

**UNDERSTANDING ROMANTIC JEALOUSY:
AN ANALYSIS OF BOTH PARTNERS' PERSPECTIVES
USING AN ATTRIBUTION FRAMEWORK**

by

Jennifer Sue Owlett

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of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to explore the impact of an individual admitting romantic jealousy to his/her partner and the effects of this admission on the formation of his/her communicative responses. This research includes a proposed model that examines a four-step process that begins with the creation of attributions following the event, moves to emotions before goal generation, and concludes with the construction of communicative responses. The proposed model suggests how the individual that reports romantic jealousy corresponds with his/her partner affects the other's analogous journey when responding to his/her communication.

Three hundred and forty three undergraduate students ($n = 343$) completed questionnaires assessing attributions, emotional responses, relational or individual goals, and communicative responses to their partner's communication about the event. Analyses suggest the cognitive and emotional components of the model are separate but equally influence the creation of avoidant, constructive or destructive communication. Consequently, a revised model which reflects this change is provided.

The original and revised models in this research bring together many aspects of the experience of a partner admitting romantic jealousy to another individual and advocate how this episode unfolds. This research bridges gaps in prior investigations and stimulates directions for future research.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Jealousy has important and far reaching implications for individuals involved in romantic relationships. Consequently, understanding the functions, factors and outcomes that occur as a response to romantic jealousy is highly important. For example, some researchers view romantic jealousy as a positive experience (Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero & Spitzberg, 1995), and have noted the demonstrated connections with relational satisfaction (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990; Vangelisti, 1992). But, jealousy also has the potential to affect a romantic relationship detrimentally (Bevan, 2008). Many authors note that the experience of jealousy is present because individuals perceive the potential for relational loss (Harmon-Jones, Peterson & Harris, 2009; Pines, 1992). Furthermore, Orvis, Kelley & Butler (1976) found outside relationship activities to cause the highest frequency of attributional conflict in young couples. These attributions may hold the fate for the continuation of the partnership.

Because romantic jealousy has the potential to damage a relationship greatly, understanding both partners' perspectives is significant for analyzing the relationship as a whole. Current research presents a perspective in which its interactive nature is noted, but responses to romantic jealousy not adequately researched (Bevan, 2004; Harmon-Jones, Peterson & Harris, 2009; Knobloch, Solomon and Cruz, 2001).

Fleischmann, Spitzberg, Andersen and Roesch's (2005) findings point to the problematic nature of only including one person's perspective. Taking into account the ways in which both partners respond to romantic jealousy will result in more understanding and better communication within the relationship because both individuals' are allowed to state their perspectives on an issue. Through identification and exploration of responses to romantic partners' reactions to romantic jealousy, couples will be aided with greater understanding of how different responses can affect a relationship (Bevan, 2004). In addition, therapists will gain insight into the reasoning behind problematic behavior and will have more opportunities to help clients (Pearce & Halford, 2008).

Attribution theory (Heider, 1944) has already contributed to a better understanding of communication responses to romantic jealousy. There is evidence of a robust relationship between negative attributions and negative couple communication (Pearce & Halford, 2008), and when combined, have been found to predict deteriorating relationship satisfaction (Pearce & Halford, 2008; Vangelisti, 1992). One area which has not yet been fully explored in romantic jealousy research is the use of both partners' perspectives. Attribution theory provides insight into the different explanations that both individuals can make when experiencing the same jealousy provoking behavior. While one person might choose to view a behavior in one light, his or her partner has the potential to provide a different explanation for the actions. Consequently, attribution theory allows for both individuals to have equal

value, which is important because each partner's inclusion is influential in understanding how behavioral explanations unfold.

The goal of this thesis is to examine an application of attribution theory in an analysis of actor-observer differences in romantic jealousy. Furthermore, this examination will delve into the myriad message choices that individuals make when faced with the perception of romantic jealousy. To accomplish this task, this text will outline principles of attribution theory and its application to close relationships, and will propose a four step model of romantic jealousy that delineates how partners respond to jealousy-causing attributions. Hypotheses and research questions will examine each level of the proposed four step model of romantic jealousy which begins with the arrival of a jealousy inducing event, moves to an actor's formation of attributional reactions to explain the romantic partner's behavior, generates appropriate goals, transfers to the beginning of emotional processing, before the actor develops behavioral and communicative responses. Finally, the model ends with the partner's progression through the same cycle. The following study will explore the model from the standpoint of both the actor of the jealousy inducing event and the affected partner.

Principles of Attribution Theory

To begin a review of attribution principles, one must start with Heider's (1944) observations about what individuals do when attempting to understand others' behavior. Heider's main interest was understanding how individuals come to comprehend changes in their perceptual fields. Overall, people tend to attribute causal

responsibility for a change to something seen to be associated with it through, for example, similarity or proximity. In addition, people are seen as responsible for their actions rather than other potential factors. For that reason, individuals tend to infer personal characteristics from others' displayed behavior. For example, if a person behaves jealously when his or her partner is interacting with others, observers might believe the individual to be a jealous person.

From Heider's (1944) initial work and later revision (1958), attribution theory was born. Heider (1958) defined the function of attributions as, "predicting and controlling the world by assigning transient behavior to relatively unchanging dispositions" (Heider, 1958, p. 79). From this definition, Heider (1958) began to view individuals' quests to understand others' actions as analogous to a naïve scientist. To interpret others' behaviors, a person must form their own theories or explanations of behavior, with the goals of description, explanation, prediction, and potential control. Several questions arise as part of this theoretical work. One question that occurs during attribution formation is determining whether the behavior of a person can be considered as intended by the actor, or if these actions are unintentional and result from the actor's environment (Jones & Davis, 1965). Answering this question becomes further complicated when one must decide if the actor has the ability to produce the results, or if he or she lacks the necessary skills (Jones & Davis, 1965). For example, if observers are told that the actor succeeded at a task, while others usually fail, most will attribute the actor as typically being able to perform the task. Meanwhile, if the observers are told the actor was not able to complete the task, and

the bulk of others failed as well, the actor's shortcomings will be attributed to task difficulty instead of ability (Nisbett, 1980). As this example demonstrates, knowledge and ability must go through assessment before another person can assign intent (Jones & Davis, 1965). Using the environmental explanation removes responsibility from the person, and indicates that the person does not always enact that specific behavior.

Responses to these questions about individual or environmental responsibility drive the goals of understanding why behavior occurs, and creating attributions which explain and predict others' behavior. These accounts are beneficial to romantic partners since they increase the ability to predict future actions. For individuals in romantic relationships, answers to these inquiries are vital for important decisions such as the continuation or disintegration of their relationship (Shaver, 1975). In addition, attributions influence emotional and evaluative reactions and create expectations for future interactions (Sillars, 1980b). In one study (Nisbett, Caputo, Legant & Marecek, 1973), college students assumed that future behaviors of actors would be similar to the enacted behaviors in the experiment. Consequently, the actions that one completes have the potential for sending signals to others about who one is, and what to expect in future interactions (Kelley & Michaela, 1980).

When evaluating the rationalization for how another person's behavior, individuals should pay careful attention to the role of bias in influencing one's explanations. For example, one of these biases, the fundamental attribution error, occurs when individuals over-attribute personality as a cause rather than the environment's influence (Sillars, 1980a). The fundamental attribution error is less

likely to occur when an individual is assessing his or her own actions, and instead comes about when a person attempts to understand another's behavior. In addition, self-serving biases, or ego defensive biases, include the need to feel good about oneself and maintain high self-esteem. This partiality occurs when actors are more likely to take credit for positive outcomes, and attribute failure to outside factors (Ross, 1977). When explaining one's own behavior, individuals want to be viewed positively and will be highly motivated for positive self-attributions (Kelley & Michaela, 1980).

A discussion of bias, however, would not be complete without understanding actor-observer differences. The actor-observer bias can be defined as the tendency for observers to generally view an actor's behavior as a consequence of the actor's personality, while an actor might attribute the cause of their own actions to the environment (Orvis, Kelley & Butler, 1976). Prior studies have demonstrated that when actors and observers are asked about the roles of causal responsibility in hypothetical vignettes, participants give responses which depend on their role in the interaction (Trentham & Larwood, 2001). One possible explanation for these differences is that actors and observers enact separate behaviors within interactions that demand unique explanations (Malle, Knobe & Nelson, 2007). In addition, punctuation differences are related to the actor-observer bias, and occur when actors and observers have different perceptions about what actions should be labeled as stimulus or response (Sillars, 1980a). One method of understanding actor-observer and

punctuation biases is through examining the separate roles of the actor performing the behavior and the observer watching it.

The salience of one's view is important because the attributions that one makes will be determined by the visual orientation that is used to witness an event as an actor or observer (Storms, 1973; Watson, 1982). Actors normally attend visually to the environment, while observers generally focus more on the behavior of the actor than situational factors. To further stress the importance of visual salience, one study reversed the actor and observer roles and examined attribution changes. Storms (1973) found that actors attributed more to their own dispositions than observers when viewing a videotape of their interactions with other participants. This research notes that the ability to view one's own behavior allows actors to more closely represent the role of an observer, allowing for more similar interpretations of their own behavior when compared with actual observers. The study demonstrates that higher levels of visual salience lead to causal observers assigning larger roles to a person, rather than the environment for a specific outcome (Nisbett, 1980).

While visual salience is a significant factor in comprehending the actor-observer bias, other factors also contribute to the formation of actor-observer differences. One consideration is the familiarity that one has with the person that is being observed. Clearly, actors will have more accessibility to their own reasoning in comparison with observers (Malle, Knobe, & Nelson, 2007). With greater familiarity, participants were more likely to respond in ways that are similar to themselves, such as assigning fewer trait explanations than environmental or situational (Nisbett,

Caputo, Legant, & Marecek, 1973). In addition, actors consistently have more available information about their previous actions, which has the potential to influence their perceptions of their behavior as not necessarily representative of their personality (Nisbett, Caputo, Legant & Marecek, 1973).

Another consideration is the positivity or negativity of the observed behaviors. Overall, when actions have a positive association, actor-observer differences will be lessened. As Nisbett (1980) writes, “people are presumed to be mightily inclined to attribute their successes to ability and their failures to bad luck, their good deeds to superior character and their bad deeds to compelling circumstance” (Nisbett, 1980, p. 231). Meanwhile, with actions that have negative connotations, stronger reinforcement of actor-observer differences will result. Self-serving biases provide one explanation as to why positive actions lead to weakened actor-observer differences and negative behaviors result in strengthened bias. Self-serving biases are often employed by individuals who have a strong motivation to protect themselves and to appear positively (Trentham & Larwood, 2001). Moreover, the ways in which these actor-observer differences become apparent also is influenced by these disparities. For example, attributions for one’s own behavior have the potential to be more internal than observers’ attributions (Kelley & Michaela, 1980). These attributions, however, only occur when two other considerations are also present. The actor must be egocentrically motivated and the behavior must be positive. Consequently, although internal attributions might not always be made publicly accessible, outside observers’ attributions have the ability to change how others process the actions if shared.

As these studies demonstrate, bias is influential in attribution formation and depends on the role one has and the emotional climate of an interaction. Highly emotional interactions which are relevant to negatively-evaluated behavior have the potential to accentuate actor-observer differences. For example, one potentially negatively evaluated behavior, jealousy, might result in extreme actor-observer differences and lead to even further problems in the relationship. Attempting to understand these concerns, such as how punctuation problems form, is increasingly important in comprehending relational partners' depictions of an interaction. Applying these tools provides further insight as to how the experience of relational transgressions, such as jealous reactions, can be escalated by both individuals. Consequently, using both partners' perspectives will help to provide clarity to our understanding of attributional processes in romantic relationships.

