

**THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN ATTACHMENT
STRATEGIES AND RISK FOR STALKING**

by

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ABSTRACT

Stalking research has produced considerable information regarding the behavioural topography of stalking (i.e., who does what to whom), however, the dynamics or motivations (i.e., why) of such interactions appear to be less well understood. While researchers have theorized about the association between insecure attachment strategies and stalking behaviour, few studies have directly investigated this association. The purpose of the current study was to investigate the ability to assess attachment strategies in a sample of convicted stalkers as well as the association between attachment strategies and risk for future stalking. Participants ($n = 25$) on probation for stalking-related offences completed a self-report measure of attachment (RSQ) and an attachment interview (HAI). A stalking risk assessment measure (SAM) was completed through review of participants' probation files. The majority of participants were primarily categorized with insecure attachment. However, results indicated that while the assessments of attachment in this sample demonstrated moderate interrater reliability, the validity of the attachment measures was questioned due to the high levels of distortion in participants' responses and the absence of consideration of offence behaviours in interview ratings. Further, the convergent validity between attachment measures was relatively poor. Pearson product moment correlations revealed little to no association between stalkers' identified attachment strategies and previous stalking behaviour or risk for continued stalking, risk for physical harm, or need for intervention. However, the identification of stalkers' attachment strategies should provide valuable information for risk management and intervention strategies.

Keywords: stalking; stalkers' attachment strategies; stalking risk and attachment strategies; stalkers' attachment strategies and risk management

For Pete with love..
..my best friend, my heart.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval.....	ii
Abstract	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Tables	xx
Introduction.....	1
Stalking.....	2
Definition	2
Behaviours	5
Prevalence	7
Demographics.....	8
Relationship between Stalker and Victim	9
Impact of Stalking	10
Classification of Stalkers.....	10
Stalking Risk Assessment and Management.....	12
Dynamics of Stalking.....	17
Adult Attachment	20
Bartholomew’s Four Category Model.....	22
Secure attachment.....	22
Preoccupied attachment.....	22
Fearful attachment	23

Dismissing attachment.....	23
Stalking-Related Research from an Attachment Perspective.....	25
Goals of the Present Study.....	30
Method	31
Participants.....	31
Historical Demographics	33
Criminal History.....	34
Index Offence Information	34
Procedure	37
Assessment of Attachment Style	37
HAI.....	37
RSQ	40
Assessment of Stalking Risk	42
SAM	42
Data Analytic Strategy	45
Results	47
Question 1: Can attachment be measured validly in stalkers?.....	47
Distribution of scores on the two attachment measures	47
HAI.....	47
RSQ	50
Concurrent Validity of Attachment Measures.....	51
Correlation between HAI and RSQ dimensional scores	52
Agreement between HAI and RSQ categories	53

Question 2: What is the association between attachment and risk for stalking?	54
Past Stalking	55
HAI	55
RSQ	56
Risk for Future Stalking	57
HAI	57
RSQ	59
Discussion	61
Can attachment be measured validly in stalkers?	61
Do the Attachment Strategies of the Current Sample Match Previous	
Theories of Stalkers	68
How are the attachment strategies of stalkers related to past stalking behaviour	
and risk for future stalking	71
Generalizability of Results	75
Limitations	77
Future Directions	79
References	82
Appendix A: WERP History of Attachments Interview	92
Appendix B: Intraclass Correlation Coefficients of Two Raters for Individual HAI	
Items	103
Appendix C: RSQ	106
Appendix D: Intraclass Correlation Coefficients for Individual SAM Items	108

Appendix E: Correlations Between HAI Attachment Strategies and SAM

Individual Items110

Appendix F: Correlations Between RSQ Attachment Strategies and SAM

Individual Items112

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: SAM Domains and Risk Factors	43
Table 2: Mean (<i>SD</i>) and Range of Scores on the HAI.....	47
Table 3: Mean (<i>SD</i>) and Range of Scores on the RSQ.....	50
Table 4: Percentage of Attachment Strategies in Current Sample Compared to Sample of Wife Assaulters.....	51
Table 5: Correspondence Between HAI and RSQ Attachment Strategies ($n = 22$)	53
Table 6: Correlations Between Attachment Strategies (HAI) and Ratings of Future Risk (SAM)	57
Table 7: Correlations Between Attachment Strategies (RSQ) and Ratings of Future Risk.....	59

The Association Between Attachment Strategies and Risk for Stalking

Many authors have highlighted the increased and sustained attention to stalking, a phenomenon that has arguably existed without a label and without fanfare throughout most of human history (Meloy, 1999; Mullen, Pathé, & Purcell, 2001; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2001). Previous literature describes the social and political movements, namely the enactment of specific anti-stalking legislation in California in 1990, which initiated a wave of legal, academic, and community responses to a pattern of behaviour that, while not new, was increasingly being acknowledged as a serious social concern (Emerson, Ferris, & Gardner, 1998; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007). Prior to this legislation, stalking-related behaviours, if noticed at all, were often resolved within the criminal justice system by the attempted prosecution of individual behaviours, such as threats, harassing telephone calls, and assault (Mullen, Pathé, & Purcell, 2000). Many of these behaviours, when considered in isolation, were not considered sufficient for prosecution. Further, many of these behaviours were overlooked if individuals were prosecuted for more serious offences (e.g., murder, assault) that occurred at the end of a period of stalking-related behaviour (McEwan, Mullen, & Purcell, 2007). However, in light of several stalking-related deaths, including a well-known celebrity and multiple incidents of husbands murdering their former partners (Mullen et al., 2000), there emerged increasing recognition that legal and societal responses to individual actions did not fully capture or adequately address the seriousness of a broad spectrum of behaviour that, when taken together, represented a significant threat to an individual's safety, psychological well-being, and personal health (Emerson et al., 1998; Mullen et al., 2000).

Research has produced considerable information regarding the most common (and uncommon) types of behaviour involved in stalking, public perceptions of stalking, and characteristics of stalkers as well as their victims. Whereas the behavioural topography of stalking (i.e., who does what to whom) appears to be well understood, the motivations or dynamics of such interactions (i.e., why) are perhaps less clear (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2001). Increasingly, literature has pointed to the need to develop a better understanding of stalking and to develop more effective management and intervention strategies (Emerson et al., 1998; Kamphuis & Emmelkamp, 2000; Kropp, Hart, & Lyon, 2002; Meloy, 2007). Understanding the motivation for stalking, or the underlying dynamics of the stalker-victim relationship that results in the persistent pursuit of selected individuals, has the potential to guide assessments of risk in stalking cases as well as provide much needed information for the management and intervention of stalkers and their victims. The purpose of the present study is to explore how attachment strategies may be associated with risk for stalking.

Stalking

Definition

In the literature, the definition of stalking appears to change depending on the purpose of the publication, the nature of the sample being studied, and the specific research question. Due to social construction (i.e., varying academic, legal, or community perceptions and purposes), the term stalking is an ambiguous construct that includes a continuum of behaviour that varies in frequency, intensity, and severity, that is either recklessly or purposefully engaged in by a wide range of individuals for a variety of purposes or intentions. It is referred to by many different labels, including *obsessive*

relational intrusion (Cupach & Spitzberg, 1998), *obsessional following* (Meloy, 1999), *obsessional harassment* (Rosenfeld, 2000), and *criminal harassment* (Criminal Code Bill C-27, 1997). Meloy and Gothard (1995) define it as the “wilful, malicious, and repeated following or harassing of another person that threatens his or her safety” (p. 258).

Westrup and Fremouw (1998) offer “unwelcome, repetitive, and intrusive harassing and/or threatening behavior directed toward a specific individual” (p. 255). According to Cupach and Spitzberg, it is “repeated and unwanted pursuit and invasion of one’s sense of physical or symbolic privacy by another person, either stranger or acquaintance, who desires and/or presumes an intimate relationship” (1998, p. 358) that comprises “not a single act or behavior, but a pattern of behavior over time, requiring a minimum of two acts, but typically consisting of what may be a ‘campaign’ of behaviour over an extended period of time” (2007, p. 66).

Legislative definitions of stalking differ not only across countries, but also across jurisdictions within a given country (Jagessar & Sheridan, 2004; Rosenfeld, 2000). There has been much debate over the development of stalking legislation and the criteria to be included. Legislation differs in terms of the number of behaviours deemed necessary to constitute stalking (usually defined as two or more acts); however, there is some consistency across legislation that the behaviours must be repetitive. Legislation also differs in terms of the requirement of intent of the perpetrator to cause fear, the inclusion of a credible threat or simply threatening conduct in order to constitute stalking, as well as the consideration of the victim’s response (e.g., reasonableness of a victim’s fear, *Criminal Code*, 1985; Douglas & Dutton, 2001). Stalking legislation also differs in terms of the identification of specific behaviours that must occur to constitute stalking versus

describing a broader definition of behaviour that could be seen as stalking (Dennison & Thomson, 2002; Hills & Taplin, 1998; Mullen et al., 2000).

As Mullen et al. (2000) noted, the difficulty with creating a comprehensive definition of stalking is in ensuring the identification of “real” stalkers (who pose legitimate threats to the safety and well-being of their victims) without creating a definition so encompassing that innocuous, unintentional, or misguided behaviours (e.g., overzealous courtship behaviours) become criminalized. Unfortunately, such differing definitions and descriptions of stalking as noted above does little for developing a consistent understanding of the phenomena of stalking, limits the ability to compare or replicate findings, and offers little guidance with regards to means to identify and manage such behaviour. However, while the literature lacks a consistent definition of stalking, research has shown that the general public are not only able to identify stalking behaviours (Ius, Price, & Connolly, 2004) but that they are also able to distinguish stalking behaviour from overzealous courtship behaviour (Sheridan, Davies, & Boon, 2001). In one of the first cross-cultural studies of stalking, Jagessar and Sheridan (2004) found that women in Trinidad had views of stalking behaviour consistent with those of women in Britain. As noted by Sheridan, Blaauw, and Davies (2003), although the definitions of stalking may differ, it seems clear that legislators and academics alike are discussing the same phenomena. According to Mullen et al. (2001), “stalking was not discovered, or uncovered, but constructed as a way to conceptualize particular forms of behaviour” (p. 12).

What is consistent across definitions is the recognition that stalking is an interactional process, one that reflects the perpetrator’s efforts to establish or maintain a

relationship, real or imagined, with the victim (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2001). Meloy (2007) stated that, following 15 years of research in this area, it has been established that the identification of stalking must include three elements: first, “a pattern of unwanted pursuit”; second, “the behaviour must pose an implicit or explicit threat to the safety of the victim”; and third, “the victim must experience fear” (p. 1). The definition used in the present study is that proposed by Kropp, Hart, and Lyon (2008): “unwanted and repeated communication, contact, or other conduct that deliberately or recklessly causes victims to experience reasonable fear for their safety or the safety of people known to them” (p. 1). This definition encompasses the essential components of stalking as outlined above while not requiring legal intervention or a specific number of behaviours.

Behaviours

Stalkers engage in various pursuit, surveillance, and monitoring behaviours. Researchers argue that much of the behaviour engaged in by stalkers is, in isolation, similar to or even indistinguishable from courtship behaviour (Mullen et al., 2001) and that the ambiguity of these activities often limits the ability to label the behaviour as illegal or criminal (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007). However, it is argued that certain behaviour occurs consistently in stalking cases (Sheridan et al., 2003). As such, Cupach and Spitzberg (2004; as cited in Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007) identified eight categories of what they called “distinguishable stalking behaviours” (p. 71). These include: (a) *hyper-intimacy behaviours*, persistent and excessive courtship behaviours, such as repeated/numerous telephone calls; (b) *mediated contacts*, communication through technological means, such as text messaging and emailing; (c) *interactional contacts*, direct contact with the victim including face-to-face communication, physical proximity,

or indirect contact through third parties; (d) *surveillance tactics*, attempts to gain knowledge and information about the victim without the victim's awareness; (e) *invasion tactics*, violations of personal or legal boundaries, such as breaking and entering and theft; (f) *harassment and intimidation*, "aggressive verbal and non-verbal activities" (p. 71) that are stressful, bothersome, and annoying, such as insults, rumours, and harassing third parties; (g) *coercion and threat*, implicit or explicit threats against the victim, pets, or third parties; and, (h) *physical aggression and violence*, such as vandalism, assault, and attempted homicide.

Kropp et al. (2002) conceptualized stalking behaviours into three categories that describe a stalker's proximity to the victim, including: *remote* (e.g., telephone calls, gifts, letters, emails); *approach-oriented* (e.g., following, watching); and *direct contact* (e.g., face-to-face communication, physical contact and physical violence).

The most frequently reported forms of stalking behaviour in the literature include intrusive and direct approaches to the victim (*interactional contacts* or *approach-oriented*), following and watching the victim (*interactional contacts/surveillance tactics* or *approach-oriented*), unwanted and repeated telephone calls (*hyper-intimacy behaviours* or *remote*), and receiving unwanted letters, gifts, and mail (*hyper-intimacy behaviours* or *remote/approach-oriented*) (Rosenfeld & Harmon, 2002; Mullen et al., 2000; Kropp et al., 2002; Gill & Brockman, 1996). A large proportion of victims have received explicit threats of harm from their stalkers (*coercion and threat behaviours* or *remote/approach-oriented*) (Mullen, Pathé, Purcell, & Stuart, 1999; Gill & Brockman, 1996) and studies indicate that the percentages of physical assault (*physical aggression*

and violence or direct contact) range from 6% to 36% (Rosenfeld & Harmon, 2002; Mullen et al., 1999; Gill & Brockman, 1996).

Prevalence

The definitional issues outlined above impact estimations of the prevalence of stalking. Prevalence estimates are not only influenced by how stalking is defined in any one study, but also for a number of other reasons, including how the data were collected (e.g., interview, survey), the sample chosen (e.g., clinical, forensic, community), the frequency or threshold set for the number of times a behaviour had to occur to meet criteria for inclusion or to constitute stalking, and the use of the word “stalking” versus a more ambiguous or broader question regarding general harassment (Kropp et al., 2002; Mullen et al., 2000).

When using a definition similar to that used herein, in which stalking must entail repeated, unwanted contact and communication that causes the victim fear, Budd and Mattison (2000) estimate 3.7% of women and 1.3% of men had been stalked in 1997 in England and Wales. Using a similar definition, Tjaden and Thoennes (1998) estimated annual stalking rates (in 1997) in the United States to be 0.4% for men (approximately 370,990 men) and 1.0% for women (approximately 1,006,970 women) and lifetime prevalence rates to be 2.2% for men and 8.1% for women. These authors noted that when stalking was defined more broadly, prevalence rates were higher. Further, previous research suggests that prevalence rates in college and young adult populations may be higher than those gathered from older community samples (Fremouw, Westrup, & Pennypacker, 1997; Fisher, 2001; Haugaard & Seri, 2004; Ravensberg & Miller, 2003). The experience of “unrequited love” is not an uncommon one, especially in a college

population, and many participants in Sinclair and Frieze's (2000) study reported engaging in behaviour that, while not extreme, could nevertheless be classified as stalking or "prestalking" behaviour. Rosenfeld (2000) argued, however, that data from college samples may be misleading due to the use of a broad interpretation of stalking.

Demographics

Current research indicates that the majority of perpetrators of stalking behaviour are male (up to 90%) whereas females are more likely to be the targets of stalking (approximately 80%) (Gill & Brockman, 1996; Kropp et al., 2002; Meloy, 1998; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Research indicates that the perpetrators of stalking are usually older than other samples of criminals, between their mid-30s and early 40s (Kropp et al., 2002; Meloy, 1998). Stalkers have been found to be well educated in comparison to other offenders (Westrup & Fremouw, 1998); however, the majority of stalkers are reported to be unemployed or underemployed at the time of their offending, perhaps unsurprisingly in light of the time commitment required to engage in stalking (Kropp et al., 2002; Mullen et al., 2001). A high proportion of stalkers were single at the time of the stalking, and many had few relationships or little relationship experience in the past (Meloy, 1998; Westrup & Fremouw, 1998). While it is suggested that the prevalence of psychopathology in stalkers is likely overestimated due to the clinical nature of many samples of stalkers (Kropp et al., 2002), Meloy (1998) suggested that the vast majority of stalkers likely meet criteria for both acute mental disorders (in particular, mood disorders, schizophrenia, and substance abuse) and personality disorders, although rarely antisocial or psychopathic personality disorder (Kropp et al., 2002; Meloy, 1998; Storey, Hart, Meloy, & Reavis, 2009). Finally, literature reviews indicate that the majority of stalkers

also have previous criminal histories with a significant number demonstrating histories of violence and assault (Meloy, 1998; Mullen et al., 2000).

Relationship between Stalker and Victim

Although the first anti-stalking legislation was enacted following high-profile cases of celebrity stalking in California (Mullen et al., 2001), stalking is now recognized as a crime that occurs primarily against women by former spouses or ex-intimate partners (Kamphuis & Emmelkamp, 2000; Emerson et al., 1998; Gill & Brockman, 1996).

Victims of stalking in previous research were primarily pursued by individuals that they knew (e.g., former intimates, co-workers, family member, clients, or acquaintances), while a smaller proportion of victims were pursued by strangers (Purcell, Pathé, & Mullen, 2002; Kropp et al., 2002; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998).

