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# LOVERS AND FRIENDS: UNDERSTANDING FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS RELATIONSHIPS AND THOSE INVOLVED

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Psychology

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Lydia K. Merriam-Pigg

May 2012

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The Designated Thesis Committee Approves the Thesis Titled

LOVERS AND FRIENDS: UNDERSTANDING FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS RELATIONSHIPS AND THOSE INVOLVED

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APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

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May 2012

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ABSTRACT

LOVERS AND FRIENDS: UNDERSTANDING FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS RELATIONSHIPS AND THOSE INVOLVED

by Lydia K. Merriam-Pigg

Friends with benefits relationships (FWBRs) are defined as sexual relationships between two individuals who are friends, though they are not emotionally intimate or committed to one another. Little FWBR research has explored *who* is most likely to become involved in FWBRs and how personality may affect their FWB experiences. With the present study, I examined two aspects of personality that have been strongly implicated in romantic relationship choices and experiences: self-monitoring behavior and attachment styles. Further, I examined relationship closeness in FWBRs and compared the findings to literature reports of other types of relationships.

Consistent with predictions, some experiences in FWBRs were influenced by interactions between gender and self-monitoring, as high self-monitoring men participated in more FWBRs and found the relationships to be more satisfying compared to low self-monitoring women. There were also some indications that gender can influence certain aspects of FWBR experiences. FWBR experiences are affected, not just by gender or self-monitoring behavior alone, but by the interaction of the two. Perhaps interactions between gender and other personality traits might also influence the experience of FWBRs. Future research should examine other personality differences in FWB participants to further understand this type of relationship.

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Most importantly I would like to acknowledge the unending encouragement my family has given me over the last few years. From the initial conception of the topic, to my experience in collecting data from participants, to analyzing and reanalyzing results, and finally working through what seemed like endless and overwhelming edits, my family has always been supportive, understanding, and eager to motivate me when it appeared I was losing confidence. I could never thank them enough for that.

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## Introduction

Love is a topic of study across several disciplines, including psychology. Research has examined the physiological responses of love (Holland & Roisman, 2010; Schneiderman, Zilberstein-Kra, Leckman, & Feldman, 2011), the effects of a break-up for each party (Davis, Shaver, & Vernon, 2003; Waller & MacDonald, 2010), and the behaviors that lead to a successful romantic relationship (Demir, 2008; Franiuk, Cohen, & Pomerantz, 2002; Schindler, Fagundes, & Murdock, 2010; Utz & Beukeboom, 2011). Love saturates our lives from birth until death, assisting in creating lasting connections with others; after all, humans are interpersonal creatures by nature. Still, with all we know about love, it is surprising that we understand very little about more contemporary relationships, such as friends with benefits, and why some people become involved in them while others do not.

Personality attributes, important in other types of interpersonal relationships, might also be involved in friends with benefits relationships. How does personality affect initial involvement in friends with benefits relationships, and how is it related to the experiences while in the relationship? Furthermore, do people involved in friends with benefits relationships find them to be close relationships? If so, it would be important in empirically expanding the understanding of friends with benefits relationships to determine if the closeness resembles that of romantic relationships, strictly friendships, or something entirely different.

## What are Friends with Benefits Relationships?

Friends with benefits relationships (FWBRs) are defined as sexual relationships between two individuals who are friends, though they are not intimately involved or committed to one another (Hughes, Morrison, & Asada, 2005). Previous researchers found the prevalence of FWBRs among college students to be anywhere between 51% and 60% involvement at one time or another (Bisson & Levine, 2009; Puentes, Knox, & Zusman, 2008), though men reported having participated in FWBRs more often than women (Puentes et al.). Several studies found specific qualities that characterize a FWBR, detailing dating styles, values in life, and love styles, to name a few.

**Characteristics of friends with benefits relationships.** FWBRs lack exclusivity, commitment, a desire for a romantic relationship, and emotional attachment (Hughes et al., 2005). Those who become involved in FWBRs are typically casual daters and are more capable of having sex without love (Puentes et al., 2008). Furthermore, FWBR participants regard "financial security" as their top value in life, and hedonism—"if it feels good, do it"—as their primary sexual value (Puentes et al., 2008; Richey, Knox, & Zusman, 2009). Occasionally though, one partner is interested in developing the sexual relationship into one with more romance (Manning, Giordano, & Longmore, 2006); however, rules in maintaining the FWBR often suggest the heart should not get involved, and if it does, to stay "just friends" (Hughes et al., 2005). Developing romantic feelings for the other person rarely is reciprocated; at that point, the appeal of the non-committal

relationship has dissolved, and with it, often the friendship that existed previously (Hughes et al., 2005; Manning et al., 2006).

Communication is also very limited in a FWBR, regardless of the importance of the questions in the relationship, such as what to call the relationship, and where the relationship is headed. In fact, Bisson and Levine (2009) found that 85% of participants reported no initiation of relationship talk whatsoever. Low communication is seen in noncommittal relationships, as is ludus, the "game-playing" love style with which people are intent on enjoying sex without deep involvement, and keen on avoiding serious relationships (Grello, Welsh, & Harper, 2006; Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000).

**Distinguishing between friends with benefits and "hooking up".** Though both FWBRs and "hooking up" are experiences of casual sex, they are quite different and it is important to distinguish between the two. Hooking up is a similar involvement to FWB, though different in frequency of the encounters, with hooking up being less frequent. In addition, though a FWBR must be with someone considered a "friend," hooking up can occur with a friend, a friend of a friend, or even a stranger. Furthermore, the engagement of sexual behaviors may differ between the two. Individuals reported engaging in more genital (as opposed to other areas of the body) sexual behaviors, such as oral sex and intercourse, when the partner was a friend as compared to a friend-of-a-friend (Grello et al., 2006). In addition, individuals also reported participating in more affectionate sexual behaviors, such as holding hands and massage, when the partner was a friend as

compared to either a friend of a friend or a person the participant had just met (Grello et al., 2006).

The personality of those who "hook up" has been explored, with research demonstrating that sensation-seeking is implicated in predicting hooking-up behaviors, as well as exhibition, impulsivity, and autonomy (Bancroft, Janssen, Carnes, Goodrich, Strong, & Long, 2004; Paul et al., 2000). Gute and Eshbaugh (2008) examined the Big Five Personality traits (Extraversion, Neuroticism, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) and found that extraversion predicted hooking up behavior. In addition, high neuroticism, low openness to experience, low agreeableness, and low conscientiousness all predicted at least one type of hooking-up activity (Gute & Eshbaugh, 2008). The lack of research in this area concerning friends with benefits relationships highlights the need to begin examining other types of casual sex relationships, especially in an effort to continue differentiating between hooking up and FWBR.

**Are friends with benefits relationships "close"?** From past research, researchers understand the characteristics of romantic relationships and friendships, and have even explored the idea of closeness. However, the difficulty in operationalizing what a "close relationship" is has not been lost on researchers. Still, over the decades, close relationships have been defined in a number of ways, though most commonly, researchers stress either the degree of behavioral interdependence (Berscheid, Snyder, &

Omoto, 1989) or the sense of interpersonal connectedness (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992).

Interdependence is how one individual affects the other, and vice versa, through a variety of contexts. For example, in developing a measure of interdependence, Berscheid and colleagues (1989) examined interdependence on the levels of frequency of interactions, diversity of interactions, and the strength of the impact at each interaction between the pair. The frequency of interactions is the time spent with the partner. This was operationalized (Berscheid et al., 1989) as the time – in hours and minutes – in the morning, afternoon, and evening the participant spends with their partner. The diversity of interactions is the number of activities done with the partner, ranging from the mundane, like attending a lecture to the exciting, such as having sex. Diversity was operationalized in the measure (Berscheid et al., 1989) as the total number of activities that participants selected as having taken part in with their partner. The strength of the interactions gives the participant an opportunity to respond how much their partner impacts their life decisions, from simply what to wear to major financial choices (Berscheid et al., 1989).

Interdependence is a way to measure the concept of "being close" with another person, the objective closeness, while Aron and colleagues (1992) developed a method that looks at the idea of "feeling close" with another, a measure of subjective closeness. The measure used by Aron and colleagues allows individuals to identify with a pair of overlapping circles, symbolizing the degree to which the individual feels close with the

person in question. Research has explored relationship closeness in a variety of romantic relationships and friendships, though it has never been employed in the research of friends with benefits.

**Implications of Self-Monitoring Behavior**

Although personality and hooking up behavior have been explored in the literature, there is little regarding personality and FWBRs. I investigated two variables related to personality: self-monitoring behavior and adult attachment.

A particularly intriguing aspect of personality, well-studied in the relationship literature, is the concept of self-monitoring. Self-monitoring is the theory that examines differences in the extent to which people value, create, cultivate, and project social images and public appearances (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). High self-monitors are those who regulate and control their behavior to make it more appropriate for the situation, and thus, make a better impression. On the other hand, low self-monitors behave according to inner attitudes, emotions, and beliefs, regardless of the situation (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). Controversy has surrounded the construct of self-monitoring behavior, in that some research suggests it could be understood as simply extraversion. Gangestad & Snyder (2000) examined this possibility, and found that, while self-monitoring behavior may have an extraversion component, self-monitoring is multidimensional and functions as its own construct. Besides expressive self-control, researchers have also examined differences of self-monitoring behavior in factors such as

decoding nonverbal cues, influence of physical attractiveness, and interpersonal relationships (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000).

**Self-monitoring behavior in relationships.** Self-monitors differ in relationships on a variety of levels. For example, high self-monitors tend to view love as a game and insist you "love the one you're with," while low self-monitors experience love as a profound affective experience in which they search for a close, long-lasting attachment, believing in the adage, "one true love" (Leone & Hawkins, 2006). Furthermore, high self-monitors focus on the physical attractiveness, sex appeal, social status, and financial resources of their prospective romantic partner, while low self-monitors are more concerned with similarity, honesty, responsibility, and kindness (Leone & Hawkins, 2006). Relationships of low self-monitors also involve more trust and commitment, as they see the possibility of the relationship developing into a marriage (Norris & Zweigenhaft, 1999).

Sexual relations vary according to self-monitoring behavior as well. Not surprisingly, Snyder, Simpson, and Gangestad (1986) found that high self-monitors, in addition to having sex with more partners than low-self monitors in the year preceding the survey, reported an unrestricted orientation towards sex: high self-monitors were capable of sexual relations devoid of psychological closeness. Low self-monitors, on the other hand, reported a more restricted orientation towards sex, emphasizing the importance of psychological closeness, and indicated being uncomfortable with casual sex with multiple partners (Snyder et al., 1986).

In this same study, Snyder and colleagues (1986) recorded three patterns of sexual behavior: the number of different partners in the past year, the number of different partners foreseen in the next five years, and the percentage of people having experienced a "one-night stand." On all three indices, the starkest differences occurred between high self-monitoring men and low self-monitoring women. This reported interaction between gender and self-monitoring on sexual behavior can be easily applied in the research field of FWBRs, given the sexual nature of the relationship.

Based on the prior research, I hypothesized that, in FWBRs, gender and self-monitoring will interact in relation to FWBR involvement, FWBR satisfaction, and reports of relationship closeness. Similar to the literature (Snyder et al., 1986), high self-monitoring men will be more involved, more satisfied, and will have lower reports of objective and subjective closeness than low self-monitoring women.

**Attachment Style**

Another individual difference that may influence FWBR involvement and FWBR experiences once involved is adult attachment style. Attachment theory developed out of Bowlby's observations of emotions towards caregivers in monkeys (as cited in Simpson, 1990) and has become a vital part of the literature across disciplines in psychology. Attachment, a three-category model in childhood, is the tendency of humans to bond affectionately to others, most often caregivers (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Secure, anxious-ambivalent, and avoidant were the names given to the three primary distinct styles observed in children. However, the three-category model was missing something

when used in research of adults, and how attachment style affected various aspects of their experiences.

**Adult attachment styles.** Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) proposed a working model of adult attachment that extended the understanding of the three-category paradigm, in which they compared self-esteem thoughts about self and sociability thoughts about others. Either of these parts can be positive or negative, resulting in four different attachment styles.

