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ASSESSING COUPLES' RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH ART MAKING:
A REPLICATION STUDY

by

Courtney Combe & Spencer Harden

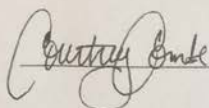
A research paper presented to the
FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY
LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

In partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
MASTER OF ARTS

May 5, 2017

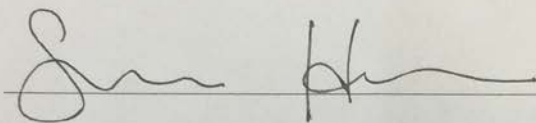
Signature Page

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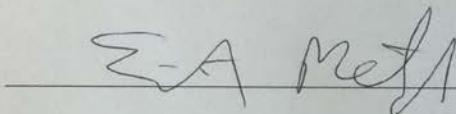
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Dedication

This research paper is dedicated to the couples that value therapeutic services and seek to
establish a balance within their relationship.

Acknowledgements

We would first like to thank the LMU Art Therapy faculty for the opportunity to take on such an exciting topic. Thank you for the words of encouragement, guidance, and of course the constant reminder that “it depends.” We would especially like to thank our research mentor, Einat Metzl, for her continuous support, patience, and reassurance that has guided us throughout this process.

To the other members of our cohort, we are honored to walk this journey with you. Thank you for sharing our stress, providing a source of comfort, and being a constant pillar of strength holding us up when we felt as though we may break through this process. Thank you for listening, reminding us to breathe, and maintain self care.

Thank you to the two participants who invited us to take a peek into their relationship and sharing their experience with us. Without you, none of this would have been possible.

Abstract

This research examined the usefulness of art therapy techniques in the assessment of attachment in couples treatment. This case illustration consisted of one couple who were invited to complete four questionnaires, participate in individual and joint art making tasks. The participants also engaged in conversation and discussion about their art and their experience throughout the art making process. The data was then analyzed and categorized into three emerging themes: (1) Relational dynamic between participants (2) Relationship and response to the art, and (3) Integration of shared and personal experiences. Through the discussion of themes, researchers found that art techniques, specifically the nonverbal joint drawing task, was a beneficial and useful tool to assess a couple's attachment.

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Introduction

Study Topic

The purpose of this research is to explore the connection between art making and attachment style by replicating a recent study by Snir & Wiseman (2010). In the original study by Snir & Wiseman (2010), which was conducted with 60 couples in Israel, a joint couple's drawing art therapy assessment was utilized to explore couples' relational dynamics through art making. The joint drawing technique is informally utilized by art therapists as an assessment tool for identifying the balance between needs for intimacy and individuality, yet the first known research regarding this technique was only recently conducted by Snir & Wiseman (2010). Further investigation of the connection between attachment characteristics and participants' evaluation of the joint drawing session could deepen art therapists' knowledge of the relational process in joint couples' drawings and enhance couples' treatment (Snir & Wiseman, 2010). Therefore, the purpose of replicating the study by Snir & Wiseman (2010) is to test the usefulness of the tool and generability of the results in a different setting.

Significance of the Study Topic

Despite the wealth of general literature available on attachment, there is a lack of literature currently available regarding working with couples through art making or assessing relational dynamics through art. Many studies have been conducted over an expansive period of

time, with a large gap in the timeline. The earliest research dates from the 1970s to the 1980s. From there, research took a large leap ahead and went directly into the past 5 years with very little research in the 1990s to early 2000s. Due to such an extensive void in research, there is a disconnect between the language used in the research. The studies based 30-40 years ago defined and referred to attachment and art therapy in different terms than the studies based in recent years. This made it difficult to decipher and compare the results and terminology between the studies. This shows a distinct need for more research to be done in regards to art therapy in couples' treatment. By recreating a significant study from recent years and placing it in the United States, new relevance is given to Snir and Wiseman's (2010) exploration of art making and attachment.

Through this replication in particular, studying the participants' attachment characteristics as well as their self-reported evaluations of perceptions and emotions, the interpersonal processes can be better understood from an art therapist's perspective. Snir and Wiseman's (2010) original study was based on the idea that the client's history of attachments to others and the quality of these attachments have a predictive effect on the process and outcome of treatment. By gaining a greater and advanced understanding of these attachment patterns and processes as shown through the joint drawing task, art therapists will be able to provide a higher level of care by being aware of what each participant brings to the romantic and therapeutic

relationship, as well as the therapy session. Additionally, this replication will take into consideration how culture impacts attachment patterns. The replication will take place in the United States of America, specifically Los Angeles, California. This replication may depict the differences in attachment styles and patterns as compared to the original study in Israel. This creates a significant impact on the advancement of couples' art therapy treatment across countries, cultures and research.

Background of the Study Topic

The history of attachment theory dates back to the 1930's and developed from the work of John Bowlby and Mary Salter Ainsworth (Bretherton, 1992). The basic ideologies of attachment theory were developed by Bowlby (Bretherton, 1992). Ainsworth was responsible for the development of methodologies that enabled empirical testing of Bowlby's conception of attachment (Bretherton, 1992).

The primary focus of early attachment research was on the parent-child bond (Belsky, Rosenberger, & Crnic, 1995). According to Bowlby (1969/1982), attachment is based upon the bond established between infant and primary caregiver, which plays a role in the socioemotional development for both infant and primary caregiver. Early interaction between infant and caregiver leads to the development of working models regarding self and others (Bowlby, 1969/1982). As a result of observations of infant-mother interactions, attachment was delineated into three styles of attachment: secure, anxious-ambivalent, and anxious-avoidant (Bowlby & Ainsworth, 1991). A study by Hazan & Shaver (1987) utilized the three attachment styles to argue that adult romantic love is an attachment process as well. Therefore, the study by Hazan & Shaver (1987) created the groundbreaking shift of attachment as a lifelong process and led to the expansion of attachment theory to include adult attachment.

The inclusion of adult romantic love as a form of attachment provided insight into ways in which problems may arise for couples that can be addressed in psychotherapy. For example, Hudson et al. (2014) contend that the impact of romantic partners' attachment styles on one another indicates the importance of investigating the dyadic process. Furthermore, emotionally focused treatment was found to provide a strong emphasis on attachment and couples' treatment. According to Hinkle et al. (2015), emotionally focused treatment is an experiential method that focuses on the strengthening of attachment bonds, while also increasing in the moment awareness in order to improve the interactional patterns within the couple. Interventions used in EFT are aimed to heighten the underlying emotions related to attachment needs (Hinkle et al., 2015). Therefore, EFT provides a framework for psychotherapeutic treatment of couples based on attachment theory.

An additional treatment modality that can be utilized with couples is art therapy. According to Sarrel et al (1981), art therapy is valuable in uncovering potentially important intrapsychic characteristics of the individual within the couple. Art therapy can be beneficial in addressing attachment issues in couples, as the primary purpose of using art therapy techniques is to highlight the interactional processes that are underlying within the relationship between the individuals (Sarrel et al, 1981). Overall, creative interventions have been found to strengthen the connections between self and others (Hinkle et al., 2015).

Snir & Wiseman (2010), utilized a joint couple's drawing art therapy assessment to explore couples' relational dynamics through art making. However, the study by Snir & Wiseman (2010) is the only known study on the expression of attachment in art made by couples. Despite the lack of research on couples' art, there is other research on expressions of attachment within art in families and individuals. For example, the Family Portrait exercise is a technique that assesses relational dynamics within families by comparing independently drawn family portraits (Kwiatkowska, 1967). Additionally, a study conducted by Bat & Ishai (2016) found that the art therapy assessment Person Picking an Apple from a Tree (PPAT) revealed associations between avoidant and anxious attachment styles. Although, Bat & Ishai (2016) contend that further research is necessary to identify drawings that may evoke expression of attachment systems.

Based on the research outlined, it appears that there are already some connections between art making and attachment style, which suggests that replication of the study by Snir & Wiseman (2010) could help to strengthen those connections further.

Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of the literature review was to explore attachment, specifically in the field of couple's therapy and how creative art interventions can benefit work with couples. Through our research, we were able to recognize common themes in the language, assessment and interventions used throughout the studies, and how art therapy was utilized in treatment.

For this literature review, we first explored the concept of attachment, how it is assessed in the context of gender and treatment. We then continued to explore the different treatments specific to attachment and couples. Finally, we researched how art is used as an intervention in the therapeutic space, as well as an assessment. We emphasized the benefits of art therapy and how it can be used in dyadic treatment of couples.

Attachment

The concept of attachment as defined by Bowlby's attachment theory references the bond established between infant and primary caregiver and the effects of this bond on the pair's socioemotional development (Bowlby, 1969/1982). Through the initial interaction between infant and caregiver, working models regarding self and others begin to develop (Bowlby, 1969/1982). The attachment behaviors developed in early childhood with caregivers contribute to relationship patterns that carry into interactions with peers and romantic partners (Bowlby,

1979). Furthermore, the relational style within a family-of-origin is a precursor of relationship attachments made by an individual later in life (Bowlby, 1958).

Based on observations of infant-mother interactions, attachment was broken down into three main categories: secure, anxious-ambivalent, and anxious-avoidant (Bowlby & Ainsworth, 1991). Secure attachment is characterized by a balance between autonomy and closeness to others (Feeney, 1999). Anxious attachment is characterized by the highest level of closeness and dependence (Feeney, 1999). Avoidant attachment is characterized by the highest level of distance and independence (Feeney, 1999).

Dalgleish, Johnson, Lafontaine, Moser, Tasca, and Wiebe (2015b) found that individuals high on attachment anxiety were seen to rely on hyperactivating strategies in the context of couple's relationships. This is where energetic attempts are made in order to attain a greater proximity, support, and love without confidence that these things will be received (Dalgleish et al., 2015b). Individuals who experience high attachment avoidance tend to deactivate their attachment needs by attempting to handle their stress alone (Dalgleish et al., 2015b).

Couples' Attachment Styles

Vatcher, C., & Bogo, M. (2001) argue that interdependence and intimacy with another person is an integral human need, and a healthy attachment to another person facilitates ongoing development well into adulthood. Hudson, Fraley, Brumbaugh, & Vicary (2014) found

that couples form a dyadic system that is shaped by both partners' attachment styles which co-regulate and coordinate change over time. Partners within a romantic relationship are more apt to have the same attachment styles and security levels (Hudson et al., 2014). Through the process of co-regulation, each partner's attachment style may impact the way the other partner reacts to mutual experiences, and a positive correlation was found between changes within each partner's level of attachment security (Hudson et al., 2014). When one partner displayed elevated levels of attachment insecurity, an elevation in the other partner's level of avoidance was likely to occur (Hudson et al., 2014). According to Crawley & Grant (2005), an emotional response is triggered when one partner experiences distress, pain, or a threat to the couple's relationship. The type of emotional response triggered is dependent on the individual's attachment style and serves to provoke behavior from the other partner that will reestablish a sense of safety and stability within the relationship (Crawley & Grant, 2005). Therefore, any behavior from one partner that poses a risk to the attachment bond of a couple is likely to cause the other partner to react in a manner that serves to restore balance to the relationship and repair the couple's connection (Vatcher & Bogo, 2001).

According to Hudson et al. (2014), attachment-anxiety tends to be more self-focused rather than other-focused, thus heightened attachment insecurity in one partner does not indicate a heightened level of anxiety in the other partner. Dagleish et al. (2015b) found that

securely attached couples are more likely to have higher levels of trust, commitment, and overall marital satisfaction. However, Dagleish et al. (2015b) found that in a relationship where responsive caregiving is not consistently available, an insecure attachment may develop, such as high levels of attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. Therefore, the partners either hyper-activate or deactivate their attachment in order to meet self-soothing needs (Dagleish et al., 2015b).