Research has also demonstrated the correlation between the previous stalker-victim relationship and risk for physical harm. Studies suggest that the more intimate the previous relationship between stalker and victim, the greater the likelihood of violence, aggression, or approach-oriented behaviours (Hills & Taplin, 1998). Former intimate stalking has been identified as the most common form of stalking and former intimate stalkers have been shown to display the highest levels of dangerousness or threat as well as to engage in more violence than other types of stalkers (Palarea, Zona, Lane, & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1999; Rosenfeld & Harmon, 2002; Mullen et al., 2000). Despite these findings, research has demonstrated that individuals were more likely to be fearful of stranger stalkers than stalkers they knew. For example, participants in Hills and Taplin's (1998) vignette study indicated they would be more likely to contact police if stalked by a stranger than a former intimate partner and Mullen et al. (1999) found that

those suspects in their clinic who were strangers and overtly mentally ill induced the most fear in their victims.

Impact of Stalking

The duration of stalking varies anywhere from days or weeks to months or years (Sheridan et al., 2003), with an average duration of approximately two years (Meloy, 2007). The persistence and determination of many stalkers often forces victims to make changes in their own environment and lifestyle (e.g., changing telephone numbers, changing addresses, altering routines, etc.) in an attempt to deter or avoid further stalking behaviour (Meloy, 2007; Mullen et al., 2000; Rosenfeld, 2003; Sheridan et al., 2003). Victims of stalking suffer diverse psychological, physical, and social consequences as a result of the relentlessness of the perpetrator. The longer that the stalking persists, with or without the presence of violence, the “greater the potential damage to the victim” (McEwan et al., 2007, p. 2). Meloy (2007) indicated that “one-third of stalking victims will incur a psychiatric diagnosis” (p. 5). Stalking impacts not only the perpetrator and the victim, but can also impact third-parties (i.e., the victim’s family, co-workers, and friends) and the larger community. According to Spitzberg and Cupach (2007), a recent American study estimated the total societal costs as a result of stalking (e.g., psychological/health visits by victims, victim’s use of police and legal resources, missed days of employment, etc.) at approximately \$342 million annually.

Classification of Stalkers

Numerous typologies or categorical systems to describe stalkers, victim-stalker relationship, psychopathology, risks, and potential interventions have been outlined in the literature. At present, there is little consistency across studies or authors regarding these

categories/descriptions (Kropp et al., 2002). Meloy (1998) categorized stalkers into three subtypes based on the prior stalker-victim relationship. These subtypes included former intimates (or prior sexual intimates), acquaintances, and strangers. Zona, Sharma, and Lane (1993) also used a three category typology of stalkers, including the love-obsessional stalker, the simple obsessional stalker, and the classic erotomaniac stalker. The RECON typology (Mohandie, Meloy, McGowan, & Williams, 2006) conceptualized stalkers as divided into two types: Type I, in which the perpetrator has had a previous relationship with the victim; and Type II, in which the perpetrator has had little to no prior contact with the victim. These authors then divided each type into two subtypes. Type I includes: (a) *intimate*, in which the previous relationship was of an intimate nature (e.g., marriage, co-habiting); and (b) *acquaintance*, in which the previous relationship was of a less intimate nature (e.g., co-worker, friendship). Type II includes: (c) *public figure*, in which the perpetrator is pursuing a public figure; and, (d) *private stranger*, in which the perpetrator is pursuing a private figure.

In contrast, Mullen et al. (2000) described a multi-axial typology of stalkers that consists of five categories, including: (a) *the rejected stalker*, described as being motivated to reconcile with or exact revenge from a former partner or a former important relationship; (b) *the resentful stalker*, described as being motivated to seek retribution against individuals who have, in their eyes, harmed them in some way; (c) *the intimacy seeker*, described as an individual who desires a relationship with an individual they feel already loves them and who continues their behaviour oblivious to the victim's response due to a delusional belief that their pursuit will ultimately result in a relationship; (d) *the incompetent suitor*, described as engaging in brief and inept attempts to engage the victim

in a relationship and who often demonstrates social incompetence and deficits in intelligence; and (e) *the predatory stalker*, described as using stalking behaviour to gain information and control over a victim prior to assaulting, often sexually, the victim. Mullen et al. indicated that these categories are often not mutually exclusive and an individual could be conceptualized as belonging to more than one category.

Finally, Kropp et al. (2002) described a four category typology, including: (a) *ex-intimate partner*, an individual unable to let go of a former relationship; (b) *grudge*, an individual who is described as disgruntled or angry and seeking vengeance for perceived insults or injustices; (c) *love obsessional*, an individual who seeks a relationship with an acquaintance, evidences distorted thinking and inadequacy, and is distinguished from the first category because there was no prior intimate relationship; and (d) *delusional*, these individuals are described as likely having some form of delusional disorder and possessing grossly distorted thoughts about the nature of their relationship with the victim, including those suffering from erotomania or delusional jealousy. Similar to Mullen et al. (2000), these authors indicate that the above noted categories are not meant to be mutually exclusive.

Stalking Risk Assessment and Risk Management

A comprehensive understanding of stalking (i.e., characteristics of stalkers, characteristics of victims, types of behaviours, etc.) facilitates the ability to label behaviours as stalking, the identification of stalking behaviour when it occurs, and eventually, theoretically, the prosecution of the individuals engaged in such behaviours. While such understanding might allow for a response by the criminal justice system, different types of stalkers are noted to respond to interventions in different ways (Mullen

et al., 2000) and such a response might only deter or limit a stalker's behaviour for a brief period. Further, interventions, such as face-to-face deterrence by police or the application and endorsement of a no-contact order might only serve to fuel the stalker's fire, in essence, escalating their behaviour to a more dangerous level. To appropriately address a stalker's behaviour, what is required is a means to assess or evaluate the degree of risk posed by a stalker towards a victim. Such an evaluation of risk involves consideration of multiple factors including who the perpetrator is likely to target, the circumstances under which the perpetrator is likely to target a victim, why the perpetrator is engaged in such behaviour, and the likely consequences of such behaviour. The evaluation of risk, as described above, should result in the development of appropriate risk management strategies.

Traditionally, mental health professionals and academics, when discussing risk assessment, have focused significant attention on the assessment of risk for violence. There is extensive literature regarding the development of violence risk assessment measures, whose aim is to describe an individual's risk for the commission of violence and to identify interventions to reduce or manage an individual's risk (Hart, 2001). Given the extensive focus on risk to commit future violence, research in that area has identified a number of variables that have been shown to be predictive of future violence.

Although it is arguable that existing risk assessment measures for violence should also be applicable to cases of stalking, researchers in the area argue that a non-specific risk assessment for violence would be inadequate in informing all the issues of risk in cases of stalking. Physical violence occurs in stalking cases only a relatively small percentage of the time; in fact, the base rates for violence overall are relatively low – a

key consideration in other violence risk assessments (Kropp et al., 2002; Meloy, 2007). While it is important to understand the likelihood of assault with any given stalker, physical violence is not always the end result, and in fact, as noted by White and Cawood (1998), stalkers are more likely to engage in “prolonged or recurring periods of stressful and fear-inducing harassment and intimidation” (p. 296). The repeated harassing intrusions (repeated telephone calls, threats, face-to-face meetings) can be considerably distressing for victims of stalking (Mullen et al., 2000).

At present, researchers in this area are working to identify both the most significant risk factors in relation to stalking cases as well as effective risk management strategies for those engaged in this type of behaviour. Spitzberg and Cupach (2007) argue that existing typologies of stalkers (as discussed above) allow for the identification of the underlying motives for stalking (e.g., induction of fear, retaliation) and provide beneficial information for risk assessments. Literature has shown that certain stalkers are more likely to be physically violent than others. Further, research has identified a number of risk factors, consistent with those identified in the violence risk literature, that are associated with risk for violence in stalking cases. These factors include: young age, and in particular age less than 30; former intimate partner of victim, particularly with histories of domestic violence or jealousy in the previous relationship; the presence of threats; having lower than a Grade 12 education; prior criminal history, particularly a history of violence or domestic violence; history of substance abuse; and in one study, being of minority race (Mullen et al., 1999; Mullen et al., 2006; Rosenfeld & Harmon, 2002). A high number of stalkers reportedly threaten their victims (between 30% and 60% depending on the sample), and Mullen et al. (2006) suggest that the risk of future

violence increases in the majority of cases in which threats are present (with the exception of public figure stalking). However, Kropp et al. (2002) caution that the converse is not necessarily true, as physical violence in stalking cases is not always preceded by the presence of threats.

According to their clinical observations and preliminary analyses, Mullen et al. (2000) suggest that the rejected stalker (an ex-intimate) demonstrates the highest likelihood for violence, the greatest persistence, the most intrusive forms of stalking behaviour, the greatest likelihood for recurrence of stalking directed towards the same victim, and one of the highest incidences of threats. Other research indicates that resentful stalkers (or grudge stalkers according to Kropp et al., 2002) are also highly likely to assault (McEwan et al., 2007).

However, as noted above, there are other aspects to be considered in stalking cases, such as the likelihood stalking will continue or whether a stalker will reinitiate stalking behaviour following an intervention (Mullen et al., 2006). As noted by Mullen et al., the longer a stalking experience has occurred, the “longer it is likely to persist” (p. 440). These authors indicate that approximately half of all stalkers continue their “stalking behaviours” for relatively short durations (i.e., a few days or weeks), however, stalking that occurs for longer than two weeks, and that involves a number of different harassing behaviours, usually extends for a significantly greater length of time, namely months or years (Mullen et al., 2001). Stranger stalkers are more likely to engage in shorter durations of harassing behaviour (typically less than two weeks duration) than former intimate partners (Mullen et al., 2006).

Few studies exist that have assessed the likelihood that a stalker will return to stalking following a break or an intervention (i.e., incarceration). Mullen et al. (2006) cite one study in which close to half of a sample of stalkers returned to stalking behaviour within a twelve-month period. However, it appeared that the majority of the stalkers included in that study had persisted in stalking behaviour for over two weeks during the initial stalking incident. In a sample of 189 identified stalkers, Rosenfeld (2003) indicated that 49% were known to have reoffended, with 80% of the recidivists having committed a new stalking-related offence within the first year of the follow-up period. The presence of Cluster B personality traits was strongly associated with an increased risk for recidivism which also increased with the addition of substance abuse. Further, stalkers who had a prior intimate relationship with the victim were at greater risk for reoffending. Prior criminal history and prior psychiatric hospitalization were unrelated to recidivism and those with a delusional disorder were also less likely to reoffend.

Several researchers have offered guidelines with regards to the assessment of risk in stalking cases. Mullen et al. (2006) introduced the *Stalking Risk Profile*, a structured professional judgement approach to stalking risk assessment, which includes five domains: relationships in stalking; motivation of stalkers; stalker's psychological, psychopathological and social status; victim's psychological and social vulnerabilities; and legal and mental health context. At present, there does not appear to be any research regarding the utility of this proposed measure. In contrast, the *Guidelines for Stalking Assessment and Management* (SAM; Kropp et al., 2008) is a structured professional judgement risk assessment method designed to address a number of stalking-related outcomes, including an individual's risk for violence or serious physical harm (both

towards the victim and/or third parties) as well as the risk of continued stalking despite, or in the absence of, interventions (both of the victim or future victims). Further, these authors also consider how a victim's perception of the extent to which they are in danger influences their behaviours (towards the perpetrator or in terms of their own safety during the period of stalking) and the possible continuation or escalation of stalking behaviours as a result of a victim's reactions. The SAM includes three domains. The *Nature of Stalking* includes ten factors related to the pattern of behaviour that makes up past and current stalking, such as *Stalking involves supervision violations*. The *Perpetrator Risk Factors* domain includes ten factors reflecting personal characteristics of the perpetrator, such as *Antisocial Lifestyle*. Finally, the *Victim Vulnerability Factors* domain includes ten factors related to the victim's safety resources and self-protective behaviour, such as *Inconsistent behaviour towards the perpetrator*. The SAM has been shown to demonstrate moderate reliability scores in previous research (Storey et al., 2009).

Dynamics of Stalking

As can be seen from the literature reviewed above, there is considerable knowledge regarding the structure of stalking and the resulting relevant factors related to identification of risk in stalking cases. However, there is limited research investigating the dynamics (e.g., motivations, etc.) of stalking (Kamphuis & Emmelkamp, 2000). Arguably, a more thorough understanding of the dynamics of stalking, including the motivation and intentions of stalkers, would be useful in informing risk assessments, particularly in providing the ability to distinguish the potentially different risk patterns of different types of stalkers. For example, those motivated by revenge or retaliation have been noted to demonstrate shorter durations of stalking behaviour with more threats but

less violence than those seeking to reconcile a pre-existing relationship (Mullen et al., 2000). Further, understanding the underlying motivations of stalking behaviour might help to elucidate the differences between individuals who engage in stalking following the break-up of a relationship versus those who may grieve but still move on to future relationships in a healthier manner.

To understand the thoughts, defences, and emotions of the stalker, Meloy (1998) postulated a psychodynamic theory of stalking. Meloy theorized that at the beginning of infatuation or romantic love, individuals form a “narcissistic linking fantasy” (p. 18), consisting of feelings of being loved and admired and idealizing another individual. He argued that such thoughts and feelings may function to initiate the pursuit of a relationship. However, if chronic and persistent rejection occurs in the behavioural pursuit of another, the desired other becomes aversive. While those who do not stalk will generally withdraw and likely move onto other relationships, the stalker, who is very sensitive to rejection, responds to the resultant feelings of shame and humiliation with rage. Meloy postulated that these feelings of rage motivate the stalker to pursue the once desired individual in order to devalue and dominate the other person. Jealousy and a desire to possess the other are also likely to contribute to the motivation in these cases. Finally, Meloy argued that in many stalking cases the narcissistic linking fantasy is eventually restored, as the stalking behaviours forever link the stalker to the desired other (e.g., through intimidation and fear, the victim forever remembers the stalker).

In describing this pursuit process, Meloy argued that an individual’s response to chronic and persistent rejection depends on the depth of the attachment to the desired other as well as the pursuer’s history of attachment and history of coping with loss.

Meloy (1996) stated “obsessional following is a pathology of attachment. It can be behaviorally described as proximity seeking toward an angry or frightened object that usually responds aversively to the act of pursuit” (p.28). According to Meloy’s theory, those who stalk respond maladaptively to consistent and repeated rejection and he reported “chronic failures in social or sexual relationships through young adulthood may be a necessary predisposing experience for obsessional followers. In fact, failed relationships are the rule among these individuals” (p. 14).

Although few studies have been conducted concerning the attachment strategies of stalkers, several other researchers have hypothesized about the possible relationship between attachment and stalking. Kienlen (1998) postulated that the use of a number of stalking behaviours such as letters, phone calls, and pursuit or following might be seen as attachment behaviours or ways to maintain an affectional bond. Further, rejection of these attachment/stalking behaviours might provide an explanation for the resulting verbal abuse, threats, and possible violence. Kienlen also argued that violent reactions to rejection may be “attempts to coerce the victim into a relationship” (p. 53).

Samuels, Allnutt, and Tan (2000) reported a case study in which a female young adult admitted to engaging in stalking behaviours directed toward several older women (a colleague, a teacher, and a former therapist). These authors hypothesized that her pursuit behaviours were triggered by attachment needs that she may have perceived as unfulfilled by her adoptive or biological mothers. Further, Kienlen (1998) hypothesized that many stalkers’ behaviours are preceded and likely triggered by some form of previous loss. Kienlen argued that loss than affects the stalker’s sense of self-worth and identity. Unable to cope with the additional loss of a potential partner, stalkers are likely to react with

grief, anger, and retaliation. A more thorough review of attachment theory as it relates to adult relationships should help to flesh out these hypotheses and elucidate how attachment may play a role in the pursuit behaviours of stalkers.

Adult Attachment

Attachment is defined as a propensity or tendency to seek closeness and protection (and a strong emotional bond) to others, particularly, in childhood, to the primary caregiver (Bowlby, 1988). The attachment system is activated when a child or an individual experiences stress, threat of separation, or loss (Bartholomew, Kwong, & Hart, 2001). Bowlby (1988) argued that attachment behaviours function to obtain or regain proximity to a primary caregiver or attachment figure. A child's anxiety will be eased and the attachment behaviours will cease if the attachment figure is able to provide a sense of security in response to these signals. Over time, an individual's experiences with caregivers are internalized in internal working models. These working models provide information about an individual's view of the self as worthy or unworthy of love and support and the expectation of others to provide or not provide support and acceptance. These models help an individual attempt to predict an attachment figure's behaviour as well as providing information to help guide behaviour in later relationships (Bartholomew et al., 2001).

According to attachment theory, threats of abandonment arouse intense anxiety and anger. Anger is described as a form of protest behaviour that functions to achieve proximity to the attachment figure. Anger and other emotions, such as grief, occur in response to threats of separation and rejection or to actual separation. It is hypothesized that continued rejection or failure to have attachment needs met in childhood may result

in a consistent and extreme angry reaction to perceived rejection or separation in adulthood (Dutton, Saunders, Starzomski, & Bartholomew, 1994).