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) developed a four-category model to represent adult attachment styles. Secure attachments are characterized by a positive view of both self and others, while comfortable with intimacy and independence. Those with an anxious-preoccupied attachment style seek high levels of intimacy, approval, and responsiveness from their partner, and often are overly dependent or clingy. Anxious-preoccupied adults do not trust their partner and experience high levels of worry and impulsiveness. What was one style of attachment in children (avoidant) became two in adults: fearful-avoidant and dismissive-avoidant. Whereas fearful-avoidant adults desire emotionally close relationships despite being uncomfortable with emotional closeness entirely, dismissive-avoidant adults desire independence and deny needing close relationships completely. Dismissive-avoidant adults distance themselves from rejection, but fearful-avoidant adults reject themselves and suppress or hide their feelings. Still, a similarity among all attachment styles is that they respond entirely differently in romantic relationships.

**Attachment style predicts relationship experiences.** Hazan and Shaver (1987) described romantic love as a process of attachment. They identified trust, friendship, and positive emotions as prominent in those individuals with a secure attachment, fear of closeness and lack of trust as characteristics of avoidant participants, and the experience of anxious-ambivalent adults marked by a view that love is preoccupying, and a struggle to merge with another person (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Further research of the three-category model of attachment found secure individuals reporting higher interdependence, commitment, and relationship satisfaction (Simpson, 1990), while those individuals with avoidant attachment styles were more likely to report never having been in love (Feeney & Noller, 1990).

In addition to different overall experiences in a relationship, attachment styles also affected the sexual experiences in relationships. In committed couples, avoidant attached individuals limit sex by avoiding sexual encounters entirely, or having fewer sexual fantasies about their partner, as some women reported (Brassard, Shaver, & Lussier, 2007). Higher avoidance is also related to more unwanted, but consensual, sexual encounters in committed relationships, perhaps due to the partner initiating sexual behaviors in an attempt to make up for a perceived deficit in emotional or sexual intimacy, characteristic of both dismissive-avoidant and fearful-avoidant individuals (Gentzler & Kerns, 2004). However, avoidant adults tend to have noncommittal sexual experiences, devoid of emotional intimacy (Gentzler & Kerns, 2004).

Thus, with this knowledge of the impact of attachment styles in relationships, I hypothesized that avoidant adults, specifically dismissive-avoidant (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), will be more involved in FWBRs and find them more satisfying than those of other attachment styles. Furthermore, I predicted that dismissive-avoidant individuals will report lower subjective and objective relationship closeness than other attachment styles, due to their desire to avoid emotional intimacy.

**The Present Study**

Literature concerning the various dimensions of traditional romantic relationships and friendships is prevalent; in fact, the research of hooking up greatly outnumbers the studies of more modern interpersonal relationships, such as friends with benefits relationships. As a result, despite having become quite common, especially on college campuses, friends with benefits is terribly understudied and likely misunderstood. In two parts of my study, I empirically enhanced the understanding of this contemporary relationship by exploring its relation to self-monitoring behavior, adult attachment style, and relationship closeness, elements well-studied in their relation to romantic relationships. The first part of the study examined who is most likely to get involved in friends with benefits relationships, as it relates to self-monitoring behavior and adult attachment style.

I based my predictions on the literature in self-monitoring behavior and attachment style in relationships, as well as a general gender difference in other kinds of relationships. Regarding FWBR involvement, I predicted that 1) high self-monitors will

report higher FWBR involvement than low self-monitors, 2) dismissive-avoidant individuals will report higher FWBR involvement than those of secure and preoccupied attachment styles, and 3) males will report higher FWBR involvement than females. In addition, I believed that the proportion of participants whom report involvement in a FWBR will replicate previous statistics in the literature.

My second inquiry of the study focused on how self-monitoring and attachment come to play in the relationships of reported subjective and objective closeness of friends with benefits relationships and satisfaction. I hypothesized that 1) high self-monitors will report lower subjective and objective relationship closeness than low self-monitors, 2) dismissive-avoidant individuals will report lower subjective and objective relationship closeness than those of secure or preoccupied attachment styles, and 3) males will report lower subjective and objective relationship closeness than females. Furthermore, in the construct of satisfaction, I hypothesized that 1) high self-monitors will report higher satisfaction in FWBRs than low self-monitors, 2) dismissive-avoidant individuals will report higher satisfaction in FWBRs than those of secure or preoccupied attachment styles, and 3) males will report higher satisfaction in FWBRs than females.

Lastly, I predicted interactions similar to Snyder and colleagues' (1986) findings regarding personality and gender on sexual behavior. In this study it will be in the way of self-monitoring behavior and gender on FWBR measures. Specifically high self-monitoring men will demonstrate higher 1) involvement and 2) satisfaction, and lower 3) objective and subjective closeness than low self-monitoring women.

## Methods

### Participants

My sample was recruited through the psychology research pool as part of course requirements at a mid-sized university. Participants ($n$ = 197) ranged in age from 18 to 49 ($M$ = 19.39, $SD$ = 2.99) years and comprised 50 males and 147 females. The ethnicity of the sample was diverse, with the largest proportion of participants identifying as Asian (37%, $n$ = 72). White/European (30%, $n$ = 59) and Hispanic or Latino (27%, $n$ = 53) were also frequently reported. A large majority of participants reported their sexual orientation as heterosexual (96%, $n$ = 187). Five participants identified as bisexual (3%) and two as homosexual (1%) (see Table 1 for full participant demographics). There were no exclusion criteria; all participants were included in the appropriate analyses.

Table 1

*Demographics*

| **Variable** | ***M*/Frequency** | ***SD*** | ***n*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Age* | 19.39 | 2.99 | 197 |
| *Gender* | | | |
| Female | 74.6% | | 147 |
| Male | 25.4% | | 50 |
| *Ethnicity* | | | |
| Asian | 36.5% | | 72 |
| White/European | 29.9% | | 59 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 26.9% | | 53 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 2.5% | | 5 |
| African American | 1.5% | | 3 |
| Middle Eastern | 1.0% | | 2 |
| Other | 1.0% | | 2 |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 0.5% | | 1 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Class rank* | | | |
| Freshman | 61.2% | | 120 |
| Sophomore | 23.0% | | 45 |
| Junior | 12.8% | | 25 |
| Senior | 2.0% | | 4 |
| Graduate student | 0.5% | | 1 |
| N/A | 0.5% | | 1 |
| *Sexual orientation* | | | |
| Heterosexual | 95.9% | | 187 |
| Homosexual | 1.0% | | 2 |
| Bisexual | 2.6% | | 5 |
| Other | 0.5% | | 1 |
| *Age at first sexual intercourse** | 16.80 | 1.51 | 142 |
| Proportion of virgins | 15.5% | | 26 |
| *Religious affiliation* | | | |
| Christian | 59.4% | | 114 |
| No preference/no affiliation | 25.0% | | 48 |
| Buddhist | 9.4% | | 18 |
| Other | 4.2% | | 8 |
| Muslim | 1.0% | | 2 |
| Hindu | 0.5% | | 1 |
| Sikh | 0.5% | | 1 |

*Note. A large proportion of participants did not answer this question (14.7%, n = 29).

**Measures**

**Demographics**. A standard demographic form was used, asking participants to report such variables as age, ethnicity, and gender. In addition, participants were asked to select a class rank (i.e., freshman, sophomore), sexual orientation, age of first sexual intercourse, and religion (see Appendix B).

**Self-monitoring behavior**. Self-monitoring behavior was measured by the original Self-Monitoring Scale (Snyder, 1974). This 25-item questionnaire is composed of individual statements, in which the participant responds as either being “true” or “false.” Such items include, “I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people” (see

Appendix C). Higher scores on the questionnaire indicate higher self-monitors. Scores are calculated by reverse-scoring some of the items (12 of the 25 items) and summing the number of "true" responses. The Self-Monitoring Scale has been used for decades in research, and, though it has its critics (Briggs, Cheek, & Buss, 1980), it remains one of the most widely used measures of personality in research (Day, Schleicher, Unckless, & Hiller, 2002). In my study, the 25-item Self Monitoring Scale (Snyder, 1974) had an overall estimated reliability of 0.58 ($M$ = 12.51, $SD$ = 3.49, *range* = 3.00-22.00) as compared to a reliability of 0.66 found in the literature (Gangestad & Snyder, 1985). My reliability analysis showed no improvement in Cronbach's alpha following deletion of any individual item, and so I proceeded with the full scale of 25 items. In analyses I used a median split (median = 12.00) to identify participants as either "high" ($n$ = 94) or "low" ($n$ = 103) self-monitors.

**Attachment style**. Adult attachment style was evaluated through Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) Relationship Questionnaire (RQ), consisting of four categories, presented as statements: *secure*, *dismissive-avoidant*, *fearful-avoidant*, and *preoccupied*. The specific attachment style statements consisted of several sentences focused on feelings towards relationships. Participants were presented with these four descriptions and responded, on a Likert scale, to what extent they felt the statement applied to them, 0 = *strongly disagree*, 1 = *disagree*, 2 = *somewhat disagree*, 3 = *somewhat agree*, 4 = *agree*, 5 = *strongly agree* (see Appendix D). The secure statement was described with sentences like "It is relatively easy for me to become emotionally close to others" ($M$ = 3.24, $SD$ = 1.31, *range* = 0 to 5). Dismissive-avoidant was represented with sentences

such as “I am comfortable without close emotional relationships” (*M* = 2.76, *SD* = 1.32, *range* = 0 to 5), while fearful-avoidant was described as “I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them” (*M* = 2.73, *SD* = 1.52, *range* = 0 to 5). The statement concerning the preoccupied attachment style was illustrated with sentences like “I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like” (*M* = 2.49, *SD* = 1.35, *range* = 0 to 5) (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

Studies have shown this self-report measure to not only correlate with other measures of adult attachment (Shaver, Belsky, & Brennan, 2000), but also to be a strong measure on its own (Bartholomew & Moretti, 2002). Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) stress the importance of having attachment measured continuously, as well as categorically. Following this guidance, I elected to assign an attachment style for each participant based on the highest-scoring style on the continuous measure. In the event that two attachment styles garnered the same Likert-scale response, a coin was flipped in order to assign a definitive style to the participant (*n* = 60). Using a categorical measure of attachment, I was able to involve it in tests with self-monitoring, and draw conclusions from their interactions, or lack thereof, on my other variables. Secure individuals composed 43% (*n* = 80) of my sample; 21% (*n* = 39) were classified as dismissive-avoidant; fearful-avoidant made up 26% (*n* = 48) of the sample; and 10% (*n* = 19) were classified as preoccupied. Eleven participants were not included in the classification of attachment styles because they scored three or more attachment descriptions with the same Likert scale response, and thus, were excluded from any following analyses.

**Relationship involvement**. Friends with benefits relationship involvement was measured through questions developed for this investigation. Participants read a specific definition of this type of interpersonal relationship and, following, were prompted to select, in a forced-choice paradigm, if they have participated, choosing one of five options: *yes (currently), yes (not currently), no (but would like to be involved), no (but would consider becoming involved),* and *no (would never)*. The definition read:

> Friends with benefits relationships (FWBRs) occur with a friend that you have, who you also have sexual activity with (this can include sexual intercourse, but can also include other types of sexual activity). This is NOT someone you describe as your boyfriend/girlfriend.

Along with the report of relationship involvement, participants were asked to report various information, such as the recency of the FWBR relationship, the length of the current or most recent relationship, the reason for it having ended, how many "breakups" they experienced in the FWBR, how many (total) they have been involved in over time, if they and their partner had remained friends following an end to the FWBR, and the types of sexual activities they engage in with this relationship (see Appendix E). In analysis, the response options were collapsed into three levels: *yes* (composed of "yes [currently]" and "yes [not currently]" response choices), *no-but-maybe* (composed of "would like to be involved" and "would consider becoming involved" response choices), and *never* (composed of the never response choice).

**Objective relationship closeness**. Participants who had selected *yes (currently)* or *yes (not currently)* were also asked to complete the Relationship Closeness Inventory (Berscheid et al., 1989). The RCI is a self-report measure that assesses objective relationship closeness, that is, the degree of behavioral interdependence between two people in a relationship and is comprised of three subscales: frequency, diversity, and strength (see Appendix F).

