

Discussion Post #2: Attachment Case Studies

Imagine that you are a research assistant in Mary Ainsworth's Attachment Styles Research Laboratory. You are learning about identifying the different attachment styles, which are as follows:

- **Secure attachment:** a relationship in which an infant obtains both comfort and confidence from the presence of his or her caregiver.
- **Avoidant attachment:** a pattern of attachment in which an infant avoids connection with the caregiver, as when the infant seems not to care about the caregiver's presence, departure, or return.
- **Anxious attachment:** a pattern of attachment in which an infant's anxiety and uncertainty are evident, as when the infant becomes very upset at separation from the caregiver and both resists and seeks contact on reunion.
- **Disorganized attachment:** a type of attachment that is marked by an infant's inconsistent reactions to the caregiver's departure and return.

Ainsworth developed the **strange situation** procedure to measure attachment. In a playroom, an infant is observed through eight episodes each lasting about 3 minutes. At first the child and caregiver are together. Then a stranger or the caregiver enters or leaves the playroom. Infants' responses indicate the type of attachment. These key behaviors are:

- *Exploration of toys*
- *Reaction to the caregiver's departure*
- *Reaction to the caregiver's return*

To become certified at identifying the various attachment styles, you have to take a quiz which involves reviewing case studies of various infants that have come to the laboratory and then identifying the attachment styles. There are five cases, which are detailed below:

Case Study #1:

Lil' Wayne is a one-year old boy who has come to Ainsworth's laboratory with his mother. When Lil' Wayne and his mother are in the play room, he plays happily with toys. He giggles while he plays with a fire truck. When the stranger enters the room, Lil' Wayne continues to play with his fire truck. Lil' Wayne's mother leaves the room. He continues to play with his toys as if she never left. Lil' Wayne's mother comes back into the room and he doesn't look at her or greet her when she returns.

Case Study #2:

Chris Brown is a one-year old kid who has come to Mary Ainsworth research laboratory with his mother. Chris enters the lab and is reluctant to play with any of the toys. His mother tries to urge him to go play with some blocks across the room. He walks over cautiously but turns around. The stranger walks in and Chris sits half-way between his mother and the blocks. Chris' mother leaves and he begins crying and yelling. When his mother comes back, Chris continues screaming even when his mother tries to comfort him.

Case Study #3:

Miley Cyrus is a one-year old girl who has come to Mary Ainsworth's laboratory with her mother. When they enter the room, Miley will not leave her mother to explore the toys around the room. She tries to sit on her mother's lap but her mother tries to urge her to play with the toys. Her mom hands her a toy and she begins to play with it. The stranger enters the room and shortly after her mother leaves. Miley throws her toy and begins to cry. When Miley's mother returns, Miley cries and looks very angry then hits her mother.

Case Study #4:

Beyoncé is a one-year old girl who is at Mary Ainsworth's lab with her mother. In the playroom, *Beyoncé* plays happily with a book. She offers her mother a doll after she finishes with the book. The stranger enters the room and her mother leaves. *Beyoncé* pauses and does not look happy. She begins to cry and tries to run after her mom. When *Beyoncé*'s mother comes back, she says "Momma" and squeals with delight then goes back to play with the doll.

Case Study #5:

Brittany Spears is a one-year old girl who has comes to Mary Ainsworth lab with her mother. When she enters the playroom with her mom, she is scared to go in but with some coaxing from her mother she does. She doesn't play with any toys but sits in the middle of the room. The stranger enters the room and her mother leaves. Brittany continues to sit in the middle of the room staring at the wall opposite from the door. When her mother comes back, Brittany gets up and throws some blocks then walks backwards across the room.

After you have read each of the case studies, think about infants' attachment styles. In your discussion post, include the following:

1. Identify the attachment style each infant exhibits, and explain why you believe the infant has the identified attachment style by using evidence from the textbook or another source. You should source cite and reference your textbook or another source. **(6 points)**

After you post your discussion:

1. Pick two classmates who have already posted.
2. Respond to the classmates' responses using complete sentences and focusing on the similarities and/or differences between your post and theirs.
3. Your response should be about one paragraph per case study. It is due by [date].
4. The two responses are worth a maximum of **4 points**. These are due by [date].

Points: 10