The construct of attachment, once used primarily in discussions regarding parent-child interactions, is now seen as an important element of adult peer and romantic relationships (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998). It is theorized that in adult romantic or intimate relationships, each partner serves as the “primary attachment figure” for the other partner. Further, it is suggested that individuals who experienced childhoods filled with secure models of attachment (featuring primary caregivers that are responsive and supportive of a child’s needs) would develop, potentially, similarly secure attachments in adult relationships. In contrast, individuals who did not experience such support and responsiveness in their primary caregiver relationships would theoretically develop similarly insecure attachment relationships in adulthood (Bartholomew, Henderson, & Dutton, 2001). Adult attachment has been conceptualized in a number of different ways. Initially, adult attachment was conceptualized as an extension of the attachment strategies defined in childhood (Ainsworth, 1989; Hazan & Shaver, 1987); however, as the study of adult attachment has progressed several researchers have adopted different classification schemes. The present study will employ Bartholomew’s model of adult attachment, a classification system that utilizes a prototype approach in order to define adult attachment dimensionally (on a continuum) rather than categorically (as has been done with attachment systems of childhood). It is argued that adults are unlikely, given a number of previous experiences and influences, to fall into a single attachment category, and Bartholomew’s model allows for the identification of an individual’s attachment profile (how they fit into each of four attachment strategies) (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994b).

Bartholomew's Four Category Model

Bartholomew (1990) developed a model of adult attachment which represents four attachment strategies that are best described by where each strategy falls along two dimensions, namely the degree to which one perceives their internal working models of self and others positively or negatively. While positive views of the “self” are associated with a positive sense of self worth (a positive self model), negative views of the self are associated with emotional dependence on others for validation and anxiety regarding the possible rejection or acceptance from others in relationships (a negative self model). Views of the availability and responsiveness or supportiveness of others represents the “other” dimension. Those who believe others will be available and supportive actively seek closeness in relationships (a positive other model) while the perception that others will not be supportive or available leads to avoidance of closeness and intimacy (a negative other model). The four combinations of the self and other models represent prototypical attachment strategies (Bartholomew, 1997).

Secure attachment. According to Bartholomew's (1990) model, individuals who demonstrate a predominantly secure attachment strategy have both a positive sense of self-worth and a belief that others will be available and supportive. As such, secure individuals are comfortable seeking support from close relationships when necessary. Secure individuals show confidence in relationships and demonstrate high self-esteem (Bartholomew et al., 2001).

Preoccupied attachment. Individuals with a negative view of the self (or a belief that they are unworthy of love) but a perception that others are available and supportive represent a prototypical preoccupied strategy. These individuals continually and actively

seek acceptance from close relationships in order to meet their attachment needs (Bartholomew, 1997). Preoccupied individuals have high levels of anxiety and will react to unresponsive attachment figures with exaggerated attachment behaviours, including anger and possibly violence. These individuals are described as intrusive, self-disclosing, and demanding (Bartholomew et al., 2001).

Fearful attachment. Those individuals with a predominately fearful attachment strategy view themselves as unworthy of acceptance and love (a negative self model) and also view important others as generally unavailable and uncaring. Despite a high need for validation from others, fearful individuals frequently choose to maintain distance from an attachment figure to avoid feared rejection (Bartholomew, 1997). These individuals have difficulty communicating attachment needs and often report high levels of distress (Bartholomew et al., 2001).

Dismissing attachment. Finally, individuals who avoid intimacy in close relationships but maintain a positive sense of self worth are described as having a dismissing attachment strategy (Bartholomew, 1997). Dismissing individuals downplay negative attachment experiences and prefer to deal with distress alone in order to maintain their sense of independence. Individuals described as primarily dismissing demonstrate high levels of self-esteem and emotional control (Bartholomew et al., 2001).

Bartholomew's model, rather than conceptualizing an individual as exhibiting only one attachment pattern, allows individuals to fit into a number of prototypes of the model to varying degrees in order to accommodate individual differences and the likelihood that individuals will exhibit a number of traits from more than one pattern of attachment, as well as potentially different patterns in different relationships (Griffin &

Bartholomew, 1994b). Griffin and Bartholomew outlined how this approach allows for a greater exploration of an individual's attachment profile, as an individual who is primarily preoccupied and secondarily dismissing is likely to look different from an individual who is primarily preoccupied and secondarily fearful. Bartholomew's model also allows for the four attachment strategies to be combined into either the underlying two dimensions of *general anxiousness* (calculated as [fearful + preoccupied] minus [secure + dismissing]) and *general avoidance* (calculated as [fearful + dismissing] minus [secure + preoccupied]) or the underlying two dimensions of the *other model* (calculated by reversing the computational formula for *general anxiousness*) and the *self model* (calculated by reversing the computational formula for *general avoidance*) (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994a). In other words, the underlying dimension of *anxiety* (the self model) can be described through Bartholomew's model by combining an individual's scores on the attachment strategies reflective of high anxiety and a negative self-model, that is, the fearful and preoccupied attachment strategies, and subtracting those scores from the combined scores of the two strategies reflective of low anxiety and positive views of self, namely the secure and dismissing attachment strategies. Similarly, the other model and the underlying avoidance dimension can be described by combining the two attachment strategies reflective of high avoidance and a negative other model (that is, the fearful and dismissing attachment strategies) and subtracting them from the combined scores of the two attachment strategies reflective of low avoidance (and a positive other model), the secure and preoccupied attachment strategies.

Bartholomew (1997) also argued that while these attachment strategies may represent internal working models that are consciously held and operate automatically,

insecure attachment strategies might also act as a defence against unconscious interpretations of the self and other. For example, dismissing individuals may engage in avoidant behaviours due to low self-esteem in order to avoid being hurt by others, while the preoccupied individual may idealize others as a defence against the knowledge that caregivers are sometimes unavailable or uncaring.

Stalking-Related Research from an Attachment Perspective

Although there has been significant theorizing about the role of attachment in stalking, there is a paucity of research to demonstrate the applicability of this theory. The studies in this area to date are few and are limited either by sample selection (e.g., college students self-reporting “stalking-like” behaviours), single case studies, or by measurement (e.g., self-report or informant ratings of attachment style).

For example, two studies have evaluated the attachment styles of undergraduate students who reported engaging in stalking-related behaviours. Lewis, Fremouw, Del Ben, and Farr (2001) employed the Attachment Style Inventory, a fifteen item self-report instrument used to measure Avoidant, Ambivalent, and Secure attachment strategies in their study of 240 undergraduates. The 9% of participants who reported engaging in multiple or repeated stalking behaviours demonstrated greater insecure attachment than the control group, although data were inconclusive regarding specific insecure attachment strategies.

In their sample of 372 college students, Davis, Ace, and Andra (2000) reported that a large percentage of those who had been rejected by a former intimate partner reported engaging in at least one stalking behaviour. The engagement in stalking behaviour was found to be correlated with the experience of anger, jealousy, and

obsessive thoughts following a break-up. Although an anxious attachment strategy (obtained through self-report) and stalking behaviour were not directly related in their sample, these authors suggested that the experience of anger-jealousy might be a mediating factor between anxious attachment and stalking. Further, these authors suggested that the correlation between the engagement in stalking behaviours and the perception that one's behaviours are an expression of love might indicate that former intimate stalkers do not perceive their behaviour as harassing but rather as a communication of their love and desire for reunion, thereby limiting their ability to appropriately self-monitor.

Using the Attachment History Questionnaire, which is designed to assess an individual's quality of relationships from childhood, Powers (1997) reported that the 54-year-old male stalker interviewed for that study demonstrated an insecure attachment strategy. According to the author, the stalker's behaviours succeeded in inflicting "psychological pain upon his love object" (p. 211) which helped him to achieve felt security and led to the cessation of stalking behaviours.

Kamphuis, Emmelkemp, and de Vries (2004) attempted to identify the attachment strategies of former intimate stalkers through the identification of such strategies by the perpetrators' victims. These authors found that victims ($n = 112$) rated 86% of stalkers as insecurely attached, with 75% of the stalkers being classified in the fearful or preoccupied categories. Similarly, Wigman, Graham-Kevan, and Archer (2008) found that those categorized as minor and severe harassers in a sample of self-identified harassers (132 undergraduates who reported engaging in two or more harassment acts following the break-up of an intimate relationship) scored significantly higher on

preoccupied attachment using Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) Relationship Questionnaire.

Although these studies have attempted to assess attachment strategies in stalkers, they are limited in their ability to generalize to more forensic/criminal populations (these studies included undergraduates who self-identified as engaging in stalking-like behaviours), to different types of stalkers, or in their utility to inform management and intervention decisions. These studies primarily incorporated self-report measures of attachment. There has been significant debate in the literature regarding the use of interview methods of measuring attachment strategies (which require extensive time and training) versus self-report measures of attachment (which may limit the amount of information and data collected from individuals) (Bartholomew, Henderson, & Marcia, 2000). Research has demonstrated moderate relationships between interview and self-report methods (Bartholomew & Moretti, 2002; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994a), however, there is some concern regarding the ability for more clinical populations, allegedly with a higher degree of insecurity, to accurately report their attachment feelings and/or relationships through self-report given a presumed high degree of defensiveness (Bartholomew & Moretti, 2002). Jacobvitz, Curran, and Moller (2002) argued that, at present, it is unclear if interview and self-report methodologies are actually measuring the same construct, and Griffin and Bartholomew (1994b) suggest that the modest convergent validity correlations found between the attachment interview and self-report measures of Bartholomew's model suggest they are "far from identical" (p. 29). While interviews are designed to code how an individual talks about their attachment relationships (their descriptions of their experiences and how those descriptions are

communicated), self-report methods rely on an individual's "abilities to accurately report their expectations and experiences in intimate relationships" (Bartholomew, 1994, p. 24).

Given the absence of attachment studies of convicted stalkers, much can also be learned from previous attachment research with spousal assaulters. Douglas and Dutton (2001) argued that evidence from previous research suggests that spousal assaulters are likely to participate in stalking-like behaviours. Further, previous research suggests "that somewhere between 30% and 65% of stalking cases that involve former intimates also involved a previous violent relationship" (p. 533).

Dutton et al. (1994) hypothesized that men who engaged in domestic violence would be more likely to demonstrate anxious attachment patterns (either from a fearful or preoccupied attachment strategy) than non-violent married men because these attachment strategies "involve negative self-models and intimacy anxiety, and they are characterized by frustrated attachment needs, subjective distress, and hypersensitivity" (p. 1370). Using the Relationship Styles Questionnaire, a 30 item self-report attachment measure, those who engaged in domestic violence were significantly more likely to score higher on fearful and preoccupied scales than controls. In contrast, the control group was significantly more likely to score higher on the secure attachment scale. Men who engaged in domestic violence were also significantly more likely to have higher total scores on measures of anger and jealousy.

In a study of violent versus non-violent husbands, Holtzworth-Munroe, Stuart, and Hutchinson (1997) found that violent men reported more anxiety regarding abandonment, greater discomfort with closeness, and more avoidance of dependency than non-violent men. These men also reported more anxious attachment and more jealousy

regarding their partners. These authors reported that in contrast to non-violent men, violent men appeared ambivalent about their need for closeness and their avoidance of dependency and discomfort with closeness. In a second study, these authors found that men who were distressed in their marriage and also engaged in marital violence were more likely to demonstrate a preoccupied attachment strategy or to be placed in the “cannot classify” or “disorganized” category while men who were distressed in their marriage but did not engage in marital violence were more likely to demonstrate a dismissing attachment strategy.

Although research concerning the attachment strategies of spousal assaulters might provide some insight into the possible attachment strategies of former intimate stalkers, Kienlen (1998) argued that all forms of insecure attachment strategies might be evident within the diversity of stalkers. For example, those stalkers who would meet criteria for Antisocial Personality Disorder (or who are classified as the resentful stalker in Mullen et al.’s 2000 typology or the grudge stalker according to Kropp et al., 2002) might be more likely to have a dismissing attachment strategy and their motivation for stalking less likely to be out of desperation and attachment needs than out of revenge and retaliation. Kienlen (1998) argued that the anger, jealousy and mood instability found in both the fearful and preoccupied attachment strategies might be representative of the mood and emotional states of most stalkers, particularly former intimate stalkers.

Further, in a study of 25 individuals classified as psychotic or nonpsychotic stalkers, Kienlen, Birmingham, Solberg, O’Regan, and Meloy (1997) found that the majority of individuals in their sample had experienced a significant loss or separation from their primary caretaker during childhood or some form of disruption in the care-

taking relationship (e.g., divorce). Further, over half of the sample reported some form of childhood abuse. The majority of participants reported having experienced some form of stressor, namely loss, prior to the onset of harassing behaviour. These authors suggested that childhood experiences similar to those reported in their study might contribute to an insecure attachment pattern, primarily a preoccupied attachment pattern (according to Bartholomew's 1990 model). Finally, Meloy (1996) also argued that obsessional following is most representative of a preoccupied attachment strategy due to the overlap of this strategy "with the obsessional thought of these subjects and the borderline nature of the affects and defenses" (p. 28). At present, there has been little research with individuals convicted of stalking offences with regards to the identification of their attachment strategies and the utility of such information.

Goals of the Present Study

The goals of the present study are to investigate:

1. Whether attachment can, as a theoretically proposed motivational factor in stalking, be assessed in a sample of individuals known to have engaged in stalking behaviour. Put differently, is it feasible to measure the attachment strategies of stalkers by using standardized interview and self-report procedures?
2. The association between the attachment strategies of individuals engaged in stalking behaviour with other risk factors identified as relevant to risk in stalking cases. In other words, how is an individual's attachment strategy related to past stalking behaviour and risk for future stalking?

Method

The author mailed information sheets to probation offices across the province of Nova Scotia detailing the purpose of and the selection criteria for inclusion in the current study. Participants were approached by the author and asked to participate in a study of a history of relationships. Participants were informed that they would complete a brief self-report measure and be interviewed for approximately 1.5 hours regarding the history of their relationships from birth to present. They were informed that interviews would be audio taped for later coding. They were informed that any information shared with the interviewer would not affect their probation status, although they were also informed of the traditional limits to confidentiality. Information necessary to complete the risk assessment was obtained from each individual's probation files, which typically included a summary of an individual's criminal history, a pre-sentence report, and probation history. Some files also contained police reports, victim statements, and mental health assessments and/or progress notes.

The present study received ethics approval from both Simon Fraser University and Correctional Services Nova Scotia Department of Justice and participants were treated in accordance with ethical guidelines.

Participants

Participants were selected between 2006 and 2008 based on the identification that their index offence (the most recent offence for which they were currently serving a term of probation) involved some form of stalking behaviour as defined for the purposes of the present study: "unwanted and repeated communication, contact, or other conduct that deliberately or recklessly causes people to experience fear or concern for their safety or

the safety of others known to them” (Kropp et al., 2008, p. 1). This definition allowed for the assessment of those individuals who may be convicted of such offences as assault or uttering threats but who displayed repeated and unwanted stalking-like behaviours in the context of the offence. Participants were identified through file review (review of index charges/convictions) and probation officer identification. A total of thirty-five individuals were initially identified, however, nine individuals refused to participate due to disinterest, absence of time, or with no reason provided, and one interview was terminated when it was ascertained that the offence did not meet the criteria outlined for the purposes of the present study. Participants received nominal remuneration for their participation (\$10.00).

The final sample comprised 25 males on various terms of probation with Correctional Services of Nova Scotia. The average age of participants at the time of the interview was 38.72 ($SD = 10.85$) and ranged from 20 to 60. Participants’ ages at the start of their index offence ranged from 18 to 56 ($M = 36.92$, $SD = 10.41$). Twenty-two participants were Canadian-born and three participants were foreign-born (one participant was born in Russia, another in Lebanon, and the third in Bangladesh). With regards to education, twelve participants reported not completing high school (six left prior to Grade 10, five after Grade 10, and one after Grade 11). Four participants reported graduating high school. Six participants reported attendance in courses (e.g., vocational or trade programs) following high school, with one participant reporting graduation from a post-secondary program. Academic information on three participants was unknown. Ten participants reported full-time employment at the time of the interview while eight reported less than full-time employment (three were employed part-time, four were

employed seasonally, and one reported self-employment). Of the seven participants who reported not being employed at the time of the interview, four reported collecting social assistance, one indicated he was retired, another reported receiving a Canada pension for disability, and one participant was currently enrolled in school. At the time of the interview, 16 participants reported being in a relationship: marriage ($n = 2$), common-law ($n = 5$), and romantic dating ($n = 9$). Seven participants reported that they were single at the time of the interview while two participants reported their marital status as separated. During the current interview nine participants reported current alcohol abuse, three reported current illicit substance abuse, and two participants reported current alcohol and drug abuse.

Historical demographics. The majority of participants ($n = 19$) reported their biological parents remained together in childhood, adolescence ($n = 18$) and adulthood ($n = 17$), however, at the time of the interview eight participants reported their mother was deceased and ten reported their father was deceased. Fourteen participants reported experiencing some form of abuse in childhood or adolescence: emotional abuse ($n = 2$); physical abuse ($n = 1$); combination of physical and emotional abuse ($n = 8$); combination of sexual and emotional abuse ($n = 1$); or a combination of all three forms of abuse ($n = 2$). Six participants were identified through file information as having a previous primary psychiatric diagnosis of a mood disorder while one participant received a previous psychiatric diagnosis of cognitive impairment. Of those that received primary diagnoses, two participants had a secondary diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and one participant had a secondary diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. For a number of other participants, their psychiatric status was unknown, due to

the absence of relevant file information. With regards to previous substance abuse, nine participants were identified as having a previous substance abuse problem (including both alcohol and illicit substances), six participants reported a previous alcohol abuse concern and two participants reported a previous illicit substance abuse concern.