The frequency scale attempts to empirically quantify the amount of time the people in a relationship spend together in face-to-face interactions (Berscheid et al., 1989). One question regarding frequency asks respondents "DURING THE PAST WEEK, what is the average amount of time, per day, that you spent alone with X in the AFTERNOON (e.g., between 12 noon and 6 pm)?" and provides space to respond in hours and minutes. Diversity aimed to explore the various specific activities the couple was involved in together, such as laundry, engaging in sexual relations, and exercise. The scale examining strength is a 34-item measure that asks participants to estimate the extent on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*) to which their partner influences these activities, both mundane, like how one dresses, and significant, such as future financial security. The entire RCI as a measure is related to, though not redundant with, other measures of relationship closeness, and has demonstrated ability to predict qualities of relationships that it would be expected to predict, such as relationship status (Berscheid et al., 1989).

The RCI is scored by summing items in each subscale – frequency, diversity, strength – and assigning a scale score from one to ten for each participant in that subscale

(Berscheid et al., 1989). The number of minutes in the frequency subscale (*M* = 310.58, *SD* = 582.42, *range* = 0 to 3005), the number of activity domains in the diversity subscale (*M* = 6.82, *SD* = 5.81, *range* = 1 to 23), and the strength total from Likert responses in the strength subscale (*M* = 77.47, *SD* = 38.60, *range* = 33 to 177) are all recorded as the one to ten scale scores. Scale scores for frequency (*M* = 3.90, *SD* = 2.81), diversity (*M* = 4.30, *SD* = 1.91), and strength (*M* = 2.75, *SD* = 1.95) were applied in all appropriate analyses.

**Subjective relationship closeness**. Another relationship closeness measure, participants completed was the Inclusion of Other in the Self (IOS) scale (Aron et al., 1992). This pictorial scale measures people's sense of interpersonal connectedness through a series of images, in which two circles are depicted: one representative of the other individual, and one symbolizing the participant. These circles overlap in different amounts to characterize how inclusive the other person is in the participant's life, rather, how close the relationship is (see Appendix G). This measure is scored by assigning numbers to each pair of circles, 1 being the least degree of overlap to 7 the highest degree of overlap (*M* = 2.79, *SD* = 2.06). I asked currently-involved participants to complete this measure when thinking of their current FWBR; participants who were no longer involved were asked to respond to the measure thinking of the relationship as it currently exists, rather than respond retrospectively and think of the relationship when it was a FWBR.

**Relationship satisfaction**. The last measure in the survey examined subjective relationship satisfaction in a FWBR. Participants who reported being involved in a

FWBR, either currently or not currently, were asked, "How satisfied are/were you in your friends with benefits relationship?" A 6-point Likert scale was employed for participants to respond to the question, 0 = *not at all satisfied*, 1 = *slightly satisfied*, 2 = *moderately satisfied*, 3 = *satisfied*, 4 = *very satisfied*, and 5 = *extremely satisfied* (*M* = 3.34, *SD* = 1.49, *range* = 1.00-6.00) (see Appendix H).

**Procedure**

Following recruitment, participants were assessed in small groups in a university classroom, equipped with several computers. After logging onto the computer at which they were seated, participants were directed to a website to complete the study. The online questionnaire first issued informed consent, after which participants began the survey. The Self-Monitoring Scale and Relationship Questionnaire were presented first, followed by the single FWBR involvement item. If the participant answered that they had participated in a FWBR – either currently or not currently – they were directed to complete all of the other measures included in the survey: FWBR-specific items, the RCI, the IOS, and relationship satisfaction. If they selected that they had not participated in a FWBR, they were directed immediately to the demographics items. These participants (*n* = 111) were not excluded from the study, and included in all applicable analyses.

Participants took as much time as needed to complete the survey. Upon completion, participants received a debriefing statement and were excused from the testing room. All of the following analyses were completed in PASW 18.0.

## Results

### FWBR Involvement

The sample was less involved in FWBRs than what has been observed in previous studies. The literature in the field of FWBRs suggests prevalence rates of anywhere between 51-60% of college students having participated at one point in time (Hughes et al., 2005; Puentes et al., 2008). In my study, of the 197 participants, 44% ($n$ = 87) reported having participated in a FWBR at one point in time. Only 20% ($n$ = 40) of the non-FWBR participants responded that they would either "consider becoming involved" or "might like to be involved," while 36% ($n$ = 71) were firm in reporting they would never be involved in a FWBR.

To examine involvement in FWBRs, I ran a series of chi-square analyses comparing involvement across sex, self-monitoring, and attachment style. I also ran a 2x3 ANOVA to examine self-monitoring scores as a function of involvement (yes, no-but-maybe, never) and sex (male, female). I did not analyze interactions of gender and attachment on sexual behavior, like what was hypothesized with self-monitoring, as there is nothing in the attachment literature to suggest differences based on that interaction.

**Gender differences.** In FWBR involvement, I hypothesized that males would report higher involvement than females. Results showed no difference in the percentage of men (44%) and percentage of women (44%) reporting having been involved in a FWBR. The significant difference in involvement was in those who had not been involved in a FWBR ever, $X^2$ (2) = 12.92, $p$ = .002. Of those non-FWBR participants,

women were more likely to report never wanting to be involved in a relationship (42%, compared to 15% who reported they'd consider it), whereas men were more likely to consider becoming involved in the future (36%, compared to 20% who reported never wanting to be involved in a FWBR; see Figure 1).

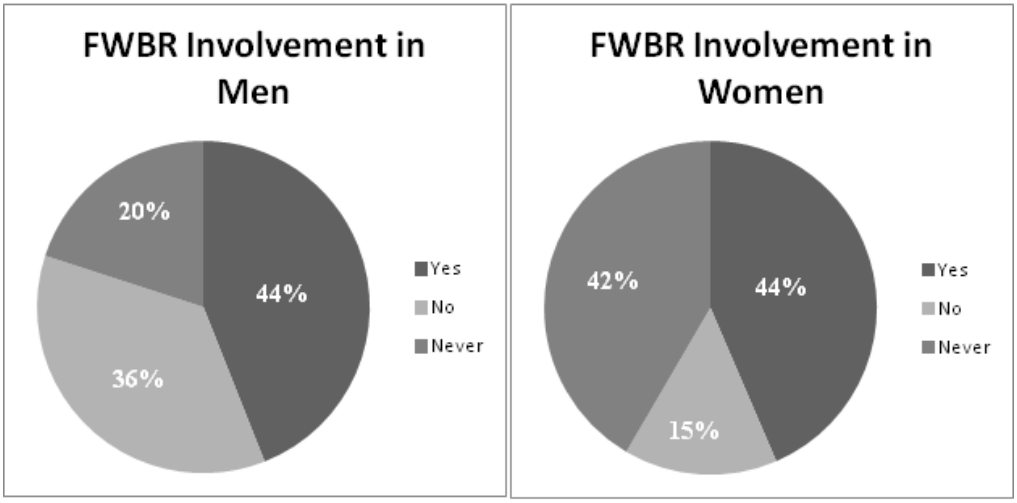


Figure 1.

*FWBR Involvement and Gender*

**Self-monitoring.** I predicted that high self-monitors would report higher FWB involvement than low self-monitors. Contrary to this hypothesis, involvement in FWBRs did not differ across self-monitoring behavior, $X^2$ (2) = .88, $p$ = .65. In fact, proportions of involvement were relatively evenly distributed (see Figure 2).

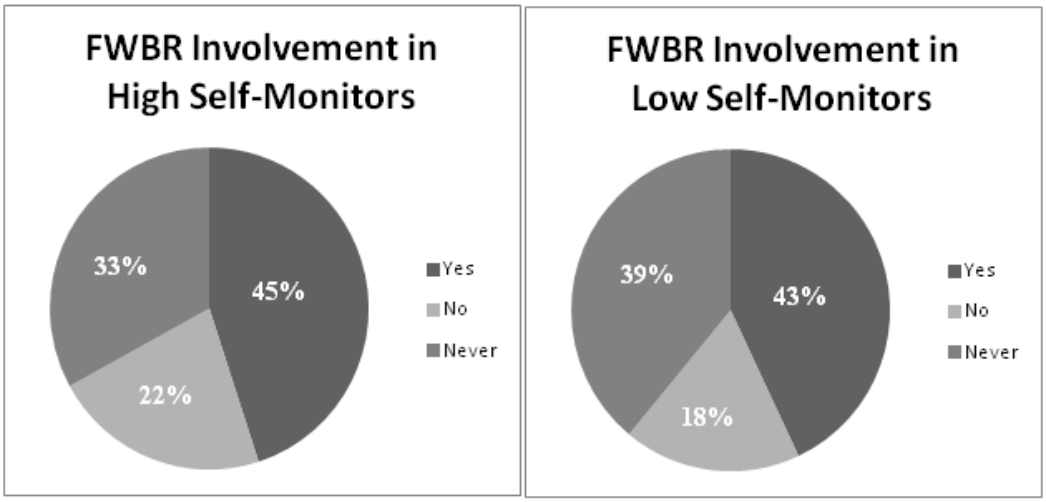


Figure 2.

*FWBR Involvement and Self-Monitoring*

**Self-monitoring X gender.** Related to observed interactions in the literature between self-monitoring and gender on sexual behavior, I expected a difference in sexual behavior due to an interaction between gender and self-monitoring behavior. Specifically, I predicted men involved in FWBRs to have the highest self-monitoring scores, and women who would never be involved in a FWBR to have the lowest self-monitoring scores. To test the prediction, I ran a 2x3 ANOVA with sex (men, women) and FWBR involvement (yes, no-but-maybe, never) as predictors, and self-monitoring (*scale range* = 0 to 25) as the dependent variable. In measuring effect size, I used Hedge's G.

I found a main effect for sex such that men ($M$ = 13.72, $SD$ = 3.49, $n$ = 50) were higher self-monitors than women ($M$ = 12.10, $SD$ = 3.41, $n$ = 147), $F$ (1,191) = 3.93, $p$ = .049, $g$ = -.214. There was no main effect of FWBR involvement on self-monitoring behavior, $F$ (2, 191) = 1.83, $p$ = .16. There was an interaction effect between gender and

FWBR involvement, in that, according to targeted contrasts, males involved in FWBRs were higher self-monitors ($M$ = 15.09, $SD$ = 3.82, $n$ = 22) than females involved in FWBRs ($M$ = 11.97, $SD$ = 3.59, $n$ = 64) and females who would never be involved in FWBRs ($M$ = 12.02, $SD$ = 3.52, $n$ = 61), $F$ (2, 191) = 3.22, $p$ = .042 (see Figure 3). As predicted, men involved in FWBRs had higher self-monitoring scores than women who would never be involved in FWBRs.

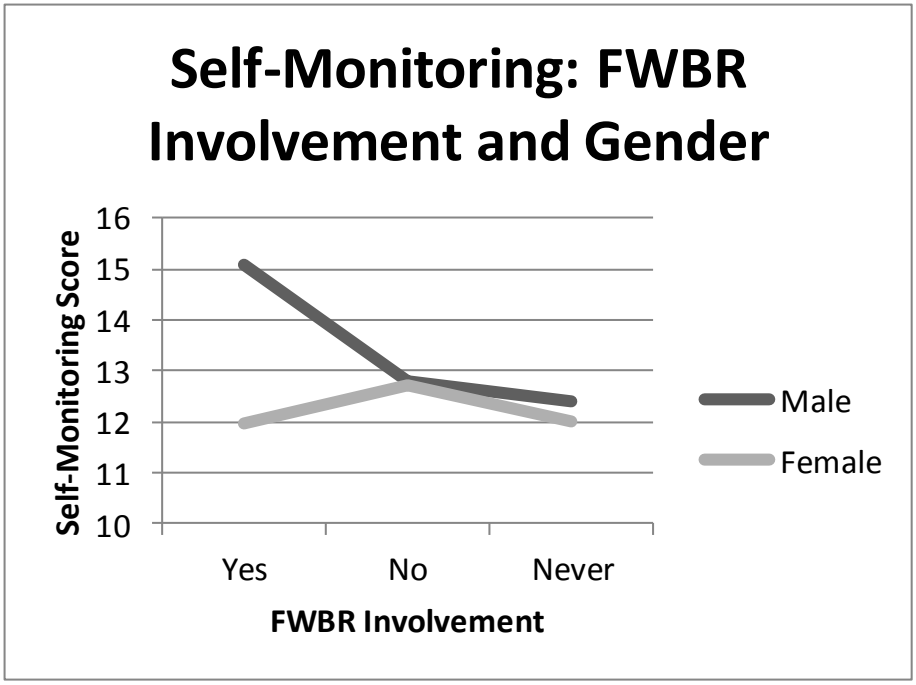


Figure 3.

