What made you a Love phobic or Passion craver?

The influence of Love Experiences and Attachment patterns on Attitudes of Love

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WHAT MADE YOU A LOVE PHOBIC OR PASSION CRAVER?
THE INFLUENCE OF LOVE EXPERIENCES AND ATTACHMENT PATTERNS ON ATTITUDES OF LOVE

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The purpose of this study was to examine possible links between relationship beliefs (Implicit Theories of Relationships and Importance of intimacy and passion), love experiences (experience of Intimacy and Passion) and attachment styles (the dimensions of Avoidance and Anxiety), in order to predict what kind of experiences and attachment patterns, would lead to which belief. A survey consisting of four different measures was filled out by 165 participants. The results showed Destiny and Growth beliefs were both predicted by Attachment avoidance. Destiny belief was also predicted by Experience of passion. Importance of passion and Importance of intimacy were both predicted by Attachment anxiety, Importance of passion by Experience of passion and Importance of intimacy by Experience of intimacy. People with different levels of Implicit Theories of Relationships showed a significant difference in Importance of passion.

People regard love in different ways. Some would consider the classical image of love to be a myth, resulting in a very practical approach to relationships. Whereas others will search an eternity for their one true soul mate, and yet others will point out they never really knew what love was until they met a certain partner. These different viewpoints will affect how a person handles meeting a new partner, whether the potential relationship is given a chance, and whether to stay in a troubling relationship. Our attitudes and beliefs about love will influence and shape, for many people in Western societies, the most important life choice: the choice of a romantic partner to share our life with. Certain beliefs of love tend to be more functional than others when making successful relationships, and some are considerably dysfunctional if you want love in your life. With the divorce rate of today, understanding from where these beliefs spring, seems important. This study will be the first in looking at experiences of love as a predictor of romantic beliefs.

The history of research on romantic love
Research in the field of romantic love have undergone a strong development during the last three decades, with researchers getting a better understanding of the mystical concept of love. The rising interest may evolve from the acknowledgment of romantic relationships as a great part of human happiness (Myers & Shurts, 2002, Myers, Sweeney, & Witmer, 2000). During the 50’ies and 60’ies research on love was not thought to be a respectable research area because of the mystical implications of the field (Myers & Shurts, 2002). During the 70’s, this however started to change with Rubin’s creation of scales to measure and separate loving from liking (Rubin, 1970). The professional acceptance continued during the 80’ies and gave way to a new interest and focus in the field (Myers & Shurts, 2002). Different theories, measures, definitions and love variables evolved, creating a wide variety of angles to choose.
from when studying love. This is considered the biggest problem in the field, because a lack of a common definition of the concept of love gives way to many interpretations (Beall & Sternberg, 1995; Hendrick & Hendrick, 1989; Myers & Shurts, 2002).

To present some of the more commonly used theories Hatfield and Sprecher (1986) focused on the difference between passionate and companionate love. They created the Passionate Love scale, which measures both the physical and psychological aspects of passionate love. Lee (1973) created a theory on different styles of love that were later reworked by Hendrick and Hendrick (1986). The theory separates between six styles of love, for example: Eros, a passionate, physical and emotional love, Storge, a companionate love, Pragma, a pragmatic shopping-list approach to love and Mania, a love filled with obsession and jealousy. Another theory of great influence is Sternberg’s (1986) Triangular theory of love, which divides love into the three components of intimacy, passion and commitment. Intimacy is thought to be the emotional aspect of love, with the feeling of closeness, security and belongingness. Passion is the motivational aspect, like the drive that leads to romance, attraction, sexual union and arousal. The commitment component is mainly the cognitive aspect of love, like the realization that you love somebody and the decision to stay in that relationship. The components are measured with the Triangular Love Scale (TLS) (1997).

Yet another breakthrough in the research on love came 1987 when Hazan and Shaver published a theory on romantic love as an attachment process, and found support for the same attachment styles in adults as with infants (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). The three attachment styles secure, avoidant and anxious/ambivalent, the predecessors Bowlby and Ainsworth had found when studying small children with their parents, could now also be detected in adults in romantic relationships (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1982). Even if the use of these three subgroups led to a theoretically meaningful difference between attachments styles for adults, several researchers have pointed out the flaws of this methodology. Today most researchers agree that the attachment system for adults varies along distinct dimensions of anxiety and avoidance, with low scores on these dimensions indicating attachment security (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Brennan, Clark, Shaver, 1998; Mikulincer, Shaver, & Pereg, 2003; Simpson, Rholes, & Phillips, 1996). The dimensions of avoidance and anxiety are measured with the Experience in Close Relationships scale (ECR), developed by Brennan, Shaver and Clark (1998). Attachment anxiety is defined as involving a fear of interpersonal rejection and abandonment, an overwhelming need for approval from others and distress when a partner is unavailable or unresponsive. Attachment avoidance is defined as involving a fear of dependence and interpersonal intimacy, an overwhelming need for self-reliance, and reluctance to self-disclosure.