Criminal History. Only one participant had an identified conviction for criminal harassment under s. 264 of the *Criminal Code* prior to the index offence, however, the majority of participants ($n = 22$) had been charged at some time prior to the index offence with a number of other offences. Of the 22 participants who had previous criminal histories, the majority of participants ($n = 19$) had been charged on more than one occasion, often for different offences. Eleven participants had at least one (and up to four) previous assault conviction and three participants had a previous conviction for sexual assault, with one of those participants also having been charged with other sexually-related offences. Other offence convictions (prior to the index offence) in the current sample included theft-related offences ($n = 8$), mischief ($n = 5$), breach of probation conditions ($n = 5$), motor-vehicle related offences ($n = 9$), and substance-abuse related offences ($n = 4$). One participant had previously been charged with uttering threats, another had been charged with property damage, and a third with harassing telephone calls.

Index Offence Information. The majority of participants in the current study were charged with more than one type of index offence as well as multiple charges for the same type of offence (e.g., mischief). On average, participants received 6.56 charges ($SD = 6.86$), however, the number of charges for each participant ranged from a single index charge for one participant to a total of 29 index charges for another participant. Only

three participants were charged with a single type of offence. Two received only one charge while the third participant received three charges for the same type of infraction (i.e., breach of a no-contact order). Only five participants were charged with a subsection of criminal harassment under s. 264 of the *Criminal Code* (1985). However, participants were charged with a number of other stalking-related offences including uttering threats ($n = 11$), breach of a no-contact order ($n = 12$), assault ($n = 10$), harassing telephone calls ($n = 3$), breach of probation conditions ($n = 9$), mischief ($n = 5$), and property damage ($n = 3$). One participant was charged with threatening conduct, another for trespassing at night, a third for an indecent act, and a fourth for a driving-related offence. Further, at the time of the present study, two participants also had new charges pending (for which they had not entered a plea or had not yet attended court to resolve the matters) including assault and breach of probation conditions.

Information regarding the details of the index offences was gathered through a review of police statements, victim statements, and Crown Brief reports contained within the probation files of each participant. The majority of participants ($n = 21$) stalked a former intimate partner. One participant stalked a casual acquaintance, although the extent of the previous relationship was unclear given differing opinions of the relationship status offered by the victim and the participant. Given this participant's cognitive limitations and evidence of poor social skills, he would likely have been classified in the *incompetent suitor* typology (Mullen et al., 2000). Three participants were reported to have stalked strangers. While two clearly stalked their victims for sexual purposes, the third, who was charged with harassing telephone calls, reported seeking an intimate relationship, albeit in a misguided and inappropriate manner. Of those who

stalked former intimate partners, the majority ($n = 19$) had one victim (their former intimate partner). However, two of these participants were also noted to stalk a third-party as part of their index offence. Further, one participant, noted to stalk strangers, had nine unrelated victims while another participant who also stalked strangers had four unrelated victims. Of the 25 participants, six participants were rated as continuing to engage in stalking behaviour at the time of the current study while another seven participants were evaluated as possibly continuing to engage in stalking behaviour with their victim at the time of the present study.

Participants in the current study engaged in a wide-range of stalking-related behaviours. Three participants were noted to have communicated about the victim to others, including making inquiries about them or making negative comments to others about them. The majority of participants ($n = 19$) were reported to have had some form of remote contact with the victim (e.g., telephone, e-mail, letters, leaving gifts, etc.). Further, the majority of participants in the present study ($n = 18$) were also reported to have made indirect contact or indirect approaches to the victim, including driving by the victim's work, following the victim, watching the victim from afar, trespassing, etc. Over half of participants ($n = 16$) were reported to have had direct, face-to-face contact with the victim of the index offence. Further, 15 participants were reported to have intimidated their victim through verbal abuse, property damage, vandalism, or physical intimidation. Over half of the participants in the current study ($n = 14$) were reported to have indirectly or directly threatened their victim and thirteen participants engaged in some form of physical violence towards their victim during the index offence. The majority of participants ($n = 19$) were reported to have violated supervision orders (e.g., no-contact

conditions, probation orders) by attempting to have contact with their victims. The duration of stalking behaviours in days ranged from a duration of six days to 1430 days (*Mdn* = 301, *IQR* = 108 to 559).

Procedure

Assessment of Attachment Style

For the purposes of the present study two methods of assessment of the four attachment styles, as defined by Bartholomew (1994), were employed, including a semi-structured interview and a self-report measure. As noted above, while self-report measures rely on a participant's ability to reflect on and report their personal experiences of relationships, there has been noted concern in the attachment literature that individuals with a higher degree of attachment insecurity (potentially individuals from more clinical or forensic populations) might not be able to accurately reflect on their attachment feelings and relationships through self-report (Bartholomew & Moretti, 2002). In contrast, according to Bartholomew (1994), interviews "do not assume the same degree of conscious awareness" (p. 24) and might provide a more accurate reflection of attachment styles. Further, Scharfe and Bartholomew (1994) found that interview ratings of attachment patterns were more stable across time than self-report. To assess the consistency between self-reported and objectively identified attachment strategies with the current participants, both assessment methods were employed.

HAI. The History of Attachment Interview [HAI] is a semi-structured interview that explores an individual's perceptions of experiences from childhood (between children and their parents and caregivers) to adulthood (between adults and their peers and romantic partners). The primary focus of the interview is on relationships in which an

individual uses others for support (Bartholomew, 1997). This interview is a merging of the Peer Attachment Interview and the Family Attachment Interview (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) (see Appendix A). Coding of the interview is based on both the content of the interview and the way experiences are described by participants, including their levels of coherence, defensiveness, and elaboration (Bartholomew et al., 2001). Coders receive a minimum of 200 hours of initial training and are required to code at least an additional 30 criterion interviews before being able to code new interviews independently (Bartholomew, n.d.). These trained coders are then used to assess each individual's attachment strategies along the four categories: Secure, Fearful, Preoccupied, and Dismissing. A continuous rating, ranging from 1 (no evidence of the attachment strategy) to 9 (a near perfect fit to the description of the attachment strategy) is assessed for each attachment strategy. Results can be interpreted in one of three ways. First, an attachment profile consisting of the four scores can be generated. Second, a rating of the self and other models can be generated through a linear combination of the four scores (the other model is calculated as [fearful + preoccupied] minus [secure + dismissing]; the self model is calculated as [fearful + dismissing] minus [secure + preoccupied]) (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994a). Finally, a best-fitting category, or most representative attachment strategy, can be determined by using the highest rating of the four attachment strategies (Bartholomew, 1997).

Previous research employing Bartholomew's semi-structured attachment interview (a different version of the attachment interview used herein that focused on participants' most recent intimate relationships) showed interrater correlations of .63 (secure), .82 (fearful), .85 (preoccupied), and .85 (dismissing) (Henderson et al., 1997).

Further, research employing the HAI with a community population of 128 adult males and females questioned regarding intimate relationship abuse reported demonstrated interrater agreement of .73 (secure), .84 (fearful), .75 (preoccupied), and .78 (dismissing) (Henderson et al., 2005).

In the present study the HAI was administered to all 25 participants by the author, who had been trained in the theoretical background and the coding of the interview. To ensure that the rating of attachment categories was rated independently from the participants' offence behaviours, the charges were not discussed during the interview (the interviewer redirected responses when possible away from information relevant to the offences) and the interviews were rated by two independent, blind coders as per the standards outlined by Bartholomew et al. (2000). The coders for the present study had both completed the required training and had established reliability for rating of this measure. Both coders provided ratings for all 25 participants, the majority through the use of audio taped interviews, however four interviews also required transcripts due to poor audio quality.

Both coders completed ratings on all items of the HAI and produced final scores, ranging from 1 and 9, for each of Bartholomew's four prototypic attachment strategies. The interrater reliability, indexed by intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC) for single raters calculated using a two-way mixed effects model, absolute agreement, for the 52 individual items on the HAI ranged from ICC = -.03 to ICC = .91, with 79% of items demonstrating ICCs above .40, 52% of items demonstrating ICCs above .60, and 12% of items demonstrating ICCs above .80 (see Appendix B).

The interrater reliability for the final attachment ratings for each of the four attachment strategies were ICC = .75 for Secure, .78 for Fearful, .70 for Preoccupied, and .92 for Dismissing. Although the coders commented on the absence of information from some interviews due to poor audio quality that could not be adequately transcribed, both coders were able to complete the HAI ratings in the absence of this information. Although this additional information may have enhanced the quality of the ratings, it was not believed that the absence of this information adversely affected the final ratings of the four attachment strategies as defined by Bartholomew (1990). Overall, the HAI demonstrated good to excellent interrater reliability on the final ratings of the four attachment strategies: Secure, Fearful, Preoccupied, and Dismissing.

A review of the final ratings for each coder revealed some discrepancies in individual ratings for the final attachment styles, in that the ratings for three participants evidenced differences in ratings at greater than the acceptable 2-point difference (K. Bartholomew, personal communication, September 2004) on one or more of the four attachment strategy ratings. However, given the acceptable intraclass correlation coefficients reported above, further calculations employed an average rating of both coders across final attachment strategy ratings.

RSQ. The Relationship Scales Questionnaire (RSQ) is a 30-item self-report measure featuring thirty attachment-relevant statements derived from three independent measures of attachment (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Participants are asked to read each of the 30 statements and, on a 5-point Likert scale rate the “extent to which it describes your feelings about romantic relationships” (Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994; see Appendix C). Scores for each of Bartholomew’s four attachment prototypes can be

derived by obtaining the mean of the items related to each scale. In addition to obtaining the four subscales of Secure, Fearful, Preoccupied, and Dismissing, the RSQ can be used to obtain scores of the underlying self-model/other-model dimensions or the anxiety and avoidance dimensions, as outlined in Kurdek (2002). Reliability estimates of the RSQ vary in previous research depending on the dimensions of attachment (the four attachment types versus the anxiety and avoidance dimensions) employed. Griffin and Bartholomew (1994b) initially reported low reliability, as indexed by Cronbach's α , for the four scales, ranging from .41 for secure to .70 for dismissing and indicated this was likely due to the overlap of the self and other models (and the RSQ items). Bäckström and Holmes (2001) also found that the secure and preoccupied scales of a translated version of the RSQ demonstrated low reliability ($\alpha = .32$ and $\alpha = .46$, respectively), however, their research revealed acceptable reliability of the fearful and dismissing scales ($\alpha = .79$ and $\alpha = .64$, respectively). These authors also reported acceptable reliability of the other model ($\alpha = .68$) but lower reliability of the self model ($\alpha = .50$). Scharfe and Cole (2006) reported reliability estimates of the anxiety and avoidance dimensions as ranging from .65 to .74 in a sample of undergraduate students. Kurdek (2002) noted that the avoidance and anxiety models of the RSQ, as proposed by Simpson et al. (1992, as cited in Kurdek, 2002), who identified the items to be included in those models from the RSQ, yielded the best reliability (in an assessment of several measurement models derived from the RSQ) with $\alpha = .77$ for avoidance and .83 for anxiety. The author noted that "goodness-of-fit indices failed to validate the existence of... secure, fearful, preoccupied, and dismissing styles" (p. 830) as defined by Griffin and Bartholomew (1994a, 1994b). In assessing the construct validity of the RSQ, two studies have

demonstrated associations between the other model and measures of extraversion and between the self model and measures of anxiety (Bäckström & Holmes, 2001, Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994a, 1994b).

In the present study, reliability analyses were conducted for the four attachment strategies, calculated following the recommendation of Bartholomew (n.d.). Reliabilities, as indexed by α and the mean inter-item coefficient (MIC), were as follows: Secure, $\alpha = .52$, $MIC = .16$; Fearful, $\alpha = .67$, $MIC = .34$; Preoccupied, $\alpha = .52$, $MIC = .23$; and Dismissing, $\alpha = .69$, $MIC = .30$. These values are consistent with previous research in this area (Bäckström & Holmes, 2001, Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994b). Reliabilities for the anxiety and avoidance scales on the RSQ, as defined by Simpson et al. (1992, as cited in Kurdek, 2002), were as follows: Anxiety, $\alpha = .86$, $MIC = .56$; and Avoidance, $\alpha = .62$, $MIC = .15$.

Assessment of Stalking Risk

SAM. The *Guidelines for Stalking Assessment and Management* (SAM; Kropp et al., 2008) is a structured professional judgement instrument that provides guidelines for the assessment and management of stalking risk. Although risk assessment and management guidelines for stalking have been proposed by other researchers (e.g., Mullen et al., 2006), the SAM is the only known measure that has been pilot tested in both Canada and Sweden, is currently employed in clinical and research settings, and has demonstrated acceptable interrater reliability (Storey et al., 2009). The SAM looks at the nature of stalking as well as characteristics of the stalker and the victim that may increase or mediate risk. As noted above, the SAM includes three domains: Nature of Stalking Behaviour, Perpetrator Risk Factors, and Victim Vulnerability Factors. Each domain

features ten individual factors, as presented in Table 1. Table 1 identifies the three domains and the factors within each domain as described in the final version of the SAM (Kropp et al., 2008). While the present study employed an earlier version of the SAM, the earlier version included the same items presented in Table 1, only in a different order on the coding form.

Table 1

SAM Domains and Risk Factors

Nature of Stalking	Perpetrator Risk Factors	Victim Vulnerability Factors
N1. Communicates about victim	P1. Angry	V1. Inconsistent behavior toward perpetrator
N2. Communicates with victim	P2. Obsessed	V2. Inconsistent attitude toward perpetrator
N3. Approaches victim	P3. Irrational	V3. Inadequate access to resources
N4. Direct contact with victim	P4. Unrepentant	V4. Unsafe living situation
N5. Intimidates victim	P5. Antisocial lifestyle	V5. Problems caring for dependents
N6. Threatens victim	P6. Intimate relationship problems	V6. Intimate relationship problems
N7. Violent toward victim	P7. Non-intimate relationship problems	V7. Non-intimate relationship problems
N8. Stalking is persistent	P8. Distressed	V8. Distressed

N9. Stalking is escalating	P9. Substance use problems	V9. Substance use problems
N10. Stalking involves supervision violations	P10. Employment and financial problems	V10. Employment and financial problems

Each factor is coded on a three-point scale (*Absent, Possibly or partially present, Present*) for its presence both currently (at the time of the assessment) and in the past. The purpose of this measure is to assess risk according to the circumstances of both the perpetrator and the victim, as well as to evaluate how changes in these circumstances may increase or decrease risk. Evaluators consider the potential meaningfulness of the factors in all domains with regards to future risk through the use of scenario planning methods. Evaluators then provide several judgements of risk (*low, moderate, high*) posed by the stalker, based on the current circumstances, including case prioritization (level of intervention needed), risk for the stalking to continue, and risk for serious physical harm. Evaluators also assess the need for intervention as not currently necessary (*none*), moderate, or immediate (emergency), and reasonableness of the victim’s fear or distress (*high, acceptable, or low*).

Previous research has demonstrated moderate interrater agreement for total scores within each domain: ICC = .77 for Nature of Stalking, ICC = .68 for Perpetrator Risk Factors, and ICC = .63 for Victim Vulnerability Factors (Storey et al., 2009).

For the present study, the SAM was completed by the author, who had been trained to complete the measure by its authors and who had completed previous SAM ratings to ascertain adequate reliability. The author then trained an undergraduate research assistant to complete the risk assessment measure through a comprehensive

review of the stalking literature (to develop a full understanding of the nature of stalking and the various subtypes and risk factors) and by completing several training cases (independent of the current participants). A subsample of 17 participants were then coded by the second rater, blind to the first set of ratings, to evaluate interrater reliability. For a summary of the ICCs for the individual SAM factors as well as descriptive statistics of the same, please see Appendix D. The interrater reliabilities for total scores within each domain were as follows: ICC = .96 for Nature of Stalking; ICC = .94 for Perpetrator Risk Factors; and ICC = .90 for Victim Vulnerability Factors. The interrater reliabilities for final risk ratings on the SAM (from the 17 participants coded independently by each rater) were ICC = .91 for Case Prioritization, ICC = .79 for Continued Stalking, ICC = .79 for Serious Physical Harm, ICC = .73 for Reasonableness of Fear, and ICC = .90 for Immediate Action Required.

Data Analytic Strategy

As noted above, there are several ways an individual's attachment can be described including: (a) categorically, through the identification of the best-fitting attachment strategy (or an individual's highest score across the four attachment strategies); (b) dimensionally, by examination of an individual's scores across all four attachment strategies; or (c) dimensionally, by examination of the underlying two dimensions of attachment, defined as the self and other models or general anxiety and avoidance and obtained through composite attachment scores.

To determine whether attachment can be measured validly within a sample of convicted stalkers, two strategies were employed. Initially, the distribution of scores on both the self-report and interview measures of attachment was examined, including an

identification of the best-fitting attachment strategies of the sample and calculation of the composite attachment scores. Descriptive statistics for both the HAI and RSQ were reported. These findings, where applicable, were compared to findings of previous attachment research in related samples, that is, forensic or offender samples. Secondly, the concurrent validity of the HAI and RSQ was evaluated by calculating the correlation between the interview and self-report ratings, as well as the chance-corrected agreement between the HAI and RSQ attachment categories as indexed by κ .