*Self-Monitoring based on Involvement and Gender*

**Attachment style.** I hypothesized that dismissive-avoidant attached individuals would more often be involved in FWBRs than other attachment styles. In analysis, dismissive-avoidant and fearful-avoidant participants were combined because of a redundancy with each other. Contrary to my prediction, FWBR involvement was not

significantly different as a function of attachment style, $X^2$ (4) = 2.891, $p$ = .576 (see Figure 4).

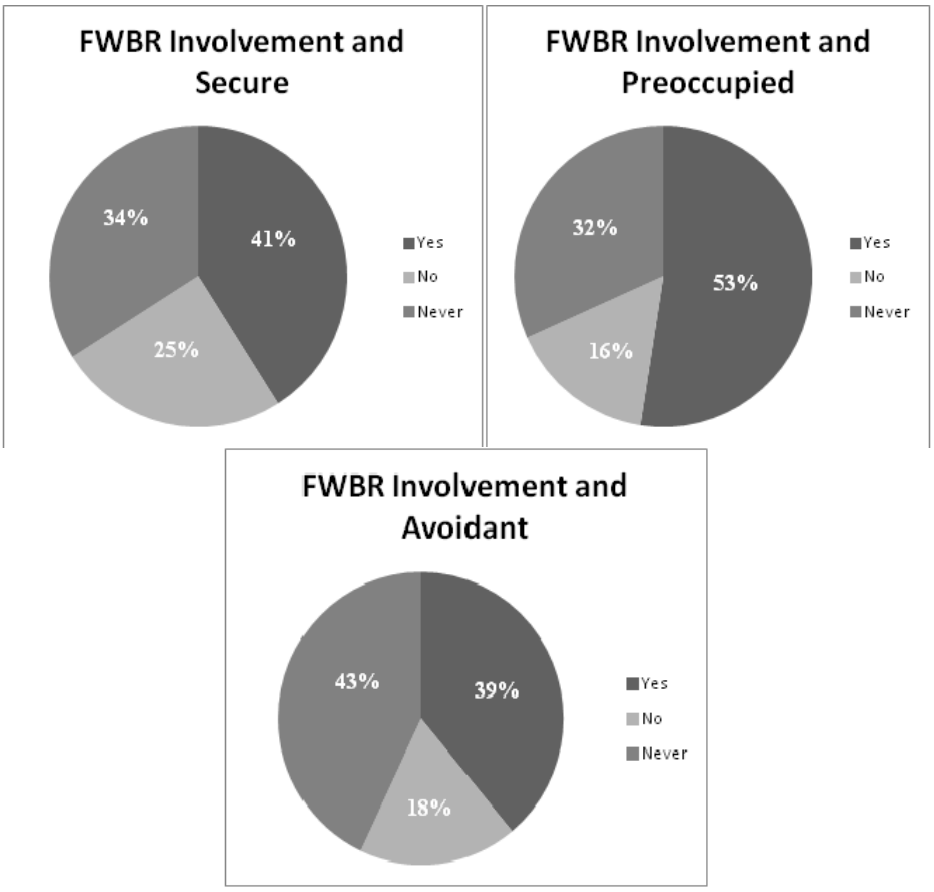


Figure 4.

*FWBR Involvement and Attachment*

**FWBR Characteristics**

I compiled various characteristics of the FWBRs in which my participants had been involved. In general, participants, of the "yes" category of FWBRs, reported having been involved in anywhere from 1 to 25 FWBRs over time ($M$ = 2.96, $SD$ = 3.98). Prior to beginning the benefits aspect of the friendship, participants were friends with their

partners for an average of 15.696 months (*SD* = 23.85 months, *range* = 0 to 144 months). After the relationship had been established, the FWBR lasted, on average, 5.634 months (*SD* = 9.191 months, *range* = 0 [less than 1 month] to 60 months).

**Number of FWBRs, self-monitoring, and gender.** I ran a 2x2 ANCOVA for the total number of FWBRs. Gender and self-monitoring (high and low) were predictors of the total number of FWBRs in which the participant had taken part, while controlling for attachment style. I hypothesized that men would report a higher number of FWBR experiences than women. Contrary to my hypothesis, men ($M$ = 4.61, $SD$ = 6.96) did not have significantly more FWBRs than women ($M$ = 2.48, $SD$ = 2.64), though the difference was in the predicted direction, $F$ (1, 75) = 1.06, $p$ = .31, $g$ = -1.55. I also hypothesized that high self-monitors would report a higher number of FWBR experiences than low self-monitors. High self-monitors ($M$ = 3.51, $SD$ = 4.81) had marginally more FWBRs than low self-monitors ($M$ = 2.38, $SD$ = 3.08), $F$ (1, 75) = 3.12, $p$ = .08, $g$ = -.796.

In an interaction between gender and self-monitoring behavior on the total number of FWBRs, I expected high self-monitoring men to have the highest number, and low self-monitoring women to have the lowest number. The overall ANCOVA interaction was marginally significant, $F$ (1, 75) = 3.25, $p$ = .076; I ran targeted contrasts, while controlling for attachment style, between high self-monitoring men and low self-monitoring women on the total number of FWBRs. My hypothesis was supported, in that high self-monitoring men ($M$ = 5.77, $SD$ = 7.95, $n$ = 13) reported a higher number of

FWBRs than low self-monitoring women ($M$ = 2.50, $SD$ = 3.27, $n$ = 34), $F$ (1, 44) = 4.15, $p$ = .048, $g$ = -2.23.

**Number of FWBRs and attachment style.** I ran a one-way ANOVA for the total number of FWBRs with attachment style (secure, avoidant, preoccupied) as the grouping variable. I hypothesized that avoidant attachment participants would have the highest number of FWBRs. There was no evidence to suggest this difference to be true, $F$ (2, 77) = .22, $p$ = .81. Though not significantly different, secure individuals had generally larger numbers of FWBRs ($M$ = 3.17, $SD$ = 5.10), followed then by avoidant ($M$ = 2.97, $SD$ = 3.45), and preoccupied ($M$ = 2.20, $SD$ = 1.32; see Table 2).

Table 2.

*Total Number of FWBRs*

| **Gender** | **Self-Monitoring** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***n*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | Low | 1.60 | .89 | 5 |
| | High | 5.77 | 7.95 | 13 |
| | Total | 4.61 | 6.96 | 18 |
| Female | Low | 2.50 | 3.27 | 34 |
| | High | 2.46 | 1.62 | 28 |
| | Total | 2.48 | 2.64 | 62 |
| Total | Low | 2.38 | 3.08 | 39 |
| | High | 3.51 | 4.81 | 41 |
| | Total | 2.96 | 4.07 | 80 |

| **Attachment** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***n*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Secure | 3.17 | 5.10 | 35 |
| Avoidant | 2.97 | 3.45 | 35 |
| Preoccupied | 2.20 | 1.32 | 10 |
| Total | 2.96 | 4.07 | 80 |

**Relationship Closeness: Objective Closeness**

Both subjective perceptions of relationship closeness and behavioral interdependence indices of closeness (self-reported) were measured in FWBRs. Objective relationship closeness was measured with the RCI. I conducted separate 2x2 ANCOVAs for each subscale of the RCI to determine any significant main effects or interactions among the variables. Sex (male and female) and self-monitoring (high and low) were the predictors, with attachment style as the covariate, in the analysis for RCI subscale scores in frequency, diversity, and strength. I also conducted separate one-way ANOVAs for each subscale of the RCI to evaluate any significant effect of attachment style (secure, avoidant, preoccupied).

**Frequency**. In analysis of this subscale (*scale range* = 0 to 10), I predicted that males would have less frequent contact with their partners than females. There was no evidence to suggest this gender difference, as males ($M$ = 3.41, $SD$ = 1.70, $n$ = 17) did not have significantly lower scores than females ($M$ = 4.33, $SD$ = 3.04, $n$ = 61), $F$ (1, 73) = 1.47, $p$ = .23, $g$ = .71.

The next hypothesis concerning self-monitoring behavior expected high self-monitors to have lower frequency scores than low self-monitors. Unlike prediction, there was no difference in high self-monitors ($M$ = 3.80, $SD$ = 2.50, $n$ = 40) and low self-monitors ($M$ = 4.47, $SD$ = 3.12, $n$ = 38) on frequency scores of the RCI, $F$ (1, 73) = .37, $p$ = .54, $g$ = .513.

Further, I expected high self-monitoring men to have the lowest frequency scores and low self-monitoring women to have the highest frequency scores. There was no significant interaction effect of self-monitoring and gender on frequency scores of the RCI in the omnibus ANCOVA, $F$ (1, 73) = .01, $p$ = .92. I ran targeted contrasts between high self-monitoring men and low self-monitoring women on differences in the frequency in relationship closeness, while still controlling for attachment style. High self-monitoring men ($M$ = 3.23, $SD$ = 1.88, $n$ = 13) spent marginally significantly less time with their FWB partner than low self-monitoring women ($M$ = 4.53, $SD$ = 3.29, $n$ = 34), $F$ (1, 44) = 3.70, $p$ = .06, g = .98.

Lastly, I expected avoidant individuals in attachment style to have the lowest reported frequency with the FWB partner than secure or preoccupied individuals. With a one-way ANOVA, I found no significant difference between avoidant ($M$ = 3.44, $SD$ = 2.58, $n$ = 34), secure ($M$ = 4.76, $SD$ = 2.90, $n$ = 34), and preoccupied ($M$ = 4.30, $SD$ = 3.06, $n$ = 10), $F$ (2, 75) = 1.94, $p$ = .15. Still, in each of the effects analyzed, the differences were trending in the predicted directions (see Table 3).

Table 3.

*RCI – Frequency Subscale*

| **Gender** | **Self-Monitoring** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***n*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | Low | 4.00 | .82 | 4 |
| | High | 3.23 | 1.88 | 13 |
| | Total | 3.41 | 1.88 | 17 |
| Female | Low | 4.53 | 3.29 | 34 |
| | High | 4.07 | 2.75 | 27 |
| | Total | 4.33 | 3.04 | 61 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | Low | 4.47 | 3.12 | 38 |
| | High | 3.80 | 2.50 | 40 |
| | Total | 4.13 | 2.82 | 78 |

| **Attachment** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***n*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Secure | 4.76 | 2.90 | 34 |
| Avoidant | 3.44 | 2.58 | 34 |
| Preoccupied | 4.30 | 3.06 | 10 |
| Total | 4.13 | 2.82 | 78 |

**Diversity**. In analysis of this subscale (*scale range* = 0 to 10), I predicted that males would have less diverse contact with their FWB partners than females, indicating fewer activity domains, in which they engaged in with their FWB partner. There was no significant evidence to suggest this difference between males ($M$ = 4.06, $SD$ = 1.95, $n$ = 17) and females ($M$ = 4.38, $SD$ = 1.85, $n$ = 61), $F$ (1, 73) = 1.20, $p$ = .28, $g$ = .27.

The next hypothesis concerning self-monitoring behavior predicted high self-monitors to have lower diversity scores than low self-monitors. Contrary to prediction, there was no difference in high self-monitors ($M$ = 4.15, $SD$ = 1.89, $n$ = 40) and low self-monitors ($M$ = 4.47, $SD$ = 1.84, $n$ = 38) on diversity scores of the RCI, $F$ (1, 73) = .22, $p$ = .64, $g$ = .27.

Further, I expected high self-monitoring men to have the lowest diversity scores and low self-monitoring women to have the highest diversity scores. There was no significant interaction effect of self-monitoring and gender on diversity scores of the RCI in the omnibus ANCOVA, $F$ (1, 73) = 1.93, $p$ = .17. I ran targeted contrasts between high self-monitoring men and low self-monitoring women on differences in the diversity

in relationship closeness, while controlling for attachment style. High self-monitoring men ($M$ = 4.31, $SD$ = 2.14, $n$ = 13) and low self-monitoring women ($M$ = 4.62, $SD$ = 1.88, $n$ = 34) participated in the same number of activities with their FWB partner, $F$ (1, 44) = .67, $p$ = .42, $g$ = .26.

Lastly, I expected avoidant individuals in attachment style to have the lowest scores. Utilizing a one-way ANOVA, I found no significant difference between avoidant ($M$ = 4.15, $SD$ = 2.00, $n$ = 34), secure ($M$ = 4.41, $SD$ = 1.81, $n$ = 34), and preoccupied ($M$ = 4.50, $SD$ = 1.65, $n$ = 10), $F$ (2, 75) = .23, $p$ = .80 (see Table 4).