Research on love and relationship satisfaction
Relationship satisfaction is an important aspect in the research on love because it accounts for the practical use in the field. As for attachment, the orientation one belongs to has been found to predict satisfaction in romantic relationships: secure attachment has shown positive association with relationship satisfaction while insecure attachment has been negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction (Banse, 2004; Carnelly, Pietromonaco, & Jaffe, 1996; Creasey & Hesson-McInnis, 2001; Simpson, 1990).

When Madey and Rogers (2009) studied the association between attachment and the components of the TLS (intimacy, passion, and commitment) on relationship satisfaction, they found that a more secure attachment predicted intimacy and commitment, which in turn
predicted greater relationship satisfaction. When controlling for passion, secure attachment and passion each provided direct paths to relationship satisfaction (Madey & Rogers, 2009).

The different love scales, like the TLS, have all been subjects to studies linking them to relationship satisfaction, in which a few of the scales have been shown to have a higher correlation with relationship satisfaction than others. For example the Eros subscale of the Attitudes about love scale, has a correlation with satisfaction ranging from moderate to high (Bierhoff, 1991, Bookwala, Frieze & Grote, 1994), and the Passionate love scale has shown correlations with satisfaction at moderate levels for both men and women (Sprecher & Regan, 1998). Both of these scales are thought to measure passionate love, which is also the case with the Sternberg passion subscale, having shown high correlations with satisfaction. As for the intimacy subscale of Sternberg the correlation with satisfaction is high as well (Sternberg, 1997, Acker & Davis, 1992, Hendrick & Hendrick, 1988). The intimacy part of the TLS has been regarded as having many of the components of companionate love, as measured by the Storge subscale, which has shown weak correlations with satisfaction, or the Rubin love scale having shown moderate to high correlations with satisfaction (Fehr, 2001).

To measure love experiences as in the current study, it is important to choose measures both commonly used because of accuracy and validity, as well those having shown a high correlation with relationship satisfaction. The TLS subscales of intimacy and passion are considered to measure up to those criteria (eg. Madey & Rogers, 2009, Overbeek, Ha, Scholte, de Kemp & Engels, 2007).

*Measuring love experience*
This study focuses on whether relationship beliefs can be explained through attachment styles and love experiences. The measures of love that exist in research, have only taken into consideration measuring love in one certain relationship, in difference to the experience of love throughout a person’s life. When trying to explain relationship beliefs the focus should be on a person’s entire experience, not just one current relationship. A Love Experience scale is then necessary and has been developed from the Sternberg TLS (Eklund, 2010). This love Experience scale measures experience of Intimacy and Passion in a person’s best relationship so far in life, and also the highest level totally experienced in every relationship taken together. Passion is here defined, much like the Sternberg passion component, as a feeling of physical and psychological attraction, with strong arousal and the intense want for sexual union. Intimacy is defined, in line with the Sternberg intimacy component, as a feeling of connectedness, closeness and of being secure with somebody (Eklund, 2010). The developed measure was improved before this study through two pilot studies.

*Attitudes and beliefs about love*
Attitudes and beliefs about love have received more focus in the field, as peoples’ beliefs about relationships can have great consequences for their romantic lives (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982; Fletcher & Kininmonth, 1992; Hendrick, Hendrick & Adler, 1988; Knee, 1996, 1998). Peoples’ beliefs will affect, for example, how they handle setbacks in a relationship and if they stay or leave a relationship with a dissatisfying partner. People seem to have different mental models for what makes a satisfying relationship. These inner models or beliefs will decide the individual’s goal and motivations in a relationship (Knee, 1998).

One of the most used measures to study relationship beliefs is Eidelson and Epstein’s (1982) scale to measure dysfunctional beliefs in relationships. It has been used in for example couples therapy, and identifies dysfunctional beliefs like *the sexes are different, partners*
cannot change and disagreement is destructive (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). Sprecher and Metts (1989) instead focused on identifying romantic beliefs in American college students and created the Romantic beliefs scale which identifies the four beliefs Love at first sight, Love finds a way, One and only and Idealization.

One of the most recognized scales about relationship beliefs is the Implicit theories of relationships (ITRs), developed by Knee, Patrick and Lonsbary (2003). The scale measures Destiny belief and Growth belief. Destiny is defined as the belief that potential partners either are compatible or they are not, and there is a focus on first impressions and sensing the “rightness” of the relationship early on. Growth beliefs is defined as the belief that satisfied relationships arise through development and effort, where you overcome problems together and grow closer. In studies by Knee et al. (1998, 2003) Destiny belief is mentioned to correlate positively with the belief that partners cannot change themselves or their relationship (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982), and also with the pragmatic shopping-list approach to love called Pragma (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986). Growth belief has been found to correlate negatively with the belief that partners cannot change, and positively with the friendship-based approach to love called Storge (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986). As for Sprecher and Metts’ (1989) Romantic beliefs scale, Destiny is associated with the belief that there is only one potential partner, idealizing romance and belief in love at first sight, while Growth is associated with the belief that love will find a way (Sprecher & Metts, 1989). When looking at responses to dissatisfaction in relationship, ITRs are associated with Rusbult’s exit-voice-loyalty-neglect typology (Rusbult, Zembrot, & Gunn, 1982). Growth belief has been found to correlate with voicing concerns about the relationship, and being loyal to the relationship, whereas Destiny belief has shown correlations with neglecting the relationship. Looking at attachment dimensions, Growth belief has been found to be moderately correlated with attachment security, but no significant correlations have yet been found with the attachment dimensions (Knee et al., 2003).