Attributional Processes in Close Relationships

Current research indicates that studying attributions in close relationships is important because this factor greatly influences relational satisfaction in romantic relationships (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990; Kearns & Fincham, 2005; Pearce & Halford, 2008; Vangelisti, 1992). Close relationships involve a strong concern about accurate presentation and attributions of causes (Orvis, Kelley & Butler, 1976). This motivation becomes especially salient when relational transgressions occur, because the well-being of both individuals and the relationship as a whole becomes threatened (Kearns & Fincham, 2005). As a result, in order to mitigate the negative consequences

of these interactions, understanding the attributions that lead to each individual's construction of the event is necessary.

While understanding how attributions function in close relationships is important, one must also take into account the existence and significance of bias, particularly through actor-observer differences, in close relationships. Kenny and Accitelli's (2001) work suggests people in close relationships are highly motivated to be accurate in their attributions and have more opportunities for observation than non-romantically involved dyads. Even with these opportunities, bias is often pervasive in partner perceptions because seeing one's partner negatively has the potential for making one question relational value (Kenny & Acitelli, 2001).

Self serving biases are prevalent in examinations of dissatisfied marriages (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990). Justifying dissatisfaction with one's relationship requires a commitment to one's own beliefs as correct and that the partner's actions should be labeled negatively. As a result, the disgruntled emotions that a relational partner has will be reflected in the types of attributions, or causal reasons, that he or she makes for partner behavior. For example, dissatisfied spouses are more likely to make negative attributions for partner behavior as compared with satisfied partners (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990). Characteristically, distressed spouses explaining positive events are likely to make attributions that locate behavior outside the partner, are unstable, specific, include the partner acting unintentionally, with little control, influenced by a temporary state, involuntary, motivated by selfish concerns, less deserving of praise and less positive attitudes towards respondent (Bradbury &

Fincham, 1990). For negative events, negative behavior will be described as an enduring characteristic, internal to the partner, globally influential, with intent, having control, influenced by a trait, voluntary, motivated by selfish concerns, deserving of blame, a less positive attitude, and less love toward respondent (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990). Work by Russell (1982) yielded results that are more relevant to satisfied couples in comparison to Bradbury and Fincham's (1990) findings. In Russell's investigation, success and failure were attributed differently with success being deemed more internal, stable and controllable than attributions to failure.

Attributions are most likely to be formed when an individual's expectations are violated, such as during conflict (Vangelisti, 1992). In a study which examined the attributions that roommates made for interpersonal conflicts, more responsibility was often given to the participants' roommate than oneself, resulting in fewer positive conflict resolution strategies (Sillars, 1980a). Extending Sillars's research to romantic relationships yields complementary findings. In a study by Vangelisti (1992), communication problems in romantic relationships were attributed most frequently to internal causes (44%), with external (29%) and interpersonal (25%) as the next most cited responses.

As the findings demonstrate, taking into account how bias occurs and influences attribution processes in close relationships is important. Careful analysis of actor-observer differences helps to aid understanding of the different ways in which romantic partners create explanations for partner behavior. But, studying how these variables function only tells part of the story. Continued understanding of how

attribution processes affect close relationships must include a closer view of how individuals in these relationships experiencing jealousy work from their attributions to make communicative responses. To gain a better comprehension of these processes, past research on romantic jealousy and communicative responses to it will be explored.

Romantic Jealousy

Previous investigations of romantic jealousy have included a plethora of definitions. While some researchers use explanations that vaguely depict jealousy in general, other investigations focus specifically on romantic jealousy. This examination will work from Guerrero, Trost and Yoshimura's (2005) definition of romantic jealousy, which reports that it combines work from Pfeiffer and Wong (1989) and White and Mullen (1989). They define romantic jealousy as, "a multifaceted set of affective, behavioral, and cognitive responses that occurs when the existence and/or quality of a person's primary relationship is threatened by a third party" (Guerrero, Trost & Yoshimura, 2005, p. 233). Even though similar definitions exist, (e.g. Fleischmann, Spitzberg, Andersen & Roesch, 2005), the alternative explanations view the third party as a rival, which has the potential to limit how romantic jealousy is measured and conceptualized.

Although this definition suggests three components which comprise romantic jealousy, the description alone does not demonstrate how the process functions. Consequently, using Guerrero, Trost and Yoshimura's (2005) description of romantic jealousy, this study will propose a model of romantic jealousy which includes

affective, behavioral and cognitive aspects. Figure 1, below, provides a visual representation of the process. The four step model begins with the arrival of a jealousy inducing event. Next, an actor forms a series of attributional reactions to explain the romantic partner's behavior. From there, the emotional processing begins, before behavioral and communicative responses are formed. Finally, the model ends with the partner's progression through the same cycle.

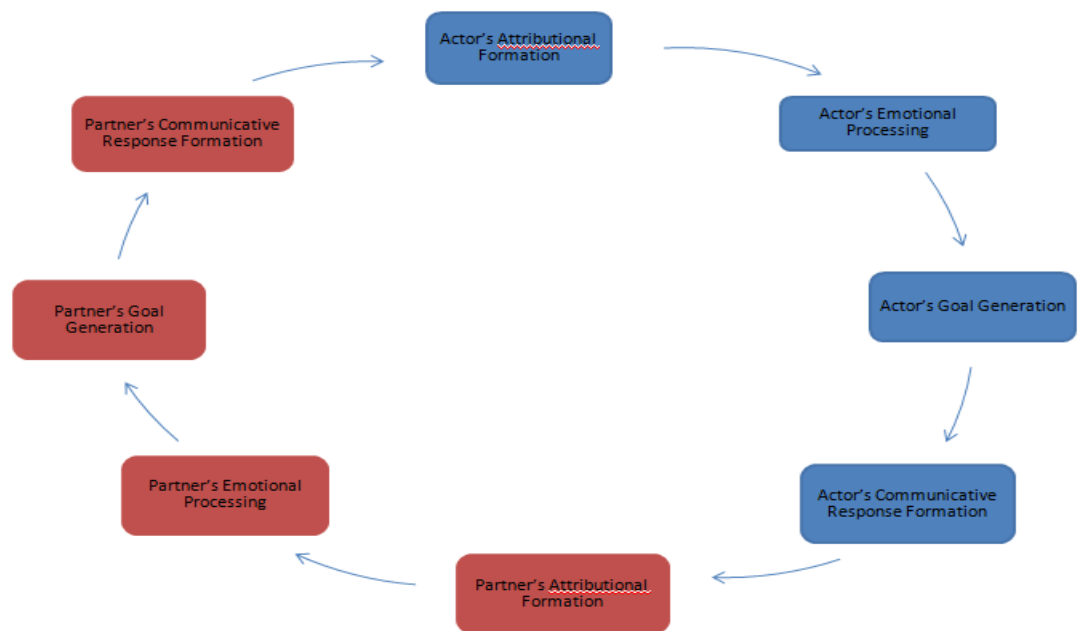


Figure 1. Actor and partner cognitive, emotional and communicative response formation following the perception of a jealousy inducing event.

One feature of this model is that cognitive aspects of romantic jealousy are considered as occurring before the emotional aspects. Pfeiffer and Wong's (1989)

findings support this sequence. Their work discusses two separate types of jealousy, cognitive and emotional, which happen in sequential order. Similarly, Knobloch, Solomon and Cruz (2001) suggest an analogous ordering. These authors examined the differences between cognitive jealousy and emotional jealousy, and described the latter as a response to a cognitive appraisal or a conditioned emotional response to relationship problems. Furthermore, Sillars's (1980b) research also suggests that attributions, the cognitive component, influence the emotional aspect of jealousy processing. While continued cognitive and emotional processing occurs throughout the model, these studies demonstrate that the emotional component follows cognitive assessment. Investigating how each step functions will include outlining the perspective of the actor and partner in turn in great detail.

Actors' Romantic Jealousy Processing

To begin, a romantic jealousy inducing event occurs, which has the ability to be interpreted in a variety of ways. For example, while some individuals might see the partner's interactions with another individual as harmless, others have the potential to see the same conversation as containing flirtatious undertones and threatening their relationship. One explanation for how the same act can be explained in different ways is the amount of commitment present in the relationship, one of three factors which determine the likelihood of continuing a relationship in Rusbult's investment model (1980). A person who has low commitment to the relationship might ignore the jealousy inducing event, instead of processing the incident as a threat. Within this model, the individual must process the event as jealousy inducing, or else the four step

process does not begin. Common examples of jealousy inducing events include the perception of valuing another person outside the relationship.

The cognitive component begins when an actor perceives the partner's behaviors as jealousy inducing. This stage includes forming attributions which explain and predict partner behavior, and determine responsibility for an event. As previously outlined, several factors have the potential to influence how this second phase in the development of romantic jealousy transpires. One potential variable is the amount of relational satisfaction present. For example, Bradbury and Fincham's (1990) findings show less relationally satisfied partners are more likely to make negative attributions for actor behavior. Like commitment, relational satisfaction has an important role in determining how a jealousy inducing event occurs. If highly relationally satisfied, individuals will be less likely to attribute responsibility to the partner than the environment.

Turning to the second stage, findings have suggested that cognitively processing the potential for loss leads to a variety of negative emotional results. Lazarus's (1991) research examines five different emotions - fear, anger, sadness, disgust and guilt - each resulting in a separate action tendency that is appropriate to consider when assessing romantic jealousy. Guerrero, Trost and Yoshimura's (2005) work indicate fear and anger as common when one experiences romantic jealousy. Depending on the type of jealousy inducing event, sadness, disgust and guilt might also be present. If the individual believes the relationship is in a dissolution stage, he or she may grieve the loss of the union. Disgust has the potential to stem from jealousy

inducing events such as infidelity, while guilt might be felt if the individual blames him or herself for the partner's behavior.

Goal generation, which comprises the third stage, occurs after the cognitive-attributional and emotional aspects of romantic jealousy. While the first three steps involve components which allow the individual to make sense of the situation, the fourth gives the power back to the affected person and considers how he or she might respond. Two types of goals are present, based upon whether the individual values the relationship as paramount, or more selfishly, him or herself as most important. The specific emotion selected determines which of these goal types is chosen. Since guilt's action tendency is to "expiate, atone, or make reparation for the harm that has been done" (Lazarus, 1991, p. 243), a relationship focused goal will result. Fear and sadness are also relationship-focused, and include action tendencies that respectively depict "avoidance" (Lazarus, 1991, p. 238) and "withdrawal" (Lazarus, 1991, p. 251). Anger and disgust both are self-focused. Anger's action tendencies to "attack the agent held to be blameworthy for the offense" (Lazarus, 1991, p. 226) while disgust includes a "strong impulse to avoid contact with the offensive substance" (Lazarus, 1991, p. 243), and are most likely to create negative responses.

In response to a jealousy inducing event, actors enter the fourth stage, choice of communicative response. They have three options; constructive, destructive or avoidant. Constructive reactions include the affected actor working with the partner to resolve the issue. Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher (2008) suggest this labeling, while Sillars (1980b) employs the term integrative responses. These strategies

increase the likelihood of conflict resolution, and have been demonstrated to increase relational satisfaction. Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher's (2008) research suggests integrative communication and compensatory restoration as examples of constructive responses. Integrative communication is described as, "communication that is direct and non-aggressive, such as discussing, disclosing, and explaining jealous feelings to one's partner" (Guerrero, Hannawa & Gallagher, 2008, p. 5). The authors define compensatory restoration as behavior, "aimed at compensating for the rival relationship by improving oneself or one's relationship with the partner. Individuals who employ this strategy use tactics such as enhancing their attractiveness, buying their partner gifts, or becoming more affectionate towards their partner" (Guerrero, Hannawa & Gallagher, 2008, p. 5).