Table 4.

*RCI – Diversity Subscale*

| **Gender** | **Self-Monitoring** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***n*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | Low | 3.25 | .96 | 4 |
| | High | 4.31 | 2.14 | 13 |
| | Total | 4.06 | 1.95 | 17 |
| Female | Low | 4.62 | 1.88 | 34 |
| | High | 4.07 | 1.80 | 27 |
| | Total | 4.38 | 1.85 | 61 |
| Total | Low | 4.47 | 1.84 | 38 |
| | High | 4.15 | 1.89 | 40 |
| | Total | 4.31 | 1.86 | 78 |

| **Attachment** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***n*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Secure | 4.41 | 1.81 | 34 |
| Avoidant | 4.15 | 2.00 | 34 |
| Preoccupied | 4.50 | 1.65 | 10 |
| Total | 4.31 | 1.86 | 78 |

**Strength**. I predicted that males would have lower strength scores (*scale range* = 0 to 10) than females, indicating the less impact the FWB partner possessed on their decisions. There was no significant evidence to suggest this gender difference, as males ($M$ = 2.53, $SD$ = 2.07, $n$ = 17) did not have significantly lower scores than females ($M$ = 2.79, $SD$ = 1.94, $n$ = 61), $F$ (1, 73) = .60, $p$ = .44, $g$ = .22.

The next hypothesis concerning self-monitoring behavior expected high self-monitors to have lower strength scores than low self-monitors. Unlike prediction, there was no difference in high self-monitors ($M$ = 2.50, $SD$ = 1.93, $n$ = 40) and low self-monitors ($M$ = 2.97, $SD$ = 1.98, $n$ = 38) on strength scores of the RCI, $F$ (1, 73) = .02, $p$ = .89, $g$ = .39.

Further, I expected high self-monitoring men to have the lowest strength scores and low self-monitoring women to have the highest strength scores. There was no significant interaction effect of self-monitoring and gender on strength scores of the RCI in the omnibus ANCOVA, $F$ (1, 73) = .71, $p$ = .40. I ran targeted contrasts between high self-monitoring men and low self-monitoring women on differences in the strength in relationship closeness, while controlling for attachment style. High self-monitoring men ($M$ = 2.62, $SD$ = 2.18, $n$ = 13) and low self-monitoring women ($M$ = 3.06, $SD$ = 2.00, $n$ = 34) reported the same strength of the FWBR, $F$ (1, 44) = .86, $p$ = .36, $g$ = .36.

Lastly, I expected avoidant individuals in attachment style to have the lowest scores. With a one-way ANOVA, I found no significant difference between avoidant ($M$

= 2.44, *SD* = 1.83, *n* = 34), secure (*M* = 3.03, *SD* = 2.14, *n* = 34), and preoccupied (*M* = 2.70, *SD* = 1.77, *n* = 10), *F* (2, 75) = .76, *p* = .47 (see Table 5).

Table 5.

*RCI – Strength Subscale*

| **Gender** | **Self-Monitoring** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***n*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Gender* | | | | |
| Male | Low | 2.25 | 1.89 | 4 |
| | High | 2.62 | 2.18 | 13 |
| | Total | 2.53 | 2.07 | 17 |
| Female | Low | 3.06 | 2.00 | 34 |
| | High | 2.44 | 1.85 | 27 |
| | Total | 2.79 | 1.94 | 61 |
| Total | Low | 2.97 | 1.98 | 38 |
| | High | 2.50 | 1.93 | 40 |
| | Total | 2.73 | 1.96 | 78 |

| **Attachment** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***n*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Secure | 3.03 | 2.14 | 34 |
| Avoidant | 2.44 | 1.83 | 34 |
| Preoccupied | 2.70 | 1.77 | 10 |
| Total | 2.73 | 1.96 | 78 |

**FWBR closeness compared to other types of relationships.** I compared overall means of each of the subscales in the study with the reported overall means in the literature of the RCI. It is interesting to note that frequency (*M* = 3.90, *SD* = 2.81) and diversity (*M* = 4.30, *SD* = 1.91) in this sample resemble what is seen in romantic relationships for frequency (*M* = 3.84, *SD* = 2.24) and diversity (*M* = 4.49, *SD* = 2.01) in the published literature (Berscheid et al., 1989). Surprisingly, strength in FWBRs (*M* =

2.75, *SD* = 1.95) is markedly lower than the literature for romantic relationships (*M* = 5.52, *SD* = 1.65), friendships (*M* = 4.28, *SD* = 1.34), and family (*M* = 4.91, *SD* = 1.55) (Berscheid et al., 1989). In FWBRs, though the time and number of activities spent with the partner is similar to a romantic relationship, participants are not closely affected by their partner in making decisions or setting life plans, like they would be in a romantic relationship, friendship, or with family.

**Relationship Closeness: Subjective Closeness**

Relationship closeness was measured in a subjective manner using the IOS (*scale range* = 1 to 7). I conducted a 2x2 ANCOVA to determine any significant main effects or interactions among the predictors. Sex (male and female) and self-monitoring (high and low) were the predictors, with attachment style as the covariate, in the analysis for IOS scores. I predicted that males would have lower scores than females. Despite the difference being in the hypothesized direction, males (*M* = 2.72, *SD* = 2.14, *n* = 18) did not have significantly lower IOS scores than females (*M* = 2.98, *SD* = 2.13, *n* = 62), *F* (1, 75) = 1.80, p = .18, *g* = .21.

In self-monitoring behavior, I hypothesized that high self-monitors would have lower scores than low self-monitors. Unlike prediction, high self-monitors (*M* = 2.88, *SD* = 2.23, *n* = 41) and low self-monitors (*M* = 2.97, *SD* = 2.03, *n* = 39) did not differ in IOS scores, *F* (1, 75) = 1.09, *p* = .30, *g* = .39.

A difference in IOS scores due to an interaction between self-monitoring and gender was predicted, in that high self-monitoring men would have the lowest IOS

scores, and low self-monitoring women would have the highest IOS scores. Contrary to prediction, however, self-monitoring and gender did not significantly interact in IOS scores of the omnibus ANCOVA, $F$ (1, 75) = 2.90, $p$ = .09. I ran targeted contrasts between high self-monitoring men and low self-monitoring women, while controlling for attachment style, on differences in subjective relationship closeness. High self-monitoring men ($M$ = 3.15, $SD$ = 2.38, $n$ = 13) and low self-monitoring women ($M$ = 3.18, $SD$ = 2.10, $n$ = 34) reported the same emotional closeness in the FWBR, $F$ (1, 44) = .20, $p$ = .66, $g$ = .02.

I also conducted a one-way ANOVA for IOS scores to evaluate any significant effect of attachment style (secure, avoidant, preoccupied). I predicted avoidant attached individuals to have the lowest IOS scores of the attachment styles. In analysis, there was no evidence to support this hypothesis. Avoidant-attached individuals ($M$ = 2.66, $SD$ = 1.91, $n$ = 35) were not significantly different than secure ($M$ = 3.43, $SD$ = 2.29, $n$ = 35) or preoccupied ($M$ = 2.10, $SD$ = 1.97, $n$ = 10) individuals, $F$ (2, 77) = 2.08, $p$ = .13.

Correlations were run between both objective and subjective relationship closeness. Each subscale of the RCI was significantly related to each other: frequency and diversity, $r$ = .39, $p$ <.01, frequency and strength, $r$ = .24, $p$ = .03, and diversity and strength, $r$ = .37, $p$ <.01. Two of the three subscales were also significantly related to the subjective measure of closeness, IOS scores. The higher the report of subjective closeness, the higher reported frequency on the RCI, $r$ = .25, $p$ = .02. Also, the higher the report of subjective closeness, the higher reported strength on the RCI, $r$ = .377, $p$ <.01.

**Relationship Closeness Differences and FWBR Involvement**

To investigate possible objective closeness differences between those currently involved in a FWBR and those no longer involved in the FWBR, I ran a series of *t*-tests comparing the averages on each RCI subscale for the participants who had responded either *yes-currently* or *yes-not currently*. There were no significant differences in frequency [$t$ (84) = .23, $p$ = .82], diversity [$t$ (84) = -.40, $p$ = .69], or strength [$t$ (84) = .41, $p$ = .69]. This suggests that objective relationship closeness does not change following an end to the sexual benefits of the relationship.

Subjective closeness differences between those currently involved in a FWBR and those no longer involved in the FWBR were also conducted with a *t*-test. I analyzed the differences in means on the IOS for the participants who had responded either *yes-currently* or *yes-not currently*. Participants who were currently in a FWBR reported higher ($M$ = 3.78, $SD$ = 1.99) subjective closeness than participants who were no longer in the FWBR ($M$ = 2.51, $SD$ = 1.97), $t$ (84) = 2.41, $p$ = .02. This implies a disconnect between emotional closeness and literal closeness in FWBRs. Objectively, participants are spending the same amount of time, doing the same number of activities with, and are affected just the same by their FWB partner following an end to the benefits. However, they feel less close with that partner once the FWBR has dissolved.

I also ran a series of one-way ANOVAs concerning closeness differences based on the act of remaining friends following an end to the relationship. Again, there were no significant differences in frequency [$F$ (2, 84) = 1.19, $p$ = .31], diversity [$F$ (2, 84) = .76,

$p$ = .47], or strength [$F$ (2, 84) = .58, $p$ = .56]. This, too, suggests that objective relationship closeness does not change following an end to the sexual benefits of the relationship.

Subjective closeness differences between reports of remaining friends – yes, no, not sure – were also conducted with a one-way ANOVA. Like the differences between objective and subjective closeness based on involvement in FWBRs, there was a significant difference in IOS scores in remaining friends, $F$ (2, 86) = 5.53, $p$ = .006. Sidak's post-hoc test revealed that participants who reported staying friends following the end of the relationship ($M$ = 3.21, $SD$ = 2.13) reported significantly higher subjective closeness than those who were unsure about the status of the relationship ($M$ = 1.27, $SD$ = .47), $MD$ = 1.93, $p$ = .01. Again, this implies disconnect between emotional closeness and literal closeness in FWBRs based on friendship after the benefits have ended. Objectively, participants are spending the same amount of time, doing the same number of activities with, and are affected just the same by their FWB partner whether or not they are actually still friends. However, they feel less close with that partner if they are unsure if the friendship remains.

**Satisfaction Differences**

To examine satisfaction in FWBRs, I ran a 2x2 ANCOVA to examine reports of satisfaction (*scale range* = 1 to 6) based on predictors of sex (male and female) and self-monitoring (high and low), while controlling for attachment style.

I predicted a gender difference in satisfaction, in that men would report higher levels of satisfaction than women in FWBRs. This hypothesis was not supported in analysis. Though in the predicted direction, there was no significant difference in satisfaction between men (M = 3.88, SD = 1.32, n = 17) and women (M = 3.18, SD = 1.50, n = 64), $F$ (1, 73) = .03, $p$ = .86, $g$ = -.63 (see Figure 5).

In self-monitoring behavior, I hypothesized that high self-monitors would report higher satisfaction than low self-monitors. This hypothesis was supported: high self-monitors ($M$ = 3.48, $SD$ = 1.50, $n$ = 40) reported significantly higher satisfaction with FWBRs than low self-monitors ($M$ = 3.18, $SD$ = 1.47, $n$ = 38), $F$ (1, 73) = 4.60, $p$ = .04, $g$ = -.27 (see Figure 5).

