

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

**Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600**

UMI[®]

**PARTNERS' ATTRIBUTIONS FOR MEMORY PERFORMANCE
IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

by

JENNIFER D. PRINGLE

B.A. (Honours), Dalhousie University, 1997

**Thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Science (Clinical Psychology)**

**Acadia University
Fall Convocation, 1999**

© by JENNIFER D. PRINGLE, 1999



**National Library
of Canada**

**Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services**

**395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

**Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada**

**Acquisitions et
services bibliographiques**

**395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-45376-6

Table of Contents

List of Tables	vi
Abstract	vii
Acknowledgements.....	viii
Introduction.....	1
Memory Research	3
Attribution Research	7
Hypotheses.....	14
Method	16
Participants.....	16
Materials	17
Procedure	20
Results.....	24
Memory Performance	25
Attributions and Reactions.....	28
Analysis Strategy	28
Females' Overall Reactions	30
Females' Judgement Ratings	30
Females' Stability Attributions.....	32
Females' Locus Attributions.....	32
Females' Effect Ratings	36
Males' Overall Reactions	39

Males' Judgement Ratings	39
Males' Stability Attributions	40
Males' Locus Attributions	40
Males' Effect Ratings	40
Summary of Results	41
Discussion	45
References	60
Appendix A: First Date Memory Prompts	64
Appendix B: Memory Response Questions	65
Appendix C: Attributional Style Measure	68
Appendix D: Relationship Trust Scale	71
Appendix E: Relationship Assessment Scale	74
Appendix F: Participant Consent Form	75
Appendix G: Demographic & Relationship History Questionnaire	76
Appendix H: Participant Debriefing Form	79
Appendix I: Script for Greeting Participants	80
Appendix J - Example of Coded Responses to One Memory Prompt	84
Appendix K - Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating as Predictors of Reactions to Partner Memory Performance	85
Appendix L - Own Memory Counts, Attributional Style, and Trust as Predictors of Reactions to Partner Memory Counts	88

List of Tables

1. Overall Attributions as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, and Memory Ratings.....	31
2. Judgement Ratings as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, and Memory Ratings.....	33
3. Stability Attributions as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, and Memory Ratings.....	34
4. Locus Attributions as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, and Memory Ratings.....	35
5. Effect Ratings as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, and Memory Ratings.....	37
6. Females' Judgement Ratings as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, Memory Counts, and Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Counts	38
7. Testing for Gender Differences in Correlations Between Partner Memory Ratings and Reaction Measures.....	44

Abstract

This thesis examined individuals' reactions to their partners' memory of an event in their shared past. Partners in 39 dating and married relationships exchanged prompted written descriptions of their first date together and privately recorded their reactions to their partners' recall. Another 15 couples did not exchange their reports, as a control for effects of sharing the report on the number of memories reported. Results indicated that males and females in both groups described the date in comparable detail, although females were credited with better perceived recall of relationship events. Participants were pleased with their partners' performance overall and indicated it had a positive effect on relationship quality. Better partner recall was associated with more positive attributions, especially for females. Results of this exploratory study contradict previous findings and encourage further study of reactions to relational memory.

Acknowledgements

This challenging production would not have been possible without the efforts of a large cast of supporting characters. No project can succeed without an insightful supervisor, who I certainly had in Diane Holmberg. As I have said many times before, she was encouraging, helpful, and enthusiastic every step of the way. I will always fondly remember her guidance and hold her in the highest admiration. I also greatly appreciated the input of members of my thesis committee, Doug Symons and Sonya Symons, who offered their wise suggestions to help make my research the best it could be. Diligently working behind the scenes, Heather Turner, Donna Murphy, and Elaine Schofield were of vital assistance, as always. I hope they always knew how appreciated they were.

Cheers to my ensemble of classmates and friends here at Acadia and around the country. I'm lucky to have lived, learned, and laughed with such "Wonders." Big hugs to my leading man, Paul for his steady encouragement from across the miles, although I know he's now suspicious anytime I "casually" ask him to reminisce with me!

Last, but never least, thanks to my wonderful parents and brother. Their unwavering faith and interest has always reminded me what I'm here for and motivated me to succeed. I'll never doubt that they'll be cheering me on as I continue to pursue my goals.

Now as the curtain closes, exit stage left and celebrate we will...

Partners' Attributions for Memory Performance in Interpersonal Relationships

The trouble began when Max forgot the second-year anniversary of his first date with Leslie. He arrived to pick her up for what he thought was a regular Saturday night of casually spending time together, but was surprised to see the elaborate preparations she had made. Leslie was wearing the outfit she had worn on their first date together and had prepared the meal they had ordered in the restaurant that night. She was playing "their song" and had rented the movie they had gone to see on their first date. Max entered Leslie's apartment and asked quizzically "What's all this for?" Leslie was devastated by his confusion, as she had been planning the event for weeks. She said to him that she had wanted an evening of special reminiscence with Max, but was disappointed that he did not seem to recall any of the memories she was considering. Max defended himself by saying the original event was two entire years past and actually had been quite an awkward night. The partners were both shocked and frustrated at each other's perceptions of the importance of the memory of their first date. Max went home baffled by Leslie's "outburst," while Leslie called a friend and complained about Max's "insensitivity."

Are the results of this scene a common occurrence? Gender differences in relationship memories are a frequent anecdotal finding in an emerging area of empirical research. Social psychologists have found that women report more vivid memories of relationship events such as first dates and arguments than do men, and that women attach more affect and personal significance to these memories (Ross & Holmberg, 1992). Indeed, when asked to report a single vivid, pleasant memory, most women in one study recounted the details of a past dating event. Men in the study, however, made very little mention of dating memories and tended to recall events surrounded by themes of competence or success (White, 1988).

Although there is ongoing inquiry into the causes and limits of gender differences in relational memories (Seidlitz & Diener, 1998), the present thesis focussed instead on the *effects* of such differences. In the earlier example, Leslie and Max had very different

views of the importance of Leslie's memories of the couple's anniversary and first date, and these differences had a substantial influence on their current impressions of one another. Since Leslie viewed the memory of her first date with Max to be a highly significant one, she was hurt and frustrated when Max did not fondly recall the event in similar detail. She called him insensitive and may have doubted that he cared about their partnership. As Max did not remember the first date vividly, he was surprised and confused that his partner would expect him to recognise the details from that distant evening; he may have thought she was being obsessive and irrational. Partners' disparate memories of shared events have the potential to lead to unfavourable views of each other and difficulties within a relationship.

When individuals are surprised by the behaviour of others, they frequently make attributions for that behaviour. It has been theorised that uncertain or unwanted events tend to trigger the attribution process, to ease worries over the uncertainty of a situation. Individuals prefer to feel that they can comfortably explain their environment (Berscheid, Graziano, Monson, & Dermer, 1976; Heitler, 1990; Siegert & Stamp, 1994). If negative attributions or unfavourable explanations for behaviours in a romantic relationship are formed by partners, further interactions between them may be affected detrimentally, and relationship satisfaction may falter (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990). Bradbury and Fincham, for example, reported that complaints about poor marital quality are an extremely frequent cause of seeking psychological help, so it is important to understand factors impinging on relationship satisfaction, including the effects of attribution-making.

In the present study, heterosexual romantic partners were asked to record their recollections of a specific event that occurred in their present relationship. Participants exchanged this information with their partners, who implicitly compared it with their own memories of the event. Each was asked to express his or her reactions to their partners' memories of the event and to explain the quality of memory the partner displayed. It was anticipated that partners would frequently show divergent memories of their shared past and would be motivated to develop explanations for their seemingly different views. It was theorised these explanations would reveal the attributions each member of a heterosexual couple made for their partner's memory performance. Through these responses, participants may indirectly comment on the influence that memory performance exerts on their romantic relationships. Because this study and much of the supporting literature considers only dating, engaged, and married heterosexual couples, the results may not be generalizable to the reactions of partners in homosexual or bisexual unions.

Before discussing whether attributions develop about relationship memory differences between partners, it is necessary to review the literature suggesting that such memory differences do indeed occur. Attributional processes, and their relevance within the context of romantic relationships, also will be discussed.

Memory Research

Males and females seem to possess similar strengths in overall memory (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974), but specific topics may produce recall differences. Commonly, women have been found to hold strengths in recall of personal memories, as in evidence

suggesting women have a greater ability to remember life events than do men. In a series of studies, Seidlitz and Diener (1998) asked male and female students to report verbally as many positive or negative personal life events in three minutes as they could recall. Despite the non-significant differences in the number of words each gender used on average to describe the events, and in the range of current emotions each gender reported, female students repeatedly recalled significantly more life events than did males. This finding was maintained after accounting for the participants' motivation and verbal abilities. The opinion that women have more detailed memory for potent life experiences was reliably supported. Seidlitz and Diener suggested that women encode their daily experiences in greater detail than do men, which later assists to produce their more detailed personal memories. Social expectations for women to attend to interpersonal information may influence a tendency to deeply encode relationship events.

Females' reports of interpersonal memories have also been found to be more accurate than those of males. Mahar (1997) requested that partners individually complete questionnaires addressing opinions on relationship issues. The couples next discussed their positions on the issues and were instructed to attend to the views they each held. A week later, females showed more accurate recall for their own and their partners' previous responses than males did. The female participants were better able to remember and report the content of the earlier relationship discussions. It is interesting to note this memory discrepancy resulted in spite of direct instructions for both partners to attend to the reported answers made by their partners. An extension of this research, however, failed to replicate this finding and instead showed no significant memory differences

between partners, suggesting that females do not always outperform males in evaluations of relationship-relevant memory (Maxwell, 1998).

Females' greater accuracy for memory of life events has been noted between pairs of same-sex roommates. This suggests the gender difference is present in briefer and less intimate relationships, and is not exclusively a function of the roles taken on by romantic partners (Chaffin, Crawford, Herrmann, & Deffenbacher, 1985). Roles may be important, however, as theories of transactive memory suggest that partners informally assign to each other different categories of knowledge, so that each partner is responsible for recalling unique information (Wegner, Erber, & Raymond, 1991). If one partner has an excellent memory for the birthdays of a couple's family members and friends, the other partner does not have to attempt to memorise those dates. That person can refer to the first partner to access the information. The second partner may instead be relied upon to recall other facts, such as travel directions to the homes of those family members and friends.

By gradually dividing the number of topics that each member of a couple is required to recall, partners gain much wider access to important material, with less effort. Wegner and colleagues (1991) report that transactive memory stores are created gradually in close relationships, and function better when partners naturally develop a knowledge base for various types of information, rather than when topics are assigned to each partner. Conversely, in new or less close relationships, transactive memory functions best when partners are assigned topics, because they have yet to discover which partner naturally understands various areas of information best.

If women tend to recall relationship events more clearly and with more emotion attached (Mahar, 1997; Ross & Holmberg, 1992), they would be assumed responsible for informally cataloguing shared memories for a couple. This would fit well in the framework of Cancian's theory (1985) that women have traditionally been regarded as relationship specialists, who are responsible for closeness and affection in a dyad. Maintaining relational memory can be considered, then, a way of preserving the connection between partners. Exploratory research by Dodge (1998) suggested that when females recall positive relationship material, it is enhancing to the relationship, but to a lesser degree than when males recall the same material. Dodge hypothesised that because males are not expected to recall interpersonal material well, it is a unique and noteworthy event when they do, and is beneficial to a relationship. Thus, the social expectation may be for females to remember relationship information with greater skill than their male partners can demonstrate. Females may assume their partners have an equal memory to them for relationship details, or males may rely on their partners to recall information. If neither situation is the case, frustration may follow. Misunderstandings over the abilities and responsibility for recalling relationship events could give rise to negative attributions between partners.

Understanding of an issue and subsequent recall often depend on the nature of the particular issue itself. Partners tend to understand each other's views best when they are discussing an instrumental, activity-related issue, such as division of housework or vacation planning. Discussing companionate, emotional issues such as trust and affection is more difficult (Sillars, Weisberg, Burggraf, & Zietlow, 1990). The concrete nature of

instrumental issues facilitates a clear discussion between couples and a heightened understanding of each other's opinions, while the abstract and intangible nature of companionate topics leads to ambiguous conclusions. Recall of a partner's view is then also stronger for concrete, instrumental attitudes than for abstract, companionate issues (Sillars et al., 1990). Individuals may show poorer memory for past relationship events because this topic includes ambiguous companionate issues, such as feelings and impressions. If one is not comfortable with abstract and emotional topics, their understanding and recall of that material should be decreased. Furthermore, if an individual cannot express companionate views adequately and clearly, one's partner will likely have difficulty understanding his or her true meaning and may show inaccurate recall. Sillars et al. (1990) stated that an individual will often project his or her own attitudes about a topic onto the partner if the partner is not clearly expressing his or her true opinions. This suggests that if partners do not actively discuss their memories of relationship events, each may project their own memories onto the other. When the actual difference between their memories arises, both partners will be surprised and may be motivated to make attributions for the difference.