In comparison, destructive responses are frequent when the affected partner, as Sillars (1980a) writes, "promote individual over mutual outcomes" (p. 181). Prior investigations have similarly suggested this categorization, with Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher (2008) and Sillars (1980b) identifying these groupings as destructive and distributive, respectively. Selection of these types of characteristically negative responses is detrimental to relationship health as the affected person chooses to focus only on his or her own needs, instead of the relationship's concerns. Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher (2008) note destructive responses as including negative communication, violence and counter-jealousy. Negative communication occurs when nonverbal expressions of jealousy are present, "such as crying or looking hurt, that are visible to the actor" (p. 5). Violent communication, "refers to threats of physical

violence or actual physical violence perpetrated against one's partner" (p. 5).

Similarly, Buunk (1984) found aggression to be related to romantic jealousy.

Meanwhile, counter-jealousy induction is likely when one partner tries to make the other jealous and he or she flirts, talks about, or acts interested in someone else (p. 32).

Finally, while both the constructive and destructive communicative responses show a distinct reaction to the transgression, the partner can also choose to avoid the issue. Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher (2008) and Sillars (1980b) refer to this category as avoidant and passive-indirect responses, respectively. While the active categories, such as constructive and destructive responses, allow for some resolution, such as the partner either deciding the issue needs to be jointly addressed, or individually tackled, long term damage can result from passive responses. One might take a more passive stance through changing the topic of the conversation, minimalizing the importance of the problem, or choosing not to share his or her emotions with the partner.

Partners' Romantic Jealousy Processing

If the affected person decides to share his or her attributions and emotions, then the partner can also go through an analogous process of forming cognitive reactions through attributions, emotionally evaluating the situation and creating goals and communicative responses. While the affected person has responded to the perceived transgression, the partner's response is to the affected person's message, if this communication occurs. In this last stage, the positivity or negativity of the emotion and message from the actor towards the partner also results in what message

choices the partner selects. Yoshimura's (2004) research indicated that positive emotions and messages on the part of the partner resulted from the actor's positive romantic jealousy expressions, whereas partners' negative emotions followed from actors' negative communication, violence, suspicious behavior and manipulation attempts.

The relationship between emotions, goals and communicative responses on behalf of the partner has many similarities to the actor's processing. As previous discussions of bias indicate, higher levels of relational satisfaction result in more blame towards oneself and less towards the actor of the jealousy inducing event. One further consideration is what happens when the actor attributes responsibility to the situation, instead of self or actor. In this type of attribution, the partner develops the same responses as when he or she attributes blame to the actor. The actor's communication also drastically impacts how the partner interprets and responds to the situation. Overall, constructive communication from the actor, with high relational satisfaction and relational goals will create constructive responses in the partner. In comparison, destructive communication, coupled with low relational satisfaction and individual goals will lead to more problematic communication.

For the partner, four emotions are salient and include guilt, anger, fear and sadness. Attribution to partner and/or situation means anger while attributions to self lead to guilt, sadness or fear. Even though guilt is present in the actor's sequence, this emotion is more likely to be found in the partner's responses. Guilt brings about a relationship focused goal that occurs when attributions create a constructive

communicative response. In comparison, anger, which is a self focused goal, will form a destructive response. Anger is possible if the partner is upset that he or she has to “deal with the actor’s emotional behavior” as such interactions are cognitively challenging. Finally, fear and sadness are also likely, and are relationship focused with constructive communication as an outcome. While Lazarus’s (1991) action tendencies are relevant for the actor, fear and sadness will differ for the partner since these emotions are attributions to the self and can lead the individual to repair the relationship, which indicates constructive communication.

While some information is known about how different variables impact the formation and process of romantic jealousy, several questions still remain. As a result, the next section of this thesis will outline research questions and hypotheses. These inquiries will focus on how attributions can impact the formation of romantic jealousy, and the communicative and behavioral choices which result. Furthermore, investigating these questions will aid understanding of the process and create pathways for future inquiries.

Hypotheses

The four stage process proposed above can account for the actor’s transition after recognition of a partner’s jealousy inducing event. If the actor chooses to communicate to the partner about the jealousy inducing event, an analogous four stage process occurs on the part of the partner. When both constructive communication from the actor and high relationship satisfaction are present, attributions to self occurs with fear, guilt, or sadness as emotional responses, relationship goals, and constructive

communication as the end result. In comparison, the combination of destructive communication and low relationship satisfaction transitions to attributions to the situation and/or actor, anger, and individual goals. Like the actor's transition through the cycle, individual goals produce destructive communication. Difficulties exist in hypothesizing what occurs when either constructive communication but low relationship satisfaction or destructive communication but high relationship satisfaction co-occur, which leaves the door open for research questions to be posed:

H1: Satisfaction is directly related to attribution to self.

H2: Satisfaction is inversely related to attribution to actor.

H3: Satisfaction is inversely related to attribution to situation.

H4: Attributions to self are directly related to guilt.

H5: Attributions to self are directly related to sadness.

H6: Attributions to self are directly related to fear.

H7: Attribution to situation or partner is directly related to anger.

H8: Guilt is directly related to relationship goals.

H9: Sadness is directly related to relationship goals.

H10: Fear is directly related to relationship goals.

H11: Anger is directly related to individual goals.

H12: Disgust is directly related to individual goals.

*H13: Relationship goals are directly related to constructive
communication.*

H14: Relationship goals are inversely related to destructive communication.

H15: Individual goals are directly related to destructive communication.

H16: Individual goals are inversely related to constructive communication.

Chapter 2

METHOD

In this study, people involved in a romantic relationship in which jealousy has occurred reported either on their experience of romantic jealousy or their experience of a romantic partner admitting jealousy to them. Perceptions relevant to each of the four stages in the process were included. Because some participants are reporting on their experience of jealousy and others on their partner's admission, different measures for each are sometimes needed.

Pre-test

Participants

Even though many of the scales used in this research have been employed in previous studies, several others combine scales in ways that the original authors did not capture. As a result, these measurements should be examined in their new context before launching a full investigation. Prior to the study, several measurements including both the partner's attributions for a jealousy inducing event and a revision to Canary, Cunningham and Cody's (1988) Conflict Tactics Scale (see Appendices C and E) were pre-tested using participants from an undergraduate communication class. Participants ($N = 106$) were recruited from an undergraduate communication course and received extra credit for their inclusion in the study.

This pre-test utilized six scenarios of romantic jealousy inducing events based on Sheets, Frendenhall and Claypool's (1997) efforts (see Appendix A). The new versions intend to elicit self, other, and situation attributions for jealousy experienced by the partner. After reading these scenarios participants responded to a series of scales designed to measure attributions to the three factors and possible communicative responses to the situation. Potential partner jealousy was also assessed using a variation of Russell and Harton's (2005) four item expected jealousy scale (see Appendix B). Another measurement was included to assess attributions of romantic jealousy (Appendix C) and communicative responses to one's partner concerning a jealousy inducing event (Appendix E). Finally, goals and emotions were also submitted to a pre-test. Descriptions of these measures and the results of the pre-test are described under the main study.

Main Study

Participants

The main study included 343 undergraduate students (176 males and 167 females) varying in age from 18 to 40 years old ($M = 20.0$; $SD = 2.07$). The length of their romantic relationships in which they reported the experience of a partner admitting romantic jealousy to them ranged from 1 month to 72 months ($M = 15.5$; $SD = 12.7$). Participants were recruited from undergraduate communication courses and received extra credit for their inclusion in the study.

Measures

Expected Jealousy

Russell and Harton's (2005) work was consulted for this inquiry. In their study, the authors proposed several scenarios and asked participants to consider their reactions to their partner's involvement in each situation. Russell and Harton (2005) asked participants to rate their expected levels of being upset, insecure and jealous, in addition to how intimate each setting was. When combined, these four variables created an expected jealousy score. Because our research includes both individuals in the relationship, and not one side as Russell and Harton's (2005) findings indicate, two different scales were constructed that investigate the participant's expected jealousy levels, and how his/her partner would react. For the purposes of this study, the fourth question has been replaced with one that explores how envious the participant, or his/her partner, would expect to be when placed in each of the revised Sheets et al. (1997) vignettes.

To explore the dimensionality of the revised scale, pre-test responses were submitted to an exploratory principal-axis factor analysis with a direct oblimin rotation. It identified one factor to account for 64.47% of variance among the data (Table 1). The eigenvalues and percentages of total variance accounted for by this factor are presented in Table 1. Cronbach's alpha coefficients suggested the fourth item be deleted from assessment. With this deletion, the factor demonstrated a high internal consistency score, with Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$.

Attributions

Keeping in mind the four factor model of romantic jealousy, actor attributions are for partner actions, but partner attributions stem from the actor's message, so different measurement tools are necessary. For the purposes of this investigation, information from both Russell's (1982) Causal Dimension scale and Mongeau, Hale and Alles' (1994) research were employed to form a new instrument assessing attributions (see Appendix C). A five-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) was used for each of the three attribution areas (self, other, situation) with 4 questions for each category, as pre-test results suggest. Actors and their partners' instructions are separate as actors' responses focused on the jealousy inducing event, while partners considered the actor's communication about the event.

Measurement of the attribution scale also submitted items to an exploratory principal-axis factor analysis with direct oblimin rotation. Three factors emerged with eigenvalues greater than one. Examining the pattern matrix, Factor 1 included 4 items which asked participants how responsible partners were for the jealousy inducing event, (e.g. "I expected my romantic partner to feel accountable for the jealousy-inducing event"). Factor 1 accounted for 41.40% of the variance. The items showed very good internal consistency ($\alpha = .94$). Factor 2, which placed blame on situational factors, included 4 items which asked how much the participant felt situational aspects were blameworthy (e.g. "The situation should be held accountable for the jealousy-inducing event"). Factor 2 accounted for 25.96% of the variance. High internal consistency was also demonstrated for this factor ($\alpha = .91$). The third factor,

accounting for 14.55% of the remaining variance, consisted of 4 items representing how personally responsible participants were for the jealousy inducing event (e.g., “I felt culpable for the jealousy-inducing event”); in this case, Cronbach’s alpha equaled .92. Eigenvalues and percentages of total variance accounted for these two factors are presented in Table 2.

Emotions

Our measurement tool for capturing emotions in this study was based on Dillard and Peck’s (2000) assessment techniques. Dillard and Peck (2000) assessed participants’ emotions through asking them to complete a set of items related to eight public service announcements. A 5-point scale (0 = *none of this feeling*, 4 = *a great deal of this feeling*) was used for anger using the following terms: irritated, angry, annoyed, and aggravated. For fear, a 5-point scale was adopted with the following emotion words: fearful, afraid, scared. Sadness included the same scale with sad, dreary, dismal, while guilt included guilty and ashamed. This study recreated Dillard and Peck’s (2000) efforts but excluded several items such as surprise, contentment and happiness. The scale also was transformed from a 5-point to 7-point to allow a greater range of responses for participants. Furthermore, disgust was excluded from Dillard and Peck’s (2000) emotions, but is appropriate to add for a study exploring romantic jealousy as Lazarus’s (1991) findings suggest. Disgust was constituted through nauseated, repulsive, sickened, and appalled. Appendix D contains instructions for gathering this information from partners of individuals who have admitted romantic jealousy.