To determine the association between the identification of a stalker's attachment profile and risk for stalking, an investigation of the association of attachment to both past stalking behaviour and risk for future stalking were conducted. Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated to assess the association between participants' attachment strategies (on both the HAI and RSQ) and the 30 items (from three domains) of the SAM, reflecting previous stalking behaviour. Further, Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated to assess the association between participants' attachment strategies (on both the HAI and RSQ) and the SAM risk ratings for need for case prioritization, risk for continued stalking, risk for serious physical harm, reasonableness of a victim's fear, and necessity of immediate action.

Results

Question 1: Can attachment be measured validly in stalkers?

Distribution of scores on the two attachment measures

HAI. Table 2 shows the mean scores, standard deviations, and ranges for the four attachment strategies on the HAI as averaged across both raters.

Table 2

Mean (SD) and Range of Scores on the HAI

Attachment Strategies	HAI Ratings (Average of Rater 1 and 2)	
	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Range (1.00 – 9.00)
Secure	3.10 (1.08)	1.33 – 5.50
Fearful	3.93 (2.07)	1.00 – 7.33
Preoccupied	4.15 (1.78)	1.50 – 8.00
Dismissing	4.02 (2.17)	1.00 – 8.00

In terms of the best-fitting attachment strategy, evidenced by the highest score across the four attachment strategies for each participant on the HAI, only two participants were rated as having a primarily Secure attachment style, while the remaining 23 participants were rated as one of the three insecure attachment styles. However, the HAI is rated on a 9-point scale, with scores of 1 to 3 indicating low agreement or low evidence of a particular strategy, scores of 4 to 6 indicating average agreement or moderate evidence of a particular strategy, and scores of 7 to 9 indicating high agreement or considerable evidence of a particular strategy. Although there were two participants rated as primarily Secure according to their highest score, it is

noteworthy that none of the 25 participants scored higher than 5.5 out of 9 on the Secure scale, suggesting that none of the participants displayed extensive features of a secure attachment strategy. Further, the two participants that would be “classified” as secure categorically also evidenced average levels (scores of 4 to 6) across the insecure attachment strategies when considered dimensionally.

Participants were relatively evenly distributed across the three insecure attachment strategies with six participants rated with a best-fitting category of Fearful, eight participants rated with a best-fitting category of Preoccupied, and eight participants rated with a best-fitting category of Dismissing. One participant’s best-fitting attachment strategy was rated to be a split between Fearful and Preoccupied, however, the ratings across all four attachment strategies for this participant were essentially equal (in the 3 to 4 point range), indicating no single best-fitting attachment strategy. A review of participants’ dimensional ratings indicated that a smaller proportion of participants ($n = 9$) received a rating of 7 or higher on any one insecure attachment strategy ($n = 4$ for Fearful; $n = 2$ for Preoccupied; and $n = 3$ for Dismissing), which suggested that only this smaller proportion of participants demonstrated considerable evidence of any one insecure attachment strategy. The remainder of participants had more average ratings (ratings between 4 and 6) across the three insecure attachment strategies. These findings are similar to previous research (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994a) in which only a small percentage (i.e., 14% of 77 participants) scored higher than a 7 on any one category of the interview measure of attachment with an average score of 6 on the highest attachment strategy, or “best-fitting attachment” strategy.

Following a procedure outlined by Bartholomew (n.d.), composite attachment scores were created with the HAI final ratings to represent general anxiousness, calculated as (fearful + preoccupied) minus (secure + dismissing), and general avoidance, calculated as (fearful + dismissing) minus (secure + preoccupied). Similar to the results presented above regarding the absence of a large number of clear, best-fitting attachment strategies among these participants, the means of the underlying dimension of general avoidance ($M = .70$, $SD = 3.95$) and the underlying dimension of general anxiousness ($M = .95$, $SD = 4.54$) suggest that there were few participants who strongly demonstrated either of these underlying dimensions. Similarly, means for the self model ($M = -.95$, $SD = 4.54$) and other model ($M = -.70$, $SD = 3.95$) did not represent evidence for a strong positive view of the self or a strong positive or negative view of others.

Previous research suggests that the attachment strategies of offenders are primarily insecure, however, few studies have identified the specific attachment strategies of different offender types. Of the 31 offenders in Ross and Pfäfflin's (2007) study, 35% were rated as Secure using the Adult Attachment Prototype Rating. The remainder of participants were rated as one of three insecure attachment strategies corresponding to the categories of the Adult Attachment Interview (19% ambivalent, 19% dismissing, and 26% mixed-insecure). Henderson et al. (2005) found slightly higher proportions of the Secure best-fitting attachment strategy in their community sample assessing intimate relationship abuse than the present study with a mean Secure rating of 4.13 ($SD = 1.4$). Similar to the present study, scores were distributed relatively evenly across the insecure attachment strategies, $M = 3.41$ ($SD = 1.8$), $M = 3.88$ ($SD = 1.7$), and $M = 3.07$ ($SD = 1.5$) for Fearful, Preoccupied, and Dismissing, respectively.

RSQ. Table 3 shows the mean scores, standard deviations, and ranges for the four attachment strategies on the RSQ.

Table 3

Mean (SD) and Range of Scores on the RSQ

RSQ Ratings (<i>n</i> = 24)		
Attachment Strategies	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Range (1.00 – 5.00)
Secure	3.26 (0.65)	2.2 – 4.2
Fearful	3.17 (0.99)	1.3 – 5.0
Preoccupied	2.97 (0.78)	1.5 – 4.3
Dismissing	3.44 (0.83)	1.8 – 5.0

Twenty-four participants independently completed the RSQ prior to being interviewed by the author. Due to language constraints (English as a second language), one participant was unable to complete the RSQ. For comparative purposes, participants' scores on the RSQ were converted to standard (*z*) scores (as per Bartholomew, n.d.). Seven participants rated themselves as having primarily a Secure attachment style on the RSQ. The remaining 17 participants rated themselves as having a primarily insecure attachment style, including eight participants who rated their primary attachment style as Fearful, three participants who rated their primary attachment style as Preoccupied, and six participants who rated their primary attachment style as Dismissing. Using the anxiety and avoidance scales as defined by Simpson et al. (1992; as cited in Kurdek, 2002), participants scored an average of 12.5 (*SD* = 5.63) on the anxiety scale and an average of 22 (*SD* = 5.76) on the avoidance scale.

Table 4 compares the distribution of attachment strategies in the current sample (indicated by percentage of the total sample) to the distribution of attachment strategies in a sample of wife assaulters (Dutton et al., 1994) employing the Relationship Questionnaire (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), a self-report measure similar to, and correlated with, the RSQ. While it is clear that the distribution of scores across secure and insecure attachment strategies is similar to that reported in a previous study of an offender population, the distribution across the three insecure strategies demonstrates some differences, notably a higher percentage of Preoccupied individuals in the wife assaulter sample versus a higher percentage of self-rated Fearful individuals in the current sample. Tonin (2004), employing the RSQ, also reported that the sample of stalkers in that study demonstrated higher insecurity scores than the forensic, non-stalker, control group.

Table 4

Percentage of Attachment Strategies in Current Sample Compared to Sample of Wife Assaulters

Attachment Strategies	RSQ (%) (<i>n</i> = 24)	RQ (%) (<i>n</i> = 120)*
Secure	28	20
Fearful	32	20
Preoccupied	12	33
Dismissing	24	27

* Dutton et al. (1994) reported moderate correlation between their obtained RSQ and RQ data and subsequently only reported the RQ data

Concurrent Validity of Attachment Measures

Correlation between HAI and RSQ dimensional scores. Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated to assess the association between participants' interview ratings of their attachment strategies and self-report ratings of their attachment strategies. Although results were generally in the expected direction, the majority of results were small to moderate in magnitude and not statistically significant. Three general patterns were apparent in the correlations. First, HAI Secure and Fearful ratings were not correlated significantly with any of the RSQ ratings, $-.36 \leq r < .25$, all *n.s.* Second, the HAI Dismissing ratings had an unexpected positive correlation with RSQ Secure ratings, $r(24) = .55, p = .005$, indicating that participants who were rated by observers as highly dismissing tended to rate themselves as securely attached. Third, HAI Preoccupied ratings were correlated positively with RSQ Preoccupied ratings, $r(24) = .58, p = .003$, and negatively with RSQ Secure ratings, $r(24) = -.51, p = .011$, indicating that participants who were rated as highly preoccupied by independent observers tended to rate themselves similarly.

Pearson product-moment correlations were also calculated to assess the associations between the underlying anxiety and avoidance models of both the HAI (as defined by Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994b) and the RSQ (as defined by Simpson et al., 1992; as cited in Kurdex, 2002). The HAI anxiety scale was significantly correlated with the avoidance and anxiety scales of the RSQ, $r(24) = .47, p = .019$, and $r(24) = .69, p < .001$, respectively.

Previous research on the convergent validity of the RSQ with Bartholomew's interview attachment ratings demonstrated positive correlations between the four matching attachment strategies (e.g., Secure on interview and self-report) of each

measure ranging from .25 to .47. Convergent correlations were higher when comparing the self-model and other-model of the interview measure and the RSQ at .37 and .48, respectively (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994b). With regards to the underlying self and other models, Griffin and Bartholomew (1994a) also found that there was moderately high convergent validity between different methods (interview versus self-report) measuring the same dimension (self and other models) with an average within-dimension correlation of .43 and low correlations between the dimensions (self and other) within the same methods (discriminant validity) with an average within-method correlation of -.09.

Agreement between HAI and RSQ categories. Table 5 illustrates the proportion of participants who rated themselves (on self-report) similarly to how they were rated on the four attachment strategies by independent coders on the HAI. There was little agreement between best-fitting strategies on the HAI and the best-fitting strategies on the RSQ. Only six of 22 participants corresponded as theoretically expected in terms of their self-report ratings and independent ratings, reflecting only chance levels of agreement, $\kappa = .064, n.s.$ Follow-up analyses indicated that cross-method agreement was poor for each of the attachment strategies.

Although participants were reasonably evenly distributed across categories, it is noteworthy that of the six individuals who rated themselves as primarily Secure on the RSQ, five were rated as Dismissing on the interview measure (the HAI). This is

Table 5

Correspondence between HAI and RSQ Attachment Strategies (n = 22)

		HAI Attachment Strategies				
RSQ Attachment		Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissing	Total
Strategies						

Secure	1	1	1	5	8
Fearful	0	1	2	1	4
Preoccupied	0	1	2	0	3
Dismissing	0	2	3	2	7
Total	1	5	8	8	22

consistent with the findings of correlational analyses presented above. Similar to previous research (Bartholomew & Scharfe, 1993), participants appeared to rate themselves as more secure on self-report than the ratings of their security by objective, independent coders on interview.

Overall, in the current study, participants' scores were relatively evenly distributed across the three insecure attachment strategies (as defined by Bartholomew, 1990). These ratings were somewhat similar to previous research regarding distributions of attachment strategies in another offender population. Although non-significant correlations between attachment strategies on different measures were primarily in the expected direction, there was an unexpected positive correlation between the HAI Secure rating and the RSQ Dismissing strategy. Further, there were notable discrepancies in the number of individuals who were coded as Secure by independent coders (via an interview measure of attachment) and those who rated themselves as Secure on the self-report measure of attachment. Finally, there was minimal agreement between HAI and RSQ identified attachment strategies.

Question 2: What is the association between attachment and risk for stalking?

In terms of the association between identified attachment strategies and risk for stalking, two areas were assessed, including the association of attachment strategies and previous stalking (as evidenced by behaviours identified on the three domains of the SAM) as well as the association between attachment strategies and evaluations of future risk for stalking.

Past Stalking

HAI. With regards to previous stalking risk, Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated to assess the association between participants' attachment strategies (as identified through independent coders on the HAI) and the items on the Nature of Stalking, Perpetrator Risk Factors, and Victim Vulnerability Factors domains of the SAM. These are presented in Appendix E. As the table in the appendix indicates, there were few notable associations between ratings on the HAI and Nature of Stalking items with the exception of a significant positive correlation between a Dismissing attachment strategy and threats towards victim (N6) on the SAM, $r(25) = .48, p = .014$. These findings suggest that participants who were rated as high on Dismissing had more often made threats during the index offence.

With regard to Perpetrator Risk Factors, there was a significant positive correlation between anger and a Dismissing attachment strategy, $r(25) = .58, p = .003$. Participants with high scores on the Dismissing scale were more likely to be evaluated as angry (P1) on the SAM. Further, the higher participants scored on the Secure scale of the HAI the more likely they were to be rated as Unrepentant (P4), $r(25) = .41, p = .042$, but also less likely to be rated as having employment and financial problems (P10), $r(25) = -.40, p = .049$. Not surprisingly, those who scored higher on the Fearful scale of the HAI

were significantly more likely to have non-intimate relationship problems (P7) and to be evaluated as distressed (P8) on the SAM, $r(25) = .45, p = .023$, and $r(25) = .64, p = .001$, respectively. Finally, the victims of those who scored higher on the Preoccupied scale of the HAI were more likely to display inconsistent attitudes towards their perpetrator (V2), $r(25) = .41, p = .044$, whereas the victims of those who scored higher on the Dismissing scale of the HAI were more likely to be evaluated as having inadequate access to resources (V3), $r(25) = .43, p = .033$.

It is noteworthy that in the previous analysis, given the large number of correlations calculated, several would be expected by chance alone to have been significant. While the employment of a simple Bonferroni correction could have potentially controlled for this inflated error rate, employment of that procedure would also greatly increase the risk of a Type II error. It was determined that a Bonferroni correction would not be employed given that the current study has adequate power to detect large effects and the correlations that were noted were all of moderate to large magnitude, suggesting that these results, although limited, are statistically reliable and not likely the result of statistical error.

RSQ. Pearson product-moment correlations were also calculated to assess the association between participants' identified attachment strategies (through self report on the RSQ) and the items for each domain of the SAM. These are presented in Appendix F. As can be seen from the table in Appendix F, there were few notable associations between RSQ ratings and the individual items on the SAM with the exception of two. Those who rated themselves as more Dismissing on the RSQ were less likely to be persistent in their stalking behaviour during the index offence (N8), $r(25) = -.41, p =$

.048, and those who rated themselves as more Secure on the RSQ were less likely to have substance use concerns (P9), $r(25) = -.49, p = .016$. Similar to that noted above, a Bonferroni correction was not employed in this analysis in order to control for statistical error, as the significant correlations were all of moderate to large magnitude (with adequate power in the present study to detect large effects), suggesting these results are also likely statistically reliable.

Risk for Future Stalking

On three of the five final risk ratings, the majority of participants were rated as moderate to high risk, including need for case prioritization ($n = 15$), risk for continued stalking ($n = 23$), and risk for serious physical harm ($n = 15$). The reasonableness of the victim’s fear was rated appropriate in the majority of cases ($n = 18$), however, less than half of the cases ($n = 9$) were identified as needing moderate to emergency intervention.

HAI. With regard to future stalking risk, Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated to assess the association between participants’ identified attachment profiles (through independent coders) and SAM ratings of future risk of stalking (see Table 6). There were no significant correlations between the five risk ratings and identified attachment strategies, demonstrating that the addition of known attachment strategies lends little to no additional information to independent ratings of risk for continued stalking, risk for physical harm, need for intervention, or case prioritization.

Table 6

Correlations Between Attachment Strategies (HAI) and Ratings of Future Risk (SAM)

	Attachment Strategies (HAI)			
SAM Risk Ratings	Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissing

Case Prioritization	.24	-.08	-.36	.26
Continued Stalking	.33	-.13	.02	.01
Serious Physical Harm	.03	-.20	-.07	.21
Reasonableness of Fear	.19	.38	-.39	-.01
Immediate Action Required	-.00	.10	-.17	.28

* $p < .05$

Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated to assess the relationship between SAM ratings of future risk of stalking and the composite attachment scores of anxiety and avoidance. There were no substantial or significant correlations between the five risk ratings and the anxiety and avoidance composite scores.

Given the absence of any meaningful associations between identified attachment profiles and ratings of risk, correlations were calculated to assess the association between ratings of future risk of stalking on the SAM and individual items coded on the HAI. There were few notable or significant correlations, with the exception of seven. The higher a participant was rated on role reversal with their female primary caregiver and the higher a participant was rated on idealization of their primary female caregiver, the lower the victim's reasonableness of fear (R4) on the SAM, $r(25) = -.42, p = .035$ and $r(25) = -.46, p = .020$, respectively. Further, the more dominant a participant was rated with regard to their romantic relationships on the HAI the higher their assessed risk for serious physical harm (R3) on the SAM, $r(25) = .43, p = .033$. Risk for continued stalking (R2) was positively correlated with both current quality of peer relationships as well as overall quality of peer relationships as coded on the HAI, $r(25) = .46, p = .020$ and $r(25) = .42, p = .035$, respectively. Finally, the higher a participant was rated on separation anxiety on

the HAI, the lower the rating for case prioritization (R1) and immediate action (R5) required on the SAM, $r(25) = -.55, p = .005$ and $r(25) = -.43, p = .031$, respectively. Again, a Bonferroni correction was not employed in these analyses, given the greatly increased risk of Type II error. However, as noted previously, the correlations reported for these analyses are all of moderate to large magnitude and are likely statistically reliable, given the adequate power of the present study to detect large effects.