Attribution Research

Attributions are explanations for the behaviour of others, and they are often based on evidence that is external to the person performing an action. When we observe the actions of another person, we are unaware of the inner motivations for that behaviour. Unless the actor explains his or her own behaviour, we must base our explanation of the event on previous knowledge of the actor's behaviour and motivations. Relevant

environmental stimuli and our own perceptions of how we would behave in a similar situation assist explanation as well. Explanations for another's behaviour are typically comprised of judgements of the (1) stability, (2) locus, and (3) globality of that behaviour. Stability refers to the likelihood that the particular behaviour under consideration will reoccur in the future; locus refers to the origin of the behaviour and whether it is caused by factors within the actor or by external influences. Globality describes whether the behaviour is similar across situations or is unique to certain contexts. A negative attributional cluster assumes that an unwanted behaviour is likely to happen again, that it is caused by the actor's internal influences, and that it affects many aspects of their behaviour. Conversely, the assumption that a negative action is unlikely to reoccur in other instances because it was caused by conditions external to the actor makes a positive attribution for the event.

Attributions are widely thought to underlie patterns of interactions in interpersonal relationships. Negative attributions focus on perceived negative motivations for behaviour and tend to lead to negative and discordant interactions, which can maintain a couple's distress. Positive attributions instead consider positive intent in the actions of another, which tends to facilitate discussion and problem solving and enhance the environment of the relationship (Baucom, Epstein, & Rankin, 1995; Heitler, 1990). If a person commits a negative behaviour that receives an equally negative response from the recipient of that behaviour, it may be the recipient's attributions that led to the defensive negative reaction. In the introductory example, Leslie may have angrily criticised Max for forgetting their first date, to which Max could have responded

that Leslie cannot tell him what he is supposed to remember. Max may have made the attribution for Leslie's criticism that she did not respect his intelligence, which could have motivated him to respond to her with anger. In a more positive interpretation of events, Max may have responded to Leslie's criticism by reflecting on how much she valued their anniversary and their first date and how hurt she must have felt that he forgot the details. This attribution would likely have led to a non-defensive response by Max and would have facilitated communication between the partners.

Fincham and Bradbury (1992) have delineated two types of attributions commonly noted within romantic relationship literature. Causal attributions are those that focus on the factors that produced an event, or the explanation for it. Responsibility attributions concern accountability for an event and whether a partner is to blame for their behaviour. Negative causal attributions are assumed to lead to negative judgements of responsibility, which may lead to attachment of blame for an action. Assigning blame is then highly correlated with anger over the event. In the scenario that opened this paper, Leslie may have decided that the unpleasant outcome of their evening was caused by Max failing to remember their first date in detail. Perhaps next she attributed responsibility to him for the unpleasantness with the assumption that he should have remembered it as she did. With this assumption of responsibility, it would then have been easy for Leslie to place blame for the event on Max. The specific attributions will vary between situations, but the path of their development is being recognised more commonly among researchers (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990).

The linear route from causal attributions to blame and anger suggests that relationship dissatisfaction would be the next result. Reviews of attributions in marital relationships report this indeed is often the case (Baucom, Epstein, Rankin, & Burnett, 1996; Bradbury & Fincham, 1990). Negative attributions can damage marital satisfaction, in that spouses who discount their partners' positive motivations and assume negative intent for their partners' behaviour report less satisfaction in the relationship. One's satisfaction with the relationship will then significantly impinge on one's future abilities to attribute positive or negative intent to the partner's behaviour. A satisfied member of a couple is more likely to disregard negative behaviour or to give it a positive spin by assigning a well-meaning motivation to one's partner. Conversely, dissatisfied members will commonly ignore positive behaviours by their partners or discount them with a negative explanation (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990). Attributional habits and relationship satisfaction therefore enter a cyclical pattern in which satisfaction leads to positive attributions that then lead to greater satisfaction. Dissatisfaction within a relationship is part of a downward spiral that spurs negative attributions that then further the dissatisfaction.

Partners who repeatedly make negative relationship attributions have been noted to fit into models of learned helplessness. Those who are caught in the cycle of negative attributions and negative feelings toward their partner express helplessness at resolving problems with the relationship (Fincham, Bradbury, & Scott, 1990). Partners who present for relationship therapy together, the extreme of the dissatisfied couples, have often come to that point because they can think of no way to improve the relationship on

their own. Cognitively-oriented couple therapists may work to interrupt the negative attribution-satisfaction spiral by encouraging new and favourable assumptions and expectations about one's partner that will promote a more positive cycle of attributions and behaviours (Bennun, 1987). The depths of distress that can prompt couples to enter therapy highlight the profound influence that attributions can exert in romantic relationships.

Indicators of relationship well-being, such as trust and satisfaction, also affect attributions for behaviour, in that one's memory of prior attributions may be distorted by current attributions. McFarland and Ross (1987) discovered that partners who currently viewed their partners' behaviours as favourable reported their past impressions of their partners to be more favourable than they actually had been at the time, according to self-reports. Individuals who currently assessed their partners and relationships to be unfavourable mistakenly reported they had been equally dissatisfied in the past. When partners did experience a true change in satisfaction with their partners, they tended to underestimate the degree of change, which also served to maintain some consistency between the two impression ratings. Interestingly, individuals who recognised a positive shift in the ratings of their partners reported that their partners' past positive behaviours had been due to the partner's internal disposition. Individuals who saw a negative change in the ratings reported that their partners' positive behaviours in the past were merely artefacts of the environment, and not reflective of any positive traits in the partners. Negative attributions may not only embitter future interactions, but also unfavourably distort the memory of a couple's past.

Once interactions between partners have begun to deteriorate due to low trust or satisfaction, attributional processes may accelerate the deterioration. Processes of attribution become particularly complex when one has reason to mistrust the person whose actions are being examined. Researchers on predictors of success in marital therapy, for example, have observed that treated couples are more likely to maintain dissatisfaction and low intimacy when wives showed little faith in their partners throughout therapy (Johnson & Talitman, 1997). When suspicious, an observer will consider several explanations for an actor's behaviour and will assume the actor wants to keep the reasons for his or her behaviour hidden. If one member of a couple suspects the partner's behaviour may cause harm to the couple, an overattribution effect will motivate an individual to assign very low weight to information about the environmental constraints on their partner's behaviour. This suggests that assumptions about the actor's internal motivations for the unwanted behaviour are heavily considered instead. The observer is therefore more likely to make negative attributions for the partner's behaviour (Fein & Hilton, 1994).

Attribution making may also be considered a personal trait that interacts cyclically with relationship well-being. Some individuals are more likely to make attributions about their partners' behaviour that will have the power to subsequently influence well-being. Styles of adult attachment reflect an individual's past experiences with close relationships and have the potential to exert a substantial influence on how one views one's current partnership. For example, those who are securely attached to their partner and are confident in their relationship will tend to make more trusting and positive

attributions for their partner's behaviour. Senchak and Leonard (1992) noted that couples in which both partners were securely attached made more favourable evaluations of each other. Insecurely attached individuals, however, have perceived in the past that close others cannot always be depended upon or trusted, and thus they will be more suspicious about the motivations of their current partners' actions. The explanations they form may be less favourable towards the partner and can thus maintain doubt of their partner's unreliability.

Interestingly, research has noted that partners of all attachment styles often unwittingly select partners who will fulfil their expectations of what a partner will be like. Patterns of parent-child attachment are thought to heavily influence one's selection of a partner, in that certain attachment styles feel familiar and comfortable as an adult. Although one may state that a relationship partner should be supportive, dependable, and comfortable with closeness, if early close relationships did not fit this description, one may not interpret this sort of potential mate as attractive in adulthood. For example, anxiously attached individuals who fear abandonment seem to commonly pair with avoidant partners who resist relationship closeness. Persons of insecure attachment may think they want secure, dependable mates, but they are unfamiliar with this type of interpersonal interaction, from lack of experience with securely attached relationships in their past. Their past experience has taught them that significant others tend to be distant, undependable, and erratic in their ability to provide security. Because an unreliable and unsupportive partner fits better with the expectations of an anxiously attached person, this is actually the partner most likely to be chosen (Collins & Read, 1990; Senchak &

Leonard, 1992). These selection patterns are likely associated with attributions and expectations about relationship partners.

Thus, previous research has indicated that romantic partners may have somewhat discrepant memories for past relationship events and that attributions made about these discrepancies could have important influences on relationship satisfaction. Previous research, however, has not yet examined what kind of attributions are commonly made for discrepant relational memories between romantic partners. The present study will examine what kinds of attributions, or memory explanations, romantic partners will make about each other when they report different memories for an event in their relationship. Partners in monogamous dyads will exchange reports of their memories for a significant event in their past together and will then respond to the quantity and quality of memories their partners could recall. Attributions that arise from discrepant memories will be assessed for gender differences. General attributional style, relationship satisfaction, and relationship trust will be measured in each couple to determine whether they influenced the attributions made for partners' potentially different relationship memories.

Hypotheses

There are four major hypotheses for the present study. First, it was expected that romantic couples would demonstrate gender differences in memory of the relationship event, as several other studies have found (Mahar, 1997; Ross & Holmberg, 1992; Seidlitz & Diener, 1998). Females have been hypothesised to encode more details of life events into memory than males (Seidlitz & Diener, 1998). Therefore, it was expected that females might have made greater encoding efforts in the past when relationship

events occurred and so would recall the details of past relational events to a significantly greater extent than would their male partners. Females were also expected to assign greater personal significance to these events than were male participants, as previously noted to be related to detailed relationship memory (Ross & Holmberg, 1992).

Second, poorer recall on the part of one's partner was expected to be associated with more negative responses on the attribution measures. When confronted with the lesser recall of one's partner, participants were expected to make ratings on the attribution questions indicating dissatisfaction with their partner's memory performance. These negative attributions stemming from less detailed memory performance would be inferred from ratings of high stability and locus embedded in the partner. Negative reactions such as judgements about the partner and negative effect on the relationship due to the performance were also assessed.

Third, the negative relationship between poor memory and attribution ratings was hypothesised to be magnified for participants who rated their relationship to be low in trust, compared to participants who reported higher levels of well-being. Suspicion encourages individuals to form negative attributions for the behaviour of another, compared to individuals who trust that their partners are acting with good intentions. Mistrusting partners were proposed to interpret their partner's poorer memory performance as exemplifying the problems they have diagnosed already in the relationship.

Finally, the effects of a partner's poor recall and their interactions with trust were expected to be different for females and males. No directional prediction was made,

however, as two alternative outcomes were anticipated as plausible. Because female samples have generally evidenced more detailed memory for relationship material and have placed higher personal value on these memories (Ross & Holmberg, 1992), they may have recalled times their partners showed poor memory for their shared past. Therefore, the pattern predicting attributions could have been stronger for females than for males. This interaction would have been understood to stem from females' dissatisfaction with frequent memory differences between partners outside of the laboratory. Alternately, it was recognised that female participants might anticipate deficits in the relationship memories of male partners. Some research has noted that wives are more accurate than their husbands are in assessing the memory abilities of their spouses (Chaffin et al., 1985). Females may have realised if they had stronger memory capacities where relationship memories are concerned, and so may have held lower expectations for their partners' recall of romantic events. In this case, vague memory performance by male partners would not have surprised females, and may not have induced an attribution process stronger than it did for males.

Method

Participants

Fifty-four heterosexual couples were recruited through several means. Couples were apprised of the study through sign-up sheets in Acadia University's psychology department, electronic memos to graduate student and mature students' associations, and advertisements displayed across campus and in the community. Twelve couples from the

local area who participated in another recent relationship project volunteered after being contacted and offered a chance to take part in the present study.

Participation was open to dating ($n = 34$), engaged ($n = 6$), and married ($n = 14$) couples who self-reported to be in committed, exclusive relationships lasting at least six months. Over half of the participants in dating couples indicated that they had either privately contemplated marriage with their current partner or had informally discussed marriage with their partner. Females reported the median length of their current relationship was 20.5 months. Males reported a median current relationship length of 15 months. The discrepancy is assumed to represent partners' different memory for the length of the relationship. In the case of married participants, some may have chosen to report only the length of their marriage while others also included the time they spent dating or living together before marriage. The sample included one couple who had been dating for only four months. They were left in the analysis because they indicated they were seriously dating and they did not appear as outliers on important variables such as trust, satisfaction, or the number of details supplied about their first date.

In exchange for their participation, students in Introductory Psychology were offered two credit points towards their grade in that course. All other participants were entered into a random prize draw for various prizes valued at \$100, \$50, and \$10. Couples who received the prize entry as remuneration received one entry per partner.

Materials

Three questionnaires were developed for use in this study. One set of questions assessed an individual partner's memory of an event that has presumably occurred in

every dating relationship. This questionnaire requested information on the details of a couple's first date, such as when it occurred, how long the date lasted, and what the partners did for their first date together. The first date was defined as either the first time partners met and became interested in one another as more than casual friends, or the partners' first formally arranged outing with an intention to pursue a relationship beyond friendship. Open-ended responses were made to specific prompts for details of the event (see Appendix A).