The emotion subscale was originally analyzed through an exploratory principal-axis factor analysis with a direct oblimin rotation; the pattern matrix was used in interpretation. There were four factors with eigenvalues greater than one. The first accounted for 45.13% of the variance. Examining the pattern matrix for this and subsequent dimensions, the three fear items were seen to load highly on it. Cronbach's alpha for these items was .86. The second factor, which accounted for 15.02% of variance, included the two guilty items, with an alpha of .71. The third factor, with the four angry items, accounted for 7.07% of variance ($\alpha = .93$). The fourth factor accounted for 6.52% of variance and consisted of the four disgust items ($\alpha = .89$). As the sadness items did not load on these dimensions, the factor analysis was re-run with a fifth dimension forced. This final dimension accounted for 4.84% of variance. Dreary and dismal loaded highly on this factor but sad only moderately. Nonetheless, alpha with all three items, .83, did not increase with sad removed.

Goals

In order to better comprehend how goal types influence communicative responses to jealousy, Guerrero and Afifi (1998) calculated goals through understanding motivations to maintain self-esteem and to maintain the relationship. Measurement of both motivations contained two three-item scales that began with the statement, "When I am jealous in my current relationship, I am usually concerned about..." Items measured self esteem maintenance and encompassed: (1) maintaining self-esteem, (2) keeping my pride, and (3) feeling good about myself despite the situation. Participants responded to these questions on a seven-point Likert scale.

Concern for the relationship ($\alpha = .85$) had three items: (1) preserving the relationship, (2) holding onto my relationship and (3) keeping the relationship going.

To assess the dimensionality of goal responses, items were submitted to an exploratory principal-axis factor analysis with a direct oblimin rotation with interpreting through the pattern matrix. The first factor includes items relevant to relationship maintenance. This factor accounted for 50.60% of the variance. This goal type had high internal consistency ($\alpha = .92$). The second factor, representing self-esteem maintenance, accounted for 32.48% of the variance. Goal absence also had high internal consistency ($\alpha = .87$).

Communication

Since jealousy in romantic relationships is an interactive experience and includes both partners' contributions to its formation and resolution, studies examining jealousy need to integrate both partners' perspectives. As a result, both points of view necessitate separate measurement tools. For the actor, a scale which measures how he or she responds to a jealousy inducing event is required. In comparison, the proposed model of romantic jealousy depicts the partner acknowledging the actor's communication about the event, and not the event alone. While the actor and the partner's responses are linked, both individuals are creating messages that respond to separate stimuli. The partner's point of view was captured through an adaptation of Canary, Cunningham and Cody's (1988) Conflict Tactic scale.

To capture the partner's perspective about the actor's jealous reaction, Canary, Cunningham and Cody's (1988) Conflict Tactic scale was used (see Appendix E).

According to Canary and Spitzberg's (1990) research, seven separate response categories (integrative tactics, topic shifting, personal criticism, anger, sarcasm, semantic focus and denial) are pervasive throughout the majority of literature on conflict. Within their study, participants rated the level to which the actor applied each tactic on a seven-point, Likert-type scale with 1 = *strongly agree* and 7 = *strongly disagree*. Two previous studies (Canary, Cunningham and Cody, 1988 as described in Canary & Spitzberg, 1990) indicate *integrative tactics* as the most commonly used for actors and partners respectively.

Due to small sample size for the pre-test data, results could not be submitted to an exploratory principal-axis factor analysis with oblimin rotation. Consequently, internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Canary, Cunningham and Cody's (1988) Conflict Tactic scale included the following Cronbach's alpha coefficients, $\alpha = .79$ for integrative tactics, $\alpha = .91$ for topic shifting, $\alpha = .92$ for personal criticism, $\alpha = .85$ for anger, $\alpha = .79$ for sarcasm and $\alpha = .365$ for semantic focus. As the Cronbach's alpha level for semantic focus does not meet criteria for acceptance, this category will be dropped from the main study. Cronbach's alpha coefficients suggested dropping several items to increase internal consistency, increasing alpha for integrative tactics to $= .90$, topic shifting to $.94$ and personal criticism to $.87$, respectively.

Relationship Satisfaction

Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero and Spitzberg's (1995) examination of jealousy expression and experience included measurements on participants' relational

satisfaction. In their analysis, they employed Hendrick's (1988) seven-item Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), which "yielded an alpha reliability of .90" (Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero & Spitzberg, 1995, p. 80). The Relationship Assessment Scale was based on a previous questionnaire Hendrick (1981) developed, the Marital Assessment Questionnaire, but was revised for individuals who are not married (Hendrick, 1988). The RAS, (see Appendix F), is a seven-item Likert scale measure of global relationship satisfaction. Responses are on a 5-point Likert scale, and can be analyzed using the total or average scores. Average scores range from 1 to 5; total scores range from 7 to 35. Higher scores indicate greater relationship satisfaction. Items 4 and 7 are reverse scored. The Relationship Assessment Scale has high internal consistency, ($\alpha = .86$), as well (Hendrick, 1988).

Table 1*Factor Analysis of Expected Jealousy*

	<i>1</i>
<hr/>	
Eigenvalue Total	2.58
% of variance	64.47
Cumulative %	64.47
How upset would you expect your partner to be?	.760
How insecure would you expect your partner to be?	.695
How jealous would you expect your partner to be?	.862
How envious would you expect your partner to be?	.585

Table 2*Factor Analysis of Attributions*

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
% of variance	64.47	17.19	10.60
Cumulative %	41.40	25.96	14.55
I felt culpable for the jealousy-inducing event.	-.053	.039	.686
I expected my romantic partner to feel responsible for the jealousy-inducing event.	.808	.010	-.071
The situation should be held accountable for the jealousy-inducing event.	-.053	.787	.010
I was blameworthy for the jealousy-inducing event.	.014	.006	.888
I expected my romantic partner to feel accountable for the jealousy-inducing event.	.928	.013	.015

Table 2 continued*Factor Analysis of Attributions*

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
Aspects of the situation were			
blameworthy for the	.049	.851	.010
jealousy-inducing event.			
I should be held responsible	-.014	.014	.911
for the jealousy-inducing event.			
My romantic partner was			
liable for the	.882	-.020	-.046
jealousy-inducing event.			
Situational factors were			
responsible for the	.080	.848	.094
jealousy-inducing event.			
I was at fault for the			
jealousy-inducing event.	.018	-.066	.928
My romantic partner			
was at fault for the	.962	.004	.057
jealousy-inducing event.			

Table 2 continued

Factor Analysis of Attributions

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
The situation was at fault for the jealousy-inducing event.	-.058	.907	-.122

Table 3*Factor Analysis for “Emotions.”*

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
Eigenvalue Total	6.92	2.90	1.37	1.00
% of variance	43.28	18.18	8.56	6.30
Cumulative %	43.28	61.46	70.01	76.32
Scared	-.048	.013	.060	-.790
Sad	.049	.413	.358	-.241
Dismal	.209	.432	.189	-.114
Dreary	.175	.364	.083	-.301
Angry	-.006	.041	.764	-.110
Afraid	.027	-.001	-.045	-.880
Irritated	.050	-.125	.871	-.025
Fearful	.104	-.045	-.040	-.886
Aggravated	-.014	.008	.885	-.032
Annoyed	.051	.000	.923	.132
Repulsive	.550	-.042	.184	-.130
Appalled	.555	-.007	.233	-.011
Sickened	.919	-.074	-.016	-.016

Table 3 continued

Factor Analysis for “Emotions.”

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
Guilty	-.161	.726	-.043	-.042
Nauseated	.739	.173	-.087	-.080
Ashamed	.142	.697	-.066	.071

Table 4*Factor Analysis for “Goals.”*

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>
Eigenvalue Total	3.04	1.94
% of variance	50.58	32.48
Cumulative %	50.60	83.07
Preserving the relationship.	.838	.065
Keeping my pride.	-.035	.682
Holding onto my relationship	.977	.019
Maintaining my self-esteem.	.070	.930
Feeling good about myself despite the situation.	-.010	.884
Keeping the relationship going.	.857	-.070

Data Analysis

All data analysis was completed through a series of multiple regression equations, each relevant to different stages throughout the process. Power analyses were done with the aid of G Power 3.1.2 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009), and in each case resulted in power for high and medium effect sizes as 1.0. The first stage, which included 1 independent variable, satisfaction for attributions, has a power of .74 for small effect size. The second stage included three independent variables for attributions, has a power of .57 for small effect size. The third stage, emotions, employed five variables with a power of .48 for small effect size. Goals comprised the fourth stage, with two independent variables yielding a power of .64 for small effect size. Finally, seven independent variables, including five emotions and two goal types, created the last stage for a power of .42 for small effect size. In conclusion, this research contains incredible power for high and medium effect sizes and an acceptable level for small. All reported betas are unstandardized.

Chapter 3

RESULTS

The current study examined relationships among relational satisfaction, communication, and all aspects of the proposed four step model. This analysis views only the processes involved from the partner's point of view. These participants have reported the experience of a partner admitting romantic jealousy to them. The following chapter reports analyses which test the relationships hypothesized in Chapter 1.

Relational Satisfaction and Attributions

H1 proposed satisfaction to be directly related to attribution to self. H2, in comparison, hypothesized satisfaction as inversely related to attribution to actor. In addition, H3 posited satisfaction as inversely related to attribution to situation. All three relationships were submitted to multiple regression analysis with relational satisfaction as the independent variable.

The first multiple regression, relevant to H1, included attribution to self as the dependent variable. The model accounted for 4.2% of the variance in attribution to self, adjusted $R^2 = .039$, $F(1, 341) = 14.91$, $p < .05$. Relational satisfaction as a predictor of attribution to self was supported, $B = .215$, $t = 3.86$, $p < .05$.

Testing H2 included attribution to actor as the dependent variable and relational satisfaction as the independent variable. The model accounted for .1% of the variance in attribution to actor, adjusted $R^2 = -.002$, $F(1, 341) = .198$, $p > .05$.

Satisfaction as a predictor of attribution to actor was not supported.

H3 examined satisfaction as inversely related to attribution to situation. The relevant model accounted for 1.8% of the variance in attribution to situation, adjusted $R^2 = .015$, $F(1, 341) = 6.25$, $p < .05$. Satisfaction as a predictor of attribution to situation, $B = .129$, $t = 2.50$, $p < .05$ was noted, but not in the hypothesized direction.

Attributions and Emotion

Analyses of relationships between attributions and emotions were conducted with five multiple regressions including all three types of attributions (self, other, situation) as independent variables and each emotion (anger, fear, sadness, guilt and disgust) as a dependent variable, in turn. Hypotheses H4, H5 and H6 sought to understand how attributions to self relate to emotion. H4 predicted a relationship to guilt, H5, to sadness and H6 to fear. H7 suggested that attribution to situation or other is related to anger. All hypothesized relationships between attributions to self, situation or partner and emotions predicted positive relationships.

H4 included guilt as a dependent variable and attribution to self as an independent variable. The model accounted for 25.2% of the variance in guilt, adjusted $R^2 = .245$, $F(3, 339) = 38.01$, $p < .05$. Attribution to self as a predictor of guilt as an emotional response to a partner admitting romantic jealousy was supported,

$B = .478, t = 10.2, p < .05$. Additional analyses demonstrated that neither attribution to other nor attribution to situation reached significance.