RSQ. Pearson product-moment correlations were also calculated to assess the association between participants' self-identified attachment strategies and SAM ratings of future risk of stalking (see Table 7). Again, there were few notable associations between the four risk ratings and self-identified attachment strategies, however, the higher participants rated themselves on the Fearful scale, the lower the case prioritization (R1) rating on the SAM, $r(24) = -.41, p = .049$, and the lower the risk for continued stalking (R2), $r(24) = -.42, p = .042$. Further, the higher participants rated themselves on the Dismissing scale, the lower a victim's reasonableness of fear (R4), $r(24) = -.44, p = .03$. These results are also considered statistically reliable, given the moderate to large significant correlations and the adequate power of the current study to detect large effects.

Table 7

Correlations Between Attachment Strategies (RSQ) and Ratings of Future Risk (SAM)

SAM Risk Ratings	Attachment Strategies (RSQ)			
	Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissing
Case Prioritization	.08	-.41*	-.26	-.22
Continued Stalking	.05	-.42*	-.01	-.11

Serious Physical Harm	.05	-.06	-.09	-.01
Reasonableness of Fear	.12	-.08	-.15	-.44*
Immediate Action Required	-.12	-.11	-.03	-.10

* $p < .05$

Pearson product-moment correlations that were calculated to assess the relationship between SAM ratings of future risk of stalking and the anxiety and avoidance scores calculated from the RSQ according to Simpson et al. (1992; as cited in Kurdek, 2002) revealed primarily negative, but non-significant, correlations.

Overall, the addition of information regarding participants' attachment profiles offered little to the evaluation of risk in previous stalking behaviour. Somewhat unexpectedly, participants who scored high on the Dismissing scale (on the HAI) were more threatening during the offence and those who scored higher on the Secure scale (on the HAI) were rated as more unrepentant. In contrast, those who scored higher on the Dismissing scale (on the RSQ) were less likely to persist in stalking behaviour. Similarly, the identification of participants' attachment profiles lent little addition information to future ratings of risk.

Discussion

The goal of the present study was to explore whether attachment strategies can be measured validly in a sample of stalkers as well as to investigate the association between identified attachment strategies of stalkers and their past stalking behaviour and risk for future stalking.

Can attachment be measured validly in stalkers?

Few studies have looked at the attachment strategies of offenders or employed either the HAI or the RSQ with a forensic population. However, studies employing other self-report measures of attachment have indicated higher proportions of insecure attachment strategies than secure attachment strategies with individuals who reported having engaged in stalking-related behaviour (Lewis et al., 2001; Powers, 1997; Wigman et al., 2008). Further, Dutton et al. (1994), employing both the RSQ and the Relationship Questionnaire (RQ) in a study of domestic violence (with a group of assaultive adult males and a control group) indicated that the differences in primary attachment strategies were significantly different between assaultive men and the control group with assaultive men demonstrating higher ratings on fearful and preoccupied scales and lower ratings on the secure scale than the control group.

Similar to the few studies that have assessed attachment relationships in individuals engaged in stalking behaviour as well as other offences, the majority of participants in the present study were objectively assessed (through the use of an attachment interview) as demonstrating a primarily insecure attachment strategy. Although previous research has theorized that stalkers would demonstrate a primarily preoccupied attachment strategy (e.g., Meloy, 1996), in the present study, participants'

best-fitting attachment strategies were relatively evenly distributed across the three insecure attachment strategies of Fearful, Preoccupied, and Dismissing.

Further, consistent with previous research regarding adult attachment profiles (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994b), the majority of participants in the current study had average ratings across all four attachment strategies, with only nine of the participants demonstrating significant qualities of any one insecure attachment strategy. Unlike previous research, the participants in the current study did not appear to demonstrate high levels of either of the underlying avoidance or anxiety dimensions (or the self and other models) on the HAI. This is likely due to the relatively even distribution of scores across all four attachment strategies.

While some researchers would argue that the attachment profiles of adults are unlikely to evidence one best-fitting attachment strategy across all relationships due to a lifelong history of varying attachment experiences (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994b), it is unclear if the addition of further information regarding participants' offences and the stalking behaviour within their romantic relationships – information which was not revealed to HAI coders – might have changed the HAI ratings in the present study. The significant number of approach and threatening behaviours demonstrated by the current participants might have provided further evidence in support of a single attachment strategy over the other two insecure attachment strategies. Coders were only provided with the participants' perspectives regarding their relationships, particularly the relationships with the victims of the index offences. Although this would also be the case in other uses of the HAI, the level of distortions present in other samples (e.g., undergraduate students, community samples) would arguably be lower compared to that

of the present sample. To begin, these participants frequently offered distorted perceptions of the reasons for the ending of their relationships (e.g., “her mother didn’t like me and forced her to leave me”) that did not take into account their stalking and threatening or intimidating behaviour. For example, when discussing the current status of their relationships, participants would often indicate their belief that the relationship, while currently “on hold” due to legal interventions, would begin again following their period of probation. They would provide evidence such as “she still tries to contact me” in attempts to support their beliefs. However, coders were not able to review probation documents, which frequently featured victim statements expressing opposite opinions to those offered by the participants.

Secondly, participants often placed blame on their victims for their current circumstances and coders were not subject to information regarding the extent, frequency, or intensity of the participants’ stalking behaviours. Participants’ distortions could not be challenged during the interview and could not be verified by the coders. For example, one participant spent considerable time discussing his “loyalty” in relationships, “I would never leave, I never leave.” Although this was rated as reflecting a secure attachment style by coders, it could also be seen as reflective of that participant’s continued obsession with his victims, and was also consistent with his repeated attempts to resolve at least two of his previous relationships through stalking behaviour.

Further, some participants engaged in stalking behaviour outside of their current relationships. For example, some participants who identified as being in new relationships were reported, in probation documents, to be continuing to stalk their victims (usually a former intimate partner). Also, in coding the attachment interviews of

individuals who stalked strangers (particularly for sexual purposes), the impact of those offences on current or previous relationships was never discussed or assessed (given that the participants never identified those stranger victims as a primary relationship) and as such, both these individuals received relatively higher security ratings.

Of primary concern in discussing the validity of these attachment ratings is the reality of the participants' relationships and the characteristics of the victims of stalking versus what these individuals portrayed during interview. On many occasions there were opportunities to challenge the distortions of the relationships as presented by participants, however, these opportunities were not pursued in order to maintain the objectivity of interview ratings. It is unclear if additional information would have changed the HAI ratings in any meaningful ways.

Not only could the distortions of the participants regarding their previous relationships (for the 21 participants who stalked former intimate partners) have impacted ratings regarding their romantic relationships, but it is unknown how much their perceptions of their earlier attachment relationships could also have been distorted. Given the level of dysfunction across a number of the life domains of individuals engaged in stalking behaviour, for example, emotional dysfunction, poor levels of social functioning, their level of insight or accurate representation of their attachment experiences is unknown. Given that the vast majority of participants were not rated as primarily secure, it is not likely that additional information concerning the conflicted relationship patterns of the stalking cases would have increased security ratings. In contrast, additional information might have provided further evidence for particular insecure strategies, which might have provided a clearer attachment profile for each participant. At present, a

number of participants received similar low to moderate ratings across three to four attachment strategies.

While the primary purpose of an attachment interview is to assess an individual's attachment through the manner in which it is discussed and communicated (e.g., consistency, elaboration, coherence, content, etc), it is questionable whether such interviews are able to accurately identify inconsistencies in an interview featuring high levels of distortion and denial of which the interviewee has limited insight. It is only with the addition of mental health and legal documents that the author of the current study was able to identify these inconsistencies. Part of the nature of stalking behaviour is an absence of insight into the distorted perceptions of a stalker's relationships. Arguably, these participants' descriptions of their relationships sound and appear accurate because that is truly how they have perceived their experiences. Only with the added information regarding their pursuit and obsessive behaviours does the extent of their insecurity and behavioural reactions to threat of loss and anxiety become clear.

Results also indicate that there was limited convergent validity with regards to the attachment strategies of the HAI and the attachment strategies of the RSQ. With regard to discriminant validity, only the preoccupied attachment strategy of the HAI was significantly negatively correlated with the secure strategy of the RSQ. Similar to previous research, a number of participants (primarily those individuals who were rated as dismissing on the HAI) rated themselves as primarily secure on the RSQ. In contrast to previous theories regarding the attachment strategies of individuals engaged in stalking behaviour, only three participants in the present study rated themselves as primarily

preoccupied, despite overt evidence of approach and threatening behaviour (i.e., from offence reports and victim statements).

As noted by Bartholomew and Moretti (2002), the discrepancy evident between interview and self-report ratings might be explained by a number of factors, including the inability of self-report ratings to get past an individual's defences. This discrepancy appears to have also tapped into the primary concern with regard to stalkers, as noted above, their distorted perceptions of their relationships. The RSQ was completed by participants following a conflicted and often traumatic end to what they viewed as significant and meaningful relationships. Many of these participants presented to the current study endorsing statements regarding their distrust of relationships, their fear of getting involved in relationships with the previous partner, and their reservations about pursuing future relationships. It is not unlikely that these endorsements were then reflected in their completion of the RSQ, resulting in potentially different primary attachment strategies in the moment of completion from those assessed by reviewing their history of attachment relationships from an objective perspective. As indicated by Bartholomew (1994), "There are reasons to believe that self-report measures may be strongly influenced by the current functioning of romantic relationships, and a case can even be made that such attachment measures assess little more than current relationship dynamics" (p. 25). Not only might the RSQ have reflected participants' defensive responses to the negative consequences of their stalking behaviours towards their victims, but for those participants who had moved onto new relationships, the RSQ might have been a reflection of their current feelings about these relationships that might not have featured the same degree of conflict and stress as the previous stalking relationships.

Therefore, the validity of their self-report ratings, which are entirely a reflection of their own view of their attachment experiences, is also questionable.

Although the data from the current study indicates that the attachment strategies of the current participants was reliably assessed (as evidenced by the high interrater reliability between the two coders on the HAI), it is unclear that the resultant attachment strategy ratings accurately reflected a comprehensive profile of the participants' attachment relationships. Important information regarding these participants' approach behaviours, methods of resolving conflicts or losses, and ability to manage emotional distress were not fully taken into account in these ratings. While the addition of such information would not likely raise ratings of security on the HAI, it is not clear whether the ratings across the other three insecure attachment strategies would continue to be average or if a primary best-fitting attachment strategy would become more evident (i.e., such as the fearful or preoccupied attachment strategies). Further, it is not clear at present whether participants' new relationships (for those participants who were not continuing to engage in stalking behaviour towards their victims) had a moderating effect on participants' best-fitting attachment strategies or whether these ratings would have been different (i.e., higher ratings on any one insecure attachment strategy) in the absence of these new relationships.

Previous researchers have noted that the convergence of different attachment measures is lower, although still modest, when the attachment measures are assessing different aspects of attachment relationships (i.e., when one measure looks at the family attachment relationships while the other assesses peer or romantic relationships) (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998). In the present study, however, the HAI assessed

attachment across the history of attachment relationships (from family to later romantic relationships), thereby potentially offering a more accurate picture of an individual's attachment profile. In contrast, the RSQ assessed one's perceptions of intimate relationship experiences with little consideration of family relationships.

Overall, the validity of the attachment profiles in this sample is somewhat questionable, given the relatively low convergent validity. Although results were similar to that of other forensic samples, it is unclear if these similarities are related to similar levels of distortion or an accurate portrayal of attachment profiles in a male forensic population whose primary victims are women. What was clear, and unsurprising, was the high proportion of insecure versus secure ratings, but it is questionable if this information would add anything meaningful to evaluations of risk.

Do the Attachment Strategies of the Current Sample Match Previous Theories of Stalkers?

A larger number of participants than would be expected (given previous theories) were noted to have a Dismissing best-fitting attachment strategy, which would appear, on initial speculation, to be in contrast to previous theoretical opinions regarding stalkers. Dismissing individuals are described as individuals who maintain a positive sense of self-worth and high self-esteem while avoiding intimacy in close relationships. These individuals are described as evidencing high emotional control (Bartholomew et al., 2001), which does not appear to be reflective of stalkers, who engage in significant pursuit behaviours as a result of being unable to regulate their negative emotional experiences following the end (or threatened end) of an important relationship. While additional information regarding overt stalking behaviours might have lent more support

or evidence for the presence of a preoccupied attachment strategy, other researchers have found that individuals classified as avoidant (e.g., from the Fearful or Dismissing categories) have also demonstrated aggressive or threatening behaviour in the face of significant loss (Weinfeld, Sroufe, Egeland, & Carlson, 1999). Further, Bartholomew (1997) previously theorized that a Dismissing attachment strategy might be a defence against a low sense of self-worth and feelings of rejection by others. Given that interviews in the current study occurred following legal interventions for stalking behaviours, these ratings might be a reflection of how those participants presented at the time of the interview, following significantly negative consequences for their previous pursuit behaviours. Some participants might have down-played the impact of the most recent relationship stress and conflict as a defence mechanism against the emotional distress resulting from the end of the relationship and the victims' responses to their stalking behaviours. Interestingly, later analyses also revealed a significant correlation between ratings of anger on the SAM and a Dismissing attachment strategy, also suggesting that the stalking behaviours of these individuals might have been triggered by this underlying anger (again, in contrast to the "emotionally controlled" description of prototypically dismissing individuals).

Although many theorists have suggested stalkers are most likely to be represented by primarily preoccupied attachment strategies, it has also been theorized by Kienlen (1998) that different types of stalkers, influenced by different motivational triggers, might evidence different attachment profiles. Although the current sample was made up of primarily former intimate stalkers, the participants were evenly distributed across the three insecure attachment strategies. While the overt acting out of preoccupied

individuals fits with a stalking pattern of behaviour, perhaps the motivations within a subgroup of stalkers (not just between categories of stalkers) also differs (for example, desperation leading to violent or overt acting out for fearful individuals or anger leading to acting out and pursuit in dismissing individuals). If this is the case, a more thorough investigation of participants' motivations would be necessary to fully understand how the identification of an attachment profile could be most useful. Information about participants' offence behaviours would have to be more thoroughly considered. The addition of offence-related behaviour might have added to ratings on either of these insecure attachment strategies in the present study, thereby challenging the theoretical opinions (see Meloy, 1996 and 1998) regarding stalkers' attachment profiles.

The above discussion, and its generalizability to other samples of stalkers is limited, given that it is not clear that the HAI and RSQ were able to measure attachment accurately in the current sample. However, the comparability of the current sample to previous forensic samples as well as samples from the community lends some support to these findings. Methodologically, the inclusion of the details of offence behaviour is of key concern for future research in this area. Stalking is described as a relational offence, and excluding the relationship aspects of such an offence from an evaluation of an individual's relationship and attachment history seems illogical outside of the strict confines of a research question such as that used in the current study. Arguably, information provided by an attachment assessment in the absence of such information provides little additional information to assessments of risk and development of risk management strategies (as is discussed below).

How are the attachment strategies of stalkers related to past stalking behaviour and risk for future stalking?

In assessing the association between participants' attachment strategies and their previous engagement in stalking behaviours (as evidenced from the information gathered regarding their index offences), there were few notable associations. However, those associations that were noted were somewhat unexpected. For example, those who were rated higher on the Dismissing scale of the HAI were described as more angry on the SAM and were more threatening during the index offence. As noted above, although this is in contrast to what attachment researchers would suggest regarding prototypically dismissing individuals (with high emotional control, avoidance of intimacy, etc), there is evidence to suggest that individuals classified as avoidant have been noted to engage in aggressive behaviour in response to loss or threats of loss and that some dismissing individuals portray emotional detachment and "lack of caring" as a defence mechanism (Bartholomew, 1997). Such information would be useful in understanding an individual's response to loss as well as potentially informing risk management decisions that target coping strategies and management of negative emotions. In contrast, those who rated themselves as Dismissing (who saw themselves as emotionally detached) on the RSQ were less likely to be persistent in their stalking behaviour. Interestingly, previous researchers have suggested that grudge stalkers, who are motivated more by revenge than a desire to re-establish a relationship, might evidence more anger and shorter durations of stalking. These results could be tapping into the differing motivations of some of the former intimate stalkers (e.g., more motivated by revenge and more fuelled by anger), however, data do not exist in the current study to fully explore this theory at present.

Those who were rated higher on the fearful scale were also more likely to have non-intimate relationship problems and to be assessed as distressed on the SAM. Given the descriptions of fearful individuals as more distressed and more likely to avoid rather than approach their primary caregivers (or significant romantic relationships), these results appear fitting.

Not surprisingly, those who rated themselves as primarily Secure on the RSQ were less likely to have employment and financial problems and were less likely to have substance abuse concerns on the SAM. Interestingly, those who were rated higher on Secure on the HAI were also more likely to be rated as unrepentant on the SAM. Perhaps those who viewed themselves as more self-confident and more trusting of relationships also viewed their behaviour as more acceptable or less blameworthy in response to the end of their relationships. If these individuals felt others were generally responsive and able to fulfill their needs, perhaps they viewed their behaviour as more justified. Finally, those who were rated as more preoccupied on the SAM also had victims who displayed inconsistent attitudes towards their perpetrators. This finding might speak to the difficulty former intimate partners have in fully recognizing the dangerousness of their perpetrators, thereby attempting to engage in resolution tactics that continue to maintain their proximity in the relationship, particularly given the proposed persistence of individuals with preoccupied attachment strategies (e.g., the more persistent and the more approach behaviours, the more victims feel obligated or compelled to make the break up easier or to attempt to get the perpetrator to stop his behaviours).