A second questionnaire was created to assess each participant's attributions regarding their partners' memories of their first date together. The scale surveyed a participant's reactions to the quantity and quality of relationship memory their partner could generate for the event about which they were asked to write. Participants appraised the locus of their partner's memory performance, such as whether the partner's memory of the date was influenced by factors associated with participating in a laboratory study, or whether it was representative of their true recall abilities. They assessed the stability of memory performance, such as whether the partner had recalled the date as well in the past and whether he or she would be likely to recall it similarly in the future. Also included were questions about the judgement that was made about the partner due to the memory performance and the effect that it had on their relationship. These four variables were measured through clusters of questions answered on 7-point Likert scales. Participants also rated the quantity and quality of their own and of their partner's memory accounts, and the importance they placed on the memory of their first date. The importance item was inadvertently left off the questionnaire for couples in the control condition. Finally,

participants individually reported in open-ended questions their attributions for the quality of relationship memories their partners can usually recreate outside of the experimental setting (see Appendix B).

A third questionnaire was intended to investigate each participant's general pattern of making attributions within the relationship. These tendencies were thought to potentially predict the reactions and attributions one had to a partner's memory account. Individuals who tend to make negative explanations for their partners' behaviour may have been more likely to make negative reactions to the memory accounts, irrespective of the actual degree of recall. The four items were based on the format of the Attributional Style Questionnaire (Peterson et al., 1982), which measures individual uses of causal attributions to account for valenced personal life events such as getting a pay raise or failing to secure employment. The adapted questionnaire presented scenarios that occur only within the context of romantic relationships, two of which were valenced in a positive direction and two of which were negatively valenced. The items required the respondent to make attributions for their partner's behaviour in the scenario, rather than their own. Respondents were asked to supply a major cause for the presented event and to rate the locus, stability, and globality of the behaviour on 7-point Likert scales (see Appendix C).

Partners individually completed the Relationship Trust Scale (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). This 26-item scale measures trust within dating, married, and cohabiting relationships, by assessing areas such as partner sincerity and doubts about the motivations for a partner's actions. Respondents considered their current relationship and

rated the applicability of each item on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from one (Strongly disagree) to seven (Strongly agree). The scale measures three dimensions of trust in romantic relationships: faith (the belief that one's partner will behave in a loving and caring way), dependability (the belief that one's partner shows stable personality and interpersonal traits), and predictability (the belief that one's partner will act in a consistent fashion across a breadth of situations). The items inter-correlated highly in the current sample, with an overall alpha coefficient of .88. Therefore, they were maintained as one measure of trust (see Appendix D).

Each partner completed Hendrick's (1988) Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS; see Appendix E) as a general measure of relationship satisfaction. This seven-item scale estimates elements such as how well the relationship compares to others, and love for one's partner. The RAS has demonstrated a 6-7 week test-retest reliability of .85. It also shows considerable overlap with other common measures of relationship satisfaction and is able to meaningfully discriminate between distress and non-distressed couples. The scale is appropriate for use with dating couples and university populations (Hendrick, Dicke, & Hendrick, 1998).

Procedure

Upon arrival at the laboratory, couples heard a description of the purpose of the study and signed individual consent forms (see Appendix F). Partners were escorted to separate rooms and individually answered a number of demographic questions (see Appendix G), and completed the Dating Trust scale (Rempel et al., 1985), Relationship

Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988) and the adapted attributional style questionnaire. Couples were allotted approximately 20 minutes to complete these questionnaires.

Before the memory prompts were administered, the experimenter ensured that both partners were prepared to describe the same relationship event. One partner was randomly assigned in advance to nominate the occasion that would represent their first date together, which each partner was required to recall for the experiment. The date could be represented by an outing formally arranged by the partners or informal time spent together that was later construed by the partners as a date. Some partners indicated they had ended and resumed their relationship together at some point, or dated other partners since the initiation of their relationship. These couples were asked to describe their first date as the more recent occasion that prompted them to resume their relationship on an exclusive and committed basis. The gender of the nominating partner was counterbalanced across couples. That partner was asked if there was any ambiguity as to what constituted the first date for that couple. If the nominating partner expressed some uncertainty, she or he was asked to describe in a few words to the researcher the occasion that best represented the first date. The researcher then briefly described that date to the partner in the other room. If the partners both had some recollection of the nominated first date event, they were instructed to proceed with the full description of the memory of that event. All couples were able to describe at least some of the event that was initially nominated as the first date.

Each partner read the sheet of prompts to recall their first date together and each wrote all the details of the event he or she remembered. Couples were given

approximately 20 minutes to complete the memory accounts. The researcher collected the memory forms describing the couple's first date and exchanged the completed memory forms between the partners. Each participant read the details his or her partner recalled of the event. After reading their partner's reported memories, participants completed a response measure to capture their immediate attributions about their partner's memories of that event. Couples had approximately 20 minutes to record their attributions about the dating event. The memory forms and the attribution measure were returned to the researcher.

After completing the attribution measures, each partner completed a short set of follow-up questions that assessed general reactions to both memory differences and agreements between partners. The researcher also queried participants informally, to discover what sort of reactions they felt when informed they would be required to exchange their memory reports with their partner. This practice was intended to generally evaluate whether knowledge of this exchange led participants to censor the information they recorded for their partner's sake. Responses to this query generally indicated that partners did not recognise altering their memory reports for the sake of their partners, although some participants indicated they excluded some personal details in the account because the researcher was to read them. No further analyses were made with this information. Finally, participants received a debriefing form describing the aims of the study (see Appendix H) and they were thanked for their participation. All were given the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

Fifteen of the 54 couples did not exchange their completed memory prompt sheets as described above. Their participation ended after answering the memory prompts with all the details they could recall and returning them to the researcher. Partners then answered the four general questions about how they usually respond to differences in memory performance between themselves and their partners. The memory reports of this randomly assigned subset of couples served as a comparison against the remaining 39 couples, beyond the self-reports of participants' thoughts on exchanging their memory reports with their partners. Comparisons were made between the two groups to assess whether awareness that one would be exchanging reports with one's partner actually affected how members of the quasi-experimental group described their relationship memories (i.e., amount of detail). Appendix I provides a description of the script typically used to greet participants in both conditions.

To achieve an objective measure of memory performance, item counts were made for each memory report. An item was counted if it represented a fact that was present or an event that occurred during the first date. Private reactions, thoughts, and feelings at the time of the date were not counted unless the respondent indicated they were explicitly expressed during the date. For example, the statement "I hoped he would ask me out again" would not be counted unless it was clearly stated that this wish was expressed to the partner. Counting private thoughts and reactions could create a bias in the number of details between partners if one person received credit for reporting private thoughts and reactions of which the second partner could not be aware. This exclusion served to equalize the number of events that both partners would have experienced on the date and,

therefore, equalize the number of events each partner could potentially remember.

Repetitions of events or facts in the answer to more than one question about the date were also excluded from the memory count, to avoid inflating either partner's measure of recall of the date.

Inter-rater reliability for memory event units was calculated by dividing the total number of agreements between two independent coders by the total number of agreements plus disagreements between them. Events identified by both coders were counted as agreements. Disagreements were counted as any event that was identified by either one of the coders, but not the other. Reliability was calculated at 88% agreement for number of event units. Inter-rater reliability calculations were also done for agreement on the coding of items when including repetitions and private thoughts, which was calculated at 85%. An example of a coded memory description is provided in Appendix J.

Results

The results are presented in several sections. First, comparisons are made between the actual memory performance of male and female participants and the ability they attributed to each other before completing the memory record. Second, the ability of memory, trust, and other predictor variables to predict overall attribution patterns is investigated, separately for males and females. Finally, the overall attribution measure is broken down into its four subcomponents and each is investigated separately. The components were (1) stability and (2) locus of the memory performance, (3) the judgement one makes about the partner for that performance, and (4) the effect it has on

the relationship. Questions making up each subcomponent are shown in Appendix B.

Statistical analyses were conducted in SPSS using an alpha level of .05 for all tests.

Memory Performance

It was hypothesised that female partners would produce more detailed memory accounts than would their male partners. First, however, pre-exchange ratings were employed to assess how partners judged each other's everyday memory abilities for relationship material. A 2x2 within-subjects ANOVA was performed, $N = 54$, using sex and target of memory ratings as its two variables. Sex was entered as a repeated measures variable, because males' and females' ratings could not be assumed to be independent of their partners' responses. Target of memory ratings on a 7-point scale were also entered as a within-subjects variable, because participants rated both their own and their partners' memory abilities, prior to completing the memory records. The analysis revealed a significant interaction between sex and target, $F(1, 53) = 7.1, p = .01$.

Before completing the memory records, females tended to rate their own abilities to recall relationship events ($M = 5.65, SD = .85$) as stronger than those of their partners ($M = 5.2, SD = 1.28$). Males, on the other hand, rated their partners' typical abilities ($M = 5.74, SD = .96$) as better than their own ($M = 5.26, SD = 1.23$). This sample of dating and married partners initially perceived that females were generally better able than males to recall relationship events.

To assess which partners were then able to summon the greatest number of first date details, within-subjects t -tests were performed on the objective count of memory details produced by individual partners. This analysis was conducted separately for

partners in the exchange ($n = 39$) and control ($n = 15$) groups. In the memory exchange group, males ($M = 31.05$, $SD = 8.62$) and females ($M = 31.62$, $SD = 8.05$) did not differ in the number of first date details they reported, $t(38) = .389$, $p = .70$. Contrary to the original hypotheses, males and females on average recalled their first date with their current partner with a similar amount of detail. Memory detail counts were moderately correlated between the two partners in a couple, $r = .48$, $p < .001$. Males ($M = 4.85$, $SD = 1.60$) and females ($M = 5.05$, $SD = 1.68$) also tended to rate the memory of their first date as important on a 7-point scale. There was no significant difference between the mean importance ratings, $t(38) = .66$, $p = .51$.

After reading their partners' memory records, participants in the exchange group provided subjective ratings of their partners' and their own memory performance. Participants evaluated the quality and quantity of each target's memory on two 7-point scales. Quality and quantity ratings were significantly correlated for each target ($r = .43$ for own memory and $r = .56$ for partner memory, both $p < .001$), and were averaged to provide overall subjective measures of partner and own memory performance. A 2x2 within-subjects ANOVA was conducted on the two sets of ratings provided by each couple. Females gave their partners a mean performance rating of 5.97 ($SD = 1.08$) on the 7-point scale, and gave themselves a mean rating of 5.58 ($SD = 1.00$). Males gave their partners a mean rating of 5.73 ($SD = 1.18$) and themselves a mean rating of 5.46 ($SD = 1.16$). There was no significant main effect of sex for these memory ratings, $F(1, 38) = 1.24$, $p = .27$, nor a significant interaction between sex and target of the memory performance rating, $F(1, 38) = .168$, $p = .68$. Instead, partners made significantly higher

ratings on average for the memory performance of their partners ($M = 5.85$, $SD = 1.13$) than they made for themselves ($M = 5.52$, $SD = 1.08$), $F(1, 38) = 9.81$, $p = .003$.

Correlational analyses were conducted between the objective and subjective memory counts and showed the measures to be moderately, yet significantly related. Subjective measures of the quantity and quality of partner memory were correlated with objective counts of the partner's details at $r = .38$, $p < .001$ and $r = .31$, $p = .006$, respectively. Objective counts of each participant's memory details were significantly correlated with their subjective view of their memory quantity, $r = .53$, $p < .001$, and marginally related to subjective own memory quality, $r = .22$, $p = .055$. These correlations lend confidence to assume that partners' ratings of each other's memory performance have some correspondence with the actual number of event details supplied.

In the control group, where partners knew they would not exchange their memory accounts, males and females showed a marginal difference in the amount of detail included, as assessed by a paired samples t -test, $t(14) = 1.945$, $p = .07$. Males in the control group gave 30.13 ($SD = 9.67$) first date details and females provided 34.07 ($SD = 9.89$) details on average. Although females seemed to provide more information when their partners would not read the accounts, gender and condition did not interact significantly to influence number of memory details, as assessed by a 2x2 (target by condition) within-subjects ANOVA, $F(1, 104) = .803$, $p = .37$. The ANOVA was conducted after confirming that the variances were sufficiently similar across groups, using Levene's test of equality of error variance, $F(3, 104) = .73$, $p = .54$. It appears that

exchanging memory accounts did not encourage partners of either sex to embellish their accounts substantially.

Thus, there was no support for the first hypothesis that females would report the first date in more detail than males. Objective counts revealed similar levels of detail for each gender, and subjective ratings showed that both males and females perceived their partners' memory performance as superior to their own overall.

Attributions and Reactions

Analysis Strategy. A series of five hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed. Each was run separately for males and females, because partners within the same couple could not be treated as independent cases. The first regression used as the criterion variable an overall measure of attributional performance that included all the reactions to the partner's memory. The coefficient alpha for the 12-item attribution and reaction measure was .38. Higher values indicated a more positive reaction overall to the partner's memory performance. The overall measure was expected to be positively predicted by partners' more detailed memory accounts.

Subjective measures of each participant's own memory, their general relationship attributional style, and their trust in their partner were entered in a first step of the multiple regression equation. Once these factors claimed their portion of variance in the model, the subjective ratings of partner memory was entered as the item of interest. It was expected that partner memory ratings would be able to predict the overall reactions measure, over and above the initial factors. As advised by Cohen (1978), a third step added the interaction of partner memory with trust, to determine if current levels of relationship trust

interacted with a partner's memory performance to predict reactions. The interaction terms were only addressed if they added a significant contribution to the variance, over and above the interaction's component parts. The interaction term, however, added significantly to prediction in only one version of the model, described later.

