualized as an  
attachment process  
by hazan,...



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Reaction Paper on Romantic Love Reaction Paper on Romantic Love Cindy Hazan and Phillip Shaver's " Romantic Love Conceptualized as an Attachment Process" discusses the similarities between the early attachment relations and adult romantic love (1987). The research was based on previous studies on the Attachment Theory by Bowlby, Ainsworth, et al about the three major styles of attachment in infancy, namely, secure, avoidant and anxious/ambivalent (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). These styles were then related to adult romantic love. The article aims to develop further the theories of Bowlby and Ainsworth that romantic relationships are influenced by the " mental models of self and social life" (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). It also explores the likelihood that infant attachment styles impact on the adults' romantic styles. In order to tests the theories, the authors had a " love quiz" printed in a local newspaper and gathered the first 620 replies they received and used this as the sample size for the first part of the study. After tabulating and analyzing the results, a second study was undertaken to address the limitations of the first study. This time a questionnaire was given to a sample of 108 undergraduates who were enrolled in the course " Understanding the Human Conflict" (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Additional topics were included in the survey such as items concerning relationships with other people and measures of loneliness.

The results of the study reveal that attachment styles in infancy are the same as those in adulthood. Furthermore, it also showed that individuals in the three attachment categories differ too in their love experiences. Another major finding of the study is that " people with different attachment orientations entertain different beliefs about the course of romantic love, the availability and trustworthiness of love partners and their own love-

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worthiness” (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Lastly, the study disclosed that the level of loneliness varies among those in the different attachment styles. One is not totally convinced that the newspaper survey done in Study 1 is a reliable method in this type of study. One thinks that personal interviews would obtain more accurate results. Newspaper quizzes are usually not answered seriously by its respondents since there is no pressure on them to answer truthfully. It is quite difficult to identify who among the respondents fall under the specific attachment style. Furthermore, limiting the sample size to the first 620 respondents might not be a fair representative of the group that needs to be studied. A major advantage of this method though is it is very convenient and it is less costly than conducting personal interviews. It accomplishes a lot at less time.

A point that is unclear to me is the scale used in measuring the loneliness item. One cannot decipher how the loneliness aspect was gauged. It is also unclear why the loneliness questionnaire was administered four weeks after the love-quiz exercise.

One thinks that future studies should be done about how previous romantic attachments affect an individual’s future romantic relationships. Research should also look into the effect of a child’s perceived romantic relationship of his parents on his future romantic relationship as an adult.

#### References

Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an Attachment Process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* , 52 (3), 511-524.