# Article information:

“When Strangers Meet”: John Bowlby and Harry Harlow on Attachment Behavior | SpringerLink  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12124-008-9079-2>

# Article summary:

1. John Bowlby and Harry Harlow were two psychologists who defied prevailing psychoanalytic and learning theoretical views on the bond between child and caregiver in the 1950s and 1960s.

2. Bowlby used Harlow's surrogate work with rhesus monkeys as empirical support for his emerging theory of attachment, while Harlow was influenced by Bowlby's thinking and tried to model his rhesus work to support Bowlby's theoretical framework.

3. Through their personal and professional relationships, joint participation in scientific meetings, archival materials, and scholarly writings, Bowlby and Harlow's cross-fertilization of ideas resulted in groundbreaking experimenting and theorizing that affects the field of developmental psychology to this day.

# Article rating:

Appears moderately imbalanced: The article provides some useful information, but is missing several important points or pieces of evidence that would be required to present the discussed topics in a balanced and reliable way. You are encouraged to seek a more balanced perspective on the presented issues by exploring the provided research topics and looking at different information sources.

# Article analysis:

The article “When Strangers Meet”: John Bowlby and Harry Harlow on Attachment Behavior provides a detailed analysis of the personal and professional relationships between two influential figures in the field of developmental psychology. The article is well-researched, drawing on correspondence between Bowlby and Harlow, archival materials, and an analysis of their scholarly writings. However, there are some potential biases and missing points of consideration that should be noted.

One potential bias is the author’s focus on the positive aspects of Bowlby and Harlow’s work, without fully exploring any negative consequences or criticisms. For example, while Bowlby’s theory of attachment has been widely accepted in the field of developmental psychology, it has also been criticized for being too deterministic and ignoring cultural differences in attachment styles (Rothbaum et al., 2000). Similarly, while Harlow’s experiments with surrogate mothers provided important insights into the importance of social contact for infant monkeys, they have also been criticized for being unethical (Blum, 2002).

Another potential bias is the author’s emphasis on Bowlby’s use of ethological findings to support his emerging theory of attachment. While this is certainly an important aspect of Bowlby’s work, it overlooks other influences on his thinking such as his experiences working with homeless children after World War II (Bowlby et al., 1952). Additionally, while the article notes that Harlow was influenced by Bowlby’s thinking and tried to model his rhesus work to support Bowlby’s new theoretical framework, it does not explore any potential limitations or drawbacks to this approach.

Overall, while “When Strangers Meet” provides a valuable contribution to our understanding of the relationship between two influential figures in developmental psychology, readers should be aware of its potential biases and limitations. It would be beneficial for future research to explore both the positive and negative aspects of Bowlby and Harlow’s work in more detail.

References:

Blum, D. (2002). Love at Goon Park: Harry Harlow and the science of affection. Basic Books.

Bowlby, J., Robertson, J., & Rosenbluth, D. (1952). A two-year-old goes to hospital. Psychoanalytic Study of the Child, 7(1), 82-94.

Rothbaum, F., Weisz, J., Pott, M., Miyake, K., & Morelli, G. (2000). Attachment and culture: Security in the United States and Japan. American Psychologist, 55(10), 1093-1104.

# Topics for further research:

* Criticisms of Bowlby's theory of attachment
* Cultural differences in attachment styles
* Ethical concerns with Harlow's surrogate mother experiments
* Bowlby's experiences working with homeless children
* Limitations of modeling rhesus work to support Bowlby's theory
* Negative consequences of Bowlby and Harlow's work

# Report location:

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