To further understand the overall effects of partner memory on attributions and reactions, the overall measure was broken down into four components: (1) stability (.42) and (2) locus of the performance (.55), (3) judgement about the partner (.61), and (4) perceived effect of the memory on the relationship (.25). Coefficient alphas for each three-item subcomponent are noted in parentheses. Four additional hierarchical regression analyses were performed with these variables as the criterion measures. Again, it was expected that more detailed partner memory would be predictive of these measures in a positive fashion. More detailed memory was expected to predict higher, more favourable ratings of the stability, locus, judgement, and effect of the memory.

Beta weights and alpha levels indicated in the tables represent prediction after the last significant step (generally step two), while values for the remaining steps of the models are reported in Appendix K. Analyses were repeated using the objective counts of memory details in place of subjective ratings of memory, to see if these variables had differential effects on prediction. Results closely replicated the analyses using subjective memory, and therefore are only discussed when unique results occurred. See Appendix L for tables of the analyses using objective counts as the criterion measure. Exploratory regression analyses included relationship satisfaction measures as well, placing the summary of satisfaction items in the first step and the interaction of satisfaction and

partner memory in the final step. Because satisfaction was unable to add significantly to prediction of any the five criterion variables, it is not discussed further in this paper.

Females' Overall Reactions. Female partners rated their overall reactions to their perceptions of their partners' memory performance as favourable on a 7-point scale ($M = 5.45$, $SD = 0.67$). After entering ratings of own memory, relationship attributional style, and trust, 8.5% of the variance in overall reactions was accounted for. The next step, including partner memory, explained another 43% of the variance. At this point, R for regression was significantly different from zero, $F(4, 34) = 9.11$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .46$. Interactions of partner memory with trust did not account for any of the remaining unexplained variance (see Appendix K). Examination of the individual beta weights at step two of the model revealed that ratings of partner memory accounted for a significant change in the variance in females' overall reactions (see Table 1). As females perceived that males displayed better first date memories, females made more favourable reactions and attributions overall.

Females' Judgement Ratings. The four subcomponents of attributions and reactions further explained females' overall thoughts on their partners' memories. Females made positive judgements about their partners for their memory performance. On a 7-point scale, they offered a mean judgement rating of 6.10 ($SD = 1.10$). The model was strongly predictive of females' judgements about their perceptions of their partners' memory performance after the second step, $F(4, 34) = 11.2$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .52$. The model's first step explained 10.5% of the variance, and the second step explained another 46%. The interaction in the third step, however, accounted for less than 1% of

Table 1

Overall Attributions as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, and Memory Ratings

Females:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 2
1	Trust	.08	1.08	.11
	Attributional style			.06
	Own memory rating			-.17
2	Partner memory rating	.43	30.49***	.72***

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Males:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 1
1	Trust	.24	3.79*	.40*
	Attributional style			-.12
	Own memory rating			.23
2	Partner memory rating	.05	2.64	

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

the remaining variance. Beta weights presented in Table 2 reveal that the subjective ratings of memory performance for one's self and for one's partner were both reliable predictors of females' judgement ratings. As males described more details of the first date, females made increasingly favourable judgements about them. Although females were pleased with their partners' memory overall, judgements were even more favourable when females also rated their own recall as somewhat less extensive.

Females' Stability Attributions. Females rated their partners' recollections of the first date as stable on average on a 7-point scale ($M = 5.26$, $SD = 1.09$). The regression model strongly predicted females' stability attributions for their perceptions of their partners' memory performance after the second step, $F(4, 34) = 5.41$, $p = .002$, adjusted $R^2 = .32$. This step explained 37% of the variance. Partner memory performance in the second step strongly predicted the attributions of memory stability that females made about their partners (see Table 3). As males displayed better memory for their first date, females attributed greater stability to that memory performance.

Females' Locus Attributions. Females also tended to rate the locus of their partners' date recall as within the partner and not primarily due to external influences ($M = 4.83$, $SD = 0.87$). This rating, however, was not reliably predicted by the variables of own or partner subjective memory ratings, attributional style, or trust, $F(4, 34) = .98$, $p = .43$, adjusted $r^2 = -.003$ (see Table 4). Little of the variance in locus ratings was explained; step one accounted for 6% of the variance, step two explained another 4%, and step three claimed 3.5 % of the variance.

Table 2

Judgement Ratings as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, and Memory Ratings

Females:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 2
1	Trust	.10	1.37	.22
	Attributional style			.02
	Own memory rating			-.29*
2	Partner memory rating	.46	36.49***	.74***

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Males:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 2
1	Trust	.63	19.59***	.68***
	Attributional style			-.07
	Own memory rating			-.07
2	Partner memory rating	.07	7.71**	.33**

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 3

Stability Attributions as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, and Memory Ratings

Females:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 2
1	Trust	.02	.26	-.09
	Attributional style			.08
	Own memory rating			-.09
2	Partner memory rating	.37	20.40***	.66***

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Males:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 2
1	Trust	.10	1.24	.07
	Attributional style			.17
	Own memory rating			.07
2	Partner memory rating	.02	.23	.19

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 4

Locus Attributions as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, and Partner Memory

Ratings

Females:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 2
1	Trust	.06	.76	.08
	Attributional style			.15
	Own memory rating			-.27
2	Partner memory rating	.04	1.59	.22

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Males:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 2
1	Trust	.09	1.18	-.27
	Attributional style			-.23
	Own memory rating			-.18
2	Partner memory rating	.08	3.44°	.36°

n = 39

°p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Females' Effect Ratings. Females gave their partners' memory a mean effect rating of 5.62 on a 7-point scale ($SD = .68$). They believed that their partners' memory performance had a positive effect on the relationship, but their assessments of partner memory did not predict effect ratings at step two. Instead, female's own performance was predictive after step one, $F(3, 35) = 3.36, p = .03, \text{adjusted } r^2 = .16$. This step accounted for 22% of variance, suggesting that females' subjective ratings of their own memory positively influenced the ratings of effect they made for their partners' memory performance (see Table 5). When females interpreted their own memory as better, relative to how other females rated themselves, they saw their partners' description of their first date as having a positive influence on the relationship.

Using the objective counts of memory details as one of the predictor variables provided little additional information about females' overall reactions. Results using detail counts tended to replicate the analyses using subjective ratings (see Appendix L). Only judgements were differentially predicted when using this variant of the regression model, $F(5, 33) = 3.3, p = .02, \text{adjusted } R^2 = .23$ after step 3. The significant interaction between trust and partner memory suggested that the judgements of less trusting females are more strongly predicted by their partners' memory performance than the judgements of more trusting females. Women expressing high relationship trust made equally positive judgements of their partners, regardless of the males' memory performance. For less trusting women, however, judgements dramatically increased when the partner displayed better memory, compared to when his recall was less strong (see Table 6). It is interesting to note that the objective count of females' own memory performance was not predictive

Table 5

Effect Ratings as Predicted by Trust, Attributional Style, and Memory Ratings

Females:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 1
1	Trust	.22	3.36*	.13
	Attributional style			-.004
	Own memory rating			.41*
2	Partner memory rating	.05	2.61	

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Males:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 2
1	Trust	.28	4.53**	.24
	Attributional style			-.22
	Own memory rating			.59***
2	Partner memory rating	.10	5.15*	-.38*

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 6

Females' Judgement Ratings as Predicted by Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory

Counts

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 3
1	Trust	.11	1.44	1.51*
	Attributional style			.14
	Own memory counts			-.26
2	Partner memory counts	.13	5.86*	2.87*
3	Trust x partner memory counts	.09	4.57*	-2.81*

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

for judgement ratings, whereas subjective perceptions of their own memory were.

Males' Overall Reactions. Like the female respondents, male participants made favourable attributions overall about their partners' memory performance ($M = 5.49$, $SD = 0.53$). For the males, however, only the first step of the model was able to predict overall attributions for their perceptions of their partners' memory performance, $F(3, 35) = 3.79$, $p = .02$, adjusted $R^2 = .18$. Own memory, attributional style, and trust accounted for a change of 24.5% of the variance in males' attributions. The next steps of the regression explained an additional 5% and 2%, respectively. Examination of the individual beta weights showed that only ratings of trust contributed significantly to the equation to predict attributions about the partner's rated performance (see Table 1). Males who were more trusting of their partners made more positive attributions about them overall. The partner's perceived memory performance and the interaction of partner memory with trust were not significantly predictive of overall reactions to the partner's memory performance.

Males' Judgement Ratings. As females did, males offered favourable judgements of their partners' memory performance ($M = 6.03$, $SD = .98$). The regression model was able to predict these judgements reliably, $F(4, 34) = 19.34$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .66$. After step one, 63% of the variance was explained. Step two accounted for 7%, leading to a significant increase in F. The model's beta weights in Table 2 suggest that as males perceived females exhibited better memory of the date, males made more favourable judgements about them. More trusting males also showed more favourable judgements of their partners' recall.

Males' Stability Attributions. Male participants interpreted their partners' memory display as stable overall ($M = 5.47$, $SD = 1.09$). However, the model could not adequately predict their attributions about the stability of their partners' memory performance when using the subjective ratings in the regression analyses, $F(4, 34) = 1.15$, $p = .35$, adjusted $R^2 = .02$ after step two. The model's first step accounted for slightly over 9% of the variance, the second accounted for 2%, and the third added less than 1% to this explanation (see Table 3).

Males' Locus Attributions. Males tended to rate the locus of their partners' memory performance as internal on a 7-point scale, $M = 4.83$, $SD = 1.02$. The variables of subjectively-rated own and partner memory, attributional style, and interaction of partner memory with trust were unable, however, to predict males' ratings of memory locus, $F(4, 34) = 1.81$, $p = .15$, adjusted $R^2 = .08$. Step one explained 9% of the variance and step two accounted for a further 8%, which led to a marginal change in the F value. The third step accounted for less than 1% of the variance (see Table 4 and Appendix K).

Males' Effect Ratings. Males indicated that their partners' memory performance had a positive effect on the relationship overall ($M = 5.62$, $SD = .71$). The model was significant for prediction of males' effect ratings, $F(4, 34) = 5.08$, $p = .003$, adjusted $R^2 = .30$. The first step of the model accounted for 28% of the variance, and the second step explained another 9.5%. Examination of the beta weights revealed effect ratings were significantly and positively predicted by males' own memory performance and negatively predicted by that of their partners. As males rated their own memory of the first date as better relative to other males, they noted more positive effect on the relationship overall.

When they rated their partners' recall as less strong, however, males made more positive ratings of effect (see Table 5).

Regressions using objective counts of memory details as the measure of memory performance yielded some significant predictions for males' attributions overall. Notable patterns generally repeated the findings from using the subjective memory measures.

These results are reported in Appendix L.

Summary of Results

Thus, across all analyses, the hypotheses were only partially upheld. There was no support for the first prediction, that females would recall the first date in more detail than their male partners and would assign more personal importance to its memory. Males and females tended to recall the event using similar numbers of detail, and credited each other with good recall of the event. The event was deemed an important one to recall by participants of both sexes.

There was partial support for hypothesis two, in that an individual's more detailed recall was generally associated with more favourable attributions and reactions on the part of one's partner, particularly for females. Because of the restricted range of reactions, caution must be taken in extrapolating the results to infer that less detailed recall would have been associated with negative attributions. There were in essence no negative reactions amongst this sample of couples.

There was little support for the third hypothesis, that low levels of trust would accentuate the association between memory performance and partner attributions. Trust was predictive of males' reactions overall after reading their partners' accounts of their

first date together, but this measure of well-being did not significantly interact with partner memory. When objective counts were used to predict females' judgements, trust significantly interacted with males' memory counts. Females with lower trust greatly increased their judgements as males' accounts became more detailed, while females of high trust maintained very positive judgements regardless of males' memory performance.

The fourth hypothesis received some support, in that males and females differed on some measures of attributions and reactions to their perceptions of partner memory performance. Partner memory was a significant and strong predictor for females in three of five reaction components. Partner memory shared a positive relation with males' reactions in one of the analyses, but it was actually a negative predictor for another reaction. Trust was the most important predictor for males' reactions. Overall, the model appeared to be better suited to predict females' reactions to their partners' memory accounts than to predict males'.

This difference in ability to predict reactions, however, may not be significant. The beta weights cannot be assumed to be independent for male and female equations, and therefore cannot be directly tested for significant differences. Other significance testing was appropriate and was conducted as a post-hoc exploration. The correlations between partner memory ratings and each reaction summary measure were tested for differences, according to the Steiger modification of the Pearson-Filon test of two correlated correlations (Kashy & Snyder, 1995). None were found to be significantly larger for females than for males. Thus, when strictly considering the relation between ratings of

partner memory and each of the five reaction measures, the model was not significantly better able to predict females' reactions than males' (see Table 7).

Table 7

Testing for Gender Differences in Correlations Between Partner Memory Ratings and

Reaction Measures

	Females	Males	Test for Differences
Overall	.70***	.47**	-1.51
Judgement	.70***	.60***	-.74
Stability	.61***	.28°	-1.78
Locus	.17	.12	-.22
Effect	.40*	-.02	-1.64

n = 39

°p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Discussion

The present exploratory study was designed to assess gender differences in partners' memories of their first date together, and the reactions that partners had upon discovering any such differences. Overall, both males and females were able to report an average of 30 details of their first date with their current partner, and interpreted their partners' performance as superior to their own. Participants recorded favourable reactions and attributions overall about their partners' memory performance upon reading the partners' memories, although the pattern of reactions appeared to differ between males and females.