Kirkpatrick & Davis (1994) contend that the pairing of attachment styles in couples is nonrandom. In an examination of the relationship between attachment styles of partners, Kirkpatrick & Davis (1994) discovered secure partners were more likely to be paired with other secure partners than with anxious or avoidant partners. Meanwhile, the study revealed no results for a anxious-anxious or avoidant-avoidant pairings (Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994). Similarly, a study conducted by Collins & Read (1990) revealed individuals with an anxious attachment style were more likely to have a partner with an avoidant attachment style. Furthermore, Collins & Read (1990) argue that individuals with differing insecure attachment styles are attracted to one another, because the opposing attachment style validates their underlying beliefs about relationships. Kirkpatrick & Davis (1994) explain the pairing of differing insecure attachment styles as follows:

For the anxious-ambivalent person, the central relationship issues are the dependability, trustworthiness, and commitment of their partners. An avoidant partner who is concerned about too much intimacy and uneasy about commitment, displays an orientation about the relationship consistent with expectations of the anxious person.

For the avoidant person, the distrust and demands for intimacy conveyed by the anxious partner likewise confirms his or her expectations of relationships. (p. 503)

Gender Differences in Attachment Styles

In a study examining gender differences in preference for closeness or distance in romantic relationships (Feeney, 1999), couples reported that females desired more closeness. Females in this study were more prone to having a fearful or preoccupied attachment style, while males were more apt to having a dismissing style (Feeney, 1999). Furthermore, females fitting into the anxious dimension of attachment were inclined to perceive their partner's avoidance as an indicator of a shortfall of their own self-worth (Feeney, 1999). While the females tended to be more anxious about the closeness of the relationship, the males reported higher needs for distance and self-reliance (Feeney, 1999). Whereas a later study by Johnson, Tambling, Mennenga, Ketring, Oka, Anderson, Huff, and Miller (2015) found that females have neutral amounts of attachment anxiety, while males had an average anxiety attachment and did not show a significant change throughout treatment.

Issues around closeness and distance in romantic relationships were found to highlight social expectations of traditional gender roles (Feeney, 1999). Similarly, Monteoliva, García-Martínez, Calvo-Salguero, & Aguilar-Luzón (2012) argue that the interaction between differences in gender role socialization and attachment style impact the closeness and strength of romantic relationships. For example, women exhibiting a secure attachment style were found to display more positive attitudes toward the disclosure of feelings than women with a dismissive attachment style (Monteoliva et al., 2012). This finding is consistent with traditional gender role socialization of women but is less consistent with dismissive attachment styles (Monteoliva et al., 2012). Furthermore, women with a dismissive attachment style still displayed more positive attitude toward the expression of feelings than men with a dismissive attachment style, which highlights the stereotype of traditional gender roles in men (Monteoliva et al., 2012). According to Vatcher & Bogo (2001), distance, autonomy, and independence are promoted as characteristic of normative expectations for male behavior. On the other hand, the characteristics of the normative expectations for females include closeness, open expression of emotions, and caring (Vatcher & Bogo, 2001). Therefore, examining gender and attachment simultaneously provides a more comprehensive understanding of romantic relationships (Monteoliva et al., 2012).

Cultural Differences in Attachment Styles

Agishtein & Brumbaugh (2013), contend that attachment behavior is significantly influenced and shaped by the cultural environment of an individual's development. In a study on cross-cultural distributions of attachment styles, Agishtein & Brumbaugh (2013) discovered variations in attachment are based on country of origin, ethnicity, acculturation, and collectivism.

In a comparison of attachment styles expressed by individuals from over 50 different countries, individuals of South Asian origin, particularly those from India, expressed the lowest levels of attachment anxiety (Agishtein & Brumbaugh, 2013). Meanwhile, individuals of East Asian origin expressed the highest levels of attachment anxiety (Agishtein & Brumbaugh, 2013). Similarly, higher levels of attachment anxiety were linked to Asian ethnicity (Agishtein & Brumbaugh, 2013). A link was also found between attachment anxiety and collectivism (Agishtein & Brumbaugh, 2013). In regards to acculturation, strong identification with the dominant culture was associated with lower levels of anxiety (Agishtein & Brumbaugh, 2013). However, strong identification with either a native or adopted culture was associated with lower levels of avoidance (Agishtein & Brumbaugh, 2013). Therefore, secure adult attachment was found to be related to high levels of cultural identification (Agishtein & Brumbaugh, 2013). Despite reported variations in many aspects of culture, Agishtein & Brumbaugh (2013) found

that attachment distribution does not vary amongst religious denominations, which suggests that attachment patterns may not be significantly influenced by religious denomination.

Identifying Attachment in Self and Partner

According to a study on self-other agreement on attachment styles amongst couples (Uziel, 2012), partners in romantic relationships are commonly able to identify one another's romantic attachment style relatively correctly. However, the one attachment dimension that was found to be less correctly identified was attachment-related anxiety in men (Uziel, 2012). The study found that men are more likely to employ the use of self-regulation to conceal attachment-related anxiety, as it does not conform with social expectations for male behaviors (Uziel, 2012). Therefore, female partners are less likely to identify attachment-related anxiety in their male partners (Uziel, 2012). In a study focusing on attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety, researchers found that there was a positive relationship between the initial level of attachment avoidance between male and females (Johnson et al, 2015). For example, if females report higher avoidance scores in the study, males would typically report high avoidance scores as well (Johnson et al, 2015). Additionally, Johnson et al. (2015) found that the higher levels of attachment anxiety and avoidance the satisfaction in the relationship decreased. In a different study, Dalglish et al. (2015b) assert that attachment theory was based on the idea that individuals seek and maintain attachment bonds in order to form close and significant

relationships. Attachment bonds and attachment systems serve to help organize a partner's emotional and behavioral expressions to help close distance and obtain closeness during times of distress (Dalgleish et al., 2015b). Dalgleish et al. (2015b) concludes that emotional accessibility and responsiveness helps the couple regulate emotional distress and restore security in the relationship. In the absence of emotional accessibility and responsiveness, individuals respond in a defensive manner that exacerbates attachment insecurities (Crawley & Grant, 2005). According to Crawley and Grant (2005), Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy defines the cyclical interactional patterns of attachment insecurities as destructive, and these patterns are the central reason for difficulties experienced by couples.

Assessment of Adult Attachment Styles

According to Shi, Wampler, & Wampler (2014), there are two clear dimensions of assessing adult attachment. The first dimension examines attachment through a developmental lens by utilizing reports of childhood experiences to identify internal working models (Shi et al., 2014). The second dimension of assessing adult attachment utilizes a social-psychological approach, which regards adult romantic relationships as a product of early attachment experiences (Shi et al., 2014). The developmental approach to assessment utilizes an interview procedure, while the social-psychological approach utilizes self-report measures (Shi et al., 2014).

The most commonly used interview procedure for assessing adult attachment is the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), which is modeled after a clinical interview (Lindberg, Fugett, & Thomas, 2012). The purpose of this measure is to assess adult attachment style based on the ability to describe childhood attachment experiences with family of origin (Sochos, 2013). Additionally, the AAI provides a longitudinal assessment of attachment thereby providing information regarding the stability of attachment over time (Booth- LaForce & Roisman, 2014).

The most commonly used self-report measure for assessing adult attachment is the Experiences in Close Relationship Questionnaire (ECR). The ECR was designed to assess attachments across multiple domains including romantic relationships (Fraley, Heffernan, Vicary, & Brumbaugh, 2011). The ECR was also used in the study by Dalgleish et al. (2015b). This version of the ECR was relationship specific and was designed to assess individual differences in the attachment anxiety and avoidance (Dalgleish et al., 2015b). In the form of a questionnaire, the ECR indicates greater attachment-related avoidance and anxiety, and was found to have high stability and convergent validity (Dalgleish et al., 2015b).

Psychotherapeutic Treatment with Couples

Hudson et al.(2014) argued that the impact of romantic partners' attachment styles on one another indicates the importance of investigating the dyadic process. In the study by Johnson et al. (2015), researchers found that in couple's treatment the clients who attended

treatment presented with more secure attachment due to lower attachment anxiety and avoidance. Nevertheless, attachment was found to change throughout the course of therapy. Results showed that attachment anxiety and avoidance do not interact across partners (Johnson et al., 2015). This suggests that within couple's treatment, an individual's attachment anxiety or avoidance does not predict the partner's attachment across the therapy session (Johnson et al., 2015).

In a review of the research on couple's treatment within the field of psychology, Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) was found to have a strong emphasis on attachment. As defined by Hinkle et al. (2015), EFT is an experiential method that focuses on the strengthening of attachment bonds, while also increasing in the moment awareness in order to improve the interactional patterns within the couple. Interventions used in EFT are aimed to heighten the underlying emotions related to attachment needs (Hinkle et al., 2015). It is important to give attention to the emotions the couple brings into the therapy session, specifically anger, sadness, longing, shame and fear (Dalglish et al., 2015). Throughout the treatment stages, EFT utilizes interventions such as empathetic reflections, validation, evocative responses, heightening, empathic conjectures, and enactments (Hinkle et al., 2015). Using these interventions, the couple can become more aware of their interactions and gain awareness of attachment needs. Continuing to use the interventions encourages the couple to interact in different ways, therefore creating and solidifying change (Hinkle et al., 2015).

In a study by Dalgleish, Johnson, Lafontaine, Moser, Tasca, and Wiebe (2015a), the researcher used EFT to track the process of change. This study targets a common interaction cycle of demand and withdrawal as displayed in distressed couples (Dalgleish et al., 2015a). Emotionally focused couple's treatment provides the couple opportunities to explore and disclose their attachment needs and learning how they and others can respond to these needs (Dalgleish et al., 2015a). EFT focuses on taking a more emotionally supportive and attuned approach to change the interaction cycles (Dalgleish et al., 2015a). In a second study by Dalgleish et al. (2015b), EFT was found to demonstrate a 70-73% recovery rate when focused on relationship distress. The couples in this study were found to have an innate need for emotional contact and security. Therefore the emotionally focused treatment in this study was aimed to create a more secure bonding through the exploration and expression of these emotional needs.

Art Therapy Treatment with Couples

An additional treatment modality that can be utilized with couples is art therapy. According to Sarrel et al (1981), art therapy is valuable in uncovering potentially important intrapsychic characteristics of the individual within the couple. The primary purpose of using art therapy techniques is to highlight the underlying interactional processes within the relationship between the individuals (Sarrel et al, 1981). Through the art assessments and dyadic work, art therapy proved to be a vital tool in marital and couple's therapy. As referenced by Barth and

Kinder (1985), art therapy is a successful technique used to stimulate verbal and graphic information and serves as a personalized opportunity to externalize inner feelings and conflicts. Similarly in Hinkle et al. (2015), creative interventions were found to strengthen the connections between self and others to increase authenticity, empathy, expression and growth. Art therapy was found to be beneficial in helping the couples feel comfortable in releasing and recognizing their attitudes, emotions, fantasies and interpersonal aspects of the relationship (Barth & Kinder, 1985). Art therapy was shown to be effective in emotionally focused couple's therapy as well. By incorporating the creative experiential interventions into EFT, the present moment experience is deepened which increases the couple and individual's awareness to their feelings and gives opportunity to process (Hinkle et al., 2015).

Art Therapy Assessments

In a study by Barth and Kinder (1985), the researchers demonstrate how multiple art therapy assessments can be utilized in couple's therapy. The study most frequently used independent free drawing in order to identify areas of significance and create exploration of certain topics in order to better understand the marital relationship. Additionally, the study used the nonverbal Joint Picture exercise as an assessment tool. Similarly to the free drawings, this assessment was key in revealing covert issues in the couple's relationship, such as dominance and dependency (Barth & Kinder, 1985). The most standardized assessment used throughout the

studies was the Draw-A-Person Test (D-A-P). The D-A-P was used as a means of assessing the progress made by the individuals and couple while in the course of therapy (Barth & Kinder, 1985). The D-A-P assessment was also utilized in studies such as Sarrel, Sarrel and Berman (1981). Like Barth and Kinder, this study found that the D-A-P was useful in the assessment of individual attitudes, interpersonal issues between the spouses, and changes throughout treatment (Sarrel et al, 1981).