Sadness as a dependent variable and attribution to self as an independent variable were evaluated to assess H5. The model accounted for 9.6% of the variance in sadness, adjusted $R^2 = .088, F(3, 339) = 12.04, p < .05$. Attribution to self as a predictor of sadness as an emotional response to a partner admitting romantic jealousy was supported, $B = .260, t = 3.93, p < .05$. A significant relationship between attribution to partner and sadness was located, $B = .160, t = 2.80, p < .05$, but not for situational attributions.

H6, attributions to self are directly related to fear, demonstrated support, $B = .343, t = 4.73, p < .05$. The model also accounted for 9.9% in the variance in fear, adjusted $R^2 = .091, F(3, 339) = 12.46, p < .05$. A significant relationship between attribution to partner and fear was noted, $B = .131, t = 2.10, p < .05$, but not for situational attributions.

Attributions to situation or partner are predicted in H7 as positively related to anger. The relevant model accounted for 12.3% of the variance, adjusted $R^2 = .115, F(3, 339) = 15.78, p < .05$. Both attributions to situation, $B = .297, t = 2.70, p < .05$, and attributions to partner, $B = .476, t = 5.55, p < .05$, were predictors of anger as an emotional response, which supports H7. An inverse relationship was noted between attribution to self and anger, but was not significant.

Disgust was excluded from hypothesized relationships between attributions and emotions. For disgust, the model predicted 14.7% of the variation, adjusted R^2

$=.139$, $F(3, 339) = 19.42$, $p < .05$. A significant relationship was found between attributions to self as a predictor for disgust, $B = .389$, $t = 4.37$, $p < .05$. Attributions to others as a predictor of disgust was supported, $B = .426$, $t = 5.56$, $p < .05$, but attribution to situation was not.

Emotions and Goals

To assess H8, H9 and H10, two multiple regressions were estimated with all five emotions as the independent variables and each type of goal as dependent. The model for relationship goals accounted for 8.7% of the variance, adjusted $R^2 = .073$, $F(5, 337) = 6.41$, $p < .05$. H8, guilt as positively related to relationship goals, was rejected, as the data demonstrated a significant, but inverse relationship, which is opposite of the hypothesized direction, $B = -.220$, $t = -2.13$, $p < .05$. H9, sadness as positively related to relationship goals, was also not supported. H10, fear as positively related to relationship goals, was also rejected, as, like H8, an inverse relationship was uncovered, $B = -.217$, $t = -2.59$ and $p < .05$. Turning to the other two emotions, anger as a predictor of relationship goals did not reach significance, but disgust did, $B = .325$, $t = 5.05$, $p < .05$.

Individual goals were examined analogously, with the model accounting for .9% in the variance in individual goals, adjusted $R^2 = -.006$, $F(5, 337) = .603$, $p > .05$. H11, which tested the relationship between anger and individual goals, was analyzed first. Anger as a predictor of individual goals was not supported. H12 stated that

disgust is positively related to individual goals, but was not supported. In addition, guilt, sadness and fear as predictors of individual goals were not significant.

Goals and Communication

Hypotheses 13, 14, 15 and 16 examined the association between goals and communication. Three multiple regressions were used with goals (relationship and individual) as independent variables and three different types of communicative responses (constructive, destructive and avoidant) as dependent. The first regression compared goal types to constructive communication. The model accounted for 14.7% in the variance in constructive communication, adjusted $R^2 = .142$, $F(2, 340) = 29.40$, $p < .05$. H13 postulated relationship goals to be positively related to constructive communication, and was supported, $B = .742$, $t = 7.67$, $p < .05$. H16, individual goals as an inverse predictor of constructive communication, was supported as well, $B = -.303$, $t = -2.586$, $p < .05$.

The model for destructive communication accounted for 9.7% of the variance in destructive communication, adjusted $R^2 = .092$, $F(2, 340) = 18.28$, $p < .05$. H14, relationship goals as inversely related to destructive communication, was supported, $B = -.646$, $t = -4.00$, $p < .05$. In comparison, H15 viewed individual goals as positively related to destructive communication, and was supported, $B = 1.11$, $t = 5.66$, $p < .05$.

Avoidant communication did not have any relationships hypothesized, but is another noteworthy communicative response type that should be included in this study's analysis. The model accounted for 5.8% of the variance in avoidant

communication, adjusted $R^2 = .052$ $F(2, 340) = 10.47, p < .05$. Relationship goals as a predictor of avoidant communication were inversely related, $B = -.502, t = -4.02, p < .05$, and individual goals had a positive relationship, $B = .522, t = 3.46, p < .05$.

Additional Analyses

Additional analyses were examined to explore relationships among variables not included in this study's hypotheses. All emotions (disgust, anger, guilt, fear and sadness), both relationship and individual goals, and the three types of communicative responses (constructive, destructive and avoidant) that occur as a result of a person reporting the experience of romantic jealousy to a partner were included. Multiple regressions also examined the role relational satisfaction has on goal formation. Each will be examined in turn using multiple regression.

Relational Satisfaction and Goals

Because relational satisfaction is believed to play an influential role in many aspects of the proposed model, it would be valuable to review how this variable affects relational and individual goals. Two multiple regressions were completed. The first regression included relational satisfaction as the independent variable and relationship goals as the dependent. The model accounted for 0.6% of the variance, adjusted $R^2 = .003, F(1, 341) = 1.92, p > .05$. Relational satisfaction as a predictor of relational goals was not significant. The second multiple regression examined relational satisfaction as the independent variable and self goals as the dependent. This model

accounted for 0.0% of the variance, adjusted $R^2 = -.003$, $F(1, 341) = 0.97$, $p > .05$.

Like the relationship with relational goals, these findings were not significant.

Attributions and Goals

Because the hypothesized model views emotions as mediating the relationship between attributions and goals, whether attributions have a direct effect on goals should be determined. Two multiple regressions were completed with the three types of attributions, (self, other and situation), as the independent variables, and the two goal types, (individual and relational), as dependent variables. The model accounted for 2.3% of the variance in relationship goals, adjusted $R^2 = .014$, $F(3, 339) = 2.66$, $p < .05$. Attribution to other was the only attribution of the three to reach significance in a positive direction, $B = .167$, $t = 2.22$, $p < .05$. Attribution to situation was found to be significant, but inversely, $B = -.200$, $t = -2.08$, $p < .05$. Attribution to self did not reach significance.

The second multiple regression, which attempted to account for the variance in individual goals, did not reach significance, adjusted $R^2 = .005$, $F(3, 339) = 1.554$, $p > .05$. Neither attribution to self, nor attribution to situation achieved significance, either. Attribution to other reached significance in a negative direction, $B = -.134$, $t = -2.15$, $p < .05$.

Emotions, Goals, and Communication

The relationship of all emotions and both types of goals with constructive communication was also explored. The model accounted for 21.6% of the variance in constructive communication, adjusted $R^2 = .200$, $F(7, 335) = 13.20$, $p < .05$.

Constructive communication was found to be predicted by relational goals, $B = .726$, $t = 7.37$, $p < .05$, and inversely related to self goals, $B = -.297$, $t = -2.60$, $p < .05$. Fear, $B = .392$, $t = 2.74$, $p < .05$, and disgust, $B = .273$, $t = 2.72$, $p < .05$, also had significant positive relationships.

Additional analyses also examined the connection between all emotions, both goals, and destructive communication as a response to the experience of a partner admitting romantic jealousy. The model accounted for 18.1% of the variance in destructive communication, adjusted $R^2 = .164$, $F(7, 335) = 10.61$, $p < .05$. Self goals exhibited a significant relationship to destructive communication, $B = 1.06$, $t = 5.58$, $p < .05$, while relationship goals were inversely related, $B = -.608$, $t = -3.72$, $p < .05$. Anger, $B = -4.07$, $t = -2.81$, and $p < .05$, and disgust, $B = -4.32$, $t = -2.31$, $p < .05$, also reported inverse relationships with destructive communication.

Finally, avoidant communication had a significant relationship with several variables in the proposed model. The model accounted for 8.8% of the variance in avoidant communication, adjusted $R^2 = .069$, $F(7, 335) = 4.64$, $p < .05$. Self goals demonstrated a significant relationship to avoidant communication, $B = .537$, $t = 3.56$, $p < .05$, while relationship goals were inversely related, $B = -.531$, $t = -4.08$, $p < .05$. Guilt was inversely related to avoidant communication, $B = -.461$, $t = -1.99$, $p < .05$.

Table 5.*Descriptives for Main Study Variables*

Question	Mean	S.D.
Self Attributions		
I felt culpable.	2.78	1.04
I was blameworthy.	2.76	1.08
I should be held responsible.	2.70	1.08
I was at fault.	2.74	1.06
Other Attributions		
Partner should feel responsible.	2.73	1.13
Partner should be accountable.	2.78	1.19
Partner is liable.	2.79	1.23
Partner is at fault.	2.73	1.13
Situational Attributions		
Situation should be accountable.	3.11	1.04
Situation is blameworthy.	3.15	1.04
Situation is responsible.	3.35	1.03
Situation is at fault.	3.23	1.06
Anger		
Angry	3.87	1.80
Irritated	4.31	1.77

Table 5 continued

Question	Mean	S.D.
Aggravated	4.13	1.78
Annoyed	4.27	1.72
Fear		
Scared	2.96	1.72
Afraid	2.96	1.70
Fearful	2.90	1.64
Sadness		
Sad	3.96	1.65
Dismal	3.25	1.60
Dreary	3.13	1.59
Guilt		
Guilty	3.45	1.81
Ashamed	2.94	1.71
Disgust		
Nauseated	2.48	1.63
Repulsive	2.83	1.72
Appalled	2.94	1.72
Sickened	2.90	1.80

Table 5 continued

Question	Mean	S.D.
Relationship Goals		
Preserving the relationship	3.29	1.86
Holding onto the relationship	3.42	1.81
Keeping the relationship going	3.43	1.90
Individual Goals		
Keeping pride	3.95	1.67
Maintaining self-esteem	3.86	1.71
Feeling good about self	3.96	1.66
Relational Satisfaction		
How well does your partner meet your needs?	3.64	0.89
How satisfied?	3.66	0.94
How good?	3.58	0.97
Wish you hadn't?	2.43	1.14
Meet expectations?	3.67	1.11
Love partner?	3.96	1.05
Problems?	2.99	1.04
Constructive Communication		
Seek mutually beneficial solution	2.77	1.61

Table 5 continued

Question	Mean	S.D.
Reason in give and take manner	2.99	1.59
Try to understand	2.61	1.58
Show concern	2.77	1.61
Express trust	3.06	1.59
Compromise	3.05	1.50
Explore solutions	3.20	1.65
Accept share of responsibility for conflict.	3.51	1.58
Avoidant Communication		
Avoid issue	4.29	1.70
Ignore issue	4.66	1.65
Change topic of discussion	4.52	1.62
Avoid him or her	5.01	1.64
Postpone issue	4.71	1.69
Change subject	4.67	1.71
Talk about abstract things	4.73	1.60
Keep person guessing	4.50	1.68
Destructive Communication		
Criticize personality	4.56	1.77

Shout at him or her	4.77	1.80
Intimidate him or her	5.10	1.82
Blame him or her for causing conflict	4.53	1.66
Lost my temper	4.80	1.75
Use threats	5.30	1.83
Criticize behavior	4.40	1.72
Be sarcastic	3.75	1.81
Tell him or her how to behave	4.20	1.70
Blame conflict on personality	4.60	1.67
Tease	4.78	1.74
Be hostile	5.01	1.75

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION

One of the most valuable objectives advanced at the beginning of this thesis was the need for communication researchers to “understand the functions, factors and outcomes that occur as a response to romantic jealousy.” This point becomes especially salient when considering that romantic jealousy can have long lasting effects on the health of a romantic relationship. Furthermore, the ways in which couples respond to issues in their relationship, such as negative emotions stemming from romantic jealousy, is one of many signals about their relationship’s health (Knobloch, Miller & Carpenter, 2007). Despite claims that studying the topic is necessary in order to better understand romantic relationships, little research actually exists (e.g. Bevan, 2004; Harmon-Jones, Peterson & Harris, 2009; Knobloch, Solomon & Cruz, 2001).