Results did not support the first hypothesis that females would recall more of their first date with their current partner than males would recall. Instead, results indicated that when recall was prompted by specific questions, males' and females' levels of recorded detail about their first date were closely comparable. There was no meaningful gender difference in the absolute number of details given of their first date.

This failure to replicate earlier findings of gender differences in memory was initially puzzling, as was Maxwell's (1998) lack of gendered memory differences. In this case, the equal memory performance is most likely attributable to the mode of retrieving participants' first date recollections. Previous research noting gender differences in memory for relational material has frequently used open-ended memory questions where one is asked to describe the event as vividly as they can recall (cf. Ross & Holmberg, 1992; Seidlitz & Diener, 1998; White, 1988). In the present study, however, questions were designed to gather a range of memories of the date that would have been observable

to both partners. The questions were intended to standardise for both partners the pool of details from which memories could be drawn, by discouraging memory only for private thoughts and feelings during the date. This method of retrieving memory may have, however, inadvertently led to a prompted recall that poorly represents the typical memory performance that partners share when they casually reminisce about their past.

Other research suggests that open-ended recall, similar to the way one remembers in a natural context, does produce gender differences in relational memory performance (Ross & Holmberg, 1992; Seidlitz & Diener, 1998). This research laboratory is currently planning studies to explicitly examine the differences in memory quantity and quality that are produced by variant forms of memory retrieval. Under certain natural conditions, males and females may be equally motivated to recall relationship data. It would be interesting to confirm whether partners actually hold similar memories of relationship events overall and can retrieve this information if they “have to,” but that only females tend to volunteer detailed accounts when asked in a general, open-ended way.

Virtually no gender difference was noted in memory performance when participants did not have to show their memory reports to their partners, compared to when an exchange was made. Partners within and between couples offered similar levels of detail in response to the first date prompts. When informally asked at the end of the study, most participants in the exchange group commented that they had not been concerned about sharing their memory report with their partners. None indicated thinking the exchange condition influenced the quantity or quality of their accounts.

Partners' seemingly equivalent memory countered not only the predictions of the current study, but also the expectations of the participants themselves. Correspondent with Dodge's (1998) findings, individual partners in this study initially attributed more elaborate relationship memory ability to females than to males, prior to the memory exchange. They originally indicated that the females in these relationships were the ones who could typically remember more of their past. Explanation of this result in light of the noted memory equivalence is complicated by the dependency on self-report measures. Partners' experience may have previously been that females did recall more relationship details, or individuals may have been influenced by the popular expectation that females would cherish relational details more than males would. Although the present methodology does not allow us to validate the basis of partners' expectations for memory performance, participants clearly expected females to outperform males at the task.

The practice of exchanging memory accounts seemed to counter females' expectations of their partners' abilities to recall relational information. Males perceived that females were the ones with better memory both before and after the memory exchange. Yet, females adapted their views on their partners' memory performance after seeing the accounts. Before completing the memory measure, females had rated their own memory for relational material as stronger than that of their partners. After the exchange, however, females conceded that their partners had remembered the first date better than they had themselves. This perception is similar to the finding of Chaffin et al. (1985), who reported that married spouses rated their partners' recall as typically better than their own for remembering childhood events, names, and conversations.

Further speculation is necessary to explain why the shift might have occurred in females' ratings of memory ability and performance. If previous findings that males demonstrate less comprehensive memory for relationship events are a common experience for couples, females may have been surprised to see the male partners' strong memory performance under the present testing conditions. If couples do not often reminisce together about their shared past, female partners may have been very surprised by the account the other could summon. Their favourable ratings of their partners' memory performance may indicate they were impressed by this uncommon event. This interpretation is reminiscent of Dodge's (1998) hypothesis that females are surprised and impressed when their male partners vividly recall relationship events. Females in her study tended to appreciate detailed male memory as a very positive circumstance, with a desirable influence on a relationship.

It is also plausible that participants considered only the outcome of the memory task and not the recall *process* when comparing their memory reports to those of their partners. Participants completed the memory accounts in separate rooms and would not have observed how difficult the task might have been for their partners. They merely saw the outcome of their partners' efforts. They would have, however, known whether they themselves had difficulty themselves in answering the memory prompts. By only seeing the partners' finished products, participants may have believed that their partners were able to recall the same detail with ease and therefore deserve a higher performance rating than they themselves do. Males, who clearly credited their partners with better memory in general, would not have to change their assessment. Females, however, might revise their

assessments of their partners' memory abilities upwards. Further research on partners' relationship memory should include pre-memory reports of one's confidence in both their partners' and their own memory abilities. It is unknown whether partners anticipated they would be able to clearly recall the first date themselves, only how they generally described their partners' memory abilities.

Despite the gender balance of memory performance overall, individuals still made notable reactions to their partners' memory reports. Generally, females' reactions were most influenced by their perceptions of the quality of their partners' memory performance, beyond the contributions of attributional style and relationship trust. As females perceived that males recalled the first date well, they had more positive reactions to them. For male participants, their partners' recall performance was less important than the degree of trust the males held. More trusting males reported increasingly positive reactions overall, less dependent on females' recall.

Women reported satisfaction with the way their partners recalled the date overall. They made very favourable judgement ratings of their partners' memory performance. They responded positively overall to items such as "I am very pleased with the way my partner remembered our first date" and "The way my partner remembered our first date suggests he/she cared about the event very much." This satisfaction increased as their partners displayed better memory of the date and was highest when females themselves displayed *less* comprehensive memory. This may be construed as tentative evidence suggesting that females hope that males will recall relational material in as much detail, or

more, as they do. Females may have implicit expectations for their partners' memory and are delighted when this expectation is surpassed.

Although females initially rated males' recall of relationship information as typically less strong than their own, and then rated males' current memory accounts as better than their own, they perceived males' memory as highly stable after exchanging accounts. High stability ratings included endorsing such items as "When I think of how typical it was for my partner to remember the first date in the detail he/she did (whether it was a detailed or vague memory), I'd say it was extremely typical." The better able males were to report the event, the more likely their partners were to proclaim that memory performance was common or stable. If partners perceive males' recall of relationship events as a positive influence on dyadic well-being (Dodge, 1998), it is understandable that females would want to portray their partners as frequently holding onto strong or vivid memories of the formation of their relationship. However, it is important to remember that although males did recall the event well on average, there was a wide range of performance. Some likely earned high stability ratings because of consistently remembering few relationship details.

Females generally rated the locus of their partners' memories to be internal, irrespective of the ratings of memory quantity or quality provided. Whatever memory a male summoned was interpreted as reflecting his actual ability for recall. This tendency included endorsing items such as "My partner's memory of our first date (whether it was detailed & accurate, or not) was due to something about him/her, such as personality or current mood." This pattern suggests that females did not think the conditions of the study

unusually influenced their partners' recall, despite post hoc hypotheses that the recall procedure was not representative of true memory exchange between partners. Females did not seem to make the same interpretation offered earlier, that the method of retrieving memories prompted partners to recall the date better than they may have otherwise. Again, this corresponds with the idea that individuals want to think their partners have strong memories of their relationship, as it can be a positive indicator of dyadic adjustment.

Females did not indicate overall that relationship memory in itself was a relationship concern. They generally disagreed with the suggestion that males' memory of the first date had an ill effect on their relationship, regardless of how well their partners remembered the date. Instead, females made positive ratings for the effect their partners' recall had on them and their relationship. They tended to reject items suggesting negative consequences, such as, "I am worried or troubled that my partner remembers our first date the way he/she did, (quality, details, accuracy), compared to the way I remember it." They were indeed pleased with males' detailed memory performance and indicated no unpleasant effects on their relationship. Women in the current sample, in fact, offered more positive effect ratings to their partners' memory reports when they perceived their *own* memories as better, rather than their partners' memories. Perhaps the comparison to their own memory solicited in the effect items rendered their own memories as especially salient.

Interestingly, males considered how much trust they have in their partners to decide the judgement they made about her memory performance, more so than any other

predictor or the actual level of performance. Males with the highest levels of trust in their partners made the most favourable judgements about their partners' performance, irrespective of their perceptions of what females remembered of the date. This is consistent with findings that high trust of others is associated with positive explanations for their behaviour. It is conceivable that individuals who mistrust their partners would interpret less comprehensive recall as behaviour deserving a negative judgement, and might interpret more vague or sparse memory as diagnostic of other relationship concerns. This pattern of attribution is often noted when the behaviour of a mistrusted individual has potential to affect the judging individual, such as in close relationships (Fein & Hilton, 1994). However, the range of trust or memory indicated by the present sample does not permit full examination of this possibility.

Males attributed high stability to their partners' memory of the date, at all perceived levels of females' performance. This corresponds to their initial ratings of females' memory skills, in that males attributed stronger memory abilities to females both before and after the accounts were exchanged. This may suggest that females evidenced memory accounts in the study similar to what they would in a real world situation, which also includes a wide range of memory performance. It also suggests that males are attuned to the memory abilities their partners typically display when discussing relational events.

Males described a negative effect when females displayed better memory of the first date. They were more pleased when they perceived that females did not perfectly recall everything about their first date. It would be interesting to clarify in future research

whether males who did not recall the first date well interpret their partners' memory as an unfair expectation for them to remember more. If males perceive that they are expected to recall more details than they can or want to, this may become a persistent negative aspect of their relationship.

To summarise the findings, females perceived that males recalled much about their first dates. They believed males provided detailed, stable memory accounts, and they were very pleased by this. They were especially positive about the partner's performance when they perceived that their own was less strong. Females may have interpreted a partner's relatively superior memory to indicate that the partner cared very much about the memory of the date. Although males appreciated females' recall efforts and made favourable judgements about them, males' trust was a better predictor of their reactions. Males with high trust in their partners had the best response to females' memory accounts. Males were in fact more positive towards their partners when their partner's memory was less strong.

Because males and females exhibited similar memory detail overall, these patterns likely apply to the majority of pairs in the sample. Given that both sexes recorded similar levels of detail overall, partners were probably more likely to respond to the content of the memory reports, more so than to the memory quantities. It is unclear at this point whether it was the quantity or quality of memory that pleased partners; future research will make efforts to tease apart whether similar reactions and attributions are made to memory content.

The present study used both absolute counts of event details and partner perceptions as measures of memory to predict attributions. Yet, it would be very enlightening to examine the content of the details and code the types of responses that are associated with more positive or negative reactions; this is a necessary future endeavour. Individuals may have reacted more to any salient content of their partners' memories, rather than to the number of details provided. Indeed, in a casual conversation about the shared past, partners would probably pay more attention to the nature of the events recalled than to the absolute number of recalled details. If the content was very positive or negative, it would be natural for participants to disregard how much their partners remembered about the event and make attributions based on the perceived quality of the memory information. For example, one male participant in the present study recalled few episodic facts about the date, but he filled in responses to each question that were very complimentary to his partner. She could have conceivably "forgiven" his lapses of memory because she appreciated the thoughtful sentiments he reported. Conversely, if an individual recorded memories that were embarrassing or doubtful of the relationship, their partner may make negative reactions to those comments, irrespective of the level of detail or accuracy. Plans are being developed to evaluate and analyse the content of the memory records from this study to discover any additional attributional patterns. It is sensible to predict that quality and quantity of relationship memories interact in their influence on partners' attributions for memories, and may explain some of the differential reactions by males and females.

As an initial exploration of attributions for partners' memories, the present study chose to focus on memory of the first date. Each relationship must have a starting point, whether formal or informal, and so the first date was chosen as a standard event for all couples to describe so that any attributional patterns would be easy to recognise.

Continuation of this research should expand partners' recall to other events. Although partners rated the memory of their first date as an important one, it may not have been as cherished as other occasions. For example, an individual might not care if his or her partner cannot recount the details of their first date 10 years ago, but might be very disturbed if the partner forgets the events surrounding the birth of their first child.

Forgetting a relationship event may be associated with greater consequences for a relationship if one's partner treasures that memory. Future research can ask partners themselves to nominate an important event for recall, counterbalancing the sex of the nominator across couples. The attributional effects and reactions noted here may be stronger if they follow an event that one partner considers very important to remember. Forgetting that event may be deemed more indicative of a problem between companions.

The use of a positively valenced relationship event may have also influenced the results. There is mixed evidence that one's memory may be better for negative events than for positive events (Ross & Holmberg, 1992; Sillars et al., 1990). Negative affect and harsh tones of voice have been more accurately perceived and better recalled by some partners, even beyond understanding for positive or neutral affect. This has been noted as especially true for dissatisfied couples, who tend to attend closely to signs of conflict (Sillars et al.). Such findings could perhaps be even more salient for females, who as a

group are motivated to recognise their partners' negative affect to maintain safety in relationships that are often unbalanced in physical strength and power. The first date is generally construed as a positive event, which may have diminished differential recall between partners. Memory differences may have emerged between partners for negative events that did not exist for the positive date events. Further exploration should consider partners' memory performance for both positive and negative events and assess the attributions that are made for the memory of each.