Kwiatkowska (1967) references an assessment known as the Family Portrait exercise. This technique is used to have the individuals produce a portrait of their family independently. From the comparison and discussion of the portraits, feeling of isolation or conflict can be seen (Kwiatkowska, 1967). Art therapy assessments are not just limited to drawing however. Collages can also be a useful tool in assessment. The use of a more structured materials can help alleviate any concerns surrounding artistic abilities, as well as to allow the client to become comfortable with the art making. It was found to be especially valuable in counseling individuals with motor and verbal impairments (Barth & Kinder, 1985).

In addition to the information provided through art therapy assessments, further information may be attained through the use of the Art-Based Intervention (ABI) Questionnaire (Snir & Regev, 2013). This self-report measure provides insight into an individual's experience of the creative process of art therapy (Snir & Regev, 2013). The questionnaire specifically

provides information on thoughts and feelings that emerge both before and during the art-based intervention as well as perception regarding the art product and use of materials (Snir & Regev, 2013). Therefore, the information garnered through the ABI Questionnaire provides a means of assessing the process of art therapy (Snir & Regev, 2013).

Art Making

Art making was found to also be successful in treatment when expanded beyond drawing. Hinkle, Radomski and Decker (2015) explored different creative experiential interventions such as music and role playing with props. In this study, music was found to be useful in couple's treatment by representing relational processes, memories, and themes while encouraging the couple to connect with their emotions (Hinkle et al, 2015). The process of making the music emphasized the couple's emotional responses and patterns of communication individually and within the relationship (Hinkle et al, 2015). By being a representation of the couple's communication skills, the music allows the couple to focus on the interaction through the music rather than the verbal content (Hinkle et al, 2015).

Role playing was also found to be a beneficial intervention during couples treatment. By initiating role playing, this allows the couple to break their normal cycle of interaction and use their newfound awareness to practice and establish new, healthy interactions (Hinkle et al, 2015). This experiential technique assists the couple in breaking down maladaptive

cycles in order for new cycles to emerge within times of heightened arousal (Hinkle et al, 2015).

By allowing new cycles to form, defensive walls have the potential to be broken down and ultimately increase the couple's connection (Hinkle et al, 2015). Props can also be used in role playing to increase the technique's effectiveness. The use of props is intended to enable visual metaphors and illustrate a new awareness. Props give opportunity for the couple to connect and propels them forward in the treatment process (Hinkle et al, 2015).

Shared and Dyadic Work

As seen in the study by Barth and Kinder (2015), the nonverbal Joint Picture exercise was beneficial in providing insight into the patterns of relating that may not be known by the couple. Through the shared work, the patterns of relating as a couple are highlighted. The couple compares and draws associations between their individually drawn figures in order to jointly develop a complete story and picture (Barth & Kinder, 2015).

Shared, dyadic work is capable of revealing the subtleties of the interplay between a couple, such as balance of power (Harriss & Landgarten, 1973). The dyadic work has a way of equalizing matters so that each subject exercises autonomy over selections and drawings (Harriss & Landgarten, 1973). In the case study presented by Harriss and Landgarten (1973), the joint drawings played a key role in accelerating the therapeutic process. The joint drawing enabled the

couple to express feelings about themselves and each other, as well as use the visual imagery to reference basic needs and fears (Harriss & Landgarten, 1973).

In a study conducted by Snir & Wiseman (2010), postsession evaluations (SEQ and ECRS) were administered to romantic couples following a nonverbal joint drawing task. The postsession evaluations revealed that attachment dimensions impacted differences in the reported experiences for each partner (Snir & Wiseman, 2010). Specifically, perceptions of less smoothness during session was more commonly associated with higher levels of attachment-related anxiety (Snir & Wiseman, 2010). Furthermore, female perceptions of the session were reported as having more depth than that reported by male partners (Snir & Wiseman, 2010).

Limitations of Research Regarding Couples Work

While researching these topics, it became apparent that there was a very limited selection of available literature. The studies found range over an expansive period of time, with a large gap in the timeline. The earliest articles found were from the 1970s to the 1980s. From there, research took a large leap ahead and went directly into the past 5 years with very little research in the 1990s to early 2000s. There was also a disconnect between the language used in the research. The studies based 30-40 years ago defined and referred to attachment in different terms than the studies based in recent years. This made it difficult to decipher and compare the results and terminology between the studies.

Since there was such an absence of research within the last 10 to 20 years, the researchers attempted to compare dated research and theories with the newer studies. Despite being from the 1970s and 1980s, these articles still held their importance in the field of couples' treatment. Many of the assessments and interventions used in these studies are now part of the foundation in couples' and art therapy. This showed how although culture, society, and times have changed, these interventions hold their ground and continue to be prominent in therapeutic practice in the modern age. This lack of research was also seen when searching articles related to joint and dyadic art therapy treatment. While the articles found provided information and insight into the use and benefits of this specific intervention, the lacking research weighed more. With such a limited availability of research, we found it hard to grasp a foundation to base our further research on.

Conclusion

Despite the limitations within the research, the attachment theory provides a complex understanding of the relationships from a longitudinal perspective spanning from infancy to adulthood. The research available indicates a complex interaction between attachment differences within romantic relationships, gender differences, and partner perceptions. Furthermore, the combination of assessment tools and measures as well as an art-based

assessment provides an opportunity to further explore the complexity of attachment within romantic relationships.

Research Approach

In order to better understand relational dynamics and impact of attachment, this study incorporated a mixed methods approach of both quantitative and qualitative research. This mixed methods design incorporates questionnaires and assessments. This approach is based on bringing together a world view or assumptions about research, a specific design, and research methods (Creswell, 2014). The researchers selected a mixed approach in order to fully incorporate all elements of the research study. Mixed method designs have been found to be most useful when quantitative or qualitative approaches alone are inadequate to best understand the research problem (Creswell, 2014). This combination provides an opportunity to utilize the strengths of both approaches in order to provide the best understanding of data gathered (Creswell, 2014). This allows the research to be well rounded.

Following the research of Snir (2006), this study began with an invitation to couples who have been living together, married and unmarried, for six or more months to participate in the study. These invitations were posted around campus. The researchers also used snowball sampling to reach additional couples who might be interested in participation. The interested couples who responded to the study invitation and met the research criteria then scheduled an appointment with the research team. Once participants were obtained, the study was replicated as Snir performed it in 2006. The study itself took approximately an hour per couple. The session

started with the demographic questionnaire and an adult romantic attachment instrument (ECRS), followed by a separate drawing and a joint art task. The session ended with the Self-Evaluation Questionnaire (SEQ) and the Art-Based Intervention (ABI) to assess the participants' perception of the experience. Specifically, following the original design of Snir & Wiseman (2006), after receiving a short explanation of the procedure, each partner was given a paint box containing 24 oil pastels as well as a blank sheet of white paper (size A4) and asked to draw a non-directed, freehand individual drawing. Upon completion of the separate individual drawings, the two participants met and showed each other their drawings. Following this warm-up, they were given the following instructions for the joint drawing task: "Here is one sheet of paper for the both of you. Draw on it whatever you would like, but do not talk to each other" (Snir, 2006). The participants worked on a 18"x24" piece of paper and used the same pastels that were used for the separate individual drawings. This task was limited to 5 minutes. After drawing, each participant sat in a separate place and completed the questionnaires. The participants then took part in a joint interview.

Once the interview was completed, the researchers collected the artwork and questionnaires and analyzed the data. The data gathered was analyzed in order to identify differences between the participants' perception of the session, ways in which individual attachment style may be correlated with this perception, and how the art provides further insight

into attachment styles. The data was gathered through the questionnaires, which were coded and sorted into categories to identify patterns and themes. These themes and patterns were also analyzed as displayed in the imagery and art work. The results from the ECRS were utilized to categorize each participant into four attachment styles: secure (low anxiety-low avoidance), dismissing (low anxiety-high avoidance), preoccupied (high anxiety-low avoidance), and fearful (high anxiety-high avoidance). Couples were then organized into categories based on combinations of attachment (female secure-male secure, female insecure-male insecure, female insecure-male secure, and female secure-male insecure). Additionally, the SEQ results were organized into categories of depth and smoothness, as well as two dimensions of mood: positivity and arousal. All results and data collected were then compared with the results from Snir and Wiseman's (2010) original study.

Methods

Definition of Terms

Attachment behavior. “Any form of behavior that results in a person attaining or maintaining proximity to some other clearly identified individual who is conceived of as better able to cope with the world (Bowlby, 1982, p. 668).”

Anxious attachment. “Individuals characterized by high levels of attachment- related anxiety ... based on their attachment history of insensitive or inconsistent caregiving tend to hyperactivate the attachment system to attain proximity to the attachment figure” (Snir & Wiseman, 2010, p.117). Additionally, according to a study by Bartholomew, Henderson, & Dutton (2001) “when they feel the attachment figure is not being responsive, they experience anxiety and respond with high levels of attachment behaviors (e.g., clinging) in an attempt to have their need for support met” (Snir & Wiseman, 2010, p.118).

Avoidant attachment. According to a study by Kobak and Sceery (1988), “individuals characterized by high attachment-related avoidance (classified as avoidant) based on an attachment history of parental rejection protect themselves against the anxiety aroused by rejection by deactivating the attachment system” (Snir & Wiseman, 2010, p.118). Additionally, a study by Cassidy and Kobak (1988) found that people with avoidant attachment “repress other thoughts and feelings that might activate the system, and dissociate emotional memories from

other memories, thereby keeping the attachment system relatively inactive” (Snir & Wiseman, 2010, p.118).

Couple. “Two people who are married or who have a romantic or sexual relationship” (Merriam-Webster, 2015). In this research, couple refers to two people, either married or unmarried, who have a romantic relationship and have been living together for a minimum of 6 months.

Intimacy versus Individuality. “Closeness and togetherness” of intimacy versus the “autonomy, control and separateness” of individuation and “the extent to which these are negotiated successfully between partners” (Snir & Wiseman, 2010, p.116).

Joint drawing. “[The joint drawing technique] involves two participants drawing together on one shared page” (Snir & Wiseman, 2010, p.116).

Secure Attachment. “Individuals low on both attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance (classified as secure) have learned, through sensitive caregiving, to trust the responsiveness and good intentions of others as well as their own capacity for problem solving” (Snir & Wiseman, 2010, p.117).

Design of Study

This research was designed to explore the process of art making in work with couples and the use of art in assessing relational dynamics in couples. Based on a comparable research

design utilized in a study conducted in Israel (Snir & Wiseman, 2010), couples who consented to participate in this study engaged in a series of questionnaires and drawing tasks. The data collected from both the questionnaires and the drawings were analyzed in response to the following research questions:

1. Does the suggested couples' joint drawing experience illuminate relational / attachment issues? In what way?
2. How do participants' responses to the battery of questionnaires and art task compare to the findings garnered by previous research using joint drawing tasks? Specifically, the original research hypothesized that (a) The association between the SEQ ratings of the members of an intimate couple regarding their shared experience of the joint drawing task will be positive. (b) Females will evaluate the joint drawing experience as more smooth and positive and as marked by greater depth and arousal, compared to the males. (c) Individuals' attachment-related anxiety will be negatively correlated with an evaluation of the session as smooth and positive (i.e., enjoyable interaction with partner) but will be positively correlated with experiencing greater depth in the joint experience. (d) Individuals' attachment-related avoidance will be negatively correlated with evaluating the session as smooth and positive and also negatively correlated with experiencing greater depth in the joint experience. (e) Finally, the depth, smoothness, and

positivity ratings within partners as a function of the different couple combinations of attachment style (i.e., within couple by couple attachment combination interaction) will be explored. These hypotheses will be reexamined in this replication study.

3. What cultural considerations might inform the use of joint couples' drawing for relational assessment in different settings?

Sampling. The researchers posted invitations around the Loyola Marymount University campus for couples to participate in this research study. The researchers also utilized snowball sampling to increase participation in the study through couples referred by participants. Only participants that did not have a personal or professional relationship with the researchers were included. Recruitment for participation in this study was conducted in the Spring of 2017, with a goal of attaining up to 60 couples for participation.