Because of these concerns, this thesis aimed to extend previous findings through examining how romantic jealousy functions from both the perspective of the individual reporting the experience of romantic jealousy, and the partner who is the recipient of messages concerning the perceived infraction. The second of these goals was accomplished, but with constraints. This chapter discusses the results obtained from this investigation and proposes a revised model of romantic jealousy, outlines

limitations of the study, and makes suggestions for future research. Practical implications will bring closure to this report by demonstrating the value of this probe for the larger population. Placement of each variable and corresponding discussion will be structured according to the progression in the four-step model.

Analysis of Results and Extension

Relational Satisfaction & Attributions

The first stage in the model concerns the relationship between relational satisfaction and attributions. Relational satisfaction was hypothesized to be positively related to self (H1) and negatively related to other (H2) and situation (H3). Results suggest relational satisfaction has a positive relationship with attributions to self (H1) and situation (H3), but not attributions to other (H2). These findings imply that when a couple is satisfied with their relationship, the individual who is at fault is more likely to blame his/her self or the situation rather than the other person. According to Rusbult's (1983) investment model, exchanges between relational satisfaction, perception of alternatives, and commitment will determine if a relationship will continue or dissolve. Rusbult's (1983) research shows that commitment increased for dyads with high levels of satisfaction. As partners become more satisfied with the relationship, they are more likely to blame factors other than their partner. These data also strengthen previous research (Heider, 1944) that suggests individuals view themselves as responsible for their behavior rather than other factors.

Attributions & Emotions

Although relational satisfaction has an influence on attribution creation, emotions resulting from these explanations provide insight into how individuals process the experience. The second phase of the model examines how attributions affect emotions. Self attributions are positively related with guilt (H4), sadness (H5), and fear (H6). Support for all of the hypotheses was located, which suggests taking accountability for a partner becoming romantically jealous ends in these emotions. These findings support the perspective of romantic jealousy as detrimental to relational health (Bevan, 2008) because of the variety of negative emotional outcomes which can occur from a romantic jealousy inducing event. Additional analyses demonstrated self attributions to be unrelated with anger but positively linked with disgust, which further backs the notion of a negative emotional experience for a person who takes responsibility for a jealousy inducing event.

In addition, attributions to situation and partner were also hypothesized (H7) to be positively associated with anger. H7 was supported, but additional analyses for relationships of attribution to other and situation with fear, sadness, guilt and disgust yielded more noteworthy data. Attributions to a partner mostly had positive relationships with fear, sadness and disgust but not with anger. Interestingly, situational attributions did not have any relationships with fear, sadness, or disgust but aligned with anger positively. Guilt did not match up with either attribution to situation or partner. Because guilt has a significant relationship with attributions to

self, this emotion only occurs when the individual who causes the jealousy inducing event believes he/she is liable, and not the other person or the environment.

Explanation of these puzzling results is offered through the Emotion-in-Relationships Model (ERM; Berscheid, 1983; Knobloch, 2008). As the interdependence of two individuals involved in a relationship increases, both individuals become more capable of either facilitating or inhibiting the other's activities and goals. "A person's emotional investment in a relationship is defined by both the facilitative and the interfering interchain connections, while the degree of emotion actually experienced in the relationship is associated with only the interfering, or interruptive, interchain causal connections" (Berscheid, 1983, p. 143).

One of the most valuable aspects of Berscheid's (1983) commentary is that the perception of another individual attempting to interfere with the relationship damages not only the union of the individuals, but the emotional investment each partner has. ERM implies the act of attribution leads to emotional reaction, and the emotion is left unspecified. The more an individual attempts to explain his/her experience of romantic jealousy, the more negative emotions are stimulated. Knobloch's (2008) work with married partners suggests that as interference grows, such as through the experience of romantic jealousy, partners display and perceive less liking from each other (Knobloch, 2008). Furthermore, Knobloch (2008) suggests that interruptions from relational partners are "at the root of emotion" as "results indicated interference from partners was positively associated with people's emotional reactions of anger and sadness" (p. 840). Viewing Knobloch's (2008) update on Berscheid's (1983) research

suggests that in response to a partner admitting feeling romantically jealous, emotions are undifferentiated but negatively valenced and affect the ultimate construction of messages.

Emotions & Goals

Relatedly, once an individual begins to form emotional responses, deciding how to create communicative responses might depend upon the types of goals he or she forms. For example, H8, H9 and H10 all positively accounted for relationship goals following guilt, sadness and fear. This investigation found negative relationships for guilt and fear, and no substantial results for the other three emotions. Using the analyses from the attributions and emotions section of this research hints that guilt and fear are strongly motivating emotions that only occur when the partner desires holding onto the relationship and inspire relational goals to be assembled. In addition, predicted positive relationships were observed between individual goals and anger/disgust, and had no findings for any of the other emotions. Because of the lack of association between emotions and both goal types, the model should be revised to reflect this issue.

Goals & Communication

According to the four-step model, the types of goals one forms should influence the ways in which communicative responses are selected. Constructive communication, which is the most desirable of the three categories, was often the

aftereffect of relationship goals (H13), but was least likely to be found with individual goals (H16). These findings are consistent with previous research (Rusbult, 1983) as relational goals suggest higher levels of commitment than individual goals. Turning to destructive communication, which is the least helpful response type for relationship continuation, analyses indicated positive associations with individual goals, and negative associations with relational goals. Like H13 and H16, these analyses reconfirmed prior findings (Rusbult, 1983) and it is not surprising that results confirmed the path from individual goals to destructive communication. Avoidant communication was more likely to occur when individual goals were present, but should not be expected with the existence of relational goals. The analogous findings between destructive and avoidant communication indicates the plausibility of avoidant communication being as equally harmful as destructive, because an individual no longer has the relationship's best interests in mind, and is only looking to champion one's own cause at any cost to the other involved partner.

Additional Analyses

In addition to the analyses previously described, two other categories of relationships were examined. The first includes testing how relationships and goals interact, while the second views emotions, goals, and communication jointly. These results are appropriate to view when attempting to revise a model of the experience of a partner admitting romantic jealousy and its effects on attributions, emotions, goals, and communication.

Relational Satisfaction & Goals

Although the hypotheses in this research clearly demonstrate that emotional reactions come from the act of attribution (H4, H5 & H7), little is known about the origins of goals. The model of romantic jealousy originally proposed in this thesis claims that goals are created from emotions. The results from additional analyses further suggest that goals do not originate as a result of relational satisfaction or emotions. Yet, goals appear to be included in the process given their relationship with communication.

One possible explanation is that goals might exist prior to entering a relationship. For example, Hazan and Shaver's (1987) work applies Bowlby's (1973) attachment theory (Bowlby, 1973; Hazan & Shaver, 1987) to adult love and relationship formation. In a secure adult attachment, "secure lovers describe their most important love experiences as especially happy, friendly, and trusting...their relationships tended to endure longer." Next, avoidant attachment is "characterized by fear of intimacy, emotional highs and lows, and jealousy." Finally, anxious/ambivalent adult attachment in relationships occurs when individuals "experience love as involving obsession, desire for reciprocation and union, emotional highs and lows, and extreme sexual attraction and jealousy" (Hazan & Shaver, 1987, p. 515). When taking these types into consideration, relational goals might develop from secure attachments, which are rewarding to the individuals involved, and individual goals could be

generated from avoidant attachments. Because this explanation is speculative, future research would benefit from examining the source of goals.

Emotions, Goals & Communication

The second set of additional analyses examined the pathways from emotion to communication and goals to communication. Constructive communication had positive relationships with relational goals, fear, and disgust, and was inversely related to self goals. These findings reflect expectations concerning the relationship between goals and constructive communication given Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher's (2008) work. The positive relationships of fear and disgust with constructive communication demonstrate the emotions motivate constructive communication. As will be discussed in the section on methodological limitations below, the questionnaire items were ambiguous in that they did not indicate whether disgust was attributed to the self or the other person. If disgusted with self, one could be motivated to fix the issue with constructive communication. In addition, being fearful of the other person in the relationship can lead one to want to approach the other individual and form constructive communicative responses in order to save the relationship.

Destructive communication was positively predicted by self goals, and inversely with relationship goals, anger, and disgust. Relational and individual goals were negatively and positively related to destructive communication, respectively. This finding further supports the existence of two separate goal types. Evidence from Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher (2008) backs up these findings as their work

suggests, “when people experience hostility and have the goal of retaliation, they are more likely to report using destructive communicative responses to jealousy” (p. 6). While this study did not examine the role of retaliation, both self goals and retaliation are focused more on the individual and not relational needs. Anger and disgust are likely emotions because of the types of responses that form destructive communication. According to Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher (2008), this category includes responses such as violence, counterjealousy induction and negative communication, which are all representative of the detrimental effects of communication after a romantic jealousy inducing event.

Analyses involving avoidant communication uncovered a positive relationship with self goals. Once again, Guerrero, Hannawa and Gallagher (2008) provide explanation for these results. “Avoidant responses, in contrast, are more likely when people have the goal of maintaining their self-esteem” (Guerrero, Hannawa & Gallagher, 2008, p. 6). Relational goals force individuals to put aside their own self-esteem and view how the relationship is affected. For some individuals, the concept of approaching a partner to communicate either a constructive or destructive response can be emotionally taxing, and avoiding the issue would create the fewest expenditures in terms of energy and resources. By having one’s own interests at the forefront, as someone who has self goals would, these commodities can be saved. Through avoiding the issue and refusing to communicate with one’s partner, little conflict can occur, but similarly, few solutions will surface and repair the relationship. Additionally, feelings of guilt led to decreased amounts of avoidance. Because guilt

emerges from the creation of self attributions, a person who feels this emotion is likely to want to resolve the issue by not avoiding communication and will actively seek a solution through communication.

Proposition of a New Model of Romantic Jealousy

The inclusion of the hypothesized relationships and additional analyses necessitates the formation of a revised model of romantic jealousy. The previous model asserted that the experience of a partner admitting romantic jealousy to someone else included causal transitions from attributions to emotions, then through goals and finishing in the construction of communicative responses. Analyses supported several of these relationships, but many problems existed, particularly in the linkages between emotions and goals. Multiple regressions suggested the relational satisfaction component as influencing self (H1) and situational attributions, and ties from attributions to emotions are clear (H4, H5 & H7). Because many of the relationships from emotions to goals were not supported (H8, H9, H10, H11 & H12), emotions cannot be credited as causing goal generation. Goal generation is still valuable to include in the model as additional analyses offer insight concerning their relationship with attributions. These results imply that attributions have effects on goals and emotions, and emotions and goals on communication. As a result, the impact of emotions and goals on communicative responses, which serve as the cognitive and emotional aspects, respectively, should be considered as separate factors.