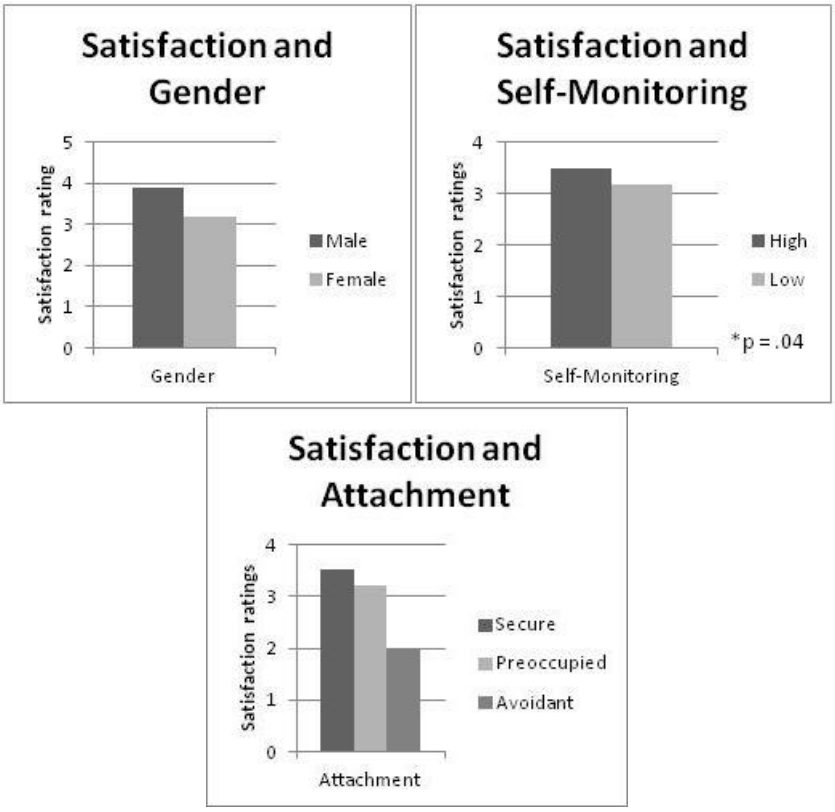

Figure 5.

*Satisfaction Differences*

A difference in reports of satisfaction due to an interaction between self-monitoring and gender was predicted, in that high self-monitoring men would report highest satisfaction and low self-monitoring women would report lowest satisfaction.

Self-monitoring and gender did significantly interact in satisfaction of the omnibus ANCOVA, $F$ (1, 73) = 7.37, $p$ = .008. (see Figure 6). I conducted targeted contrasts between high self-monitoring men and low self-monitoring women while controlling for attachment style, to compare differences in satisfaction with FWBRs. High self-monitoring men ($M$ = 4.38, $SD$ = 0.96, $n$ = 13) reported higher satisfaction in FWBRs than low self-monitoring women ($M$ = 3.29, $SD$ = 1.49, $n$ = 34), $F$ (1, 44) = 4.76, $p$ = .04, $g$ = -.997.

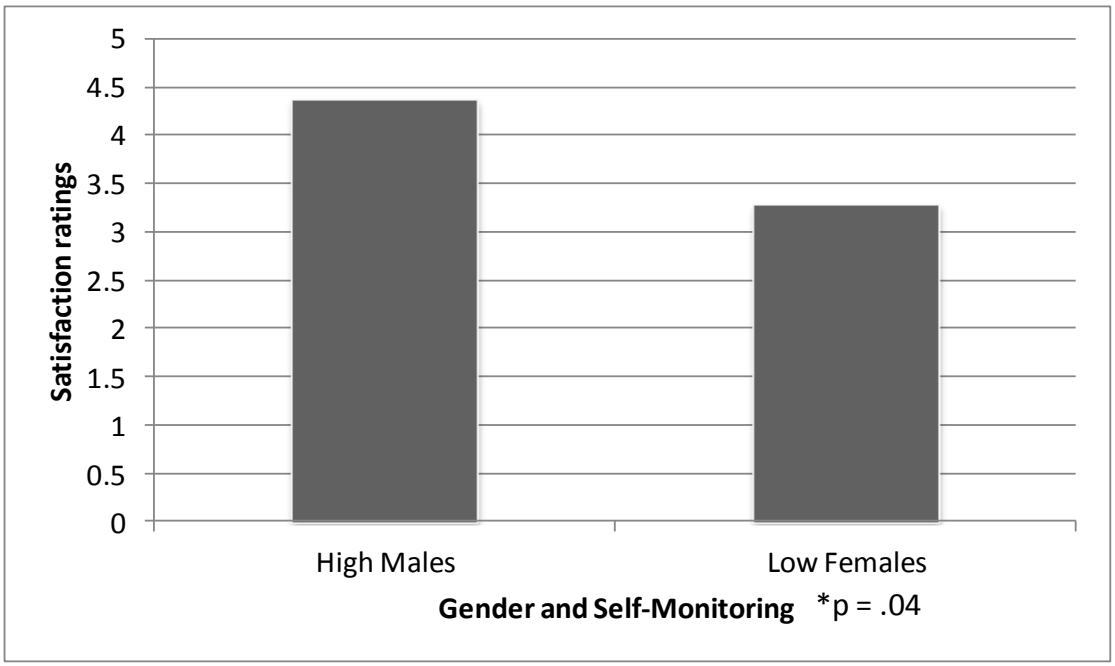

Figure 6.

*Satisfaction based on Gender and Self-Monitoring*

**Attachment style.** I also conducted a one-way ANOVA for satisfaction scores to detect any significant effect of attachment style (secure, avoidant, preoccupied). I hypothesized avoidant-attached individuals would report highest satisfaction in FWBRs of the attachment styles. In analysis, there was no evidence to support this hypothesis. Avoidant-attached individuals ($M$ = 3.18, $SD$ = 1.51, $n$ = 34) were not significantly different than secure ($M$ = 3.53, $SD$ = 1.48, $n$ = 34) or preoccupied ($M$ = 3.20, $SD$ = 1.48, $n$ = 10) individuals, $F$ (2, 75) = .52, $p$ = .60 (see Figure 5).

**Other satisfaction analyses.** To address concerns of retrospective memory in those no longer currently involved in FWBRs, I ran a $t$- test between *yes (currently)* and *yes (not currently)* on reports of satisfaction. There was not a significant difference in satisfaction with FWBRs, suggesting that these *yes (currently)* ($M$ = 3.56, $SD$ = 1.65, $n$ = 18) and *yes (not currently)* ($M$ = 3.26, $SD$ = 1.44, $n$ = 68) are not affected by the possible memory differences in their reports of experiences in a FWBR, $t$ (84) = .74, $p$ = .46.

Correlations were run between satisfaction, characteristics of the FWBR and both objective and subjective relationship closeness. Satisfaction was significantly related to the number of FWBRs participants had been involved in over time, $r$ = .24, $p$ = .02. The higher the total number of FWBRs, the more satisfied they were with their current or most recent FWBR. Satisfaction was also significantly related to the IOS score, $r$ = .25, $p$ = .02. Surprisingly, the higher subjective closeness participants reported with the FWBR, the more satisfied they were with the FWBR. Though not significantly related to

all of the subscales of the RCI, the objective measure of closeness, satisfaction was significantly related to the subscale for strength, $r = .23$, $p = .03$. Participants reported higher satisfaction when they responded with the FWB partner having higher impact on their decision-making and goals.

**FWBR Termination**

FWBRs ended for a variety of reasons, though the most frequently reported was interest in another person (50%, $n = 74$). Whether it was the participant's interest in another (28%, $n = 21$), or the partner's interest in another (22%, $n = 16$), FWBRs ended primarily due to a desire to pursue someone else. Occasionally the FWBR ended because feelings became involved (15%, $n = 11$), violating the cardinal rule of this type of relationship. Loss of sexual interest was the next most often reported reason for terminating the FWBR (12%, $n = 9$), followed by embarrassment of the relationship (11%, $n = 8$), pressure from family or friends (8%, $n = 6$), and the occurrence of conflict or argument (4%, $n = 3$; see Figure 7).

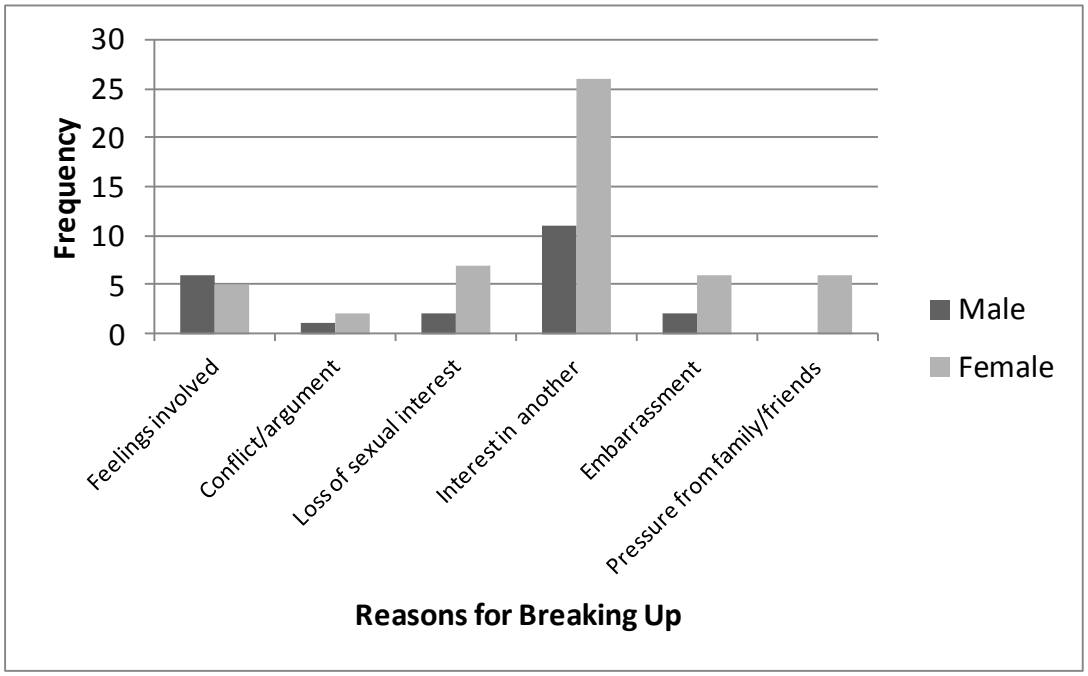


Figure 7.

*Breakup Reasons by Gender*

A series of chi-square analyses were conducted to test the likelihood of remaining friends following the termination of the FWBR, as measured by the question "Are you still friends?" in the relationship involvement measure, according to three variables of interest: self-monitoring behavior, attachment, and gender.

Gender was significantly related to the status of the friendship following an end to the FWBR, $X^2$ (2) = 6.09, $p$ = .048. Men were more likely to be unsure of the status of the friendship (26%, $n$ = 6) than women (8%, $n$ = 5), as compared to the other categories: *yes* (men – 65%, women – 73%), and *no* (men – 9%, women – 20%; see Figure 8).

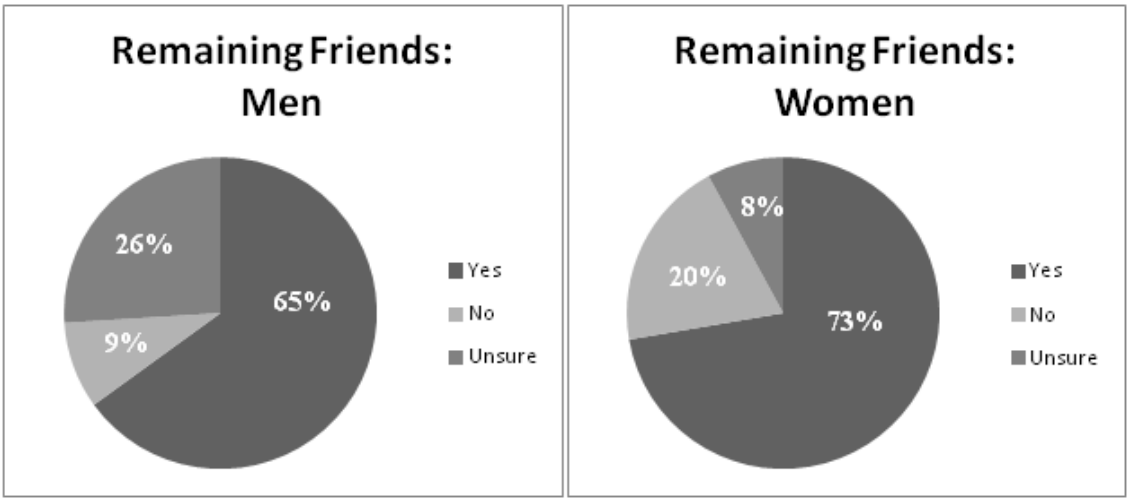


Figure 8.

*Remaining Friends and Gender*

There were no significant differences in remaining friends according to self-monitoring behavior, $X^2$ (2) = .16, $p$ = .92. High and low self-monitors were equally likely to remain friends (high – 70%, low – 71%), to end the friendship as well as the FWBR (high – 18%, low – 16%), or be unsure of the status of the friendship (high – 11%, low – 13%; see Figure 9).