Overall, there were limited associations between attachment strategies and perpetrators previous stalking behaviours, and it is unclear if the identification of

attachment strategies lends any additional meaningful information to previous stalking risk. While the low validity of the attachment measures might have impacted the current findings, a stronger association between attachment and stalking risk might also be more evident in a larger sample with a greater range and diversity of participants.

With regards to risk for future stalking, there were no significant associations between the identified attachment strategies according to the HAI and the ratings of future risk for stalking on the SAM, suggesting that the identification of an individual's attachment profile lends little to no information to ratings of risk to continue stalking, risk for physical violence, need for intervention, or case prioritization. There were also few significant relationships between individuals' self-report ratings of attachment profiles and ratings of future risk of stalking. However, one finding suggested that the more Fearful a participant rated themselves on the RSQ, the less likely the risk for continued stalking and the lower the case prioritization required. This finding makes intuitive sense, given that the more fearful an individual rated themselves, the lower the risk of continued stalking, as a prototypically fearful individual, by definition, would be less likely to engage in approach behaviour. Given the reduced likelihood of approach behaviour, they would likely also require lower prioritization of intervention (for example, even if they continued to stalk in indirect ways, such as via telephone, the risk would likely be lower for physical violence).

Interestingly, individual items on the HAI did demonstrate significant relationships to ratings of risk on the SAM. Unsurprisingly, those that were coded as highly dominant in relationships were also rated as being at higher risk for physical assault. Also of interest, the absence of peer networks or social support has been

identified as a risk factor for future stalking, however, the present study suggests that individuals who had high quality peer relationships (supportive, consistent, etc.) were more likely to continue stalking. Counter-intuitively, those that were rated as higher on the separation anxiety item of the HAI received lower ratings of case prioritization and requirement of immediate action on the SAM. Given the proposed association between attachment insecurity and risk for stalking, it would be anticipated that these results would be reversed. Unlike previous studies in this area (see Meloy, 1998; Westrup & Fremouw, 1998), over half of the participants in the current study reported currently being in a romantic relationship, with at least seven of the participants reporting being in a relationship with the victim of the index, stalking-related, offence (the identity of participants' current partners was not always known, and in several cases there was speculation that the participant had continued in, or re-established, a relationship with the victim of his index offence). Perhaps this difference in relationship status also affected attachment ratings, in that some of the underlying characteristics of the insecure attachment strategies, e.g., fear of being alone, fear of approaching new relationships, low self-esteem, etc., might be more evident (or better communicated) in situations in which an individual is not in a relationship. The added confusion of continuing a relationship with a victim might also have influenced results, in that those currently experiencing good relationships might under report the more "insecure" characteristics at the time of the interview.

Although attachment did not appear to add any significant additional information to risk assessment for stalking in the current study, such information could be useful in understanding management and treatment interventions or even the sometimes

inconsistent behaviour of victims. For example, Bartholomew et al. (2001) theorized that there might be strong attachment bonds between those who are abused and their abusers in domestic violence situations such that fear and anxiety or threat serve to activate one's attachment system. This might explain why victims continue to interact with their stalkers, particularly in former intimate stalking situations, and might also contribute to a vicious cycle. For example, the stalker perceives threat and loss which activates his attachment system and he responds with anger and frustration. This triggers the victim's attachment system resulting in inappropriate responses, such as attempts to ease the pain of a breakup. The victim, who continues to experience fear in response to the persistence of the stalker later pulls away, triggering the rejection cycle all over again.

Generalizability of Results

The current study had a limited sample size, featuring a majority of former intimate stalkers with moderate to high risk ratings. However, despite the limited variability of the current sample, the participants in the present study closely resembled the descriptions of "stalkers" from previous research findings (see Gill & Brockman, 1996; Kropp et al., 2002; Mullen et al., 2001; Rosenfeld & Harmon, 2002; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007). The majority of participants were in their mid to late thirties, primarily Caucasian, and had completed a Grade 11 or higher level of education. Although 40% of participants in the current study reported full-time employment, the remaining 60% ranged from part-time and seasonal employment to being unemployed. A large number of participants reported some form of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse in their childhood and six participants were identified as having a previous psychiatric diagnosis. Unfortunately, for the purposes of the present study, mental health information was only

available for a subset of participants and diagnostic testing was not completed, therefore the presence of other psychiatric diagnoses was not clear. At the time of the current interviews, over half of the participants reported some form of current substance abuse.

Only one participant had previously been charged with criminal harassment, however, as noted above, the majority of participants had a previous criminal history. Similar to other studies in this area, almost half of the participants in the current study had a previous assault conviction (see Meloy, 1998; Mullen et al., 2000). Further, three participants had previously been charged with “stalking-related” offences, consisting of uttering threats, property damage, and harassing telephone calls.

Consistent with the argument presented by McEwan et al. (2007), the majority of participants were not charged with criminal harassment but instead received a large number of other charges related to their stalking-like behaviour. Consistent with previous research, the majority of the participants in the present study engaged in remote communication and indirect attempts at contact (*hyper-intimacy behaviours/mediated contacts or remote behaviours*). Further, over half of the participants in the current study engaged in direct, face-to-face contact with their victim (*interactional contacts or direct contact behaviours*). Indirect and/or direct threats (*coercion and threat*) occurred in over half of the stalking cases and physical violence (*physical aggression and violence or direct contact*) occurred in approximately half of the cases described in the current study. Consistent with the demographics of previous research studies, the majority of the participants in the current study were classified as former intimate stalkers (Kamphuis & Emmelkamp, 2000; Emerson et al., 1998). There were no individuals classified as “intimacy seekers” as none of the individuals included in the present study met criteria

for erotomania or a delusional disorder. This study did include one participant who met criteria for an *incompetent suitor* (Mullen et al., 2000) and three participants engaged in stalking behaviour for primarily sexual purposes (although only two of these would likely have been categorized as *predatory stalkers* as defined by Mullen et al, 2000). In summary, the participants in the present study had demographic and criminal history profiles similar to those of stalkers in previous research.

Limitations

As noted previously, the current study did feature a small sample size, potentially limiting the generalizability of the study. However, in assessing the inter-rater reliability of both the HAI and the SAM, the sample size likely had limited impact on results, given that inter-rater reliability typically is assessed on only a portion of an overall sample (usually of a similar size to that of the current sample). Inter-rater reliability did not appear to be impacted by the current sample size. Similarly, in assessing the convergent validity between the HAI and the RSQ, although the correlations were small, they were consistent with previous research in the area and the addition of more participants would likely have added little to that analysis. As such, the limited sample size likely had the greatest impact on the analysis of the association between stalker attachment strategy and risk for stalking. As noted previously, given the large number of correlations calculated, several significant correlations would likely have been expected by chance alone. Given that this was the first study of its kind, those correlations were primarily exploratory and likely offer more utility as a means to direct future research.

The majority of stalkers were identified as former intimate stalkers. Having a high proportion of former intimate stalkers resulted in further limitations, including little

variation in risk ratings as former intimate stalkers are defined, in research, as the highest risk for continued stalking and for physical violence (which was reflected in the high proportion of moderate to high ratings across all risk categories in the current study). Further, there was limited ability to assess the attachment strategies of different types of stalkers. However, the current sample did reflect a variation of attachment strategies within this subtype of stalkers, suggesting that attachment strategies may vary by individual stalker rather than by type of stalker. It is also important to note that the current methodology limited the ability to accurately assess attachment strategies in a sample of stalkers. First, the individual's offences were not revealed to attachment coders in order to maintain objectivity of ratings, despite the relational nature of stalking. Second, the completion of a comprehensive attachment interview with an individual who evidenced delusions or thought disorders would be difficult. The HAI considers coherence of the interview as a primary coding factor and an individual with a thought disorder may be incoherent due to the thought disorder rather than due to an insecurity in attachment. It is not clear that certain subtypes of stalkers could be included in future studies with similar methodology. Finally, individuals who met criteria for stalking but continued in their relationship with their victim were still included in the current study. It is likely that these muddied relationship boundaries also influenced an individual's perceptions of their relationships as reflected in both self report and interview.

The current study was conducted in the province of Nova Scotia where case law and precedent for criminal harassment cases is currently limited. This limited the identification of individuals engaged in stalking behaviour (few participants received a criminal harassment charge), thereby limiting the sample size. Further, victim impact

statements often offered limited information regarding the stalking behaviour, as the individual was usually charged with a different offence. Such information is beneficial for risk assessment and the development of risk management strategies. The introduction of the current study did, however, draw the attention of community corrections staff to the array of stalking behaviours and the need to follow-up with the victims or current partners of their clients in certain circumstances. Continued education will hopefully lend support to future identification and intervention in this and other provinces in stalking cases.

Future Directions

Although the results of the current study are limited, much can be gained from the current study with regard to informing future research. At present, it is unclear if the current results are due to problems with the validity of the attachment measures, problems with the homogeneity of the sample and the small sample size, or are an accurate reflection of an absence of association between attachment strategies in stalkers and risk. One of the primary findings from the current study is an understanding of the complexity of adult attachment relationships and the complexity involved in the assessment of attachment relationships, particularly in a forensic, clinical sample. The implications of this complexity impact future decisions regarding methodology, to assess the true nature of the association between attachment and stalking, as well as future research questions. To fully explore the utility of the identification of attachment strategies for stalking risk assessment and risk management, a more thorough exploration of the attachment strategies of all subtypes of stalkers needs to be completed. It is arguable that the inclusion of information regarding a stalker's stalking behaviours is

essential in future attachment interviews to fully capture a stalker's relationship behaviour, particularly in response to threat and loss. However, including such information has the potential to bias the subsequent investigation of the association between attachment strategies and risk for stalking. As such, future research in this area would likely require rating the HAI on two occasions, initially without the information regarding the stalking behaviours and subsequently with information from police reports and probation records in order to determine if that additional information leads to differences in attachment ratings as well as differences in the associations between attachment strategies and risk. Further, a larger sample would allow for greater variability in risk ratings as well as stalking and attachment behaviours. Finally, in future research in this area, a more thorough risk assessment would need to include an interview with the victim, or at the very least, a greater description of the stalking-related behaviours to accurately assess risk for future stalking.

While the identification of the association between attachment strategies and risk for stalking is important, what is likely more essential to the management of stalkers is the exploration of how the identification of stalkers' attachment strategies can inform risk management and intervention decisions. Understanding an individual's attachment profile is likely to highlight valuable information regarding individual's reactions to deterrents, legal responses, or mental health interventions. Further, interventions aimed at an individual's attachment strategies and underlying motivations for engagement in stalking behaviour might be more effective long-term than external interventions such as incarceration, monitoring and supervision (which are all necessary for protection of the victim, but which are often time limited). Research that explores how individuals with

certain attachment profiles have been deterred from continued stalking behaviour or physical violence in stalking cases would be beneficial in informing risk management and intervention decisions. The consideration of a qualitative study that allowed for specific selection of a heterogeneous representation of stalkers with different motives for stalking might be the most beneficial in informing the rationale for individual stalking behaviours as well the specific risk assessment, risk management, and intervention needs required to success manage a stalker. The complexity of adult attachment, as noted above, highlights the need for risk assessment and risk management to assess each individual stalker based on his specific motivations, risks, and needs, and following from that assessment, develop an effective and appropriate risk management strategy that targets individually-tailored risk factors.

Theoretical opinions regarding the underlying motivations of stalkers often turn to insecure attachment as a primary and fundamental rationale for stalking behaviour. The current study has lent some support to this theory. While the identification of the attachment profiles might not lend significant additional information to assessments of risk in stalking cases, knowledge of an individual's history of attachment will likely elucidate key targets for risk management as well as mental health intervention and support.

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Appendix A

WERP – History of Attachments Interview

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

- How old are you?
- What do you do for a living?
- Do you have any siblings?
- Are you currently in a relationship?
 - Review and verify relationship status.
 - Relationship length.
- Do you have any children? (How many?)

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Family Background

- . Please describe your family background. The kinds of things I'm interested in are: where you lived, how often you moved, what your parents did for a living, siblings, that sort of thing.
- . Are your parents still alive?
 - As appropriate: Did your parents ever separate or divorce?
- . Who lived in the household?
- . Were any other adults central in your upbringing?
- * Briefly describe what your parents' marital relationship was like when you were young. Was there much conflict?
 - As appropriate: Did your parents' conflicts ever become physical? In front of you? Explore
- ..Were they physically affectionate with one another in front of you?
- . Briefly describe what kind of a young child you were.

Relationship with Parents

- . I'd like you to describe your relationship with **each** of your parents as a child, going back as far as you can.
- * Which parent were you closest with? Why?
 - If necessary: Did you feel distant from either parent?
- . Was each of your parents affectionate? Describe how.
 - As necessary: Could you give me some adjectives describing your mother.
 - As necessary: Could you give some adjectives describing your father.

As necessary, ask for specific memories or incidents to illustrate the adjectives for your mother, for your father. (Can you think of any specific memories or incidents that illustrate how your mother was...?)

..Did either of your parents have a drug or alcohol problem?

Explore: Which parent, alcoholism, binges, etc.

Did it lead to anger or aggression?

What effect did it have on family, on you as an individual?

Upsets

. If you were unhappy or upset as a child, what would you do? Example. How did your parents respond?

..When you were ill or physically hurt, what would you do? How did your parents respond?

..When you were emotionally hurt? (teasing, conflicts with teachers or siblings)

Separations

. If loss or separation within family, explore.

. Do you remember the first time you were separated from your parents for any length of time? (e.g. camp, parents' holiday, hospitalization) Explore.

If necessary: How about going to school for the first time?

Or going to college?

..As a child, did you ever get lost? How did you react (feelings)? How did your parents react?

..Did you ever run away from home? Why? How did your parents react?

R

Rejection

. Did you ever feel rejected by your parents as a child? Describe.

How did it feel?

What did you do?

..If not, did they ever hurt your feelings?

..If not, did you ever feel that you'd disappointed your parents?

..How did they show their disappointment? For instance, with regard to grades at school?

..Did your parent realize s/he was rejecting (hurting your feelings, showing their disappointment towards) you?

. Did you feel pushed by either parent?

- . Were your parents ever threatening - either jokingly or for discipline?
- . What [else] did they do for discipline?
 - If necessary, were you ever afraid of either parent?
 - If necessary, how consistent was your mother in her parenting? Father?
 - How predictable was each parent?

- ..How often did each parent get angry at you? Explore.
 - If necessary: How did they show their anger?
 - If necessary: How expressive was each parent? Range?

- . What are your feelings now about the discipline you received as a child?
- . Did you feel loved? Were they proud of you? How was that shown?

- ..Did you feel that they understood you?

Trauma

- . As a child or adolescent, did you have any sexual contact with an adult or older person?
 - Explore: age? by whom? who did you tell? how did parents respond?
 - If necessary: Did you consider that abusive or inappropriate? At the time? Now?
- . As a child or adolescent, did you ever attempt suicide? Explore.

Changing Relationship with Parents

- . Did your relationship with each of your parents change during adolescence?
- . What is your relationship with your parents like now?
 - If different, what brought about the change?

- ..How often do you talk to them?
 - Do you talk about personal concerns?
 - Are there things that it would be hard to talk to them about? Explore.

- ..Do you feel that they understand you?

Changes

- ..What are your feelings now about the parenting you received as a child?
 - If necessary: How would you have liked your parents to be different?
- ..How do you think that your parents would have liked you to be different?

Siblings

- ..What was your relationship(s) like with your sibling(s) when you were growing up?

..Siblings often get into conflicts. Were there any conflicts that you were involved in with siblings that caused physical or emotional harm? Explore.

..What is your current relationship(s) like with your sibling(s)?

Effects

. How do you think your experiences growing up with your family have influenced your relationships with people outside of the family?

Childhood friendships

..Did you have many close friends in childhood/adolescence?

..How did you get along with childhood peers in general?

..Did you ever feel that you were 'different' in childhood or adolescence?

How prevalent/often? Was this a concern?

..Did you experience any rejection, teasing, or forms of abuse from your peers as a child or adolescent?

If appropriate, do you have any sense of why they did that?

PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Now I'd like to move on and talk about your peer relationships but I'd first like to start with some general questions about how you see yourself in relation to other people.

Personal Information

* Compared to other people you know, how emotional would you say you are?
Why do you say that? Expression of emotions?

* How often do you cry? (If prompting, "once a day, every few days..")

..Do you cry more often alone or with others?

. If you do feel unhappy or upset about something, what are you likely to do?

. Are you more likely to go to other people or do you tend to deal with upsets on your own?

Friendships

I'd like to turn now to talking about your friendships.

. How many close friends do you have?

. What does it mean to you to call someone a close friend?

. Do you discuss personal matters with your close friends? Are there things you wouldn't talk about or that would be difficult to talk about? Example. Why?

- . With your friendships as a whole do you have a sense of who is more involved or invested? You or the other person?
If discrepancy: How do you feel about that?
- . Have you ever had conflicts with your close friends? How do you handle it? What do you do? Have they ever been physical?
If necessary: Have you ever had your feelings hurt by a close friend? Example
Have there been times when you and a close friend haven't talked to each other?
- ..Have you ever felt torn between your friends and your romantic relationships?
- . What changes would you like to see in your friendships over time?
- . How do your current friendships compare with your childhood friendships?
- . When you meet new people do you think they will like you?
- . How confident are you about making new friends?
- ..Would you consider yourself a generally shy person?
- . What impression do you think you make on other people?
* What impression would you like to make?