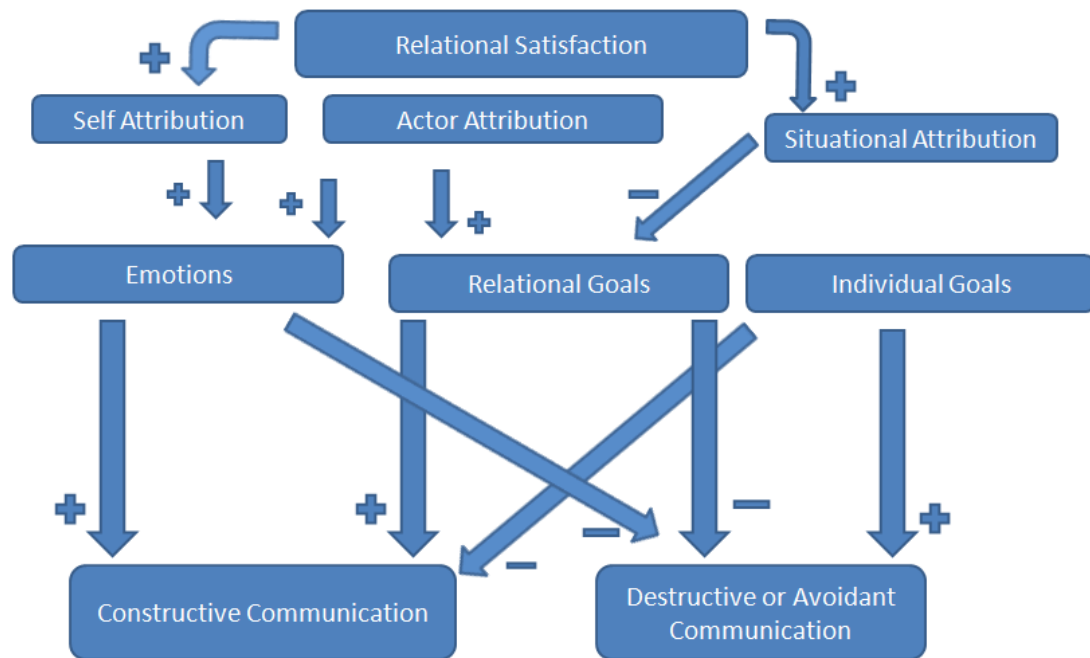


Figure 2. Revised cognitive, emotional and communicative response formation following a partner reporting the experience of romantic jealousy.

Methodological Limitations

While the current study extended previous research on romantic jealousy, communication and relational satisfaction as viewed through a proposed four-step model, these analyses should be considered with limitations. Three main areas should be evaluated when considering the results and include concerns with the sampled population: organization of the questionnaire, and the ways in which the emotional

components of the study were perceived by participants. Each issue will be explained separately with a focus on how these areas could affect the results discussed in Chapter 3.

One of the foremost issues present throughout communication research is the use of a college aged-sample. Researchers who use college aged samples have echoed concern with the limited generalizability of this type of sample for assessment purposes (Hatcher, Kryter, Prus & Fitzgerald, 1992; Rusbult, 1983, 1986; Sanderson & Kurdek, 1993). Sanderson and Kurdek (1993) also note differences in levels of education and economic opportunity for college-aged samples in comparison to the general population. While speculative, these concerns might influence how romantic jealousy transpires and the types of topics which prompt its existence. Future endeavors into the field of romantic jealousy research should keep these disparities in mind.

While the current study included a wide range of relationship lengths, (1 month to 72 months; $M = 15.5$; $SD = 12.7$), having a mean of 15.5 months for relational length is relatively short lived when compared to married couples. An extension of the sample to a larger, more generalized population would allow researchers to focus on relationships that might be more substantial, such as a larger inclusion of married individuals. When taking romantic jealousy into consideration, the use of married individuals, or cohabitating individuals with long term relationships might prove beneficial as these types of relationships demonstrate higher levels of commitment than college aged samples. Rusbult's (1983) research supports this notion as it

indicates, “over time, rewards increase, costs increase, satisfaction increases, alternative quality declines, investment size increases, and level of commitment increases” (p. 114). Having a comparative population which is more invested and relationally satisfied in which to examine the newly proposed model would yield a variety of benefits for relationship researchers.

Another issue is the organizational structure that was implemented for the participant questionnaire. Prior to launching the investigation, the research team decided to ask participants if they had ever had a partner admit romantic jealousy to them before indicating if they had experienced it themselves. The researchers believed far fewer participants would have the experience of a romantic partner admitting jealousy to them, rather than feeling romantically jealous of a current or previous partner. If the participant replied s/he had a partner admit romantic jealousy, questions about their own jealousy were never asked.

Surprisingly, a majority of the participants indicated a romantic partner had admitted romantic jealousy to them. Of the 112 participants who stated they had never had that experience, only 47 admitted they themselves had been jealous. As a result, future investigations should evaluate both the actor and the partner’s perspective. Rearrangement of questions and equal weighting of the distribution of all items might decrease the overwhelming majority in favor of one side over another. In addition, revision of the organizational structure would also enable researchers to understand which point of view is more common, and would allow future lines of research to react accordingly.

Two additional concerns about the conclusions reached in this thesis involve experiment wise error rate and a large sample size. The first of these three limitations involves this work not accounting for experiment wise error rate. Overall, this research ran 23 tests to explore hypotheses and additional analyses. Because of the high number of tests, several of the findings that appear to be significant may not be. Furthermore, this issue presents a strong possibility of Type 1 error occurring. Another concern includes the relationship between a large sample size and low variances of different variables in analysis. With a large sample, as included in this work ($n = 343$), certain analyses have little real-world impact. For example, factor analyses for items within the guilty and disgust had factors account for 15.02% and 6.52% of the variance, respectively. Even though these items were significant, they are not hugely important because of the low variance. These percentages should be taken into account when assessing the impact of the results.

One final limitation is in response to the ways in which the survey questions about emotions were formulated. Directions for participants who had a partner admit romantic jealousy to them included, "Please rate the amount of each emotion you felt when processing your romantic partner's communication about an event that made him/her jealous." The original intent of these directions was to increase specificity by directing the emotion only as a response to the partner's communication and not the act itself. When analyzing the results, the researchers were concerned with the emotional responses indicated. For example, even though the actor's communication

was indicated, the participants were not able to further specify what portion of the actor's communication triggered that specific emotion. If a participant experienced sadness about some portions of the actor's messages but not others no room was made to differentiate the two expressions and sources.

However, the largest issue for this limitation is the object of the emotional response was not indicated. This feature is problematic because it which leaves open whether the self or another is the target for the emotion. Because of these concerns, these findings' interpretations are complicated. Having a higher level of specificity would allow future research to examine models of romantic jealousy that include which individuals in the relationship emotional reactions are directed toward.

Practical Implications

As previously hypothesized, the presence of romantic jealousy has weighty concerns for individuals involved in romantic relationships. Understanding the impact of each individual in the relationship is highly important and rarely been considered. Explanations such as the Emotion-in-Relationships Model (Berscheid, 1983) offer some perspective on how facilitative and inhibitive factors to one's chain of planned events can influence romantic jealousy processing. Furthermore, the findings relevant to destructive and avoidant communication as being equally harmful are important to consider. While forming a constructive response might be taxing and require separate processing, having a facilitative goal in mind is important for relationship well being. As demonstrated, high levels of relational satisfaction were likely to lead to self

attributions, which then created negative emotions and constructive communication as a result.

While the role of goals in the model still demands attention for future research, for couples in relationships, having constructive interactions is healthy and likely to create higher levels of relational satisfaction as the partners must work through an issue together. Findings also showed attributions to actor and situation often ended in detrimental results, such as positive associations with anger, fear, sadness and disgust. For destructive communication, one of the most notable issues is the association with self goals. While a self attribution might not always be warranted, simple actions such as taking responsibility for one's behavior (self attribution) can lead to more positive results.

Counselors and therapists might also gain insight into the processes involved in romantic jealousy processing which might lead them to better advise their clients. While therapists might understand how romantic jealousy can affect a relationship, having an explanatory model should allow better diagnosis and treatment of continued offenses. For example, if one partner continually tells her/his partner s/he is jealous, the model can aid the therapist in going through each step and questioning where the couple began to have issues. After proper diagnosis, the impact of romantic jealousy on the relationship as a whole might be lessened and higher levels of relational satisfaction can be obtained.

Suggestions for Future Research

While this thesis met many of the original objectives, future research would benefit from tackling some of the issues this investigation alone could not. For example, Chapter 1 speaks of the issues apparent in only viewing one perspective. Due to sample size considerations, we were not able to fully consider both roles in the process. Consequently, allowing both points of view to have their own place would achieve several goals. Testing the newly revised model could be completed from the onset of the romantic jealousy inducing event, to the partner's formation of communication, and back to the distressed individual. Through studying the other person's perspective, further light could be shed on how attributional bias might control the outcome of a romantic jealousy inducing event, as well. Comparing both perspectives would allow for research on punctuation differences (Sillars, 1980a). Currently, research on the topic lacks a thorough investigation of the relationship between the actor and the partner's transition through and beyond a jealousy inducing event.

Future investigations can research the additional implications of attribution theory. For example, Jones and Davis (1965) analyzed the role played by judgments of intent and ability in attribution formation. Even though these items were noted as important, neither were fully measured. The pre-test, which included scenarios designed to induce different attributions of romantic jealousy, asked participants to indicate the extent to which they felt different emotions, such as insecure, jealous, upset and envious, but did not examine how intentionality and ability directly

impacted the attributions which were formed. As a result, inclusion of appropriate measures would increase knowledge about the impact of these two topics.

Relatedly, Sillars (1980b) suggested that attributions, emotions and reactions work together to influence expectations for future interactions. This investigation only worked to unearth how a single romantic jealousy inducing event influenced the immediate attributions, emotions, goals, and communication in response to the partner's communication. Participants were instructed to recall the most hurtful incident, which might have biased participant reporting due to the highly emotional nature of the event. A long term study of how the overall relationship was affected by a singular event would allow researchers to comprehend how detrimental certain events can be to the overall health and satisfaction of a relationship. Additionally, viewing the effects long term would also create the opportunity for additions to the revised model to be created and tested.

Because one of the goals of social science research is to extend the results of investigations to a larger population, external validity should always be considered. As mentioned in the discussion of limitations, a college-aged sample was implemented for this assessment. Future research should test the new model of romantic jealousy using a married or nontraditional long term sample. Relational satisfaction should be higher for married couples due to changes in investment, commitment and perception of alternatives (Rusbult, 1983). Exploring different samples would add to previous research on the subject while bolstering the model's explanation of romantic jealousy processing.

Furthermore, due to time constraints, a paired sample could not be obtained. Instead, participants were asked about their experiences independently from their partner's responses. Future research on the issue should include both individuals from the same relationship, which would allow researchers to consider and compare the severity of different romantic jealousy inducing events and their outcomes. Even though there are statistical worries resulting from the use of paired data, such as a lack of independence, multi-level modeling could help to alleviate many of these concerns.

Conclusion

Throughout the course of this thesis, the role of romantic jealousy on relationships has been explored. One major outcome of this research is the proposition of a new model of romantic jealousy, from the perspective of the individual who is told by his/her partner about their feelings. A review of current literature on all aspects of the original four-step model in Chapter 1 led to the creation of hypotheses which were examined using the methods included in Chapter 2. Even though not all of the hypotheses were supported, additional analyses yielded interesting results which necessitated the creation of a revised model of romantic jealousy. One of the largest take home messages from these analyses is the suggestion that emotions and goals have separate impacts on the creation of communicative messages for recipients of messages about romantic jealousy.