It should be noted that the findings represent participants' initial reactions to their partners' memory performance. Some of these patterns may change after one has time to think about and compare their recall and to interpret any differences or similarities in light of other conditions of their relationship. As always, it is necessary to consider potential effects of social desirability. Participants may have wanted to present their relationships well to the experimenter and may have denied any concerns about their partners' memory performance, thereby skewing the reactions to be more favourable.

Continued research on partners' reactions to memory performance could also include homosexual partners. The majority of research has noted that females recall more relationship details than men do, but no theory exists to predict memory distribution and reactions to partner memory in same-sex relationships. If females are generally considered relationship historians and males are commonly *assumed* to recall less information, which partners are expected to take on the role of rememberer in same-sex couples? Partners in homosexual relationships may make negative attributions about each other if the partner is not fulfilling the recall role that is expected of them, based on their sex. When Chaffin et

al. (1985) compared the accuracy of perceptions of the memory abilities of a same-sex roommate, females were better able to assess their roommates' recall abilities than were male participants. They suggested that females are well equipped to assess the memory abilities of another, whether or not the other is someone with whom they are romantically involved. Alternately, it may be that same-sex couples do not have such gendered expectations for each other and may exhibit no clear pattern of attributions after one's memory is revealed.

Future study could also take a developmental perspective and examine partners' attributions for age-related memory decline. After years together, partners are very familiar with each other's memory abilities. Transactive theories of memory suggest they would come to depend on each other's memory stores to have access to the widest possible base of knowledge (Wegner et al., 1991). Partners may be surprised by the cognitive changes that come with age and may initially make negative attributions about the partner's altered performance. However, an older couple in the present study gave each other the benefit of the doubt for brief memory reports and avoided making negative judgement or effect ratings. They indicated they knew age and individual illnesses such as depression and chronic pain affected each other's memory, so they did not expect the other to remember much of their first date. It would be interesting to assess whether their reactions are typical of older couples who have experienced changes in their memory abilities. Patterns of transactional memory become automatic for partners, so an unexpected change may lead to negative attributions if partners are forced to come up with new patterns or must agree to forget some things.

An alternate outcome may be that older couples who have been together longer may have developed an agreed script to describe important events in their past, such as the memory of their first date. Fewer differences may emerge in their memory accounts because they have recounted the tale of their early relationship many times and are secure in their recall of events. Their reactions may be very favourable, in this case, because they have gradually developed a description of their first date that satisfies each partner's recall of the occasion. The success of the present model of prediction did not necessitate exploring age or relationship length as influences on reactions to partners' recall, but these demographic factors may reveal relevant information in future study of partners' attributions to memory performance.

In addition to soliciting reactions from a wider representation of dyads, greater examination of the effects of individual characteristics would also be worthwhile. For example, styles of adult attachment may have an interesting impact on how memory differences between partners are processed and accepted. One relevant feature of attachment is the level of relationship trust one has, which appeared to exert some influence on reactions to the relational memory of one's partner. Less securely attached individuals have been described as less trusting of their relationship partners and less able to depend on close others (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Memory discrepancies in a dyad may be particularly threatening or suspicious to insecurely attached individuals who have difficulty trusting their mates and thus may result in more negative attributions than a securely attached adult would make.

The findings of the present study suggest that memory discrepancies do not have to be extreme, such as those of Leslie and Max in the introductory paragraph, in order to prompt reactions from romantic companions. Even when individuals appear to offer similarly detailed accounts of an early relationship event, perceptions and expectations can affect how one's recall is received by their partner. Participants in the current study were very pleased overall with their partners' memory performance, but they expressed some differences in their expectations of how much each partner should remember for the best possible influence on the relationship. Partners may come to resent each other's expectations for their memory performance, if they do not match their own preferences. Continued research combining the areas of relationship memory and attributions is worthwhile for greater understanding of partners' interactions, past and present.

References

Baucom, D. H., Epstein, N., & Rankin, L. A. (1995). Cognitive aspects of Cognitive-Behavioral Marital Therapy. In N. S. Jacobson & A. S. Gurman (Eds.) Clinical handbook of couple therapy (pp. 65-90). New York: The Guilford Press.

Baucom, D. H., Epstein, N., Rankin, L. A., & Burnett, C. A. (1996). Understanding and treating marital distress from a cognitive-behavioral orientation. In K. S. Dobson & K. D. Craig (Eds.) Advances in cognitive-behavioral therapy (pp. 210-236). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Bennun, I. (1987). Behavioural marital therapy: A critique and appraisal of integrated models. Behavioural Psychotherapy, 15, 1-15.

Berscheid, E., Graziano, W., Monson, T., & Dermer, M. (1976). Outcome dependency: Attention, attribution, and attraction. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 34, 978-989.

Bradbury, T. N. & Fincham, F. D. (1990). Attributions in marriage: Review and critique. Psychological Bulletin, 107, 3-33.

Cancian, F. M. (1985). Gender politics: Love and power in the private and public spheres. In A. S. Rossi (Ed.) Gender and the life course (pp. 253-264). New York: Aldine Publishing Co.

Chaffin, R., Crawford, M., Herrmann, D. J., & Deffenbacher, K. A. (1985). Gender differences in the perception of memory abilities in others. Human Learning, 4, 233-241.

Cohen, J. (1978). Partialed products *are* interactions; partialed powers *are* curve components. Psychological Bulletin, 85, 858-866.

Collins, N. L. & Read, S. J. (1990). Adult attachment, working models, and relationship quality in dating couples. Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 58, 644-663.

Dodge, D. (1998). Relationship memory: He said, she said and what it means for a relationship. Unpublished manuscript. Acadia University: Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

Fein, S., & Hilton, J. L. (1994). Judging others in the shadow of suspicion. Motivation and Emotion, 18, 167-198.

Fincham, F. D., & Bradbury, T. N. (1992). Assessing attributions in marriage: The Relationship Attribution Measure. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 62, 457-468.

Fincham, F. D., Bradbury, T. N., & Scott, C. K. (1990). Cognition in marriage. In F. D. Fincham & T. N. Bradbury (Eds.). The psychology of marriage (pp. 118-149). New York: The Guilford Press.

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

Heitler, S. M. (1990). From conflict to resolution: Strategies for diagnosis and treatment of distressed individuals, couples, and families. New York: W. W. Norton & Co.

Hendrick, S. S. (1988). A generic measure of relationship satisfaction. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 50, 93-98.

Hendrick, S. S., Dicke, A., & Hendrick, C. (1998). The Relationship Assessment Scale. Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, *15*, 137-142.

Johnson, S. M., & Talitman, E. (1997). Predictors of success in emotionally focused marital therapy. Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, *23*, 135-152.

Kashy, D. A., & Snyder, D. K. (1995). Measurement and data analytic issues in couples research. Psychological Assessment, *7*, 338-348.

Maccoby, E. E., & Jacklin, C. N. (1974). The psychology of sex differences. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press

Mahar, S. L. (1997). *Sure, whatever you said honey: A study on memory in dating relationships*. Unpublished manuscript, Acadia University: Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

Maxwell, M. J. (1998). Memory in dating relationships: Relationship versus non-relationship material. Unpublished manuscript, Acadia University: Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

McFarland, C. & Ross, M. (1987). The relation between current impressions and memories of self and dating partners. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, *13*, 228-238.

Peterson, C., Semmel, A., von Baeyer, C., Abramson, L. Y., Metalsky, G. I., & Seligman, M. E. P. (1982). The Attributional Style Questionnaire. Cognitive Therapy and Research, *6*, 287-300.

Rempel, J. K., Holmes, J. G., & Zanna, M. P. (1985). Trust in close relationships. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *49* (1), 95-112.

Ross, M., & Holmberg, D. (1992). Are wives' memories for events in relationships more vivid than their husbands' memories? Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 9, 585-604.

Seidlitz, L., & Diener, E. (1998). Sex differences in the recall of affective experiences. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74, 262-271.

Senchak, M., & Leonard, K. E. (1992). Attachment styles and marital adjustment among newlywed couples. Journal of Social & Personal Relationships, 9, 51-64.

Siegert, J. R., & Stamp, G. H. (1994). "Our first big fight" as a milestone in the development of close relationships. Communication Monographs, 61, 345-360.

Sillars, A. L., Weisberg, J., Burggraf, C. S., & Zietlow, P. H. (1990). Communication and understanding revisited: Married couples' understanding and recall of conversations. Communication Research, 17, 500-522.

Wegner, D. M., Erber, R., & Raymond, P. (1991). Transactive memory in close relationships. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 61, 923-929.

White, H. (1988). Sex differences in vivid memories. Imagination, Cognition, and Personality, 8, 141-153.

Appendix A

First Date Memory Prompts

We would like you to describe your first date with your current partner. This might be the first time you met and got to know your partner, or it might be the first formally arranged outing the two of you had together. *In either case, be sure to describe the event that you and your partner agreed on as your first date when answering these questions.* Use the following questions as prompts to provide as much detail about the event as possible. Report as many details as you can recall, being sure to report all the specific details that are requested on this form. *(Feel free to omit sexual details of the event, if applicable)*

1. Who initiated the date; who asked for the date?
2. How was the date initiated? (i.e., on phone, in person, through friends, through e-mail...) Be as specific as you can recall.
3. What was the response like? (How did the partner who was asked for a date respond?) Be as specific as you can recall.
4. What did you & your partner do for your first date together? (i.e., where did you go, what did you plan?) Be as specific as you can recall.
5. Describe how you arrived at the destination of the date (car, bus, walked...)
6. What did your partner wear for the date? Be as specific as you can recall.
7. What did you wear for the date? Be as specific as you can recall.
8. What was the date (month/day/year) of your first date together?
If you cannot recall the exact date, state approximately how long ago your first date was.
9. What day of the week was it?
10. Approximately how long did the first date last?
11. What was the most salient aspect of the date; what stands out the most in your memory? Be as specific as you can recall.
12. What was the best moment about the date? Be as specific as you can recall.
13. What was the worst moment about the date? Be as specific as you can recall.
14. Did your first kiss occur during your first date? If so, describe how & when it happened.
15. On your first date, did you arrange to meet again? If yes, describe how.
16. Did either of you express a new or special feeling to the other during the first date? Describe.

Appendix B

Memory Response Questions

(STABILITY)

1. When I think of how typical it was for my partner to remember the first date in the detail he/she did (whether it was a detailed or vague memory), I'd say it was:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Not Somewhat Extremely
 at all typical typical
 typical

(EFFECT)

2. When I think of how bothered I was by the amount of detail of the date my partner was able to remember, I'd say:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Not Somewhat Extremely
 at all bothered bothered
 bothered

(JUDGEMENT)

3. I am very pleased with the way my partner remembered our first date.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Strongly Somewhat Strongly
 disagree agree agree

(LOCUS)

4. My partner's memory of our first date (whether it was detailed & accurate, or not) was due to something about him/her, such as personality, or current mood.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Strongly Somewhat Strongly
 disagree agree agree

(JUDGEMENT)

5. My partner should be able to remember our first date in more detail than he/she did in this experiment.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Strongly Somewhat Strongly
 disagree agree agree

(STABILITY)

6. If I had to predict how much the quality (amount of detail, accuracy, etc.) of my partner's memory of our first date will change in the future, I'd say:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Not at all Somewhat Extremely

14. How would you characterize what you remembered about your first date with your current partner?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Unimportant Standard Extremely special
 details details details

15. How much did your partner remember about your first date together?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Nothing Some Almost
 details everything

16. How would you characterize what your partner remembered about your first date together?

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Unimportant Standard Extremely special
 details details details

17. Rate the importance that you personally assign to the memory of your first date with your current partner:

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
 Unimportant Somewhat Extremely
 important important important

18. Describe why you think your partner remembered your first date in the detail he/she did.

Follow-up Questions

1. Describe your thoughts and feelings when you discover your partner remembers a detail about an event in your relationship that you also remember.
2. Describe your thoughts and feelings when you discover your partner forgets a detail about an event in your relationship that you remember.
3. Describe your thoughts and feelings when you discover your partner remembers a detail about an event in your relationship that you had forgotten.
4. Describe your thoughts and feelings when you discover your partner forgets a detail about an event in your relationship that you had also forgotten (For example - if someone asks you a question about an event in your relationship and neither of you can remember the answer).

Appendix C

Attributional Style Measure

1. Please read each situation and vividly imagine it happening **between you & your partner**.
2. Decide what you feel would be the *major* cause of the situation if it happened **between you & your partner**.
3. Write one cause in the blank provided.
4. Answer the three questions about the *cause*.
5. Go on to the next situation.

Situation One:

Your partner is supposed to meet you for dinner at your favorite restaurant and he/she arrives 30 minutes late.

1. Write down the *one* major cause _____
2. Is the cause of your partner's lateness due to something about him/her or due to something about the situation? (circle one number)

Totally due to partner	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Totally due to situation
---------------------------	---------------------------	-----------------------------

3. In the future, if your partner is late again for an appointment with you, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

Will never again be present	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Will always be present
-----------------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------

4. Is the cause something that just influences whether your partner is late for a date with you, or does it also influence other areas of your partner's behaviour? (circle one number)

Influences just this particular situation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Influences all areas of partner's behaviour
---	---------------------------	---

Situation Two:

Your partner surprises you by bringing you an unexpected gift one evening.