The criteria for inclusion in the study included either married or unmarried couples who had been living together for a minimum of 6 months. The sample size was determined by the number of couples that responded to the invitations and fit the criteria for participation.

Participation in the study was voluntary.

Gathering of Data. Interested participants received information about the procedure of the research over the phone and were asked to confirm a time in which they were able come in to the primary investigator's office with their partner. The researchers reviewed the Participant Bill

of Rights as well as the informed consent form with couples interested in participation. Formal participation in the research only began if the couple was still interested in participation after arriving together and signing the consent forms (see Appendix). Participants completed a demographic questionnaire and an adult romantic attachment instrument (Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (ECRS)). Participants then completed non-directed, freehand individual drawings, followed by a nonverbal joint couple's drawing. After completing the art tasks, the participants were separated and asked to complete an Art-Based Intervention Questionnaire (ABI) and a Self Evaluation Questionnaire (SEQ).

Analysis of Data. All data gathered was analyzed to identify differences between participants' perception of the session, ways in which individual attachment style may be correlated with perception, as well as how the art provides further insight into attachment. The data gathered through the questionnaires was coded and sorted into categories to identify patterns.

The art was organized by categories of common themes displayed in imagery. The results from the ECRS were utilized to categorize each participant into four attachment styles: secure (low anxiety-low avoidance), dismissing (low anxiety-high avoidance), preoccupied (high anxiety-low avoidance), and fearful (high anxiety-high avoidance). Once each participant was categorized by individual attachment style, the couples were organized into categories based on

combinations of couple attachment styles (female secure-male secure, female insecure-male insecure, female insecure-male secure, and female secure-male insecure). The results of the SEQ were organized into categories of depth (e.g. shallow-deep; special-ordinary) and smoothness (e.g. rough-smooth; difficult-easy), as well as two dimensions of mood: positivity (e.g. happy-sad; friendly-unfriendly) and arousal (e.g. energetic-peaceful; moving-still). The results of the ABI questionnaire were divided into four main categories: feelings and thoughts prior to beginning art-making tasks, feelings and thoughts during the art-making tasks, thoughts and reactions toward the artistic product, and attitude towards the art materials. Finally, all results were compared with the results of the original study (Snir & Wiseman, 2010).

Presentation of Data

One couple chose to participate in this research study. Participants met with researchers and were informed that participation in the study was intended to examine the benefits and limitations of using art to explore couples' relationship. Participants were then given consent forms and the research process was explained. After signing the consent forms, participants were separated into different rooms and requested to fill out the Demographic and Experiences in Close Relationship Scale (ECR-S) questionnaires. Participants were provided with 24 oil pastels and a blank sheet of white paper, size A4, and instructed to free draw for 5 minutes. Upon completion of individual drawings, participants were brought back together to begin the joint drawing process. The participants were provided with 24 oil pastels and a 18"x24" blank sheet of white paper, and informed that they would have 5 minutes to complete a nonverbal joint drawing task. Once completed, participants were separated again to respond to the Art Based Intervention (ABI) and Session Evaluation (SEQ) questionnaires. Finally the participants were brought together again in order to discuss both their individual and joint art, as well as their experiences. For the presentation of data, both participants gave the researchers permission to use their artwork and selected the names to be identified by in reported results.

Introduction of Participants

“K” (21 year old, white female, undergraduate senior)



Figure 1a “Serene”

“S”, identified throughout this research as Participant 2 (22 year old, white male, undergraduate senior)



Figure 1b “Sunset at the Beach”

Beginning Questionnaires

Prior to the individual art task, the participants were separated and asked to complete two questionnaires. The first questionnaire was the Demographic questionnaire. The results were then coded by the researchers.

	Participant 1	Participant 2
Demographic 1	21	22
Demographic 2	1	2
Demographic 3	1	1
Demographic 4	6	6
Demographic 5	2	6
Demographic 6	1	1
Demographic 7	1	1
Demographic 7a	1	1
Demographic 7b	Graphic Design/Political Science	Health and Human Science
Demographic 8	2	2
Demographic 9	2	2
Demographic 10	2	2/"neighborhood"
Demographic 11	1	1
Demographic 11a	Bay Area	Seattle
Demographic 11b	16yrs	18yrs
Demographic 12	2	2
Demographic 13	2.5yrs	2yrs
Demographic 13a	7.5mo	7mo
Demographic 14	7	6
Demographic 15	2	2

Table 1a

Following the Demographic questionnaire, the participants completed the Experiences in Close Relationship Scale (ECR-S).

	Participant 1	Participant 2
ECRS 1	2	1
ECRS 2	5	5
ECRS 3	2	2
ECRS 4	1	1
ECRS 5	1	1
ECRS 6	3	2
ECRS 7	1	1
ECRS 8	2	2
ECRS 9	1	2
ECRS 10	6	3
ECRS 11	1	5
ECRS 12	5	2

*Table 1b***Individual Art Task**

“K” (identified throughout this research as Participant 1). K said that her drawing was informed by thoughts about an upcoming trip with S and trips she took with her family as a child. K expressed that she did not think her drawing was very interesting and lacks color. However, K stated that she was happy with her drawing even though she does not think it is a work of art. K initially named her drawing “Lake Tahoe”. After being teased by S for a lack of creativity in the title of her art, K changed the title to “Serene”.

Participant	Title	Description of Art	Response to Art Making
K	"Serene"	"[My drawing] is not that interesting... We are going to San Diego this weekend. I was thinking about trips and going to Tahoe as a kid. So, I was thinking about that. I didn't make a work of art, but I'm totally happy with it."	"I enjoyed it... Calming, because it was so familiar as an art major. It was no pressure. Whatever happens comes out on the page."

(Table 2a)

"S" (identified throughout this research as Participant 2). S stated that he did not initially know what to draw. He described the final art piece as an image of the ocean while the sun is setting. He stated that he focused on each individual element as he created the image, attempted to create waves, and included a variety of colors. When asked about the scenery he created, S stated that it is something that makes him happy. S titled the drawing "Sunset at the Beach". Upon seeing S's art, K gave S a high-five and told him that she liked his art even though she did not expect to like it. K also expressed surprise at how much color S utilized in his drawing but said she was not surprised that S chose to draw a place that is familiar to him.

Participant	Title	Description of Art	Response to Art Making
S	"Sunset at the Beach"	"Its the ocean, as the sun is going down. I tried to do the waves and add different colors... It makes me happy... One of my favorite things is the beach and sunset. So, I combined them both."	"Fun... It was calming. There was no pressure. Doing it to do it. Calming process.... Five minutes went fast. I was trying to be realistic with what I could do in that time... What made me apprehensive when starting was not knowing how to draw. I tried to stay in my bounds."

(Table 2b)

Joint Drawing Task

During the joint drawing process, Participant 1 and Participant 2 sat side by side. Participant 1 motioned for Participant 2 to begin drawing and after no response, Participant 1 initiated the joint drawing by reaching over to draw on the portion of paper directly in front of Participant 2. Participant 1 and Participant 2 took turns observing one another and contributing to the drawing. Participant 1 made attempts to make eye contact with Participant 2 and engage Participant 2's attention multiple times throughout the drawing process. Participant 2 minimally engaged in reciprocating eye contact with Participant 1 and did not break focus from the art when Participant 1 attempted to get his attention.

After completing the joint drawing task, Participant 2 stated that he was not sure how to start the drawing and was taking cues from Participant 1. Participant 1 acknowledged that she did not think Participant 2 would start the drawing. As she did not think Participant 2 would make

the first move, Participant 1 said that she drew the silhouette of a figure in hopes that Participant 2 would recognize it from a photo she had taken of him in the past. Participant 2 informed Participant 1 that he was unsure what she was drawing until she added a hat into the image, at which time, Participant 2 began contributing more to the art piece. Both Participant 2 and Participant 1 stated they liked how they went back and forth in contributing to the drawing rather than doing separate drawings or staying on their separate parts of the page. They also both expressed that they wouldn't have felt good about the drawing if they had done separate drawings on the same paper. Overall, Participant 2 said that the experience felt playful and childlike to which Participant 1 agreed. When asked for a title for the art, Participant 1 told Participant 2 she thought they should name the figure they drew. Participant 2 proposed the title "Lee". Participant 1 laughed and seemed puzzled as to why they should use that title, but Participant 1 ultimately agreed to title the art "Lee".



Figure 1c “Lee”

Analysis

The researchers utilized The Formal Elements Art Therapy Scale Rating Manual (FEATS) as guide to explore the content of both the individual and joint drawings created by participants. The FEATS assesses different elements of art such as line quality, prominence of color, and developmental level, etc. Instead of utilizing the Person Picking an Apple from a Tree directive, which is traditionally utilized with FEATS, the researchers provided non-directive art tasks. Therefore, some of the FEATS scales were no longer relevant to the directives provided

and only the applicable scales were utilized in examination of the art. Each FEATS scale utilized was ranked from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest value and 5 being the highest value. The FEATS scaling method was beneficial in standardizing the finding and applying them to the broader art therapy world.

	Individual Drawing		Joint Drawing		
	Katie	Sam	Katie	Sam	Katie & Sam
Prominence of Color	4	5	3	2	3
Color Fit	5	4	4	3	3
Implied Energy	3	4	3	2	3
Space	4	5	4	2	4
Integration	5	5	4	2	4
Logic	5	5	5	4	4
Realism	3	3	2	2	3
Developmental Level	5	4	4	4	4
Details of Objects & Environment	2	2	3	2	3
Line Quality	5	5	3	3	3
Rotation	5	5	5	5	5
Perseveration	3	4	4	3	4

Table 1c

Final Questionnaires

Upon completion of the joint drawing, the participants responded to the final two questionnaires. These questionnaires were to evaluate the participants' experience in the art

making and research process. The first questionnaire was the Session Evaluation Questionnaire

(SEQ). Following the SEQ, the participants completed the Art Based Intervention (ABI) .

	Participant 1	Participant 2
SEQ 1	7	1
SEQ 2	6	3
SEQ 3	3	7
SEQ 4	5	1
SEQ 5	3	7
SEQ 6	7	1
SEQ 7	3	6
SEQ 8	5	1
SEQ 9	2	7
SEQ 10	7	2
SEQ 11	1	6
SEQ 12	2	7
SEQ 13	7	1
SEQ 14	6	6
SEQ 15	6	2
SEQ 16	2	7
SEQ 17	1	5
SEQ 18	1	7
SEQ 19	3	2
SEQ 20	5	6
SEQ 21	2	5

Table 1d

	Participant 1	Participant 2		Participant 1	Participant 2
ABI 1	1	1	ABI 31	5	5
ABI 2	1	1	ABI 32	3	3
ABI 3	2	2	ABI 33	1	5
ABI 4	1	1	ABI 34	7	6
ABI 5	2	2	ABI 35	7	5
ABI 6	1	1	ABI 36	5	6
ABI 7	6	6	ABI 37	4	5
ABI 8	6	6	ABI 38	6	7
ABI 9	7	6	ABI 39	5	6
ABI 10	5	5	ABI 40	5	5
ABI 11	5	4	ABI 41	6	6
ABI 12	1	2	ABI 42	6	7
ABI 13	6	4	ABI 43	1	6
ABI 14	4	5	ABI 44	3	5
ABI 15	1	2	ABI 45	5	4
ABI 16	1	3	ABI 46	2	2
ABI 17	5	5	ABI 47	6	5
ABI 18	7	3	ABI 48	3	3
ABI 19	3	2	ABI 49	6	4
ABI 20	2	4	ABI 50	7	4
ABI 21	2	3	ABI 51	7	4
ABI 22	5	6	ABI 52	1	2
ABI 23	5	7	ABI 53	1	2
ABI 24	3	5	ABI 54	1	3
ABI 25	5	5	ABI 55	4	4
ABI 26	1	2	ABI 56	2	1
ABI 27	1	2	ABI 57	2	2
ABI 28	7	6	ABI 58	5	3

	Participant 1	Participant 2		Participant 1	Participant 2
ABI 29	6	7	ABI 59	6	4
ABI 30	6	5	ABI 60	6	5

Table 1e

Analysis of Data

This research was meant to explore attachment through the use of an art therapy couples' drawing assessment, in order to further understand how creative art interventions can be beneficial in dyadic couples treatment. This research was a replication of a study completed by Snir & Wiseman (2010), which was conducted with 60 couples in Israel. Snir and Wiseman (2010) studied the usefulness of the nonverbal joint drawing task as tool in assessment and the generability of the results. This research intended to answer three questions. 1) Does the suggested couples' joint drawing experience illuminate relational / attachment issues? In what way? 2) How do participants' responses to the battery of questionnaires and art tasks compare to the findings garnered by previous research using joint drawing tasks? Specifically, the original research hypothesized that (a) The association between the SEQ ratings of the members of an intimate couple regarding their shared experience of the joint drawing task will be positive. (b) Females will evaluate the joint drawing experience as more smooth and positive and as marked by greater depth and arousal, compared to the males. (c) Individuals' attachment-related anxiety will be negatively correlated with an evaluation of the session as smooth and positive (i.e., enjoyable interaction with partner) but will be positively correlated with experiencing greater depth in the joint experience. (d) Individuals' attachment-related avoidance will be negatively correlated with evaluating the session as smooth and positive and also negatively correlated with

experiencing greater depth in the joint experience.(e) Finally, the depth, smoothness, and positivity ratings within partners as a function of the different couple combinations of attachment style (i.e., within couple by couple attachment combination interaction) will be explored. These hypotheses will be reexamined in this replication study. 3) What cultural considerations might inform the use of joint couples' drawing for relational assessment in different settings?