ITRs differ somewhat from implicit theories in other domains since they are not assessed as opposing ends of a single continuum. In the relationship domain it is somewhat desirable to believe both that potential relationships can be diagnosed and that relationships require maintenance (Knee et al., 2003). High or low levels of Destiny and Growth belief entail a separation into four categories: Cultivation orientation (high growth, low destiny), Evaluation orientation (low growth, high destiny), Optimization orientation (high growth, high destiny) and Helpless orientation (low growth, low destiny). Optimization orientation is the preferred type since it is quite desirable to hold high beliefs on both dimensions. The helplessly oriented has low expectations of love and relationships and could in a way be seen as not quite believing in love. As for the extreme orientations, cultivation orientation tends to buffer negative consequences in relationships and evaluation orientation tends to exacerbate them (Knee, Nanayakkara, Vietor, Neighbors, Patrick, 2001; Knee, Patrick, Vietor & Neighbors, 2002).

Another part of the attitudes and beliefs about love research is the examination of peoples’ considerations of what is important in a relationship. Fletcher and Kininmonth (1992) developed an Individual differences scale, which aims to describe important elements that should exist in a good relationship. Like Sternberg they came to the conclusion that intimacy and passion were two important components, as well as individuality and external factors. A person’s belief about the importance of these four factors could then be measured. The factor of individuality contains items related to autonomy, something that the Sternberg model has been criticized for lacking, but otherwise the Sternberg TLS is more thoroughly structured
and considerably more recognized and studied. Sternberg also engaged in the importance research in his study in 1997, where he let his participants fill out the TLS both for how characteristic the items were for their own relationship and also for how important the items were in a good relationship. Intimacy rated for more important than passion in both the Sternberg and the Fletcher and Kininmonth’s study.

This study aims to gather further information concerning our beliefs about love and relationships. More specifically it will examine the backgrounds as to why people hold certain beliefs, in order to understand and possibly in the longer run, change maladaptive beliefs. Because of the sensitive area romantic relationships represent, the participants’ answers will be specifically controlled for Social Desirability.

**Purpose and hypotheses**
The main purpose of this study is to examine links between relationship beliefs (ITRs and Importance of intimacy and passion), love experiences (Experience of Intimacy and Passion) and attachment styles (the dimensions of Avoidance and Anxiety), in order to gain understanding of what kind of experiences and attachment styles, would lead to which belief.

The hypotheses were:

Hypothesis 1. Experience of passion predicts Destiny belief.

Hypothesis 2. Experience of intimacy predicts Growth belief.

Hypothesis 3. Experience of passion and Attachment anxiety predicts Importance of passion.

Hypothesis 4. Experience of intimacy, Attachment anxiety and Attachment avoidance predicts Importance of intimacy.

An additional purpose is to explore the differences in experience of love between the ITRs four groups (the orientations of cultivation, evaluation, optimization and helpless), as well as examining differences in experienced levels of passion between participants with different relationship status.

**Method**

**Participants**
The sample consisted of 165 participants. They were recruited through a link requesting research participants on the social network of Facebook, or through a note requesting research participants at the department of Psychology at Stockholm University. Of the participants, 94 were women, and 71 were men. The mean age was 33.2 years (SD = 9.7).

**Measurements**
The survey consisted of four parts, two measuring attitudes about love, one measuring attachment orientation and one measuring love experiences. The measurements where translated into Swedish by the author and tested in two pilot studies before lounging the main survey.
Attachment orientation.

Attachment orientation was measured by the ECR-S (Brennan et al., 1998, Wei et al., 2007), which is the 12 items short form of the ECR-R. 6 items measure avoidance, with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.82 in this study; 6 items measure anxiety, with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.72 in this study. The 36 items ECR-R has in previous research had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.90, but the gain in having a shorter questionnaire that would be less time consuming for the voluntary participants was thought to be a greater advantage in this study. Examples of items are: "I want to get close to my partner, but I keep pulling back.” (avoidance) ”My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.” (anxiety).

Love Experience.

Love experience was measured by a Love Experience scale developed by the author (Eklund, 2010), originally using items from the Sternberg TLS intimacy and passion subscales. The scale was developed further for this study, in two pilot studies, resulting in a scale of 13 items, 6 measuring experience of passion and 7 measuring experience of intimacy, with a test-re test reliability of 0.62. The scale measures the highest level experienced in life on the components of intimacy and passion, as well as the highest level experienced in the “best” relationship the person has had. The participants were first asked to think about their “best” relationship experienced when responding to the items. Then, they were asked for possible higher levels of experience on each item, which they might have experienced in other relationships. The individual’s highest experience of the item (either from the best relationship or other relationships) will later be used when identifying the individuals’ highest experienced levels of intimacy and passion. Cronbach’s alpha for the passion scale was 0.75, and for the intimacy scale 0.79 in this study. Examples of items: "I can rely on my partner when I need him/her.” (intimacy), ”When we are not together I find it hard to stop thinking about my partner” (passion). (Appendix A)

Beliefs about love.