1. Write down the *one* major cause _____
2. Is the cause of your partner's surprise behaviour due to something about him/her or due to something about the situation? (circle one number)

Totally due to partner	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Totally due to situation
---------------------------	---------------------------	-----------------------------

3. In the future, if your partner surprises you with a gift again, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

Will never again be present	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Will always be present
-----------------------------------	---------------	---------------------------

4. Is the cause something that just influences whether your partner surprises you with a gift or does it also influence other areas of your partner's behaviour? (circle one number)

Influences just this particular situation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Influences all areas of partner's behaviour
---	---------------	---

Situation Three:

You walk into the room where your partner is waiting for you and he/she tells you that you look great today.

1. Write down the *one* major cause _____
2. Is the cause of your partner's compliment due to something about him/her or due to something about the situation? (circle one number)

Totally due to partner	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Totally due to situation
---------------------------	---------------	-----------------------------

3. In the future, if your partner compliments you, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

Will never again be present	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Will always be present
-----------------------------------	---------------	---------------------------

4. Is the cause something that just influences whether your partner tells you that you look great, or does it also influence other areas of your partner's behaviour? (circle one number)

Influences just this particular situation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Influences all areas of partner's behaviour
---	---------------	---

Situation Four:

You try to give your partner a hug, but he/she walks away from you.

1. Write down the *one* major cause _____

2. Is the cause of your partner walking away from you due to something about him/her or due to something about the situation? (circle one number)

Totally due to partner	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Totally due to situation
---------------------------	---------------	-----------------------------

3. In the future if your partner avoids affection from you, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

Will never again be present	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Will always be present
-----------------------------------	---------------	---------------------------

4. Is the cause something that just influences whether your partner walks away when you try to give him/her a hug, or does it also influence other areas of your partner's behaviour? (circle one number)

Influences just this particular situation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Influences all areas of partner's behaviour
---	---------------	---

Appendix D

Relationship Trust Scale

Please answer each of the following questions by circling the number that you feel is most representative of your own answer, consider your current relationship when answering each question.

1. When we encounter difficult and unfamiliar new circumstances I would not feel worried or threatened by letting my partner do what s/he wanted.

strongly disagree		neutral		strongly agree
-3	-2	-1	0	1
			2	3

2. I can count on my partner to be concerned about my welfare.

strongly disagree		neutral		strongly agree
-3	-2	-1	0	1
			2	3

3. In general, my partner does things in a variety of different ways. S/he almost never sticks to one way of doing things.

strongly disagree		neutral		strongly agree
-3	-2	-1	0	1
			2	3

4. My partner has proven to be trustworthy and I am willing to let him/her engage in activities which other partners find too threatening.

strongly disagree		neutral		strongly agree
-3	-2	-1	0	1
			2	3

5. I am familiar with the patterns of behaviour my partner has established and I can rely on him/her to behave in certain ways.

strongly disagree		neutral		strongly agree
-3	-2	-1	0	1
			2	3

6. Even when I don't know how my partner will react, I feel comfortable telling him/her anything about myself, even those things of which I am ashamed.

strongly disagree		neutral		strongly agree
-3	-2	-1	0	1
			2	3

7. Though times may change and the future is uncertain, I know my partner will always be ready and willing to offer me strength and support.

strongly disagree		neutral		strongly agree
-3	-2	-1	0	1
			2	3

8. I am never certain that my partner won't do something that I dislike or will embarrass me.

strongly disagree		neutral		strongly agree
-3	-2	-1	0	1
			2	3

9. My partner is very unpredictable. I never know how s/he is going to act from one day to the next.

strongly disagree		neutral		strongly agree
-3	-2	-1	0	1
			2	3

10. I feel very uncomfortable when my partner has to make decisions that will affect me personally.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

11. I have found that my partner is unusually dependable, especially when it comes to things which are important to me.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

12. My partner behaves in a very consistent manner.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

13. In my relationship with my partner, the future is unknown, which I worry about.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

14. Whenever we have to make an important decision in a situation we have never encountered before, I know my partner will be concerned about my welfare.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

15. Even if I have no reason to expect my partner to share things with me, I still feel certain that s/he will.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

16. I can rely on my partner to react in a positive way when I expose my weaknesses to him/her.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

17. I usually know how my partner is going to act. S/he can be counted on.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

18. When I share my problems with my partner, I know s/he will respond in a loving way even before I say anything.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

19. In our relationship I have to keep alert or my partner might take advantage of me.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

20. I am certain that my partner would not cheat on me, even if the opportunity arose and there was no chance that s/he would get caught.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

21. I sometimes avoid my partner because s/he is unpredictable and I fear saying or doing something which might create conflict.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

22. I can rely on my partner to keep the promises s/he makes to me.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

23. I would never guarantee that my partner and I will still be together and not have decided to end our relationship 10 years from now.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

24. When I am with my partner I feel secure in facing unknown new situations.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

25. Even when my partner makes excuses which sound rather unlikely, I am confident that s/he is telling the truth.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

26. I am willing to let my partner make decisions for me.

strongly disagree neutral strongly agree
 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3

Appendix E

Relationship Assessment Scale

Please answer the following questions by closely considering your current relationship. Circle the letter that most closely represents your answer.

1. How well does your partner meet your needs?

A	B	C	D	E
Poorly		Average		Extremely well

2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?

A	B	C	D	E
Unsatisfied		Average		Extremely satisfied

3. How good is your relationship compared to most?

A	B	C	D	E
Poor		Average		Excellent

4. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship?

A	B	C	D	E
Never		Average		Very often

5. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?

A	B	C	D	E
Hardly at all		Average		Completely

6. How much do you love your partner?

A	B	C	D	E
Not much		Average		Very much

7. How many problems are there in your relationship?

A	B	C	D	E
Very few		Average		Very many

Appendix F

Participant Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a study about memories of past relationship events and reactions to these memories. There are certain events that almost every couple will experience, such as meeting each other’s friends or having occasional arguments, but these events may be very different for each couple. We are examining how partners recall these events and how they react to each other’s memories.

You will be asked first to complete a few questionnaires assessing your overall feelings about your current relationship. Then the experimenter will select a common relationship event for you to describe in as much detail as you can recall. We would appreciate as complete and detailed a picture of the event as you can provide. Partners often show discrepancies in memories of their shared past, so after you have recorded all the details of the events you can recall, your descriptions of the events will be exchanged with your partner. You will be asked to answer some questions about your reactions to your partner’s descriptions of the events. You and your partner will not exchange the questionnaires about your reactions at any time.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty. All information you provide will remain confidential. All data will be coded and grouped for analysis; no individual data will be reported.

In appreciation of the time couples devote to this study, students enrolled in Introductory Psychology will receive 2 bonus points towards their final grade in that class. Participants not enrolled in Introductory Psychology will receive an entry into a random prize draw (1st prize=\$100, 2nd prize=\$50 and three 3rd prizes=\$10 each).

If you have questions or concerns about this study now or in the future, please contact Jennifer Pringle at 585-1745, or Dr. Diane Holmberg at 585-1226. Your participation is greatly appreciated!

I consent to participate in the above-mentioned study.

Signature of Participant _____ Date _____

Signature of Experimenter _____

Appendix G

Demographic & Relationship History Questionnaire

The following information is strictly confidential, so please feel free to answer completely and honestly. Your partner will not see these responses. Fill in the blanks or check the responses that are appropriate to you. PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE PAGES.

1. Your age _____
2. Your gender _____
3. Level of education last completed _____
4. Your occupation _____ (If retired, please specify former occupation)
(If self-employed, please specify the type of occupation)
5. Average hours worked weekly _____
6. Personal annual income _____ Rather not say _____
7. Did you live with both of your parents up until the age of 16 years?
_____yes _____no

If no, why not? _____

8. How close do you live to most of your family of origin?

Not at all							Very close
Close							close
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

9. How often do you see most of your family of origin?

- Daily _____
- Weekly _____
- Monthly _____
- Several times a year _____
- Once a year _____
- Other (please specify) _____

10. How emotionally close do you feel to most of your family of origin?

- | | | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| Not at all | | | | | | | Very close |
| Close | | | | | | | close |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |

11. How emotionally close do you feel to most of your partner's family of origin?

- | | | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| Not at all | | | | | | | Very close |
| Close | | | | | | | close |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |

12. At which one of the following stages would you place your current relationship?
Check one.

- Casually dating _____
- Seriously dating _____
- I've thought about marriage
but we haven't discussed it _____
- We've discussed marriage
but we have no formal plans _____
- We are engaged _____
- We are married _____

13. How long have you and your partner been together? (If married, how long have you been married?)
_____years _____months _____years _____months

14. Are you and your partner living together? _____yes _____no

15. If you are married, did you and your partner live together before marriage?
_____yes _____no
If yes, for how long? _____

16. Do you and your partner have children? _____yes _____no
If yes, how many? _____
What are their ages? _____

17. Do you plan to have children in the future? _____yes _____no _____not sure

18. Starting with your first dating relationship & including your current relationship,
approximately how many people have you dated? _____

19. How many of these relationships would you classify as serious? _____

20. How long was the longest of these relationships? _____

21. Is your longest relationship also your current relationship? _____yes _____no

22. In general, who in your relationship makes more of the decisions?
_____me _____my partner _____both equal

23. Generally, how well do you recall events that have happened over the course of this relationship?

Not at all well							Extremely well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

24. Generally, how well does your partner recall events that have happened over the course of this relationship?

Not at all well							Extremely well
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

25. Generally, how often do you talk about past relationship events with your partner?

Hardly ever							Very frequently
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

26. Generally, how often do you talk with people other than your partner about past events in your relationship?

Hardly ever							Very frequently
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

27. Do you consider yourself to be a religious/spiritual person? yes no

28. How important a role does religion/spirituality play in your daily life?

Not at all important							Extremely important
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

29. Do you identify yourself with a specific ethnic background (e.g. Chinese, Scottish, Jamaican...)? yes no

If yes, then what ethnicity do you identify yourself as?

30. How important a role does your ethnicity play in your daily life?

Not at all important							Extremely important
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Appendix H

Participant Debriefing Form

Partners in romantic relationships often report different memories for events that they experienced together in the past. Typically, it has been found that females tend to recall relationship events with greater detail and accuracy than do their male partners. Assuming these memory differences are a common experience for couples, what effect do they have on a relationship?

The current study investigates the attributions, or explanations, that one will make about a partner's memory when it differs from one's own account of an event. It is expected that partners with superior memory for relationship events will report negative attributions for their partners' poorer memory reports. Current levels of trust and satisfaction within a relationship may also influence attributions for a partner's memory performance. Please note these hypotheses are merely predictions at this point.

Remember that all information you provided will remain confidential. All data will be coded and grouped for analyses; no individual data will be reported.

If you have questions or concerns about your participation in this study, either now or in the future, please contact Jennifer Pringle at 585-1745 or Dr. Diane Holmberg at 585-1226.

If you have friends or classmates who plan to participate in this study, please do not discuss what was involved until after they have completed the study as well. It is important that we receive a true picture of each partner's memory, which would be tainted if they discuss the methods or expectations of the study in advance. Thank you!

Appendix I

Script for Greeting Participants

After escorting the couple to the lab, have them sit at separate tables in the same room.

Thanks for coming in today! I really depend on people volunteering for this study so I appreciate it a lot. Basically, I am looking at variation in memories for events that happen within a relationship, and how partners react to these memories. We know there are certain events that almost every couple will experience, such as meeting each other's friends for the first time, or having an occasional argument. However, how these events unfold will be very different for each couple. And there's also wide variation in how each partner remembers the events, since some of them may have happened quite a while ago.

First I'll be asking each of you to fill out some general questions about yourself and your relationship together. You'll do that on your own and won't have to show those answers to each other at any time, so you can be totally honest! Next I'll pick an event that probably happened since you've been together and get you to write down every thing you can remember about that time. It's important that I get a full picture of the event, so I need you to write down every detail that you think happened. Then I'll get you to look over each other's descriptions of the event and answer some questions about your response to your partner's memory of the event. You won't be looking at each other's responses to the memories, just each other's description of the event itself. I'll give you more detailed instructions as we go along.

All the information you give me will be confidential. Only my supervisor and I will see that data and it'll just be identified by a code number. All the data will be coded and grouped for analysis. No individual data will be reported. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty, and you also have the right to withdraw your data from analysis later.

As a thank you for your time, if you're an Intro Psychology student here at Acadia, you'll receive 2 credit points towards your grade in that class. If neither of you is in that course, you'll receive an entry in our random prize draw. The top prize is valued at \$100, the 2nd place prize is valued at \$50 and there are three 3rd place prizes valued at \$10.

IF Intro Psyc students ask for the prize draw entry instead of the points, they can do that. Really emphasize that it's EITHER points OR the prize draw – not both, and they can't change their choice later!

Any questions before we begin?

Answer questions, but don't tell them hypotheses or anything that will influence their behaviour in this study. Say that you'll tell them at the end of study. Have each partner read, sign, & date a consent form.