Therefore, this section serves to illuminate the manner in which data was analyzed to provide insight into how art interventions can be utilized for assessment within couples' treatment.

Attachment As Presented Through Art

Data was collected through the joint art making process as well as through a series of questionnaires. Prior to the joint drawing task, the participants completed the demographic questionnaire (*Table 1a*) and the Experiences in Close Relationship Scale also referred to as the ECR-S (*Table 1b*). The participants then completed the separate individual drawings and the joint nonverbal drawings. The session concluded with the participants answering the Session Evaluation Questionnaire or SEQ (*Table 1d*), Art Based Intervention or ABI (*Table 1e*), and finished with a discussion about their art and experiences. The data was then coded and logged by the researchers, as well as categorized into emergent themes.

The data was analyzed through the use of the questionnaires, relational dynamics, participant reported experience, and the FEATS assessment. Themes emerged from the art and

the questionnaires as well as participant discussion. The researchers used these tools in order to identify major themes central to the research exploration questions. Information gathered from the artwork, questionnaires and relationship dynamics were all triangulated leading to the emergence of three themes: 1. Relational dynamic between participants, 2. Relationship and response to the art, and 3. Integration of shared and personal experiences. The data was gathered and analyzed to identify the differences between participants' perception of the session, as well as how individual attachment style may influence this perception. The questionnaires and artwork were coded and sorted into categories in order to identify patterns. The themes were assessed further to explore how they influenced the attachment styles presented through the art.

Relational dynamic between participants. The first overarching theme focuses on the relational dynamic between participants as evidenced by process and product of the joint drawing task. Through observation and participant report, researchers were able to analyze the relational dynamics between the two participants. These dynamics included communication of metaphors, playfulness within the relationship, and overall interaction with each other. Through the process of the shared art piece, the participants were encouraged to interact with one another nonverbally. While the participants could have opted to create two separate drawings on the same piece of paper, they chose to create a collaborative art piece. In order to engage her partner in interaction through the art, Participant 1 reached out to the other side of the paper and pursued

her partner in order to establish closeness. The attempt to establish closeness indicates a secure attachment between the couple. Despite the nonverbal limitation, the method through which participants interacted within the joint drawing task enable them to communicate through related metaphors. For example, Participant 1 began by drawing an image that she believed Participant 2 would recognize and respond to. Rather than begin with an image with no relation to the couple, Participant 1 carefully sought out a way to relate to her partner and close the space between them on the page. The image was that of a facial profile which Participant 1 later stated was connected to an art project she previously created by using Participant 2's profile as a reference. Once Participant 2 responded to Participant 1's prompts, the couple began to playfully respond to one another through the art. Both participants took turns observing the other's markings and carefully responded, therefore creating a more articulated image. Participant 1 then extended the drawing to the other half of the paper, inviting Participant 2 to continue expanding beyond the original metaphor. Participant 2 reciprocated this action, and followed Participant 1 into the space. The playfulness and interaction through the art shows that both participants' actions triggered responses from their partner and created an environment for the couple to maintain balance and security within the relational dynamics. The relational dynamic between participants illuminated the couple's attachment styles and the direct correlation to each participant's methods of maintaining closeness.

Relationship and response to the art. The second overarching theme focuses on the relationship and response each participant had to the art making process, individually and jointly. This theme was assessed through the ABI, statements made by the participants, and participant interaction with the art. The research found that a past relationship or experience with art correlated to how comfortable the participant felt as measured by participant report (*Table 2a*) and how they responded to the art as measured by the SEQ (*Table 1d*) and ABI (*Table 1e*).

As an art major with a vast experience with art, Participant 1 identified feeling at ease and familiar with art. However, Participant 1 was also more critical of the product, while Participant 2 was pleased with his product. As a an art major with more experience working with art than her partner, Participant 1 may have been assuming the role of an artist and taking on a higher level of expectation for herself in the art making process. Participant 1 was first to initiate and motion for her partner to participate. There has been some evidence in this study that the more comfortable the participant felt with the art materials and directive, the more likely they were to take the leadership role in the nonverbal art making process. However, due to the very small sample this may or may not be applicable for other couples. This is also supported by the FEATS scoring which revealed that Participant 1 scored consistently high in color fit, space, integration, logic, developmental level, and rotation in both the individual and joint drawing tasks. Participant 1 appeared to be utilizing her experience as an artist to expound upon the initial

image by incorporating a variety of colors and compositionally expounding within the space to create a more comprehensive image. However, Participant 2 scored lower in the joint drawing task than the individual task. The drop in Participant 2's FEATS scores in the joint drawing appeared to be a response to his partner, in which he took on a more passive stance by avoiding eye contact and taking cues from Participant 1 in regards to the next step.

Integration of shared and personal experiences. The third overarching theme focuses on shared and personal experiences. This theme emerged from data that identifies how the individual and joint experiences influence the art making process. The couple in this study demonstrated the ability to work individually and together in an equivalent manner. This inclusion of shared and individual experiences allowed the couple to explore and incorporate their own culture, as well as the culture of the couple. Research has found that balance between closeness and autonomy is a characteristic of a secure attachment. Therefore the couple's ability to work individually, incorporating their personal experiences and then rejoin to work together by incorporating shared experiences demonstrates a secure attachment. The inclusion of childhood and individual personal experiences demonstrates an ability to maintain autonomy. During the art making and discussion of their experiences, it was clear that past experiences of art making both individually or jointly, influenced the process and content of the art. In the individual art, both participants identified that the content referenced personal experiences. For

example, Participant 2 stated that he created an image of a sunset at the beach, as he often goes to the beach alone and enjoys sunsets (*Table 2b*). Participant 1 described her individual art piece as reminding her of times she spent in Lake Tahoe with her family as a child (*Table 2a*).

Participant 1 also acknowledged that her individual art piece emerged not only from a personal memory but anticipation of an upcoming trip with Participant 2 as well (*Table 2a*). While both participants noted individual experiences influenced the individual art task, discussion about the joint drawing task lacked mention of individual experiences and highlighted the influence of shared experiences in both process and content of the art. For instance, Participant 1 said that past experiences led her to believe that Participant 2 would not initiate the drawing. Therefore, she described how she initiated the task by drawing the silhouette of a person, as she previously created an art piece with a photo of Participant 2's profile. Participant 1 explained that she thought the use of this imagery would encourage Participant 2 to respond by reminding him of art they co-created in the past. Participant 2 verbally acknowledged that he felt more comfortable and was inspired to add to the drawing when he recognized the familiar imagery as an attempt from Participant 1 to engage him in the process. Therefore, predominant focus on individual experiences in the individual art suggests a level of autonomy which directly correlates with secure attachment. Additionally, the participants' ability to shift from an individualistic approach

in the individual drawing to a joint effort implementing shared experiences suggests a level of closeness between both participants.

Comparison of Results

This research study served as a pilot study as well as a cross cultural comparison study. Following closely as possible to the protocol delineated by Snir & Wiseman (2010), findings allow for a further validation or invalidation of their findings. Snir and Wiseman (2010) hypothesized that (a) The association between the SEQ ratings of the members of an intimate couple regarding their shared experience of the joint drawing task will be positive. (b) Females will evaluate the joint drawing experience as more smooth and positive and as marked by greater depth and arousal, compared to the males. (c) Individuals' attachment-related anxiety will be negatively correlated with an evaluation of the session as smooth and positive (i.e., enjoyable interaction with partner) but will be positively correlated with experiencing greater depth in the joint experience. (d) Individuals' attachment-related avoidance will be negatively correlated with evaluating the session as smooth and positive and also negatively correlated with experiencing greater depth in the joint experience. (e) Finally, the depth, smoothness, and positivity ratings within partners as a function of the different couple combinations of attachment style (i.e., within couple by couple attachment combination interaction) will be explored.

The results from the study by Snir & Wiseman (2010) were reexamined and compared to the results of this replication study. (a) In comparing results from this study to the original research, the association between the SEQ ratings and the participant's shared experience of the joint drawing task was consistent between studies. In the results from the original study conducted by Snir & Wiseman (2010), there was limited agreement between participant evaluation of a positive and smooth experience. The results of this study also revealed incongruent experiences between the two participants, as Participant 1 reported a positive experience and Participant 2 reported a negative experience. (b) According to her responses to the SEQ, Participant 1 evaluated the joint drawing task as more smooth and positive as marked by greater depth than her male partner. The responses provided by Participant 1 were congruent with the results of the original study, in which females provided a higher rating to these categories than males. However, Participant 1 rated the experience as less arousing than her partner, which differs from the results of the original study regarding arousal by females. (c) Snir & Wiseman (2010) found that the joint drawing task was perceived as less smooth (i.e. rough) in cases of higher attachment-related anxiety for males and females. Whereas, the joint drawing task was perceived as less smooth for males with higher attachment-related avoidance. In the case of the present study, Participant 1 scored slightly higher in attachment-related anxiety, but reported the joint drawing task as more smooth. Due to the absence of participants with higher

attachment-related avoidance, it was not possible to compare results to the original study. (d & e)

The results of the original study reported that attachment-related avoidance was only correlated negatively with smoothness for males. Although for both males and females, attachment-related avoidance was negatively correlated with positivity. Overall, females had an overall higher rating of depth during the joint drawing task. Unfortunately, it is not possible to compare the results of this study with the results of the original study regarding attachment-related avoidance and evaluation of session depth due to limited sampling of the replication study.

Discussion of Findings

This research explored attachment through the use of an art therapy couples' drawing art assessment, in order to further understanding of how creative art interventions can benefit work with couples. The purpose of this research was to replicate a study done by Snir & Wiseman (2010), which was conducted with 60 couples in Israel, in order to test the usefulness of the tool and generability of the results in a different setting. Specifically, this research was intended to answer three questions. 1) Does the suggested couples' joint drawing experience illuminate relational / attachment issues? In what way? 2) How do participants' responses to the battery of questionnaires and art tasks compare to the findings garnered by previous research using joint drawing tasks? Specifically, the original research hypothesized that (a) The association between the SEQ ratings of the members of an intimate couple regarding their shared experience of the joint drawing task will be positive. (b) Females will evaluate the joint drawing experience as more smooth and positive as well as marked by greater depth and arousal, compared to the males. (c) Individuals' attachment-related anxiety will be negatively correlated with an evaluation of the session as smooth and positive (i.e., enjoyable interaction with partner) but will be positively correlated with experiencing greater depth in the joint experience. (d) Individuals' attachment-related avoidance will be negatively correlated with evaluating the session as smooth and positive and also negatively correlated with experiencing greater depth in

the joint experience. (e) Finally, the depth, smoothness, and positivity ratings within partners as a function of the different couple combinations of attachment style (i.e., within couple by couple attachment combination interaction) will be explored. 3) What cultural considerations might inform the use of joint couples' drawing for relational assessment in different settings?