Beliefs about love where measured by a shortened version of the Implicit Theories of Relationships scale (Knee et al., 2003) which held 18 items (9 measuring Destiny, 9 measuring Growth). The shortened version was chosen because of translation issues and reliability problems surrounding two items in each scale. Cronbach’s alpha for the Destiny scale was 0.87, and for the Growth scale 0.77 in this study. Examples of items are: “Early troubles in a relationship signify a poor match between partners.” (Destiny) “The ideal relationship develops gradually over time.” (Growth) Participants scoring higher than 3.5 on a dimension were said to be “high” in this dimension, while participants scoring lower than 3.5 were said to be “low” in this dimension. (The items were scored from 1-7 by the participants, 3.5 being in the middle, as is described by Knee et al. (2003)) This gave a separation into the four groups of the ITRs model. The cultivation group included 58 participants, the evaluation group 35 participants, the optimization group 69 participants and the helpless group 3 participants, in the current study.

Complementing the more complex beliefs of Destiny and Growth, beliefs about love where also measured by an Importance scale asking for how important different aspects are in a good relationship. The items were developed from the Love Experience scale (originally the TLS), 5 items measuring perceived Importance of intimacy and 5 items measuring perceived Importance of passion. Cronbach’s alpha for the passion part of the scale was 0.77, and for the intimacy part 0.71, in this study. Examples of items: How important would you say the
following aspects are for a good relationship? “That you can rely on each other when you need to.” (intimacy) “That you are very attracted to each other.” (passion) (Appendix B)

**Social Desirability and background variables.**
At the end of the questionnaire the participants responded to a Social Desirability scale, a short form of the Marlowe-Crowne Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) developed by Schalling and co-workers (e.g., Schalling, 1985). The participants were also asked to provide information about gender, age, relationship status (single/in a relationship/in between), number of relationships lasting longer than 3 months and if the “best” relationship thought of in the Love experience part was a current relationship or not.

The items in the survey (except for the items in the Importance scale) were answered with a likert scale from 1 to 7, were 1 stood for “Disagree completely” and 7 for ”Agree completely”. The Importance scale was answered with the same 1-7 likert scale, were 1 stood for “Unimportant” and 7 for “Important”.

**Procedur**
A link was posted on the social network of Facebook requesting research participants in a study revolving love experiences. The link was later “shared” by those who took part in the study making it possible for the study to reach even more people. After clicking on the link each participant would be directed to an online survey, which took about 10-15 minutes to complete. The participants from the psychological department wrote down their e-mail address when signing up for the study revolving love experiences, and later got an e-mail sent to them with a link to the same online survey.
Results

Table 1 presents the correlations between the variables in the study, as well as means and standard deviations.

Table 1. Correlations (Pearson) between the variables in the study. Experience of Intimacy and Passion refers to the total experience in life.

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*Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, woman=1, man=2*

As can be seen in table 1, significant correlations existed between several variables. Destiny had significant correlations with Experience of passion and Importance of passion, while Growth had significant correlations with Importance of intimacy and Attachment avoidance. As for the Importance components, Importance of Passion was significantly correlated with Experience of passion, Destiny, Importance of intimacy and Social desirability, while Importance of intimacy was significantly correlated with Experience of passion, Experience of intimacy, Growth, Importance of passion, Attachment avoidance and gender.
Results of the regression analyses

Table 2 shows four hierarchical multiple regression analyses, corresponding to the four hypotheses. The analyses were performed with the relationship belief variables as dependent variable. Social desirability was entered at step 1 in each analysis, and both attachment variables as well as the experience variables were put in at step 2.

With Destiny as dependent variable (Hypothesis 1), Experience of passion and Attachment avoidance predicted significantly, Experience of passion at a 0.01 level, and Attachment avoidance negatively at a 0.05 level. In total the two variables accounted for 6.6 % of the variance. With Growth as dependent variable (Hypothesis 2) Attachment avoidance was the only predictor, predicting negatively at a 0.05 level, accounting for 2.8 % of the variance.

With Importance of passion as dependent variable (Hypothesis 3) Experience of passion predicted significantly at a 0.01 level, and Attachment anxiety at a 0.05 level. The two variables together accounted for 21.8 % of the variance. With Importance of intimacy as dependent variable (Hypothesis 4) Experience of intimacy was the strongest predictor at a 0.01 level, followed by Attachment anxiety at a 0.05 level, the two of them accounting for 24.8 % of the variance.

It should be noted, in Hypotheses 1 and 3, if not controlling for Social desirability, no significant results were found concerning the attachment dimensions. The Experience components were significant both when Social desirability was put in at step 1 and when it was not, the attachment dimensions however, were not. As for Hypotheses 2 and 4, the attachment results became more strongly significant when controlling for Social desirability, though they were significant also before the control.