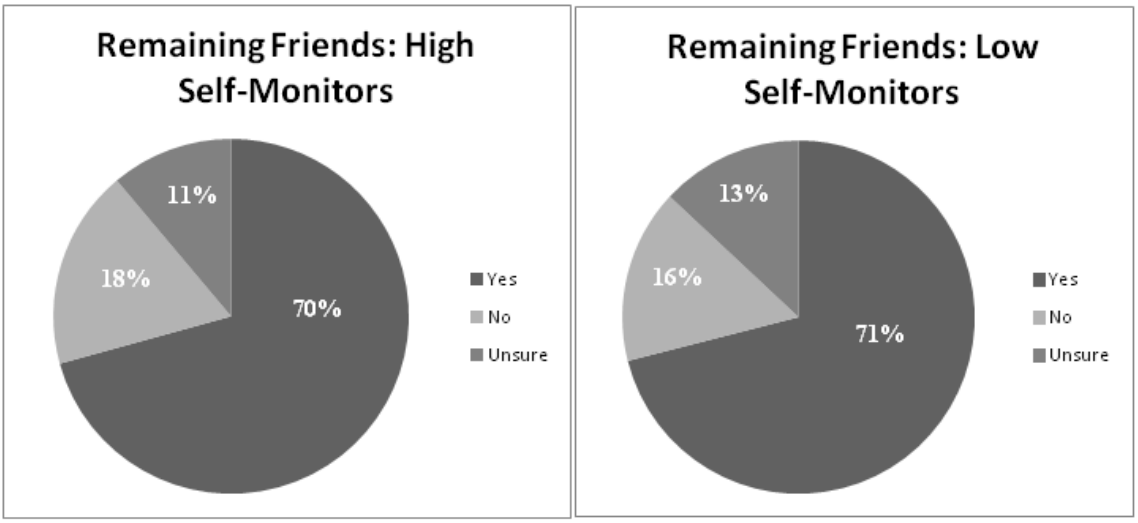

Figure 9.

*Remaining Friends and Self-Monitoring*

There was no interaction between gender and remaining friends on self-monitoring behavior, $F$ (2, 83) = .49, $p$ = .61. Similarly, attachment was not significantly related to the proportion of participants remaining friends, $X^2$ (4) = 1.57, $p$ = .81. Secure, preoccupied, and avoidant participants were equally likely to remain friends (see Figure 10).

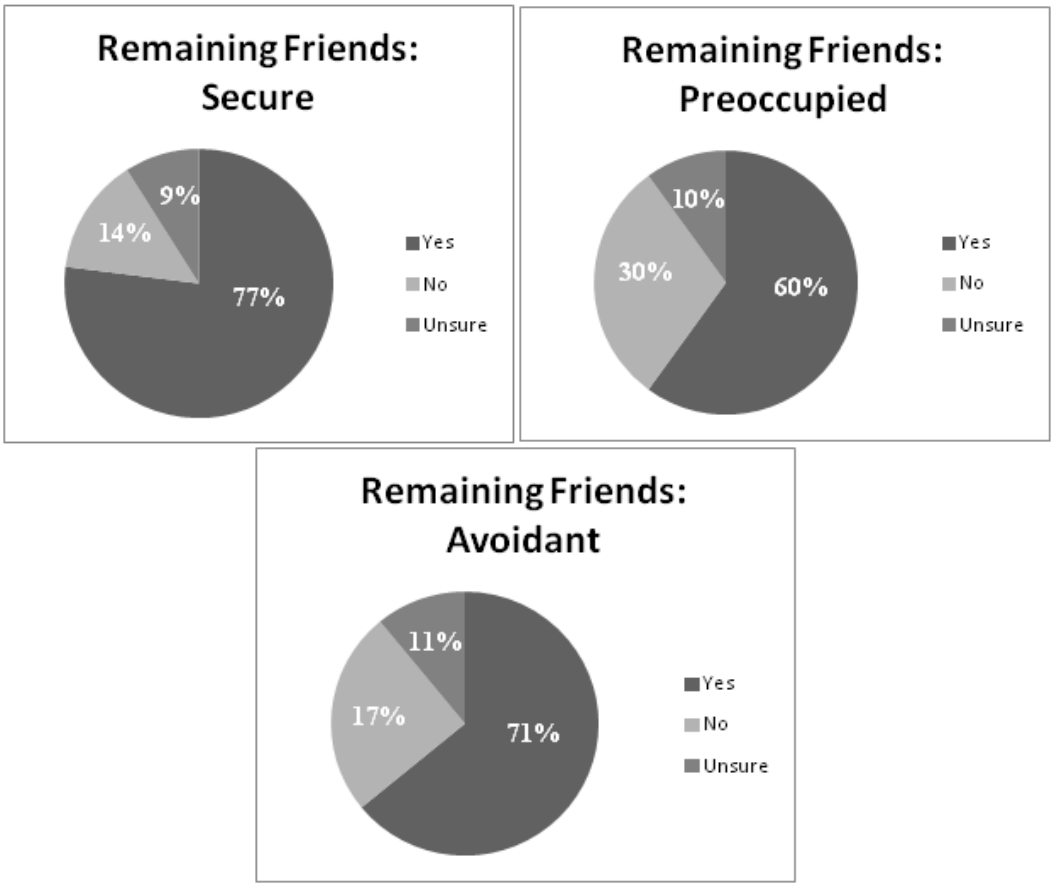


Figure 10.

*Remaining Friends and Attachment*

## Discussion

The FWBR is a relatively new type of relationship. As a result, it has been rarely examined from a psychological perspective. I set out to understand why some people become involved in FWBRs while others do not, and to understand the experience of the relationship itself and the variables surrounding its termination. Do personality and gender affect initial involvement and experiences within FWBRs? According to my results, personality alone does not appear to affect whether or not someone is involved in a FWBR or the experiences within the relationship, while gender has more of an impact. However, the interaction of personality and gender does relate to FWBR involvement and experiences within the FWBR. Do people involved in FWBRs find them to be close relationships? My analyses showed that FWBRs are, surprisingly, generally comparable to literature standards of closeness in romantic relationships. Furthermore, following an end to the benefits of the FWBR, participants find the relationship with their FWB partner to be emotionally less close, though objective closeness has not changed.

### Evaluation of Hypotheses

**Involvement**. The reported involvement in my sample of participants was lower than that expected. Only 44% of the participants had herein participated in a FWBR, as compared to the 51-60% reported in the literature (Hughes et al., 2005; Puentes et al., 2008). Although men were not necessarily more likely to participate in FWBRs than women, men who had not previously participated in a FWBR were more interested in becoming involved in a future FWBR than women who had yet to be involved. Specifically, of those participants who had not been involved in a FWBR, men were more

likely to be willing to try it, whereas women were more likely to express never wanting to be involved in one. Self-monitoring differences and various attachment styles did not vary in FWBR involvement as predicted. However, there was a significant interaction of sex and involvement, as predicted. In my sample, men were higher self-monitors than women. More importantly, an interaction between gender and FWBR involvement was significantly related to self-monitoring behavior. Similar to the literature (Snyder et al., 1986), men involved in FWBRs were higher self-monitors than women who were involved in FWBRs and than women who reported never wanting to be involved in FWBRs.

**Relationship closeness.** Contrary to predictions, closeness in a FWBR, objective and subjective, was not significantly affected by gender, self-monitoring behavior, or attachment. Regarding objective relationship closeness, as measured by the subscales of the RCI, high self-monitoring men and low self-monitoring women did not participate in a different number of activities with their FWB partner or attribute strength to the FWBR in impacting their life decisions. However, there was a marginal difference in time spent with the FWB partner in that high self-monitoring men spent less time than low self-monitoring women in their respective FWBRs.

The analyses concerning differences between those currently involved and those not currently involved in FWBRs on objective and subjective closeness offered an unanticipated insight. Objectively, participants spent the same amount of time, did the same number of activities with, and were affected just the same by their FWB partner following an end to the benefits of the relationship. However, they felt less close with

that partner once the FWBR has dissolved. Similarly, differences in closeness as a result of remaining friends implies this same disconnect between emotional closeness and literal closeness in FWBRs based on friendship after the benefits have ended. Objectively, participants spent the same amount of time, did the same number of activities with, and were affected just the same by their FWB partner whether or not they actually remained friends. In contrast, again, they felt less close to that partner when they were unsure if the friendship remained. This implies that introducing sexual benefits into a friendship will not hurt it objectively when it ends, but it will change subjectively; the person's feelings of closeness with the former partner diminish once the FWBR has dissolved.

**Satisfaction.** Satisfaction was not significantly impacted by gender or attachment. However, the gender differences were in the predicted direction, in that, males reported generally higher satisfaction with FWBRs than women. Self-monitoring behavior did differ in satisfaction. As predicted, high self-monitors were more satisfied with FWBRs than low self-monitors. Perhaps they find them more satisfying because of their "unrestricted" orientation towards sex (Snyder et al., 1986) or their belief to "love the one you're with" (Leone & Hawkins, 2006). In addition, high self-monitoring men were, as was hypothesized, more satisfied in FWBRs than low self-monitoring women. Overall, FWBR experiences are affected by the interaction of gender and self-monitoring behavior, as predicted (Snyder et al., 1986). Perhaps interactions of gender and other personality traits might also influence the experience of FWBRs.

**Gender differences.** There are some gender differences in FWBRs. The first exists in involvement: men were more likely to be interested in becoming involved in FWBRs than women, while women were more likely to report never wanting to be involved in one. In addition, following an end to the FWBR, men were more likely to be unsure about the status of the friendship than women. This difference in remaining friends may be women deciding the status of the friendship and not sharing it with the man. Perhaps women are simply more resolute in their labeling of the relationship, as compared to men. Another possibility is that women are simply more concerned with the label of a relationship. Though a large number of men were unsure of the status of their friendship, it is possible that this does not bother them, and they do not care to know the status of the friendship.

## Limitations

My study is not without its limitations. Unfortunately, the sample of participants was limited in that I had few men, especially compared to the number of women in the study. The power of my completed analyses is hindered by the small number of men included, and the possibility of delving further into the data is more difficult. In addition, my sample was highly disproportionate in class rank, as 60.9% ($n$ = 120) were freshmen. Perhaps the low involvement rate, as compared to the prevalence stated in the literature, is a factor of my sample not yet having an opportunity to become involved in a FWBR. Furthermore, the ethnicity of my sample, primarily of Asian descent, may impact my findings. Other FWBR research had primarily White participants; perhaps my heavily-

Asian sample was raised with stricter values of relationships, and, as a result, has not participated, and has no interest in participating, in a FWBR.

The reliability of the Self-Monitoring Scale in our study was lower than in previous literature. This attenuates our findings concerning self-monitoring behavior. Unfortunately, the scale could not have been statistically strengthened by eliminating individual items, or reducing to the 18-item revised format. As a result, differences in self-monitoring behavior in our various tests are not as powerful as would be ideal.

There are concerns of retrospective memory, in that some of the survey questions asked participants to think of their most recent FWBR, if they were not currently involved. The differences between *yes (currently)* and *yes (not currently)* would not be important in the question of involvement, but rather in the question of satisfaction. Perhaps those no longer involved are remembering the relationship to be better or worse than it actually was. Future studies concerned about experiences while currently involved in a FWBR could fix this limitation by only recruiting people who are currently involved, or completely eliminating the data of those not currently involved.

Further, in only receiving input from one partner of the FWBR, I am limited in verifying the reported experiences, as well as comparing one partner's experience of the FWBR to the other partner's experience. Perhaps there are more individual differences in this relationship; understanding them in the future relies on having information from both partners.

## Future Research

Despite the limitations, with this research we not only expand the literature concerning friends with benefits relationships, but more important improve the understanding of a fairly under-researched interpersonal relationship type. Especially due to the limited amount of friends with benefits research, each study completed provides inspiration for future directions in the area.

Perhaps future research will examine under what circumstances, though violating the cardinal rule, friends with benefits relationships successfully evolve into a romantic relationship. Another question that arises from this study is to specifically examine how the friendship has changed, or not changed, following an end to the "benefits" part of the relationship, and if gender differences are present. Also, how does personality moderate the ways in which people experience friends with benefits relationships? Are FWBRs solely a college phenomenon or do they exist before and after the college experience? Future research is undeniably necessary in this ever-expanding field. Relationships between people are certainly less concrete than either romantic or friendship. FWBRs illustrate the possibility of other types of relationships that do not fit the traditional categories seen in relationship literature to date.