Data was gathered through individual and joint drawing tasks, as well as responses to a series of questionnaires. The data was coded and was assessed for emergent themes. The themes were examined further to explore how they influenced the attachment styles presented through the art. Indicators of attachment styles emerged through triangulating relational dynamics during the art making process, response to questionnaires, and content of the art.

In this section, the findings are joined with art therapy literature and general literature with the intent of providing further insight into how the previously stated research questions may be addressed. Finally, clinical applications and research limitations are presented.

Attachment Styles in Couples' Joint Drawing Experience

Through an examination of artwork, questionnaires and relationship dynamics, three themes materialized: 1. Relational dynamic between participants 2. Relationship and response to the art and 3. Integration of shared and personal experiences. These emergent themes served to illuminate how relational dynamics and attachment styles may be assessed through art. The

findings of this study are elaborated upon further by connecting them to general and art therapy literature.

Relational dynamic between participants. The relational dynamics between the two participants included their communication of metaphors through the art, playfulness within their relationship and overall interaction with each other. These dynamics informed the assessment of attachment styles as displayed through the art. Due to the nonverbal component of the activity, the participants needed to adapt their communication styles. These adaptations in interactions helped make inferences to the individual and couple attachment styles. These methods of communication and interaction were accomplished by the participants' incorporation of metaphors such as the male profile. The use of these metaphors can be viewed as the participants' attempts to maintain closeness within the relationship in the context of the joint drawing task. According to Crawley and Grant (2005) the individual attachment style serves to provoke behavior from their partner in order to re-establish safety and security within the relationship. Through Participant 1's efforts to engage her partner in the drawing task by using metaphors and playful interaction, we see the two separate individuals making the switch into a cohesive and collaborative unit. This then demonstrates the couple's ability to balance autonomy and closeness within the relationship. This is supported by Feeney (1999), who noted that secure attachment is characterized by said balance. The participants' balance between individuality and

connectedness as a couple can also be seen through the playful interaction of the art making. By taking turns and observing one another, the participants were able to incorporate both aspects of the individual and couple. In a study by Hudson, Fraley, Brumbaugh & Vicary (2014) this references how couples form a dyadic system that is shaped by both partners' attachment styles which co-regulate and coordinate change over time.

Relationship and response to the art. The results of the research found that a past relationship or experience with art could depict how comfortable the participants felt during the art making process. This influenced their responses during the joint and individual drawing tasks. During the individual tasks, Participant 2 appeared to be much more at ease. Differing from his role in the joint drawing, Participant 2 was engaged with the materials and self motivated in creating his individual drawing. Participant 2 reported feeling apprehensive at first due to his lack of experience and confidence with the art making process. However, when the individual process was complete Participant 2 reported the experience as calm and fun. Participant 1 was more critical of her art and made self-deprecating remarks toward her artwork. This may be due to her role or identity as an artist and her relationship with art. Research has found individuals responding in a defensive manner can be telling of attachment styles and insecurities (Crawley & Grant, 2005). Additionally, the participants' response to the shared experience of the nonverbal joint drawing demonstrates the attachment styles within the couple. Hudson et al. (2014) found

that through the process of co-regulation, each partner's attachment style can affect the way the other partner reacts to mutual experiences, and a positive correlation was found between changes within each partner's level of attachment security.

This comfortability also lent itself to the participant's ability to support their partner in the joint drawing task. Participant 1 felt much more at ease initiating the start of the task, while Participant 2 followed her lead throughout the task. Participant 1's repeated effort to entice Participant 2 could be seen as a way of compensating for Participant 2's lack of initiation. This relates to the study done by Barth and Kinder (2015) where researchers found that the nonverbal joint drawing was beneficial in providing insight into the patterns within the relationship.

Additionally, Harriss and Landgarten (1973) found that the shared, dyadic work is capable of revealing the subtleties of the interplay between a couple, such as the balance of power. Based on the literature, this provide insight into the relational dynamics outside of the nonverbal joint drawing task. For example, Participant 1's strength and mastery based on her relationship with art resulted in a more dominant role in the art making process. As an art major with experience in art making, Participant 1 identified feeling at ease and familiar with art. Due to her experience with art, Participant 1 held a role as an artist. She was able to use her own strength within that role to support and guide the art making process for her partner. According to Dalglish et al. (2015b), energetic attempts may be made in order to attain a greater proximity, support, and

love. Therefore, Participant 1 took on a leadership role, based on her experience with art, as a method of supporting her partner in engaging through the art process to develop greater proximity and closeness.

Integration of shared and personal experiences. Both participants exhibited the ability to incorporate individual and shared personal experiences within their art. While creating their individual drawings, the participants incorporated personal experiences that bonded them to the individual experience. The predominant focus on individual experiences during the individual task demonstrates a level of autonomy that suggests a more secure attachment. Once the individual transitioned into working jointly, shared experiences were utilized in order to engage one another and create a new bond within the art. This ability to rejoin as a couple demonstrates the couple's capacity to seek and maintain bonds. Research by Dalglish et al. (2015b) asserted that these attachment bonds and systems serve to help organize the emotional and behavioral expression in order to close distance and obtain closeness. The use of metaphors within their shared experiences were key in the couple's engagement with one another. These metaphors were a centralized theme in the art. Research completed by Barth & Kinder (2015) states that a secure attachment can be seen when a couple compares and draws associations from the individual and couple in order to develop a complete story and picture.

Comparison to Previous Research Using Joint Drawing Tasks

The original study by Snir & Wiseman (2010) found limited agreement between participant evaluation of the session as a positive and smooth experience. Snir & Wiseman (2010) also found that females evaluated the experience as more smooth and positive and as marked by greater depth and arousal, compared to the male participants. Similarly, the current study revealed divergent evaluations between participants, and the female participant was found to evaluate the session as more smooth and positive. According to Feeney (1999), gender differences - specifically social expectations of gender roles - could account for differences found within couples. Normative expectations for females include characteristics of closeness, open expression of emotions, and caring, whereas normative expectations of male behavior include distance, autonomy, and independence (Vatcher & Bogo, 2001). Therefore, the dissimilarity between participant evaluations within both the original and current studies could possibly be a result of differing comfort levels with sharing feelings about the session based on gender expectations. However, the female participant in this study evaluated the experience as less arousing than her partner. As a self-identified artist, her experience and comfort with art making may have been more soothing and peaceful, thus less arousing.

Additionally, Snir & Wiseman (2010) found that attachment-related anxiety in both male and female participants was correlated with less smooth (i.e. rough) evaluations of the joint

drawing task. Based on findings in a study done by Dalgleish et al. (2015b), individuals high on attachment anxiety were seen to rely on hyperactivating strategies in the context of couples' relationships. The hyperactivating strategies manifested as energetic attempts to attain a greater proximity, support, and love without confidence that these things will be received (Dalgleish et al., 2015b). Therefore, participants exhibiting attachment-related anxiety in the study by Snir & Wiseman (2010) may have utilized hyperactivating strategies to attain closeness with their partners and the uncertainty of how their actions would be received may have led to an experience lacking smoothness or stability. Furthermore, higher attachment-related avoidance in males was correlated with less smooth evaluations of the joint drawing task in the original study. Whereas, the present study found that Participant 1, who scored slightly higher in attachment-related anxiety, reported the joint drawing task as more smooth. Unfortunately, it was not possible to compare results regarding attachment-related avoidance to those of the original study due to a lack of participants in the current study. While our study was unable to compare the results to Snir & Wiseman's research, there were correlations between other research regarding attachment. Similar to findings of this study, Feeney (1999) found that female participants tended to lean towards a more anxious attachment style and sought closeness within the relationship more than their male partners. Consistent results were also found in Vatcher & Bogo's (2001) research where distance, autonomy, and independence were common

characteristics of normative male behaviors. Vatcher & Bogo (2001) also found normative expectations for females to include closeness, open expression of emotions and caring. While our sample was limited, our results align with these results.

Clinical Applications

The findings of this research can be utilized to inform couple's treatment in clinical settings. Additionally, the integration of the findings and scholarly literature provides further insight into methods of working within clinical art therapy: 1. Art as an assessment tool for couples' relational dynamic and 2. Art as a way to track progress and facilitate change.

Art as an assessment tool for couples' relational dynamic. The research discussed in the literature review reveals the need for and value of assessment processes. As Hudson et al. (2014) reported, the dyadic process is critical in the assessment and investigation into how romantic partners' attachment styles impact one another. Through the use of the nonverbal joint drawing, these attachment styles can emerge and illuminate the relational dynamics within the couple. Additionally, Barth and Kinder (2015) found the nonverbal joint drawing task to be beneficial in providing insight to the patterns of relating that may not be known by the couple. Use of this dyadic work would be beneficial not only to the therapist in assessment, but also for couples by bringing unknown patterns or behaviors to light.

Art as a way to track progress and facilitate change. Art therapy can be a beneficial way of facilitating and progressing change throughout treatment. Within couple's treatment, the primary purpose of using art therapy techniques, such as the nonverbal drawing task, is to highlight the interactional processes that are underlying within the relationship between the two individuals (Sarrel et al, 1981). Heightening underlying emotions related to attachment can increase the moment of awareness in order to improve interactional patterns within a couple and strengthen attachment bonds (Hinkle et al., 2015). Art therapy was found to be beneficial in this by helping the couples feel more comfortable in releasing and recognizing their attitudes, emotions, fantasies and interpersonal aspects of the relationship (Barth & Kinder, 1985). The art techniques can be a way of observing and noting how the relational dynamics change over the course of treatment. As an individual's attachment anxiety or avoidance does not predict the partner's attachment across the therapy session (Johnson et al., 2015), continued assessment throughout treatment may provide an opportunity to identify and track the progress of change. By continuing these interventions throughout the treatment the couple is encouraged to interact in different ways, therefore creating and solidifying change (Hinkle et al., 2015).

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

As displayed with any research, this study has many limitations that can be addressed in future research. The limitations emerged from the small sample size, limited diversity, recruitment process, and problematic characteristics of the questionnaires.

The largest limitation of this study was the lack of participants and small sample size. With only one couple to receive results from, our findings were very limited. Due to the lack of participants in the sample our findings were constricted to one joint drawing, two individual drawings, and two sets of questionnaires (four questionnaires total). Therefore, it was not possible to utilize statistical analysis. The small sample size, which inherently lacks in diversity, also made it impossible to generalize results to different settings.

The limitation of a small sample size is directly correlated to the limitations of recruitment. Following the original study, participants were found through flyers placed around a university campus. The placement of flyers on a single university campus limited researchers' outreach to a specific age group and education level. In our study, flyers were placed throughout campus but did not seem to draw the attention from participants as they did in the original study. This may be due to lack of visibility and potentially poor placement of the flyers. Due to the culture of social media amongst college-age individuals, use of advertisement on social media sites may have been more effective in obtaining participants. Moving forward, use of social media advertisement may reach a broader range of participants and potentially attract a larger

sample size. Additionally, the original study was able to offer compensation to participants for their role in the study. Due to limited funding, our study was not able to provide the same compensation. Obtaining a grant for future research may motivate more participants, thus potentially leading to an increased sample size.

Conclusion

This research examined the usefulness of art therapy techniques in the assessment of attachment in couples treatment. It is a replication of a study completed by Snir & Wiseman (2010), which was conducted with 60 couples in Israel, to test the usefulness of the nonverbal joint drawing task as tool in assessment and the generability of the results. The case illustration of this study consisted of one couple who were invited to complete four questionnaires each and participate in individual as well as joint art making tasks. The participants also engaged in conversation and discussion about their art and their experience throughout the art making process.