Table 2. The results from the hierarchical regression analyses (1-4).

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*p < 0.05  **p < 0.01
Differences between the ITRs groups

A one-way ANOVA was used to compare the groups of the ITRs model (the Cultivation, Evaluation, Optimization and Helpless orientations), finding the groups to differ significantly on levels of Importance of passion, as well as on the differentiation of experience of passion between the best relationship had and overall experience in life. The results can be seen in Table 3.

The differentiation of passion measure evolved from the Love Experience scale. The participants filled out information on both their best relationship experienced on the component of passion, as well as their overall highest experience in life on the passion component. A differentiation existed when the participant entered a lower score for their best relationship, than for their overall experience (other relationships than their best one). Having a differentiation of passion then means having your highest experience of passion in other relationships than your best one. The evaluation group (high in Destiny, low in Growth) in this study had not experienced a differentiation at all, the differentiation being zero for every individual in the group (their best relationship included their highest experience of passion). The cultivation group (low in Destiny, high in Growth) had a differentiation of 0.70 and the optimization group 0.35 (high in both Destiny and Growth). A post hoc test showed the evaluation group and the cultivation group differing significantly from each other.

The variable differing the most in between the ITRs groups was however Importance of passion. The cultivation group scored the highest, followed by the optimization group and the cultivation group. A post hoc test showed the evaluation group and the cultivation group differing significantly from each other. The helpless group (low in both Destiny and Growth) was too small for comparison, including only 3 people. It might however be worth noting the very low levels of Importance of passion these individuals have.

Table 3. Differences in Differentiation of Passion and Importance of Passion between the groups of Evaluation, Cultivation, Optimization and Helpless.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cultivation</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Optimization</th>
<th>Helpless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation of Passion (Mean)</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of Passion (Mean)</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>4.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When comparing individuals high in differentiation of passion (having their highest levels of experience of passion not in their best relationship) with individuals low in differentiation (having their highest levels of experience of passion in their best relationship), the results showed a significant difference in Importance of passion. When adding relationship status to the comparison in a one-way ANOVA, it was clear single people with a high differentiation of passion did not show a lower Importance of passion. People in relationships however, did. A post hoc test showed a significant difference between the group in a relationship with a high differentiation and the other groups. For results see Figure 1.
Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine links between relationship beliefs, love experiences and attachment styles, in order to gain understanding of what kind of experiences and attachment, would lead to which belief.

In accordance with Hypothesis 1, Destiny belief was predicted by Experience of passion. Indicating that, having experienced high levels of passion would heighten the level of Destiny belief. The reason for this may be that passion cannot be experienced with just anyone, in that way supporting the Destiny belief theories of love being about finding the right person. The ITRs have not been studied or linked with experienced levels of passion before, however, earlier research have shown Destiny belief to be linked with Sprecher and Metts’ (1989) romantic beliefs subscales of idealizing romance and belief in love at first sight. These subscales could be linked to experience of passion. With the subscale of love at first sight for example, what would be present when meeting somebody in this fashion, is most likely attraction and passion. Also in Druen’s (1996) partner selection strategies, Destiny belief is associated with searching for an ideal partner. In the ideal image of love and the perfect partner, passion has a large part to play. The result in this study then is in line with what could be expected from earlier research.

The prediction between Experience of passion and Destiny belief might be thought to go in the opposite direction, with high Destiny belief making a person strive for higher levels of experience of passion. The problem with this view is the fact that passion in difference to intimacy, cannot be experienced simply by wanting and striving for it. An individual is in control of his or her experiences of intimacy to the extent that it is possible to either choose or not choose to open up to and trust another person. An individual cannot however choose to feel passion towards somebody. You could possibly choose not to develop feelings of passion by turning away from something, but you cannot decide to experience it, rather, it will happen to you. Possibly because you are open to it and ready in some way, but you still have very
little control of whom you can get these kinds of feelings for. Which is why the prediction should not be interpreted to go in the other direction. What should be noted is however, that Experience of passion only accounted for about 4 % of the variance in Destiny belief. The rest will be coming from somewhere else, perhaps making it quite possible to have a Destiny belief even without high experiences of passion. This may occur for example when a person is young, not having had too much experience of love, and for example having watched lots of popular culture preaching destiny belief. Holmes (2009) analyzed 40 romantic comedies and found them to present very ideal pictures of love, in some ways easily interpreted towards Destiny belief.

An additional predictor of Destiny belief, was Attachment avoidance. Earlier research has not been able to find a connection between the attachment dimensions of avoidance and anxiety and ITRs (Knee et al., 2003). This was the case also in this study, until controlling for Social desirability. To explain the common ground between the variables Destiny believers can be unforgiving towards potential partners, rejecting them when something does not seem quite right (Knee et al., 2003); much like attachment avoiders not letting anyone come close, making it easy to end things when the relationship does not go the way they want it (Brennan et al., 1998). What is to be mentioned however, is that the direction for this prediction or connection is less obvious than with Experience of passion. Destiny belief might affect Attachment pattern, or they might simultaneously affect each other.