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Appendix A

Demographics

*Instructions:*
*Please answer the following demographic information to the best of your ability.*

What is your age in years?

What is your sex? ____Male ____Female

Please mark the race/ethnicity with which you most identify:

____ African American ____Middle Eastern

____American Indian or Alaskan Native ____Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

____Asian ____White/European

____Hispanic or Latino ____Other (describe below)

(_____)

What class rank are you according to units completed?

____Freshman (0-30 units) ____Senior (90+ units)

____Sophomore (30-60 units) ____Graduate student

____Junior (60-90 units) ____N/A

What sexual orientation do you most identify with?

____ Heterosexual

____ Homosexual

____ Bisexual

____ Other (please specify) (_____)

How old were you when you first had sexual intercourse (in years)? ("Sexual intercourse" means vaginal intercourse or anal intercourse between persons regardless of sex).

What is your religious affiliation? Mark the option that best applies with an "X" in the field, followed by any specific denomination with which you identify.

_____ Christian

_____ Muslim

_____ Jewish

_____ Sikh

_____ Buddhist

_____ Hindu

_____ No preference/No affiliation

_____ Other

Appendix B

Self-Monitoring Scale (Snyder, 1974)

*Instructions:*
*The statements on the following page concern your personal reactions to a number of different situations. No two statements are exactly alike, so consider each statement carefully before answering. If a statement is TRUE or MOSTLY TRUE as applied to you, select True. If a statement is FALE or NOT USUALLY TRUE, select False. It is important that you answer as frankly and as honestly as you can. Your answers will be kept in the strictest of confidence.*

---

I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people.
____ True ____ False

At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like.
____ True ____ False

I can only argue for ideas which I already believe.
____ True ____ False

I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information.
____ True ____ False

I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain others.
____ True ____ False

I would probably make a good actor.
____ True ____ False

In a group of people I am rarely the center of attention.
____ True ____ False

In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons.
____ True ____ False

I am not particularly good at making other people like me.
____ True ____ False

I'm not always the person I appear to be.
____ True ____ False

I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please someone or win their favor.
____ True ____ False

I have considered being an entertainer.
____ True ____ False

I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting.
____ True ____ False

I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.
____ True ____ False

At a party I let others keep the jokes and stories going.
____ True ____ False

I feel a bit awkward in public and do not show up quite as well as I should.
____ True ____ False

I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for a right end).
____ True ____ False

I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them.
____ True ____ False

Appendix C

Relationship Questionnaire (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991)

*Instructions:*
*Please indicate to what degree you agree with the following statements.*

It is relatively easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on others and having others depend on me. I don't worry about being alone or having others not accept me.

| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Strongly agree |

I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me.

| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Strongly agree |

I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don't value me as much as I value them.

| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Strongly agree |

I am somewhat uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I sometimes worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.

| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Somewhat agree | Agree | Strongly agree |

Appendix D

Relationship Involvement

*Instructions:*
*Please respond to each question or statement as it pertains to you. Friends with benefits relationships (FWBRs) occur with a friend that you have, who you also have sexual activity with (this can include sexual intercourse, but can also include other types of sexual activity). This is NOT someone you describe as your boyfriend/girlfriend. Please keep this definition in mind while answering the following questions.*

---

Have you ever participated in a FWBR as defined above?

____Yes (currently involved)
____Yes (not currently involved)
____ No (but would like to be involved)
____ No (but would consider becoming involved)
____ No (would never be involved)

How many total FWBRs have you been involved in over time?

How recent was your FWBR? (If currently involved, write "Currently involved")

How long has your current FWBR lasted as of now? (If not currently involved, report the length of time for your most recent FWBR.)

How long were you friends with your most recent FWB partner BEFORE beginning the FWBR?

If your FWBR ended, what was the reasoning to the dissolution of the relationship? (Select all that apply)

____My feelings became involved
____Partner's feelings became involved
____Conflict/argument
____ My loss of sexual interest in partner
____ Partner's loss of sexual interest in me
____ My interest in another person
____ Partner's interest in another person
____ Embarrassment of the relationship
____ Pressure from family/friends
____ Other (please specify)
(_____)

In your current or most recent FWBR, how many times did it "end" before its final termination? (If the final "break-up" was the only time it ended, write "0")

Are you still friends?
____Yes
____No
____Not sure

What types of sexual activities did you engage in with your FWB partner? (Check all that apply.)

____ Kissing
____ Partner's hands to achieve pleasure
____ Penetration (vaginal or anal)
____ Oral (fellatio or cunnilingus)
____ Petting (affectionate caressing)
____ Mutual masturbation
____ Other (please specify)
(_____)

Appendix E

Relationship Closeness Inventory (Berscheid et al., 1989)

*Instructions:*
*Please answer the following questions about your current/most recent FWBR. Answer the questions with regard to your particular partner in the FWBR.*

---

Who is this person? (initial of first name only) _____

What is this person's age? _____

What is this person's sex? _____

How long have you known this person? _____

We would like you to estimate the amount of time you typically spend alone with this person (referred to below as "X") during the day. We would like you to make these time estimates by breaking the day into morning, afternoon, and evening, although you should interpret each of these time periods in terms of your own typical daily schedule. Think back over the past week and write in the average amount of time, PER DAY, that you spent alone with X, with no one else around, during each time period. If you did not spend any time with X in some time periods, write ___0___ hour(s) ___0___ minutes.

During the past week, what is the average amount of time, per day, that you spent alone with X in the morning (e.g., between the time you wake and 12 noon)? If not currently involved, estimate the average amount of time per week that you spend alone with X in the morning NOW (no longer in FWBR).

_____ hour(s) _____ minutes

During the past week, what is the average amount of time, per day, that you spent alone with X in the afternoon (e.g., between 12 noon and 6pm)? If not currently involved, estimate the average amount of time per week that you spend alone with X in the afternoon NOW (no longer in FWBR).

_____ hour(s) _____ minutes

During the past week, what is the average amount of time, per day, that you spent alone with X in the evening (e.g., between 6pm and bedtime)? If not currently involved, estimate the average amount of time per week that you spend alone with X in the evening NOW (no longer in FWBR).

_____ hour(s) _____ minutes

Compared with the "normal" amount of time you usually spend alone with X, how typical was the past week? (Check one)

_____ typical _____ not typical (please specify)

If not typical, why? _____

The following is a list of different activities that people may engage in over the course of one week. For each of the activities listed, please check all of those that you have engaged in alone with X in the past week. Check only those activities that were done alone with X and not done with X in the presence of others.

In the past week, I did the following activities alone with X: (Check all that apply)

_____ did laundry

_____ prepared a meal

_____ attended a non-class lecture/presentation

_____ went to a grocery store

_____ discussed things of a personal nature

_____ planned a party/social event

_____ went on a trip (vacation)

_____ went to church/religious function

_____ engaged in sexual relations

_____ went to a clothing store

_____ went to a movie

_____ participated in a sporting activity

_____ went to a play

_____ visited family

_____ went to a department, book, hardware store, etc.

_____ attended a sporting event

_____ watched TV

_____ went to an auction/antique show

_____ went to a restaurant

_____ went for a walk/drive

_____ went to a museum/art show

_____ attended class

_____ cleaned house/apartment

_____ worked on homework

_____ discussed things of a non-personal nature

_____ talked on the phone

_____ ate a meal

_____ outdoor recreation (e.g., sailing)

_____ went to a bar

_____ visited friends

_____ played cards/board game

_____ exercised (e.g., jogging,

aerobics)

_____ went on an outing (e.g., picnic, beach, zoo)

_____ wilderness activity (e.g., hunting)

_____ went to a concert

_____ went dancing

_____ went to a party

_____ played music/sang

The following questions concern the amount of influence X has on your thoughts, feelings, and behavior NOW. Using the 7-point scale below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by writing the appropriate number in the space corresponding to each item.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

1. _____ X will influence my future financial security.
2. _____ X does not influence everyday things in my life.
3. _____ X influences important things in my life.
4. _____ X influences which parties and other social events I attend.
5. _____ X influences the extent to which I accept responsibilities in our relationship.
6. _____ X does not influence how much time I spend doing household work.
7. _____ X does not influence how I choose to spend my money.
8. _____ X influences the way I feel about myself.
9. _____ X does not influence my moods.
10. _____ X influences the basic values that I hold.
11. _____ X does not influence the opinions that I have of other important people in my life.
12. _____ X does not influence when I see, and the amount of time I spend with, my family.
13. _____ X influences when I see, and the amount of time I spend with, my friends.
14. _____ X does not influence which of my friends I see.

15. _____ X does not influence the type of career I have.

16. _____ X influences or will influence how much time I devote to my career.

17. _____ X does not influence my chances of getting a good job in the future.

18. _____ X influences the way I feel about the future.

19. _____ X does not have the capacity to influence how I act in various situations.

20. _____ X influences and contributes to my overall happiness.

21. _____ X does not influence my present financial security.

22. _____ X influences how I spend my free time.

23. _____ X influences when I see X and the amount of time the two of us spend together.

24. _____ X does not influence how I dress.

25. _____ X influences how I decorate my home (e.g., dorm room, apartment).

26. _____ X does not influence where I live.

27. _____ X influences what I watch on TV.

Now we would like you to tell us how much X affects your future plans and goals. Using the 7-point scale below, please indicate the degree to which your future plans and goals are affected by X NOW by writing the appropriate number in the space corresponding to each item. If an area does not apply to you (e.g., you have no plans or goals in that area), write a 1.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Not at all | | | | | | A great extent |

1. _____ my vacation plans

2. _____ my marriage plans

3. _____ my plans to have children

4. _____ my plans to make major investments (house, car, etc.)

5. _____ my plans to join a club, social organization, church, etc.

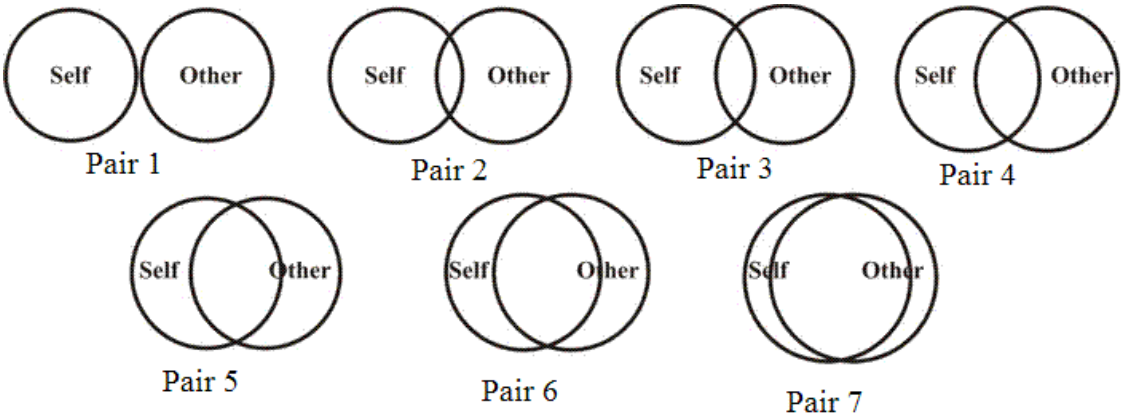
6. _____ my school-related plans

7. _____ my plans for achieving a particular financial standard of living

Appendix F

Inclusion of Other in the Self scale (Aron et al., 1992)

*Instructions:*
*Identify the picture that best describes your relationship with your current FWBR partner. If not currently involved, identify the picture that best describes your CURRENT relationship with your most RECENT FWBR partner. Select the option that corresponds to the pair of circles you identify with in the image.*




_____ Pair 1

_____ Pair 2

_____ Pair 3

_____ Pair 4

_____ Pair 5

_____ Pair 6

_____ Pair 7

Appendix G

Relationship Satisfaction

*Instructions:*
*Please select the response that best represents your level of satisfaction.*

How satisfied are you in your current friends with benefits relationship? If not currently involved, how satisfied were you in your most recent friends with benefits relationship?

_____ Not at all satisfied

_____ Slightly satisfied

_____ Moderately satisfied

_____ Satisfied

_____ Very satisfied

_____ Extremely satisfied