This research intended to answer three questions: 1) Does the suggested couples' joint drawing experience illuminate relational / attachment issues? In what way? 2) How do participants' responses to the battery of questionnaires and art tasks compare to the findings garnered by previous research using joint drawing tasks? Specifically, the original research hypothesized that (a) The association between the SEQ ratings of the members of an intimate couple regarding their shared experience of the joint drawing task will be positive. (b) Females will evaluate the joint drawing experience as more smooth and positive as well as marked by

greater depth and arousal, compared to the males. (c) Individuals' attachment-related anxiety will be negatively correlated with an evaluation of the session as smooth and positive (i.e., enjoyable interaction with partner) but will be positively correlated with experiencing greater depth in the joint experience. (d) Individuals' attachment-related avoidance will be negatively correlated with evaluating the session as smooth and positive and also negatively correlated with experiencing greater depth in the joint experience. (e) Finally, the depth, smoothness, and positivity ratings within partners as a function of the different couple combinations of attachment style (i.e., within couple by couple attachment combination interaction) will be explored. 3) What cultural considerations might inform the use of joint couples' drawing for relational assessment in different settings?

Analysis of the data revealed three emergent themes: (1) Relational dynamic between participants (2) Relationship and response to the art, and (3) Integration of shared and personal experiences. Through the exploration of the emergent themes, the researchers found that art techniques, specifically the nonverbal joint drawing task, are a beneficial and useful tool to assess couples' attachment. While the original and present studies, faced some limitations of generability based upon lack of sample size and diversity, further research could significantly enhance the use of this art technique for couples' treatment.

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Appendix A

On Tuesday, November 29, 2016 11:50 AM, "Paterson, Julie"
<Julianne.Paterson@lmu.edu> wrote:

Dear Professor Metzl,

Thank you for submitting your IRB application for your protocol titled *Art Making with Couples – Looking at Couples' Dynamic Creatively*. All documents have been received and reviewed, and I am pleased to inform you that your study has been approved.

The effective date of your approval is **November 29, 2016 – November 28, 2017**. If you wish to continue your project beyond the effective period, you must submit a renewal application to the IRB **prior to November 1, 2017**. In addition, if there are any changes to your protocol, you are required to submit an addendum application.

For any further communication regarding your approved study, please reference your **IRB protocol number: LMU IRB 2016 FA 46**.

Best wishes for a successful research project.

Sincerely,

Julie Paterson

Julie Paterson I Sr. IRB Coordinator I Loyola Marymount University I 1 LMU
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Appendix B

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

IRB Application Questionnaire

Assessing Couples' Relationships through Art Making: A replication study

(Einat Metzl - PI, Spencer Harden, Courtney Combe, and Angela Miller - Graduate student researchers)

1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Recent studies have begun to look at way that art making illuminates and support our understanding of intimacy and sexuality (Kahn, 2016; Metzl, 2013) and connecting art making and attachment style (e.g. Snir & Regev, 2013). Although not much research is currently available about working with couples through art making or assessing relational dynamics through art, a recent art therapy assessment utilized joint couple's drawings to

explore couples' relational dynamic through art making (Snir & Wiseman, 2010). The purpose of this research is to replicate the above study, which was conducted with 60 couples in Israel, and test the usefulness of the tool and generability of the results in a different setting. Specifically, following the design of the original study (Snir & Wisemann, 2010) the researchers will invite couples who have been living together, married and unmarried, for 6 months or more to participate in this study. Invitations will be posted around campus (see appendix I) and the researchers will also use snowball sampling to reach additional couples who might be interested and meet the criteria. The study itself will take approximately an hour per couple to complete, starting with a demographic questionnaire and an adult romantic attachment instrument (Close Relationships Scale (ECRS), see appendix II), followed by a separate drawing and joint art tasks, and end with the Self Evaluation Questionnaire (SEQ) and Art-Based Intervention Questionnaire (ABI) (see appendix II), an instrument assessing participants' perception of the experience.

We aim to discover the answer to three questions:

1. Does the suggested couples' joint drawing experience illuminate relational / attachment issues? In what way?
2. How do participants' responses to the battery of questionnaires and art task compare to the findings garnered by previous research using joint drawing tasks? Specifically, the original research hypothesized that (a) The association between the SEQ ratings of the members of an intimate couple regarding their shared experience of the joint drawing task will be positive. (b) Females will evaluate the joint drawing experience as more smooth and positive and as marked by greater depth and arousal, compared to the males. (c) Individuals' attachment-related anxiety will be negatively correlated with an evaluation of the session as smooth and positive (i.e., enjoyable interaction with partner) but will be positively correlated with experiencing greater depth in the joint experience. (d) Individuals' attachment-related avoidance will be negatively correlated with evaluating the session as smooth and positive and also negatively correlated with experiencing greater depth in the joint experience. (e) Finally, the depth, smoothness, and positivity ratings within partners as a function of the different couple combinations of attachment style (i.e., within couple by couple attachment combination interaction) will be explored. These hypotheses will be reexamined in this replication study.

3. What cultural considerations might inform the use of joint couples' drawing for relational assessment in different settings?.

2. SUBJECT RECRUITMENT

The researchers will invite potential participants by posting invitations around the Loyola Marymount University campus (community boards). The researchers will also utilize snowball sampling by informing students that we are seeking referrals for participation in the study. Only participants that do not have a personal or professional relationship with the researchers will be included. Furthermore, the criteria for inclusion in the study includes either married or unmarried couples who have been living together for a minimum of 6 months, and are over the age of 18.

3. PROCEDURES

Interested couples who respond to the study invitation and meet the research criteria above will schedule a research appointment with the research team. Prior to participating in the study, researchers will review the informed consent form (see appendix III), Participant Bill of Rights (appendix VI). After signing consents, willing participants will participate in an hour-long art task and will fill out several questionnaires.

Specifically, following Snir (2006)'s original design which is replicated here, after receiving a short explanation of the procedure, first as a warm-up, each partner was given a paint box containing 24 oil pastels and a blank sheet of white paper, size A4, and was asked to draw a non-directed, freehand individual drawing. After working separately on these individual drawings, the two met and showed each other the drawings. Following this warm-up, they were given the following instructions for the joint drawing task: "Here is one sheet of paper for both of you. Draw on it whatever you like, but do not talk to each other ." The participants worked on a 100 _ 70 cm blank sheet of white paper that was attached to the wall; they used the pastels they had been given earlier. This task was limited to 5 min. After drawing, each participant sat in a separate place and completed the questionnaires. They then took part in a joint interview (Snir, 2006).

All data will be stored digitally on the researchers' computers (in a secure folder). No identifying information is stored in the questionnaire (participants are never asked to identify by name and can sign informed consent by initials.)

4. RISKS / BENEFITS

This study will investigate the relational attachments illuminated by the use of art in couples. The general literature exploring the junction of art therapy work with couples is limited. This research will expand the current scope of literature in order to help art therapists, and the community at large, further understand the sexual identity and issues of their clients. Supplementary benefits include the cathartic and illuminating nature of art making and its ability to empower those people to express unnamed experiences.

The risks involved in this study are minimal. Participation is completely voluntary, anonymous and does not require a long time engagement. The art tasks are ambiguous / neutral and not likely to illicit strong emotional response. The questions included in the study instrument are more sensitive (linked to participants' attachment and relationship with their partner), but are also entirely voluntary and will not be shared with anyone outside the research team. Participants can withdraw from the study at any time and may skip all questions (besides the Informed Consent initials). Should the art experience or instrument questions trigger emotional or psychological reactions, a list of community resources related to couples' therapy will be provided at the end of the survey (See appendix V).

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

The questionnaires (See appendix II) are private (not shared with partner) and coded as to avoid identifying information for being stored, other than the coupling of one's art piece with their response to the questionnaires, and those being coupled with the partner's responses for the purpose of analyses. Participants will choose to sign the consent form (See appendix B) using their initials or a pseudonym. All collected data will be kept in physical form in the primary researcher, Dr. Einat Metzl's office, and coded on researchers' computers for the analyses, then the primary researcher will only keep the coded and anonymous data from the survey on her computer for 2 years.

After a period of 2 years, the data and images that have not been used for analysis or publications will be discarded.

6. INFORMED CONSENT

See Appendix III.

7. STUDENT RESEARCH

This is a faculty sponsored research of Dr. Einat S. Metzl, Ph.D., LMFT, ATR-BC, in which three graduate students of the department of marital and family therapy are currently involved as part of their final project or graduate assistantship.

8. QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

The researcher (primary investigator) has her doctorate degree from Florida State University and her MA from Loyola Marymount University. She is a licensed marital and family therapist, has completed multiple research courses, and regularly teaches and mentors graduate students' final research papers. The students involved in this research project have completed the graduate course MFTH-691 Research Methodology, and are being supervised by a research mentor, Einat S. Metzl, Ph.D., LMFT, ATR-BC as part of follow up research methodology course MFTH-696. The research mentor and students have all completed the certification course, National Institutes of Health (NIH) Web-based training course, "Protecting Human Research Participants" (See appendix VI).

9. QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS

See Appendix II.

10. SUBJECT SAFETY

We recognize that subject safety is particularly important due to the nature of the survey, and we recognize sensitivity around this topic. Therefore, all data collected via questionnaires will be kept confidential. Data will be stored digitally in secure and coded folders in the researcher's office and computers. No identifiable information beyond the shared art task (which both partners of the couple preview so they would both be able to identify it) will be published, and all analysis of attachment styles or relational dynamic will be narrated in an unidentifiable fashion.

11. COUNSELING

There is no foreseeable need for counseling. While couples' relationships can be a sensitive topic, the questionnaire or art tasks do not ask particularly triggering questions. Participation is voluntary and all participants will have the ability to withdraw their collected data as long as they notify the researchers before the research is published. However, we recognize that this research might bring up more questions and thoughts

about sexuality and so we will include a page of sexuality related resources in the Los Angeles area (See appendix V).

12. SAFEGUARDING IDENTITY

All participation is voluntary and is conducted in the privacy of the primary researcher's office (UH 2516) in the afternoon hours when no students (other than the research team) are present. Participants will choose to sign the consent form (See appendix B) using their initials or a pseudonym. The questionnaires (See appendix II) are anonymous and will not be shared with anyone outside the research team. The collected data (artwork and questionnaires) will be coded and stored in secure folders in physical and digital forms.

13. ADVERTISEMENTS

The research invitation (See appendix I) which will be posted in several locations around university hall and emailed through snowball sampling to interested participants, names the intention of the study, criteria for participation, duration, location, and contact information for making an appointment for participation.

REFERENCES

- Kahn, J. A. (2016). Visual Sexuality: Exploring an Integration of Art and Sex Therapies. *Journal of Clinical Art Therapy*, 3(1), 14-20.
- Metzl, E. (2013) Artistic, Therapeutic, and Sexually Informed: A Five-Week Human Sexuality Course for Art Therapy Students *American Journal of Sexuality Education*, Vol. 8
- Snir, Sh. (2006). Connectedness and individuality expressions in couples' joint-drawings. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Haifa, Israel.
- Snir, Sh. & Regev, D. (2013).
- Snir, Sh. & Wiseman, H. (2010). Attachment in Romantic Couples and Perceptions of A Joint Drawing Session. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 18(2) 116-126. DOI: 10.1177/1066480710364318

Appendix C

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY Experimental Subjects Bill of Rights

Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code §24172, I understand that I have the following rights as a participant in a research study:

1. I will be informed of the nature and purpose of the experiment.
2. I will be given an explanation of the procedures to be followed in the medical experiment, and any drug or device to be utilized.

3. I will be given a description of any attendant discomforts and risks to be reasonably expected from the study.
4. I will be given an explanation of any benefits to be expected from the study, if applicable.
5. I will be given a disclosure of any appropriate alternative procedures, drugs or devices that might be advantageous and their relative risks and benefits.
6. I will be informed of the avenues of medical treatment, if any, available after the study is completed if complications should arise.
7. I will be given an opportunity to ask any questions concerning the study or the procedures involved.
8. I will be instructed that consent to participate in the research study may be withdrawn at any time and that I may discontinue participation in the study without prejudice to me.
9. I will be given a copy of the signed and dated written consent form.
10. I will be given the opportunity to decide to consent or not to consent to the study without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, coercion, or undue influence on my decision.