Hypothesis 2, that Experience of intimacy would predict Growth belief, was not supported. Growth belief was however significantly negatively predicted by Attachment avoidance. As commented on before, ITRs have not been linked to the attachment dimensions in earlier research (Knee et al., 2003). To explain the negative prediction, Growth believers in some ways act the opposite of avoiders when striving to make a relationship work. When an avoidant individual would flee and end the relationship (Brennan et al., 1998), the Growth believer stays, determined to work on the problems (Knee et al., 2003). What should also be pointed out is the fact that the direction of the connection is not certain. One could also argue that Growth belief might affect Attachment patterns.

In accordance with Hypothesis 3, Experience of passion and Attachment anxiety significantly predicted Importance of passion, explaining the variance to 21.8 %. Fletcher and Kininmonth (1992) failed to find any links between the attachment dimensions and their importance scale for passion. Their passion subscale was however put together differently than the one in this study. As in Hypothesis 1 the prediction of the attachment variable only became clear after controlling for Social desirability. To interpret these finds, anxious individuals have a strong need for physical closeness and confirmation of the relationship through sex (Davis, Shaver & Vernon, 2004), this might be why the relation between anxiety and passion shows in the results. That Experience of passion predicted Importance of passion, might seem logical. Once you have tasted passion, you will want it again, possibly. Not having experienced high levels of passion will then lead you to not consider passion important, possibly since you do not know what you are missing, as is the case with many other things in life. The problem of direction would not be seen as a complication with Experience of passion, from the same reasons given concerning Destiny belief, however Attachment anxiety might be discussed as for direction of the prediction.

In accordance with Hypothesis 4, Experience of intimacy and Attachment anxiety predicted Importance of intimacy, explaining 24.8 % of the variance. Attachment avoidance predicted negatively as expected, but not at a significant level, leaving a part of the hypothesis
unsupported. Fletcher and Kininmonth (1992) found results partly similar when studying links between their importance of intimacy scale and the attachment dimensions. Their intimacy scale being different from this study's, and using the older three group model of attachment, the results were however different, showing a positive correlation with attachment security, and a negative correlation with anxiety/ambivalence. The correlation with avoidance was however negative in accordance with this study’s results. To interpret the finds, anxious individuals have been shown to want extreme closeness with their partners (Brennan et al., 1998), naturally having a high Importance of intimacy. The prediction of Attachment avoidance, being close to significance, can be explained by avoidant individuals fearing intimacy (Brennan et al., 1998), naturally having a lower Importance of intimacy. As discussed previously, since the experience of intimacy can be individually controlled (in difference to the experience of passion), the direction of the prediction can be discussed, both with Experience of intimacy and the attachment dimensions. The connection between Importance of intimacy and Experience of intimacy might seem logical. The interpretation being Experience of intimacy possibly creating a wish for more of that experience, or if looking in the other direction, individuals high in Importance of intimacy, making sure to provide themselves with high levels of Experience of intimacy.

The results of the questions of the additional purpose showed the groups of the ITRs model (Cultivation, Evaluation, Optimization and Helpless) to differ significantly on levels of Importance of passion as well as on the differentiation of experience of passion between the best relationship, and overall experience of passion in life. The evaluation group (high in Destiny, low in Growth) experienced no differentiation at all, the differentiation being zero for every individual in the group. This meaning their best relationship includes their highest experiences of passion, or also, they have not experienced higher levels of passion outside their best relationship. This implies they have a high set of expectations passion wise, when being in a relationship. Or another angle might be - they do not settle for less, they want their best relationship to include everything they know can be experienced passion wise. Unlike the cultivation individuals (low in Destiny, high in Growth) with a differentiation of 0.7, showing they do not need their best relationship to include as much passion wise as they know can be experienced. They will settle for less. When comparing these two extremes (cultivation and evaluation) to the optimization individual (high in Destiny, high in Growth) who showed a differentiation of 0.35, this turns out to be right in between the two extreme groups. The optimization individual will then accept a certain amount of settling, not getting exactly everything that can be had passion wise, but at the same time not accepting the same levels of settling as the cultivation group. This is in accordance with Knee et al. (2001) who found ITRs moderating the relationship between wanting more in one’s partner and feeling satisfied in the relationship. Wanting more was defined as perceiving a discrepancy between what one wants in an ideal partner and what one believes he or she has in a current partner. Wanting more in one’s partner was strongly and consistently related to feeling less happy with the relationship. This link was however moderated by Destiny and Growth beliefs. Wanting more was less strongly linked to satisfaction when one had a cultivation orientation. The cultivation individual was able to acknowledge their partner not having everything they wanted in a partner, and still remain relatively satisfied (Knee et al., 2001).

The other significant difference found between the ITRs groups, was the difference in Importance of passion (Table 3.). This is logically connected to the results from the differentiation of passion above. The evaluation group reported the highest Importance of passion, while the cultivation group had the lowest, with the optimization group in between, all of them significantly differing from each other. Having the helpless group in the
comparison would have given the analyses yet another level, since the helpless group may be one of the most interesting to look at, with their quite negative view of love and relationships. Unfortunately the sample did not offer enough individuals in this category.