Escort one member of the couple to the other room (or other side of room if testing in a large classroom). Hand each partner the packet of questionnaires.

These are general questions about yourself and your relationship. Answer as truthfully as possible; your partner will not see your answers at any time. Please be sure to look at both sides of the papers. Anything that doesn't apply to you or your relationships can be left blank. Let me know if you have any questions, and tell me when you are done.

Wait in hallway while partners complete questionnaires. Answer any questions. Collect questionnaires from both partners when they are done; put them aside.

*Check the random assignment sheet to see which partner is to nominate which event will be considered the "first date", in case there is ambiguity. Ask that partner to briefly describe the event, then go into the other room, describe the event in just a few words and check that the other partner recalls that event. ** Do not give out details of the event when confirming with the second partner, so as not to tamper natural memory** (ex., just say "He says you went to a party. Do you remember that time?") Even if they do not agree on what was the first date, have them describe the nominated occasion to ensure that both partners are recalling the same event.*

Hand out the sheets "First Date".

Consider the event that was just nominated to represent your first date and answer these questions while considering that occasion. Please record every detail you think you can recall, no matter how trivial or hazy it may seem. Let me know if you have questions.

Answer any questions that will not tamper with their memories of the event.

Collect the memory reports when they each finish.

If one partner finishes first, take their memory sheets and offer them magazines to read while waiting.

Then collect the memory from the other partner when they finish.

Now I'm going to get each of you to look over each other's accounts of your first date. Let me know when you have looked it over once.

When they have read it once, give them the sheet "Response Questions – First Date"

Now please answer these questions about your reactions to your partner's memory of the event. You will not have to show each other your reactions at any time. You can look at their description of the event while you do this if you need. Let me know when you have completed the questions.

Collect the memory reports and the response questions when each partner is done.

Give each partner a Debriefing Form.

*Have Intro. Psyc. students sign a receipt for their credit points. If they choose the prize draw instead, have them sign a receipt that indicates they forfeited their right to points in favour of a prize draw entry. **THEY CANNOT RECEIVE BOTH CREDIT POINTS AND A BALLOT** – although one partner may choose points while the other chooses the ballot.*

Give a ballot to people who choose to go in the prize draw and get them to put it in the ballot box in Jenn's office.

Thank you very much for participating in this study. Remember that your data will remain completely confidential. If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, either now or in the future, please do not hesitate to call Jenn at the number given on this form. If you have any questions at this time, I'd be happy to answer them.

If you have acquaintances who are thinking of participating in this study, please do not tell them all about what they will be doing, so that they will have a fresh, open mind when they come in for the study, just like you did. Afterwards, you can all talk about it as much as you like, or not at all! And if you know of any other dating or married couples around here who might want to participate, my phone number is at the bottom of the sheet and they can call to find out more about it. Thanks again.

Script for Greeting Participants – CONTROL GROUP

After escorting the couple to the lab, have them sit at separate tables in the same room.

Thanks for coming in today! I really depend on people volunteering for this study so I appreciate it a lot. Basically, I am looking at variation in memories for events that happen within a relationship, and how partners react to these memories. We know there are certain events that almost every couple will experience, such as meeting each other's friends for the first time, or having an occasional argument. However, how these events unfold will be very different for each couple. And there's also wide variation in how each partner remembers the events, since some of them may have happened quite a while ago.

First I'll be asking each of you to fill out some general questions about yourself and your relationship together. You'll do that on your own and won't have to show those answers to each other at any time, so you can be totally honest! Next I'll pick an event that probably happened since you've been together and get you to write down every thing you can remember about that time. It's important that I get a full picture of the event, so I need you to write down every detail that you think happened. Your partner will not see your description of how you remembered the event. I'll give you more detailed instructions as we go along.

All the information you give me will be confidential. Only my supervisor and I will see that data and it'll just be identified by a code number. All the data will be coded and grouped for analysis. No individual data will be reported. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty, and you also have the right to withdraw your data from analysis later.

As a thank you for your time, if you're an Intro Psychology student here at Acadia, you'll receive 2 credit points towards your grade in that class. If neither of you is in that course, you'll receive an entry in our random prize draw. The top prize is valued at \$100, the 2nd place prize is valued at \$50 and there are three 3rd place prizes valued at \$10.

IF Intro Psyc students ask for the prize draw entry instead of the points, they can do that. Really emphasize that it's EITHER points OR the prize draw – not both, and they can't change their choice later!

Any questions before we begin?

Answer questions, but don't tell them hypotheses or anything that will influence their behaviour in this study. Say that you'll tell them at the end of study.

Have each partner read, sign, & date a consent form.

Escort one member of the couple to the other room (or other side of room if testing in a large classroom). Hand each partner the packet of questionnaires.

These are general questions about yourself and your relationship. Answer as truthfully as possible; your partner will not see your answers at any time. Please be sure to look at both sides of the papers. Anything that doesn't apply to you or your relationships can be left blank. Let me know if you have any questions, and tell me when you are done.

Wait in hallway while partners complete questionnaires. Answer any questions.

Collect questionnaires from both partners when they are done; put them aside.

Check the random assignment sheet to see which partner is to nominate which event will be considered the "first date", in case there is ambiguity. Ask that partner to briefly describe the event, then go into the other room, describe the event in just a few words and check that the other partner recalls that event. ❦

*Do not give out details of the event when confirming with the second partner, so as not to tamper natural memory** (ex., just say "He says you went to a party. Do you remember that time?") Even if they do not agree on what was the first date, have them describe the nominated occasion to ensure that both partners are recalling the same event.*

Hand out the sheets "First Date".

Consider the event that was just nominated to represent your first date and answer these questions while considering that occasion. Please record every detail you think you can recall, no matter how trivial or hazy it may seem. Your partner will not see your answers. Let me know if you have questions.

Answer any questions that will not tamper with their memories of the event.

Collect the memory reports when they each finish.

If one partner finishes first, take their memory sheets and offer them magazines to read while waiting. Then collect the memory from the other partner when they finish.

Now I just have a few follow-up questions for you to answer generally.

Give them the last sheet from the packet "Response Questions – First Date". This sheet is titled "Follow-up Questions"

Give each partner a Debriefing Form.

*Have Intro. Psyc. students sign a receipt for their credit points. If they choose the prize draw instead, have them sign a receipt that indicates they forfeited their right to points in favour of a prize draw entry. **THEY CANNOT RECEIVE BOTH CREDIT POINTS AND A BALLOT** – although one partner may choose points while the other chooses the ballot.*

Give a ballot to people who choose to go in the prize draw and get them to put it in the ballot box in Jenn's office.

Thank you very much for participating in this study. Remember that your data will remain completely confidential. If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, either now or in the future, please do not hesitate to call Jenn at the number given on this form. If you have any questions at this time, I'd be happy to answer them.

If you have acquaintances who are thinking of participating in this study, please do not tell them all about what they will be doing, so that they will have a fresh, open mind when they come in for the study, just like you did. Afterwards, you can all talk about it as much as you like, or not at all! And if you know of any other dating or married couples around here who might want to participate, my phone number is at the bottom of the sheet and they can call to find out more about it. Thanks again.

Appendix J

Example of Coded Responses to One Memory Prompt
Disagreements Noted by //

Couple #41, Female (14/15 agreements)

Primary Coder

We went to the 'Vil / but my friends were underage // and couldn't get in. / So we piled into B's car / and went to Legend's // in Kentville. / There was a band playing / and we danced, / I was the only one to get ID'd (3 times). / I played some VLT's, / and joked around with the bouncer / and C from C was there. / We got food, / and danced some more. / Went back to B's room / and danced alone to his records. /

Second Coder

We went to the 'Vil / but my friends were underage and couldn't get in. / So we piled into B's car / and went to Legend's in Kentville. / There was a band playing / and we danced, / I was the only one to get ID'd (3 times). / I played some VLT's, / and joked around with the bouncer / and C from C was there. / We got food, / and danced some more. / Went back to B's room / and danced alone to his records. /

Couple #41, Male (11/12 agreements)

Primary Coder

The Edge in Kentville (repetition because it was mentioned in response to a previous question) / Dancing - which I never do, / but G was so beautiful I would have done anything to impress her, just to get her to notice me (private thought). / After the bar was closed we came back to my place / and I put on some records / - "Footloose," / when a slow song "Almost Paradise" / came on, we slow danced. / I stole a soft gentle short kiss. / I knew this night that I would want to be with her forever (private thought). / I walked her home a little later. /

Second Coder

The Edge in Kentville (repetition because it was mentioned in response to a previous question) / Dancing - which I never do, / but G was so beautiful I would have done anything to impress her, // just to get her to notice me (private thought). / After the bar was closed we came back to my place / and I put on some records / - "Footloose," / when a slow song "Almost Paradise" / came on, we slow danced. / I stole a soft gentle short kiss. / I knew this night that I would want to be with her forever (private thought). / I walked her home a little later. /

Appendix K

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating as Predictors of Reactions to Partner

Memory Performance

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating Predicting Females' Overall Ratings

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 3
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.00	.008	.08

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating Predicting Males' Overall Ratings

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 3
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.015	.72	-1.26

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating Predicting Females' Judgement Ratings

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 3
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.006	.50	-.58

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating Predicting Males' Judgement Ratings

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step 3
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.002	.24	-.48

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating Predicting Females' Stability Attributions

<u>Step</u>	<u>Predictor</u>	<u>R² Change</u>	<u>F Change</u>	<u>Beta at Step 3</u>
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.001	.04	-.19

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating Predicting Males' Stability Attributions

<u>Step</u>	<u>Predictor</u>	<u>R² Change</u>	<u>F Change</u>	<u>Beta at Step 3</u>
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.006	.23	-.80

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating Predicting Females' Locus Attributions

<u>Step</u>	<u>Predictor</u>	<u>R² Change</u>	<u>F Change</u>	<u>Beta at Step 3</u>
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.04	1.35	1.37

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating Predicting Males' Locus Attributions

<u>Step</u>	<u>Predictor</u>	<u>R² Change</u>	<u>F Change</u>	<u>Beta at Step 3</u>
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.001	.04	-.32

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating Predicting Females' Effect Reactions

<u>Step</u>	<u>Predictor</u>	<u>R² Change</u>	<u>F Change</u>	<u>Beta at Step 3</u>
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.001	.04	-.20

Interaction of Trust with Partner Memory Rating Predicting Males' Effect Reactions

<u>Step</u>	<u>Predictor</u>	<u>R² Change</u>	<u>F Change</u>	<u>Beta at Step 3</u>
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.02	1.06	-1.43

n = 39

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Appendix L

Own Memory Counts, Attributional Style, and Trust as Predictors of Reactions to Partner

Memory Counts

Female's Overall Reactions with Memory Counts:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step Two
1	Trust	.08	1.08	.28
	Attributional style			.08
	Own memory rating			-.25
2	Partner memory rating	.16	7.20*	.44*
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.04	2.11	-1.97 (at Step Three)

Male's Overall Reactions with Memory Counts:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step Two
1	Trust	.20	2.99*	.46**
	Attributional style			-.15
	Own memory rating			.06
2	Partner memory rating	.002	.08	.05
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.005	.20	-.86 (at Step Three)

n = 39

°p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Females' Stability Attributions with Memory Counts:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step Two
1	Trust	.01	.13	.08
	Attributional style			.05
	Own memory rating			-.18
2	Partner memory rating	.13	5.02*	.40*
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.05	1.97	-2.04 (at Step Three)

Males' Stability Attributions with Memory Counts:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step Two
1	Trust	.10	1.33	.18
	Attributional style			.17
	Own memory rating			.14
2	Partner memory rating	.002	.08	.05
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.01	.53	-1.48 (at Step Three)

n = 39

°p< .10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Females' Locus Attributions with Memory Counts:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step Two
1	Trust	.06	.69	.10
	Attributional style			.13
	Own memory rating			-.24
2	Partner memory rating	.02	.75	.16
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.01	.27	.80 (at Step Three)

Males' Locus Attributions with Memory Counts:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step Two
1	Trust	.12	1.65	-.15
	Attributional style			-.24
	Own memory rating			-.17
2	Partner memory rating	.001	.04	-.04
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.006	.24	-1.00 (at Step Three)

n = 39

°p< .10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Females' Effect Reactions with Memory Counts:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step Two
1	Trust	.11	1.40	.27
	Attributional style			-.001
	Own memory rating			.05
2	Partner memory rating	.05	1.99	.25
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.009	.38	-.90 (at Step Three)

Males' Effect Reactions with Memory Counts:

Step	Predictor	R ² Change	F Change	Beta at Step Two
1	Trust	.19	2.79°	.23
	Attributional style			-.24
	Own memory rating			.34°
2	Partner memory rating	.003	.14	-.06
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.01	.47	1.32 (at Step Three)

n = 39

°p < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Males' Judgement Reactions with Memory Counts:

<u>Step</u>	<u>Predictor</u>	<u>R² Change</u>	<u>F Change</u>	<u>Beta at Step Two</u>
1	Trust	.63	19.42***	.80***
	Attributional style			-.10
	Own memory rating	.		-.09
2	Partner memory rating	.01	1.33	.14
3	Trust x partner memory rating	.00	.01	-.14 (at Step Three)

n = 39

^op < .10, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001