Appendix D

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

Art Making with Couples: Informed Consent Form

Date of Preparation October 19, 2016

1. I hereby authorize the researchers to include me in the following research study:
Art Making with Couples: Looking at couple's dynamic creatively.
2. I have been asked to participate on a research project, which is designed to look at the benefits and limitations of using art to explore couples' relationship dynamic

through art. This procedure will last no longer than 1 hour of your time and requires the presence of myself and my partner.

3. It has been explained to me that the reason for my inclusion in this project is that my partner and I have been living together for 6 months or more, and I expressed that we are interested in participating in an art making task and several questionnaires.
4. I understand that if I am a participant, I will participate in a one-time meeting in which my partner and I will make art separately and together, answer several questionnaires and have an opportunity to verbally discuss with a therapist our experiences of the joint art making tasks. Data, both artwork and questionnaires, collected for this study will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law and digitally stored in a computer only the researchers has access to. Data that is not used for publication purposes will be discarded two years after the study is completed. Findings from this research study will be published as part of the research assistants' final research paper and may be subsequently disseminated in scholarly journals and presentations. In case of publication my name will not be used, and identifying information about my self and my partner will be protected.
5. If any of these procedures are unclear to me, I can receive clarification for the research intent and methodology from Einat Metzl (PI) during the data collection process as well as before or after the data collection at einat.metzl@lmu.edu
6. The images of the art making collected may be used to illustrate the use of art making to explore relational dynamic, attachment indicators, or response to art making in couples' work .
7. I understand that the study described above may involve the risk or discomfort of recalling different experiences related to my relationship or my perceptions of my partner.
8. I also understand that the possible benefits of the study are empowering creative expression to support couples' connection, communication, and assessment of couples' needs and strengths for the purpose of therapeutic interventions.
9. I understand that Dr. Einat Metzl, who explained to me the purpose and procedures of this study, can be reached at (310) 338-4561 or einat.metzl@lmu.edu, and will answer any questions I may have concerning details of the procedures performed as part of this study.

10. I understand that if I have any further questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may contact David Moffet, Ph.D. Chair, Institutional Review Board, 1 LMU Drive, Suite 3000, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles CA 90045-2659 at david.moffet@lmu.edu.
11. If the study design or the use of the information is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained.
12. I understand that I have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from this research at any time without prejudice to (e.g., my future medical care at LMU).
13. I understand that circumstances may arise which might cause the investigator to terminate my participation before the completion of the study.
14. I understand that no information that identifies me (aside from my artwork, which my partner will be able to recognize from our shared session) will be released without my separate consent except as specifically required by law.
15. I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any question that I may not wish to answer and that I can withdraw my participation at any time prior to publication of the findings.

Participant's initials _____ Date_____

Appendix E
Subject Recruitment Flyer



Relationship Styles and Art Making Study

Have you and your partner been living together for 6 or more months? **THEN WE NEED YOU!**

Please join us for a study regarding art making and relationship styles.

If interested, email elainat.metzl@lmu.edu

Study will be held on Loyola Marymount campus in University Hall by graduate students in the Family and Marital Therapy program.

Come be an integral part of a fun and interesting research experience!

Appendix F**Invitation to participate in the research**

This study is completely voluntary and private. Participants can withdraw from the study or skip any tasks / questions of their choosing. The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Loyola Marymount University.

So, if you are willing to take an hour of your time to make art with your partner to help us learn about how art making illuminates relationships, or if you would like more information about this research study, please contact us at einat.metzl@lmu.edu.

Thank you so much for considering to participate in this research.

Best,

The Research Team: Einat Metzl (PI), Spencer Harden, Courtney Combe, and Angela Miller.

Appendix G

Survey instruments

Art Task:

Free drawing on an 8.5x11 (each partner separately)

Joint art tasks

Instruments:

Demographic Questionnaire

1. Age? _____
2. Gender? _____
3. Cultural ethnicity / race / affiliation? _____
4. Do you have a religious or spiritual practice? If so, how would you define it? _____
5. Social Economic Class: _____
6. What is the highest level of education have you completed? _____
7. Are you currently a student? _____ If yes, grad or undergrad? _____
Major? _____
8. Describe your employment status _____
9. Have you ever been in the military? _____ Is yes, what
branch? _____ How long? _____ Have you seen
combat? _____
10. Where do you currently reside (neighborhood /
city)? _____
11. Have you lived anywhere else? When? For how
long? _____
12. Have your parents or grandparents immigrated from another country? If so,
which? When? _____
13. How long have you known your current partner? _____ How long have you lived
together? _____
14. What is your relationship / marital status? _____
15. Any specific interest or hesitation related to this research?

Experience In Close Relationships Scale (ECRS)

Experiences in Close Relationship Scale-Short Form (ECR-S)

Instruction: The following statements concern how you feel in romantic relationships. We are interested in how you generally experience relationships, not just in what is happening in a current relationship. Respond to each statement by indicating how much you agree or disagree with it. Mark your answer using the following rating scale:

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

- 1. It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need.**
2. I need a lot of reassurance that I am loved by my partner.
3. I want to get close to my partner, but I keep pulling back.
4. I find that my partner(s) don't want to get as close as I would like.
- 5. I turn to my partner for many things, including comfort and reassurance.**
6. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.
7. I try to avoid getting too close to my partner.
- 8. I do not often worry about being abandoned.**
- 9. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner.**
10. I get frustrated if romantic partners are not available when I need them.
11. I am nervous when partners get too close to me.
12. I worry that romantic partners won't care about me as much as I care about them.

Scoring Information:

Anxiety = 2, 4, 6, 8 (reverse), 10, 12

Avoidance = 1 (reverse), 3, 5 (reverse), 7, 9 (reverse), 11

Wei, M., Russell, D. W., Mallinckrodt, B., & Vogel, D. L. (2007). The experiences in Close Relationship Scale (ECR)-Short Form: Reliability, validity, and factor structure. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 88, 187-204.

Art-Based Intervention (ABI) Questionnaire

Code: _____

(For Researcher's Use Only. Initials DOB Gender Ethnicity Researcher Initials)

Please fill out the following:

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Date of Birth (DD/MM/YY): _____ Age: _____

Gender: Mark with an X:

☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Other

Marital Status: Mark with an X

☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Partnership ☐ Separated ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed

Ethnicity: Mark with an X (please chose one that best fits for you)

☐ Hispanic ☐ Caucasian ☐ African American ☐ Asian ☐ Native American ☐ Middle Eastern
☐ Other

Education: Mark the highest level of education with an X (completed or in process)

☐ Elementary ☐ Middle School ☐ High School
☐ 2 Year College ☐ 4 Year College or University ☐ Graduate School (Masters or Doctoral)

Employment: Mark your current status with an X (self employment included)

☐ Full Time ☐ Part Time ☐ Unemployed ☐ Never been employed

Is English your first language. Mark one response

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you were born somewhere other than the United States how many years you have lived in the United States:

If so where were you born?

ABI

General:

Below are some statements that people use to describe their art-making experience. For each part please rate your experiences according to the instructions.

Part I: Try to recall your feelings and thoughts in the moments *before* beginning your work. Circle the number that best describes your experience.

1=not true	4=In the middle between True and Not True						7=very much true
1. I was upset at the prospect of getting dirty during the task.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I was reluctant to participate in the task.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I was apprehensive about participating because I thought that the art task would reveal my inner world.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Thinking about touching the art materials raised a feeling of resistance in me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I resisted the idea that I would need to create something with the materials.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I did not feel like starting to work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I was curious about the creative task.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I was glad to have an opportunity to engage in a creative task.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I was excited to begin the creative task.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I had ideas about what I would want to make.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I felt confident that whatever I chose to do would go well.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I did not feel confident that I would be able to create today.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I believed in my ability to work with the different qualities of the materials.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I thought I would be able to create something nice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I did not think that I could successfully create the art task.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I did not believe that I would be able to create what I wanted to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part II: Now try to remember your feelings and thoughts while you were doing the creative task. Circle the number that best fits your experience during the art-making.

1=not true	4=true and not true in the same amount						7=very much true
17. I felt that I could keep on going for hours.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I knew exactly how to handle the art materials.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I felt that I wasn't being creative.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. I had a difficult time executing my ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I felt that I wasn't good at this kind of activity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I was able to let go and flow with my creativity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Working on my art project released any tension I might have had.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I learned about myself in the process.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. I felt that I was able to easily make a nice and aesthetic product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. I encountered many technical difficulties in performing the art task.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. I had a hard time sitting still and wanted to get up and move around.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. I enjoyed the art task process.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. I found it pleasant to create.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. Working on my art project provided me with I-felt a sense of inner peace and warmth.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

31. While I was creating, I came up with all kinds of ideas for my art project.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. I felt that my creative ability was limited	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. It took me some time to understand how to work with the art materials.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. I felt that it was OK for me to make mistakes during the process.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. I felt playful with the materials.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. As I worked on my art task I discovered new ideas. This is like 31.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. At times I felt that the art materials give me direction and led the creative process.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. Working with the art materials took me back to my childhood, to a time when I loved playing with them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. It was fun working with the materials because I could change what I was doing at any time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. Working and creating gave me a sense of confidence.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. I find that this type of work activity makes me concentrate.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. I felt that the work was a therapeutic activity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part III: The following statements deal with your thoughts and reactions towards the artistic product you have made. Circle the number that best indicates your experience after the art task was completed.

1=not true	4=true and not true in the same amount	7=very much true					
43. I wanted to keep what I had made.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. I was excited about what I had created.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. I was surprised by what I had made.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. I wasn't satisfied with what I had made.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. I completed the task with a sense of satisfaction.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. I was not interested in the final art product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part IV: Finally, in light of your experience with the art material, please describe your attitude towards this material.

1=not true	4=true and not true in the same amount	7=very much true					
49. The art materials were pleasant to work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. The art materials seemed inviting and friendly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51. The art materials had a soothing and relaxing effect.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. The art materials were not inviting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53. The art materials made me feel restless.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. The art materials were not easy to work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. The art materials were powerful.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. The art materials transmitted a sense of emotional coldness.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57. The art materials seemed superficial.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58. The art materials transmitted a sense of emotional warmth.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59. The art materials were personally meaningful.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60. The art materials allowed for a meaningful process.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Self-Evaluation Questionnaire (SEQ)

Code: _____
(For Researcher's Use Only)

Session Evaluation Questionnaire – (SEQ) Form 5

Please circle the appropriate number to show how you feel about this session.

This session was:

Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
Difficult	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Easy
Valuable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Worthless
Shallow	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Deep
Relaxed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Tense
Unpleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Pleasant
Full	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Empty
Weak	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Powerful
Special	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ordinary
Rough	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Smooth
Comfortable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uncomfortable

Right now I feel:

Happy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sad
Angry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Pleased
Moving	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Still
Uncertain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Definite
Calm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Excited
Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Afraid
Friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unfriendly
Slow	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Fast
Energetic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Peaceful
Quiet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Aroused

Appendix H

Resources and Referrals

Community Resources for Couple's Therapy

Airport Marina Counseling Center

7891 La Tijera Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045

(310) 670-1410

Open Paths Counseling Center

5731 W. Slauson Ave., Suite 175, Culver City, CA 90230

(310) 258-9677

Southern California Counseling Center

5615 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90019

(323) 937-1344

The Maple Counseling Center

9107 Wilshire Boulevard, Lower Level, Beverly Hills, California 90210

(310) 271-9999

Miracle Mile Community Practice

7461 Beverly Boulevard, Suite 405, Los Angeles, CA 90036

(323) 939-6355

Advantage Psychological Services

11500 West Olympic Blvd Ste 578, Los Angeles, CA 90064

(888) 800-5761

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1(800) 799-7233

Appendix I
NIH Certificates