The measure for differentiation of passion also gave a comparison between individuals low in differentiation (having their highest levels of experience of passion in their best relationship) and individuals high in differentiation (having their highest levels of experience of passion in other relationships but their best one). Quite logically the results showed a significant difference in importance of passion between the groups (Table 3.). Individuals high in differentiation did not consider passion as important as individuals low in differentiation. When also looking at relationship status in between the groups, it became clear that single people with a high differentiation did not show low scores on Importance of passion, in fact they scored about the same as individuals without a differentiation (both singles and people in relationships). This meaning, the high-differentiation individuals showing low scores on Importance of passion, were the individuals in relationships. They showed an Importance of passion score significantly lower than the other groups. The reason for this could be having a differentiation as well as being in a relationship (which for most of the individuals was their best relationship), meant they had settled for something that was less than ideal passion wise. Believing in Importance of passion would then contradict their own actions. According to Festinger (1989) behaving in a way not consistent with our beliefs, will cause unpleasant cognitive dissonance, leading us to change our belief, to receive a better agreement between behavior and belief. The cognitive dissonance theory explains the high-differentiation individuals in relationships, changing their Importance of passion to a lesser value. Possibly they did have a higher Importance of passion when they were single, according to the results in this study. Single people with a differentiation of passion does indeed have a lower level of passion in their best relationship, than in their overall experiences, but at the same time they are not still in that best relationship. They are single people possibly looking for a new partner, and would then not suffer from the dissonance, not having to lower their Importance of passion to match their actions.

Limitations in the study
As for limitations in the study the measures used need to be considered. The fact that two of the scales used, the Love Experience scale and the Importance of passion and intimacy scale, where new and created for this study is a limitation since the scales need further validation. What should be noted is however the high Cronbach’s alpha of the scales, and also the relatively high test-re test reliability. The Love Experience scale requires the participant to remember certain aspects of his or her life, which is not an easy task considering our memory is not always accurate and consistent, especially with events far back. This is a challenge for the scale and it will also put demands on the research participant who will have to think hard and challenge themselves to remember. In the opening text before starting the survey, the participants were specifically told this would be a mental challenge demanding effort from them. If this was enough to motivate a thorough and careful completion of the survey can only be speculated on, however there were only a handful of participants who interrupted their participation.

Also important to consider in this type of research is Social desirability. This study aimed to control for this issue through a Social desirability scale, proving quite functional, even showing for new results in the link between attachment and ITRs. Moreover, in the area of romantic relationships one should also be aware of the possibility of individuals having created illusions surrounding their relationships. It is for example common to look through
positive glasses on a current relationship, in order to justify oneself for being in the relationship. To control for this is not an easy task, since all people are not affected. It should however be noted that these kinds of illusions exist. Additional limitations of the study are the possibility to generalize to a larger population, since the sample was not randomly selected, as well as the causality problem which needs more focus in future research.

**Conclusion and future directions**

Contrary to previous research this study showed the Attachment dimensions to be linked to Destiny and Growth beliefs. Avoidant individuals will most likely have a stronger Destiny belief and a weaker Growth belief. Higher experience levels of passion predicted Destiny belief, which implies individuals low in Destiny belief might be so because they are lacking in Experience of passion. This is similar to the finding that individuals low in Importance of passion are so because they have a low experience of passion. This study also showed that anxious individuals will have a higher Importance of intimacy and Importance of passion, than the avoidant and secure individual.

To further study the origins of Destiny and Growth beliefs is important, in order to find answers to how positive beliefs (as the optimization orientation) might be approached and negative beliefs (as the helpless orientation) avoided. Other predictors to consider in future research are for example the role of popular culture, since Destiny belief often is strongly communicated through this channel. The implication of parents relationships through for example divorce, as well as experiences and opinions of friends and family.

Acevedo and Aron (2009), when showing that romantic love, - with intensity, engagement and sexual interest, can last in long term relationships, said that “maintaining the assumption that romantic love cannot last allows those with good, but not stellar relationships to maintain the status quo and avoid being threatened by the possibility of high levels of love in long term relationships” (p.59). For this reason the Love Experience scale should be developed further for more general use. It may be of practical value for people to know their experience levels, in order to see where they are lacking in experience. That way possibly being able to develop current or future relationships in a positive direction.


Reis, H. T., & Knee, C. R. (1996). In Fletcher G. J. O., Fitness J. (Eds.), *What we know, what we don't know, and what we need to know about relationship knowledge structures*. Hillsdale, NJ, England: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, Hillsdale, NJ.


Appendix A:
The Love Experience scale (In Swedish and English)

Love Experiences

When you answer the questions, you shall think of the best relationship you have experienced in life, the one which have mattered most and been the most satisfying. This can of course be your current relationship, which is why the items are written in present tense. If not, you need to think back and remember. (the highest experienced level in the relationship is the one you shall mark down)

Imagine the partner’s name on the dotted line, and grade each statement as for how much you agree, from a scale of 1 to 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agree completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree completely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part 1 – Start here!!