Romantic Relationships

Now I'd like to spend some time talking about your romantic relationships.

Relationship History

- . If currently in a romantic relationship:
You said you were currently in a romantic relationship. Prior to your current relationship, how many relationships did you have that you would consider serious?
- . If not currently in a romantic relationship: Have you been involved in a romantic relationship in the past? How many?
- . At what age did you first start dating or becoming involved in romantic relationships?
Explore both same sex and opposite sex dating.

If no previous romantic relationships, move on to single questions on page 9.

- ..Do you prefer to be in a monogamous or an open relationship?
- ..Has this changed over time across your relationships? Has this changed within your current or most recent relationship?
- ..If open, how is it negotiated, does partner know, do you maintain boundaries, i.e. discussing it, rules, what to share, not share, etc. How do you think your partner feels about this arrangement? How do you feel about each others' activities? Explore.

. Now I'd like to first talk briefly about your previous romantic relationships. Perhaps you could give me brief history of those romantic/sexual involvements. The kinds of things I am interested in are how long you were together, how serious it was, what were the positives and the negatives of the relationship.

If necessary, how did it end? Who initiated the ending? How was that for you?
If necessary, explore times not in a relationship?

. Do you see any patterns across your relationships?

If necessary, do you ever feel that you either trust others too much or have difficulties trusting others?

. Was there any physical conflict in any of these relationships such as pushing, shoving, etc.? Can you briefly describe the incident. If necessary – context, impact on relationship, how did that make you feel?

..Did you ever feel forced or pressured into sex in any of these relationships when you didn't want to?

If yes, explore (abuse questions on page 11)

If NOT currently in a relationship, go to singles questions.

Current Relationship

. Briefly describe your relationship in terms of how serious it is, amount of time spent together, and whether or not you've considered future plans.

. Can you tell me a little about what your relationship is like, what your partner is like?
If necessary: What do you like about your relationship or your partner? What don't you like?

. What do you think your partner likes most about you? And least?
If necessary: What would they say? How do you know?

Communication & Support

. How comfortable are you discussing personal matters with your partner?
What are some of the topics of conversation you avoid with your partner- because they're awkward to talk about or they lead to disagreements?

* How does your partner respond when you would like help or support?

..How does your partner respond when you're hurt or sick?

..What about emotionally upset? What would you like your partner to do? Example.

If necessary: Do you ever feel your partner is not responsive enough or too responsive?

If necessary: Do you feel comfortable crying in front of your partner? If not, why? How does partner respond?

..How well does your partner understand you?

Love-worthiness & Trust

. Have you ever felt rejected by your partner? Describe.

If necessary: Have you ever had your feelings hurt by your partner?

..Have you ever doubted that your partner loves or cares about you? How does your partner show it?

. Have you ever felt neglected by your partner?

..How does your current relationship compare with past ones?

. Do you say "I love you" to each other? How often? One more often? Explore as necessary.

Conflict Resolution

. How often do you have disagreements or arguments? What about? What happens?

Does it get resolved? How?

As necessary: Do you ever have differences of opinion? i.e. Movies? Music?

Do you ever wonder if your partner disagrees with you, but doesn't say anything?

How long do you stay angry? Who initiates the arguments and the resolution?

. Could you give me an example of a typical conflict and describe how it tends to go.

. How does this compare with past relationships?

. Have you ever felt afraid of your partner?

. How often are you and your partner mean to each other or critical?

If necessary: Have the two of you had any issues about the amount of time you spend together?

If necessary: How do the two of you go about making decisions? Is it mutual?

. Have your conflicts ever become physical? (pushing, shoving, slapping, throwing things)

If yes, explore

If necessary, is there anything you or your partner have done that could be considered emotionally or psychologically abusive?

Physical Relationship

. How affectionate are the two of you within the relationship? Is one of you more so than the other? Ever an issue, in private or public?

..Do you ever feel that your partner is not warm or affectionate enough? Or too affectionate?

- . How do you feel about the sexual aspect of your relationship
 If necessary, how do you think your partner feels about it?
 If necessary, has it changed over time? Is it more important for you or your partner?
- . Have you ever felt pressured by your partner into having sex or engaging in a sexual activity that you didn't feel comfortable with?
 Explore.
- . Have you ever pressured your partner into having sex or engaging in a sexual activity that he didn't feel comfortable with?
 If necessary: What changes would you like to see in your sexual relationship? (to make it more satisfying for you? your partner?)

Separations

- . Have you and your partner ever been apart for any length of time? (e.g., holidays, business trips). Explore.
 If not, how would you feel if it did happen?
- . Have there been any separations or other involvements since you've been together?
 Explore.

Mutuality

- . People in relationships commonly report that one partner seems more invested or committed to the relationship? Has this ever been the case in your relationship? If so, describe.
- . Some people feel concerned about becoming too dependent in a relationship. Is this a concern for you? For your partner?
- . How jealous or possessive is your partner?
 If your partner is jealous, how does it make you feel?
- . How about you? How jealous or possessive are you? Explore

Regrets, Break-up

- . Have you ever thought about separating? When? Why?
 If yes, tell me your thoughts about it?
- ..How difficult would it be for you to end this relationship?
 If necessary: Have you ever had regrets or doubts about having become involved with (married to) your partner?
 If appropriate: How much faith do you have that your relationship will last in the long term?

- . If it did break up, who do you think would be most likely to initiate a break up? Why?
If necessary: If you and your partner ever did break up, how difficult do you think it would be for you? And for your partner?

General Evaluation

- . How would you like to see your relationship change over time?
If necessary: Any changes in the way you relate to your partner? Or how your partner relates to you?
- ..If you could have the ideal relationship, how would it differ from your present relationship?
- ..How does your current relationship compare with past ones?

RELATIONSHIPS IN GENERAL

Now I'd like to ask you a few final questions concerning all your relationships - family, friends, romantic partners.

- ..How many people do you think would be there for you no matter what?
- ..Has that changed over time?
- ..How connected do you feel socially?
- ..Are you satisfied with your social support system? Changes?
- . What kinds of changes would you like to see in the way you relate to others?
If necessary: What kinds of changes would you like to see in the way others relate to you?
- * Is there anything else about your social relationships that we haven't hit upon that seems important?

Final Questions

- . How did you feel about talking about the kinds of issues we've been talking about in this interview? Are these things that you've talked about with other people?

What encouraged you to say yes to coming in to do this session?

Thank you.

SINGLES' QUESTIONS

Note about single questions: If person is not in a romantic relationship or dating, and would clearly like to be, ease off on a lot of the "why not" questions.

Also any questions from the regular interview can be framed in a hypothetical way. For e.g.: if you were involved in a romantic relationship..... Again , be cautious about not making the person feel badly about not being involved. Dating Status
Have you been dating anyone recently? Or have you dated anyone in the past

**IF YES: Could you give me a brief history of your dating experiences.
If necessary, frequency, length, enjoyment, etc.**

..Would you prefer to see several people or would you rather have a steady relationship with one person?

..How long do you see the same person before you consider yourself a couple?

..What do you like about dating? What don't you like about dating?

..What are you looking for when you date? (i.e., for fun, to find partner, sex, etc.)

..Was there any physical conflict in any of these relationships?

If yes, explore

. Do you see any patterns across your dating relationships

IF NO:

* Have you ever dated? And how do you feel about that? Can you tell me more about that?

. Are there any particular reasons why you haven't dated much up to now (or lately)?

. Do you ever meet people that seem interesting to you? What happens?

* Do you ever have crushes on people? Explore. What happens?

* Are you doing anything to pursue romantic relationships now? Explore.

. What do you do? How does the other person respond?

If not interested in dating

..What about dating makes it uninteresting to you now?

..Do you expect that to change in the future?

Feelings about being single

. Do you ever feel envious of your friends' romantic relationships?

. Do you ever feel left out? Explore.

. Do you think they are ever envious of you? Explore

. Do you experience any pressure to be in a romantic relationship? (from friends, parents)

. Do you see any advantages to being single over being in a relationship?

. How much time do you spend alone? Right amount?
If appropriate: Would you consider living alone?

. How often do you feel lonely? Explore

Conflict Resolution (for dating only)

..How often have you had disagreements or arguments with people you are dating?
Explore.

If necessary, have you ever felt afraid of a dating partner?

If necessary, how often are you and a dating partner mean to each other or critical?

If necessary, in a dating relationships has there ever been issues of the amount of time you spend together?

If necessary, have your conflicts ever become physical? (pushing, shoving, slapping, throwing things)

If yes, explore

Future

. Are you interested in finding a steady relationship in the near future? How often do you think about it?

If appropriate: Are you doing anything to pursue romantic relationships now?

Explore. What? Why not?

. If you did meet someone, do you feel that you'd be ready to make a serious commitment?

. In general, how important is it to you to be in a romantic relationship?

. In the long term, how important would it be to you to be in a romantic relationship?

. Do you ever worry about not finding someone to be with? What about that worries you? How realistic do you think that is?

* What do you think you would miss by not being in a relationship?

..What do you think you would gain?

* What are your ideals for a romantic relationship? Kind of relationship, kind of person, etc.

* Are there things you know you wouldn't want?

Appendix B

Intraclass Correlation Coefficients of Two Raters for Individual HAI Items

HAI Domains and Individual Items	ICC	
CAREGIVER/CHILD RELATIONSHIP	Female Caregiver	Male Caregiver
Acceptance	.91	.91
Rejection	.89	.85
Neglect	.73	.73
Role Reversal	.48	.10
Anger at Parent	.41	.74
Idealization	.22	.33
Proximity Seeking	.66	.40
Dominance	.78	.66
Childhood Closeness	.53	.79
Current Closeness	.08	.31
Quality	.87	.87
OVERALL CAREGIVING ENVIRONMENT		
Stability of Home Environment		.72
Parental Substance Abuse		.90
Emotional Abuse		.52
Physical Abuse		.86
Sexual Abuse		.59
PEER RELATIONSHIPS		
Self-Disclosure		.69

Relative Involvement	.67
Dominance	.21
Idealization	.19
Current Quality	.73
Overall Quality	.68
ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS	
Self-Disclosure	.57
Relative Involvement	.43
Dominance	.42
Idealization	.32
Current Quality	.79
Overall Quality	.67
SELF IN RELATION TO CAREGIVERS	
Emotional Expressiveness	.77
Anger	.34
Adult Proximity Seeking	.60
Emotional Dependence	.48
Separation Anxiety	.63
Caregiving	.47
Jealousy	.59
Trust	- .03
Self-Confidence	.52
Adolescent Rebellion	.68

Elaboration	.60
Coherence	.53
Warmth	.23

Appendix C

RSQ

		Not at all like me	Somewhat like me	Very much like me		
1.	I find it difficult to depend on other people.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	It is very important to me to feel independent.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I find it easy to get emotionally close to others.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I want to merge completely with another person.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I am comfortable without close emotional relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I am not sure that I can always depend on others to be there when I need them.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I worry about being alone.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I am comfortable depending on other people.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I often worry that romantic partners don't really love me.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I find it difficult to trust others completely.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I worry about others getting too close to me.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I want emotionally close relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I am comfortable having other people depend on me.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I worry that others don't value me as much as I value them.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	People are never there when you need them.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	My desire to merge completely sometimes scares people away.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	It is very important to me to feel self-sufficient.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I am nervous when anyone gets too	1	2	3	4	5

	close to me.					
21.	I often worry that romantic partners won't want to stay with me.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	I prefer not to have other people depend on me.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	I worry about being abandoned.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	I prefer not to depend on others.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	I know that others will be there when I need them.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	I worry about having others not accept me.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	Romantic partners often want me to be closer than I feel comfortable being.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	I find it relatively easy to get close to others.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix D

Intraclass Correlation Coefficients for Individual SAM items

SAM Domains and Individual Items	Mean(SD) (range 0 – 2)	ICC
NATURE OF STALKING		
Communicates about victim	.32(.69)	.91
Communicates with victim	1.60(.76)	.96
Approaches victim	1.52(.82)	1.00
Direct contact with victim	1.36(.91)	1.00
Intimidates victim	1.44(.77)	.85
Threatens victim	1.16(.99)	.97
Violent toward victim	1.08(1.00)	1.00
Stalking is persistent	1.24(.66)	.75
Stalking involves supervision violations	1.60(.76)	.96
Stalking is escalating	.60(.91)	.57
PERPETRATOR RISK FACTORS		
Angry	1.28(.79)	.77
Obsessed	.52(.65)	.81
Irrational	.16(.47)	.90
Unrepentant	1.52(.77)	1.00
Intimate relationship problems	1.92(.28)	.65
Non-intimate relationship problems	1.04(.68)	.83
Distressed	.80(.91)	.97
Substance use problems	1.28(.89)	1.00

Employment and financial problems	1.44(.77)	.92
Criminality	1.96(.20)	.00
VICTIM VULNERABILITY FACTORS		
Inconsistent behavior toward perpetrator	1.12(.88)	.87
Inconsistent attitude toward perpetrator	.88(.88)	.84
Non-intimate relationship problem	1.92(1.38)	.94
Inadequate access to resources	.40(.87)	.53
Intimate relationship problems	1.68(.99)	.60
Employment and financial problems	2.36(1.19)	.93
Distressed	.60(1.00)	.95
Substance use problems	2.04(1.27)	.55
Unsafe living situation	.88(1.13)	.92
Concerns related to dependents	.88(.97)	.73

Note. Mean and SDs were calculated from Rater 1 for all 25 cases. ICCs were calculated from combination of Rater 1 and Rater 2 for 17 cases.

Appendix E

Correlations between HAI Attachment Strategies and SAM Individual Items

SAM Domains and Individual Items	HAI			
	Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissing
NATURE OF STALKING				
Communicates about victim	.07	-.07	-.08	.05
Communicates with victim	-.23	-.03	-.11	.21
Approaches victim	.14	-.36	-.13	.22
Direct contact with victim	-.07	-.33	.38	-.04
Intimidates victim	.07	.01	-.23	.12
Threatens victim	-.38	.09	-.19	.48*
Violent toward victim	-.12	-.18	-.01	.08
Stalking is persistent	-.07	-.03	.19	.13
Stalking involves supervision viol.	.02	-.24	.26	.12
Stalking is escalating	-.15	-.35	-.10	.36
PERPETRATOR FACTORS				
Angry	-.34	-.05	-.23	.58**
Obsessed	.31	.23	-.22	-.17
Irrational	-.01	.33	.19	-.33
Unrepentant	.41*	.03	-.23	-.11
Intimate relationship problems	-.16	.03	.28	-.17
Non-intimate relationship problems	-.29	.45*	-.02	-.03
Distressed	-.18	.64**	-.08	-.14

Substance use problems	-.12	.04	.27	-.16
Employment and financial problems	-.40*	.12	.20	.14
Criminality	-.11	-.23	.12	.13
VICTIM FACTORS				
Inconsistent behavior toward perpetrator	-.11	-.24	.32	.04
Inconsistent attitude toward perpetrator	-.21	-.31	.41*	.10
Non-intimate relationship problem	.17	.27	.01	-.18
Inadequate access to resources	.00	-.17	-.18	.43*
Intimate relationship problems	-.26	.23	.07	-.28
Employment and financial problems	-.20	.01	-.12	.15
Distressed	-.20	.22	-.29	.37
Substance use problems	.22	.08	-.34	.17
Unsafe living situation	.18	.01	-.23	.05
Concerns related to dependents	.07	-.04	.17	-.21

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Appendix F

Correlations between RSQ Attachment Strategies and SAM Individual Items

SAM Domains and Individual Items	RSQ			
	Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissing
NATURE OF STALKING				
Communicates about victim	-.14	-.24	-.40	-.37
Communicates with victim	-.04	.18	-.08	-.35
Approaches victim	.35	-.40	-.06	-.21
Direct contact with victim	-.21	.06	.29	-.03
Intimidates victim	-.19	-.15	-.09	-.13
Threatens victim	.01	-.07	-.01	-.10
Violent toward victim	-.08	.13	-.12	.03
Stalking is persistent	.07	-.33	.06	-.41*
Stalking involves supervision viol.	.03	-.25	.16	-.16
Stalking is escalating	.13	-.16	.06	-.01
PERPETRATOR FACTORS				
Angry	.17	-.19	-.40	-.01
Obsessed	.03	-.27	-.31	-.34
Irrational	-.31	.08	.13	-.17
Unrepetant	-.13	-.03	-.15	.06
Intimate relationship problems	-.16	-.03	.04	.02
Non-intimate relationship problems	-.32	.13	-.02	.26
Distressed	-.15	.14	.01	.04

Substance use problems	-.49*	-.02	-.05	.37
Employment and financial problems	-.19	.18	.31	.23
Criminality	-.11	.14	.20	.32
VICTIM FACTORS				
Inconsistent behavior toward perpetrator	-.01	-.03	.22	.19
Inconsistent attitude toward perpetrator	.01	-.07	.20	.21
Non-intimate relationship problem	.01	-.03	.23	-.03
Inadequate access to resources	.29	-.40	-.34	.01
Intimate relationship problems	-.30	.38	.17	.39
Employment and financial problems	-.03	.04	.01	.23
Distressed	.32	-.20	-.21	-.23
Substance use problems	.37	-.30	-.20	.03
Unsafe living situation	.04	-.09	-.09	.18
Concerns related to dependents	-.36	-.08	.12	-.06

* $p < .05$