One caveat should be kept in mind while attempting to understand how romantic jealousy functions. This work explored the topic with a rational explanation

in mind. With events that create high levels of emotion, such as romantic jealousy, making rational decisions is difficult. Furthermore, not all couples may choose to resolve their issues as the model implies.

APPENDIX A

Sheets, Friendendall, and Claypool (1997) Vignettes

Jealous Person: Partner

Attribution of blame: SELF

Instructions: Romantic jealousy is pervasive in many partnerships. After reading the following hypothetical vignettes, please answer the items below to indicate how you would respond to the following situation and the effects on your romantic partner and your relationship.

Your partner has agreed to go with you to your class reunion. On your way there, a song comes on the radio. It is the song that was your favorite when you were first together. As you are driving along, listening to the radio, you begin to think about your relationship. You and your partner have been dating for 2 years. Lately you both have been having numerous arguments about your continuing relationship with a guy/girl you used to date. While you have always had feelings for him/her, you understand both of you will only remain friends and do not want to ruin your current relationship with your boyfriend/girlfriend. You have felt pretty guilty about spending so much time with your old date and not enough with your significant other and hope spending time together during this weekend will prove to him/her how much you care about your relationship.

You and your partner are now at your weekend-long class reunion. It is Friday night and you are at an outdoor bar-b-que. Tomorrow night will be the formal party: a mixer, a dinner, and a dance. You have introduced your partner to a number of your old classmates. About an hour ago, you see the (guy/girl) you used to date about whom you and your partner have been arguing and start talking with him/her. You end up going for a walk with him/her and are now just returning to the party area. You and (he/she) are standing close together by the bonfire and are still talking. You suddenly see your partner staring at the two of you. You touch the arm of the (guy/girl) you used to date, then you wave and smile at your partner. The two of you talk for a few more minutes. (He/she) walks away and you walk toward your partner. Your partner has been watching you the whole time you were by the bonfire. You return to (him/her) smiling, your cheeks feeling flushed.

At the conclusion of your weekend long class reunion, you and your partner pack your car and begin to drive home. During this trip, your partner remains unusually quiet until he/she finally says that your behavior and actions when you were around the person you used to date during Friday night's bar-b-que made him/her jealous.

Sheets, Friendendall, and Claypool (1997) Vignettes
Jealous Person: Partner
Attribution of blame: PARTNER

Instructions: Romantic jealousy is pervasive in many partnerships. After reading the following hypothetical vignettes, please answer the items below to indicate how you would respond to the following situation and the effects on your romantic partner and your relationship.

Your partner has agreed to go with you to your class reunion. On your way there, a song comes on the radio. It is the song that was your favorite when you were first together. As you are driving along, listening to the radio, you begin to think about your relationship. You and your partner have been dating for 2 years. But lately, your partner seems to be distant during your conversations and you suspect he/she might be interested in someone else. After all, he/she has been spending a lot of time with someone from work and has had to cancel your date nights frequently. When you are together, he/she is constantly sending text messages to other people and refuses to tell you who he/she is communicating with, which has made you quite angry. You wish he/she knew how you felt. As a result, you are hoping to test his/her commitment this weekend to see how he/she reacts.

You and your partner are now at your weekend-long class reunion. It is Friday night and you are at an outdoor bar-b-que. Tomorrow night will be the formal party: a mixer, a dinner, and a dance. You have introduced your partner to a number of your

old classmates. About an hour ago, you saw a (guy/girl) you used to date and you started talking with him/her. You end up going for a walk with him/her and are now just returning to the party area. You and (he/she) are standing close together by the bonfire and are still talking. You suddenly see your partner staring at the two of you. You touch the arm of the (guy/girl) you used to date, then you wave and smile at your partner. The two of you talk for a few more minutes. (He/she) walks away and you walk toward your partner. Your partner has been watching you the whole time you were by the bonfire. You return to (him/her) smiling, your cheeks feeling flushed.

At the conclusion of your weekend long class reunion, you and your partner pack your car and begin to drive home. During this trip, your partner remains unusually quiet until he/she finally says that your behavior and actions when you were around the person you used to date during Friday night's bar-b-que made him/her jealous.

Sheets, Friendendall, and Claypool (1997) Vignettes
Jealous Person: Partner
Attribution of blame: SITUATION

Instructions: Romantic jealousy is pervasive in many partnerships. After reading the following hypothetical vignettes, please answer the items below to indicate how you would respond to the following situation and the effects on your romantic partner and your relationship.

Your partner has agreed to go with you to your class reunion. On your way there, a song comes on the radio. It is the song that was your favorite when you were first together. As you are driving along, listening to the radio, you begin to think about your relationship. You and your partner have been dating for 2 years. Overall, you both have been pretty happy with your relationship with the exception of a few bumps here and there. Lately, most of your partner's time has been taken up by caring for an ill family member. Between your partner's work schedule, and his/her frequent trips to the doctor's office, he/she barely has any time for you. When you both do have time for a date, he/she is too exhausted to stay awake. You've sat through countless movies next to your sleeping partner. While you deeply care for your boyfriend/girlfriend, you are not sure how you can continue your relationship when so much of his/her time is taken up by his/her caregiving activities. You understand and are supportive of his/her caretaking and understand the stress he/she must be experiencing, but have concerns for your relationship. You are hoping this weekend will reduce any doubts you have.

You and your partner are now at your weekend-long class reunion. It is Friday night and you are at an outdoor bar-b-que. Tomorrow night will be the formal party: a mixer, a dinner, and a dance. You have introduced your partner to a number of your old classmates. About an hour ago, you saw a (guy/girl) you used to date and you started talking with him/her. You end up going for a walk with him/her and are now just returning to the party area. You and (he/she) are standing close together by the bonfire and are still talking. You suddenly see your partner staring at the two of you. You touch the arm of the (guy/girl) you used to date, then you wave and smile at your partner. The two of you talk for a few more minutes. (He/she) walks away and you walk toward your partner. Your partner has been watching you the whole time you were by the bonfire. You return to (him/her) smiling, your cheeks feeling flushed.

At the conclusion of your weekend long class reunion, you and your partner pack your car and begin to drive home. During this trip, your partner remains unusually quiet until he/she finally says that your behavior and actions when you were around the person you used to date during Friday night's bar-b-que made him/her jealous.

APPENDIX B

Russell and Harton's (2005) Expected Jealousy Scale

Instructions: Please rate how upset, insecure, jealous and envious you would expect *your partner* to be after being involved in the above scenario.

How upset would your partner be?

1	2	3	4
Not at all			Very

How insecure would your partner be?

1	2	3	4
Not at all			Very

How jealous would your partner be?

1	2	3	4
Not at all			Very

How envious would your partner be?

1	2	3	4
Not at all			Very

APPENDIX C

Attributions for Jealousy Inducing Event - Partner

Instructions: Think about the reason or reasons you have as explanations *for your romantic partner's communication* about the jealousy inducing event. The items below concern your impressions or opinions of this cause or causes of your outcome. Circle one number for each of the following scales.

Self

1. I feel culpable for how my partner communicated about the jealousy inducing event.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Strongly Agree

2. I am blameworthy for my partner's communication about the jealousy inducing event.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Strongly Agree

3. I should be held responsible for my partner's communication about the jealousy inducing event.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Strongly Agree

4. I am at fault for my partner's communication about the jealousy inducing event.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Strongly Agree

Other

1. I expect my romantic partner to feel responsible for his/her communication about the jealousy inducing event.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Strongly Agree

2. I expect my romantic partner to feel accountable for how he/she communicated about the jealousy inducing event.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Strongly Agree

3. My romantic partner is liable for his/her communication about the jealousy inducing event.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Strongly Agree

4. My romantic partner is at fault for his/her communication about the jealousy inducing event.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Strongly Agree

Situation

1. The situation should be held accountable for the ways in which my partner's communication transpired concerning the jealousy inducing event.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Strongly Agree

2. Aspects of the situation are blameworthy for my partner's communicative responses about the jealousy inducing event.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree

Neither Agree Nor Disagree

Strongly Agree

3. Situational factors are responsible for my partner's communicative responses about the jealousy inducing event.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

4. The situation is at fault for my partner's communication about the jealousy inducing event.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree			Strongly Agree

APPENDIX D

Emotional Responses to Romantic Jealousy Processing – Partner

Instructions: Please rate the amount of each emotion you felt when processing your romantic partner's *communication* about a jealousy inducing event.

1. Irritated

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

2. Angry

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

3. Annoyed

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

4. Aggravated

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

5. Fearful

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

6. Afraid

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

7. Scared

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

8. Sad

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

9. Dreary

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

10. Dismal

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

11. Guilty

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

12. Ashamed

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

13. Nauseated

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

14. Repulsive

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

15. Sickened

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

16. Appalled

None of this feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 **A great deal of this feeling**

APPENDIX E

Canary, Cunningham & Cody's (1988) Conflict Tactics scale

Instructions: Please rate the level to which you applied each tactic when responding to your partner's communication about the romantic jealousy inducing event with your partner.

Item #/Item

Integrative tactics

(13) I sought a mutually beneficial solution.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(16) I reasoned with him or her in a give-and take manner.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(33) I tried to understand him or her.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(21) I was sympathetic to his or her position.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(7) I showed concern about his or her feelings and thoughts.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(19) I expressed my trust in him or her.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(4) I compromised with him or her.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(10) I explored solutions with him or her.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(30) I accepted my fair share of responsibility for the conflict.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(35) I ignored his or her thoughts and feelings.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Topic shifting

(9) I avoided the issue.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(26) I ignored the issue.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(18) I changed the topic of discussion.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(6) I avoided him or her.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(15) I tried to postpone the issue as long as possible.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(3) I tried to change the subject.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(29) I talked about abstract things instead of the conflict issue.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(43) I kept the person guessing what was really on my mind.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Personal criticism

(11) I criticized an aspect of his or her personality.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(22) I blamed him or her for causing the conflict.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(31) I criticized his or her behavior.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(36) I told him or her how to behave in the future.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(45) I blamed the conflict on an aspect of his or her personality.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(17) I tried to make him or her feel guilty.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Anger

(14) I shouted at him or her.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(28) I showed that I lost my temper.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(25) I was hostile.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(5) I calmly discussed the issue. *

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Sarcasm

(34) I tried to intimidate him or her.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(8) I used threats.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(42) I was sarcastic in my use of humor.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(23) I teased him or her.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Semantic focus

(32) I focused on the meaning of the words more than the conflict issue.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

(44) I avoided the issue by focusing on *how* we were arguing instead of what we were arguing about.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Agree

Strongly Disagree

Note. An asterisk indicates that the item's values were reversed. Distributive tactics = Personal Criticism, Anger, and Sarcasm; Avoidance = Topic Shifting, Semantic Focus, and Denial.

APPENDIX F

Hendrick's (1988) Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS)

Directions: Please mark the number for each item that best answers that item for you:

1. How well does your partner meet your needs?

1	2	3	4	5
Poorly		Average		Extremely Well

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

1	2	3	4	5
Unsatisfied		Average		Extremely Satisfied

3. How good is your relationship compared to most?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

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

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Average		Very Often

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

1	2	3	4	5
Hardly at all		Average		Completely

6. How much do you love your partner?

1	2	3	4	5
Not Much		Average		Very Much

7. How many problems are there in your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Few		Average		Very Many

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