(Are filled out later!)

______ I and … give each other lots of emotional support. (I) ____

______ … can make me feel ”high” on life and bubbly. (P) ____

______ … can rely on me when he/she needs me. (I) ____

______ When … is around I long for us to touch each other. (P) ____

______ I feel I can really trust … (I) ______

______ When we are not together, I find it hard not to think of … (P) ____

______ I can really rely on … when I need him/her. (I) ______

______ There is something almost ”magical” about my relationship with … (P) ____

______ I can rely on … even with the most intimate details. (I) ____

______ … really knows me well: my thoughts, fears and dreams.(I) ______

______ I get sexually excited just by looking at …. (P) ______
I share deep personal information about myself with … (I)   
For me … is the perfect romantic partner. (P)

You will now go back and look at the statements which you have given 1-6 (all statements not having received a 7), writing in the column to the right if you have experienced this statement to a higher degree in another relationship. I you haven’t, you will leave it blank. If you have, you will write down the higher number.

(Try to be clear about who/whom these other partners are, when you are working through the statements, think specifically of the person.)

(I = measure of intimacy, P = measure of passion)

Erfarenheter i kärleksrelationer

När du besvarar påståendena, ska du tänka på den bästa kärleksrelationen du har haft i ditt liv, den du anser har betytt mest och varit mest tillfredsställande. Det kan givetvis även handla om din nuvarande relation, varför påståendena är skrivna i nutid. I annat fall tänker du tillbaka och försöker att verkligen minnas. (Det är den högst upplevda nivån i förhållandet du ska ange.)

Tänk dig personens namn, med vilken du har haft en relation, på den prickade linjen. Gradera till vilken grad du håller med om påståendet från skala 1 till 7 nedan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instämmer inte alls</td>
<td>Varken eller</td>
<td>Instämmer helt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Del 1 – Börja här!!

(Fylls i senare!)

Jag och … ger varandra mycket känslomässigt stöd. (I)   
… kan få mig att känna mig ”hög” på livet och bubblig. (P)   
… kan räkna med mig när han/hon behöver mig. (I)   
När … är i närheten trånar jag efter att få beröra och bli berörd. (P)
_____ Jag känner att jag verkligen kan lita på … (I)  
_____ När vi inte är med varann har jag svårt att sluta tänka på … (P)  
_____ Jag kan verkligen räkna med … när jag behöver honom/henne. (I)  
_____ Det är nänting nästan ”magiskt” över min relation med … (P)  
_____ Jag kan förlista mig på … även med de mest intima saker. (I)  
_____ … känner mig verkligen: mina tankar, rädslor och drömmar. (I)  
_____ Bara jag ser … så blir jag exalterad/upphetsad. (P)  
_____ Jag delar med mig av djupt personlig information till … (I)  
_____ För mig är … den perfekta kärlekspartnern. (P)  

 Nu går du tillbaka och tittar på de påståenden som du har gett 1-6, alltså alla påståenden som inte har fått en 7:a, och anger på raden till höger om påståendet om du har upplevt detta påstående i något annat förhållande till en högre nivå. Har du inte det låter du raden vara blank, annars skriver du den högre siffran.
(Försök ha klart för dig vem/vilka dessa andra betydelsefulla partners är, när du går igenom svaren, tänk specifikt på den personen) 

(I= mäter intimitetserfarenhet, P= mäter passionserfarenhet)
Appendix B:
The Importance of passion and Intimacy scale (In Swedish and English)

Importance of intimacy and passion

How important would you say the following statements are for a good relationship. Grade the items from a scale of 1 (Not important) to 7 (Important).

To give each other lots of emotional support. (I)
To know each other very well (thoughts, fears, dreams). (I)
To think that your partner is the perfect romantic partner. (P)
To be able to rely on each other when you need to. (I)
To be able to trust each other. (I)
To make each other “high” on life and bubbly. (P)
To be very attracted to each other. (P)
To long for touching each other when being close to one another. (P)
To rely on each other with very intimate details. (I)
To feel there is something almost “magical” about the relationship. (P)

Vikt av intimitet och passion (Swedish version)

Hur viktiga skulle du säga att följande påståenden är för en bra relation? Gradera påståendena på en skala från 1 (Oviktigt) till 7 (Viktigt).

Att man ger varandra mycket känslomässigt stöd. (I)
Att man känner varandra väldigt väl (tankar, rädslor, drömmar). (I)
Att man tycker att ens partner är den perfekta kärlekspartnersn. (P)
Att man kan räkna med varandra när man behöver det. (I)
Att man kan lita på varandra. (I)
Att man kan göra varandra lite ”höga” på livet och bubbliga. (P)
Att man är väldigt attraherade av varandra. (P)
Att man tränar efter att få röra varandra, när man är i närheten av varandra. (P)
Att man kan förlita sig på varandra med väldigt intima saker. (I)
Att det är nånting lite ”magiskt” över relationen. (P)