



Abstracts

2019 International Association for Relationship Research mini-conference

Theme: *Positive Action in Relationships*

Conference venue: Richcraft Hall, Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

June 20-22, 2019

Conference organizers

Cheryl Harasymchuk (Chair), Johanna Peetz, Marina Milyavskaya, Amy Muise, & Emily Impett

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Note. Special thanks to Shamarukh Chowdhury for preparing this document!

Keynote Speakers: Abstracts

Positive interpersonal processes

Sara Algoe

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Good relationships are characterized by frequent positive social interactions, such as having fun together, sharing laughs, doing kind things for one another, and expressing gratitude. Here, building on rapidly-emerging findings that bridge affective and relationship science, I articulate core features of *positive interpersonal processes*. This approach leads to useful specificity in predictions about relationship consequences and simultaneously contributes to both affective and relationship science, two domains that span disciplines within the psychological literature. In turn, basic research on everyday positive interpersonal processes points toward new avenues for understanding the well-established links between good relationships and health.

Why are relationships difficult to change?

Thomas Bradbury

University of California, Los Angeles

The interpersonal processes that are vital to relationships and to relationship science are widely understood to generate valued relational, familial, and social benefits. However, efforts to actively change these generative processes, through clinical and preventive interventions, have yielded mixed and unexpected results. In my talk I will outline the value of developing the applied side of relationship science, while highlighting some of the challenges that arise when attempting to make basic research findings actionable. After summarizing why my research on social support might serve as a cautionary tale, I review a series of findings that I believe help explain why it has proven difficult to create lasting change in relationships for couples in the early stages of committed partnerships. The talk will conclude with a few ways in which research and theory can allow us to harness the prosocial forces that reside in our closest relationships, perhaps enabling more couples to reap the benefits that are inherent in our social bonds.

Getting what you want: Different types of sex have different benefits for heterosexual and sexual-minority women

Lisa Diamond

University of Utah

In this talk, I review previous research linking sexual satisfaction to mental and physical health, highlighting the degree to which this research has been conducted almost exclusively among heterosexuals. Some of this research has argued that penile-vaginal intercourse is more “beneficial” for women’s well-being than other sexual acts. In this talk I present data collected from sexual-minority and heterosexual women showing that the day-to-day benefits of different sexual acts depends on the degree to which women personally value different types of acts.

You tangle my emotions: The regulation of emotions by close others

Shelly Gable

University of California, Santa Barbara

Close relationship partners can actively influence one another's emotional experiences; a process called *extrinsic interpersonal emotion regulation (EIER)*. Relationship researchers have largely been concerned with EIER processes that occur *after* the other has experienced an emotion, such as attempts at down-regulating negative emotions through social support. I will present theory and data supporting an expanded model of EIER across the temporal spectrum of an emotional experience. We find that people frequently engage in extrinsic interpersonal emotion regulation by using strategies focused on the antecedents of an emotional experience, such as creating situations to increase or decrease the likelihood of an emotion being experienced, as well as strategies employed in response to the experience of the emotion, such as suppressing the close other's expression of emotion. These strategies can be aimed at making the other feel better or making the other feel worse, and their use plays a role in close relationships. I will end with a discussion of implications that this work has for research on emotion regulation and research on close relationships.

When good is stronger than bad: Reward and threat in the pursuit of relationships

Geoff MacDonald

University of Toronto

Social psychologists have argued that people are more motivated by avoiding bad outcomes than pursuing good ones. But research in my lab suggests that when deciding whether to invest in a relationship, people may be more strongly influenced by rewards (e.g., intimacy) than threats (e.g., rejection). I will describe research showing that people regret missed relationship opportunities more than rejections, stay attached to ex-partners who are rewarding rather than safe, and are more likely to stay together in the long term with partners who offer reward. I will provide evidence that the rewards of relationships may be so enticing because they are mediated by the release of endogenous opioids. Finally, I will argue that avoidantly attached individuals actively defend against social reward and discuss research suggesting that communicating love to avoidants with highly active nonverbal messages may be one way to work past these defences.

Symposia: Group Abstracts

(sorted alphabetically by the symposium title)

Automatic processes in close relationships: How implicit evaluations of significant others promote relationship-maintenance mechanisms

Presenting Authors: Faure, Reis, & Zayas

Chair: Ruddy Faure

Growing evidence suggests that implicit evaluations – the automatic affective associations toward one’s significant other – are a powerful predictor of relationship success over time. In this symposium, we discuss novel findings that further illuminate the reasons why implicit evaluations have substantial long-term implications and, to a broader extent, how automatic processes importantly contribute to our understanding of relationship science. Across three presentations, we first provide converging evidence that implicit evaluations capture both specific and general aspects of one’s relationship that can hardly be assessed through explicit self-report. Then, we describe the conditions under which more positive implicit evaluations of an important other may automatically foster both cognitive (i.e., resistance to relational threat, rose-colored perception of past and present interpersonal experiences) and behavioral (i.e., forgiveness) processes that are crucial for maintaining satisfying relationships in the long run, and this over and above explicit evaluations.

Broadening and building in the bedroom: Relationship processes that enhance couples’ sex lives

Presenting Authors: Brady, Genesse, Raposo, & Vannier

Chairs: Amy Muise and Stephanie Raposo

Maximizing the benefits of sex in relationships promotes relationship satisfaction and maintenance. In this symposium, we present research on several relationship processes—self-expansion, savouring, gratitude, and balancing autonomy and connectedness needs—that are associated with couples’ sexual desire and satisfaction. In the first talk, Raposo examines whether self-expansion (i.e., novelty, excitement, broadening) can help couples maintain sexual and relationship well-being when coping with low sexual desire. In the second talk, Vannier investigates how sexual savouring (i.e., reminiscing about, anticipating, and savouring sexual experiences) can promote desire and satisfaction in relationships. In the third talk, Brady explores how gratitude facilitates motivations to meet a partner’s sexual needs. In the fourth talk, Genesse discusses how balancing autonomy and connectedness needs is facilitated by secure attachment and associated with higher desire and satisfaction. The research in this symposium provides insight into the processes that help couples keep their sexual spark alive.

In the pursuit (or avoidance) of sexual pleasure: Relationships in context

Presenting Authors: Clark, Garcia, Lyons, & O'Sullivan

Chair: Lucia O'Sullivan

Pleasure is rarely the focus of sexuality research. Of the work that does exist, research often surprisingly overlooks the relationship context of these partnered sexual experiences. Is pleasure inherent to our consensual sexual interactions? What are the components of a sexual life that are most closely linked to pleasure? This symposium comprises a set of four papers that examine expressions of sexual pleasure in the context of intimate relationships. The papers address (1) which individual and relational factors best predict pleasurable versus problematic sexual functioning among young people, (2) sex-positive, neutral, and sex-averse attitudes among sexual and asexual people as they navigate intimate relationships, (3) active, limited, and frustrated expressive paths in the sexuality of aging adults, and (4) an in-depth analysis of the sexual activities that constitute satisfying and pleasurable sex in the relationship context.

Perceiving you, perceiving me: Sources and benefits of accuracy and bias in interpersonal interactions

Presenting Authors: Elsaadawy, Gere, Tissera, & Visserman

Chairs: Hasagani Tissera and Norhan Elsaadawy

Are people accurate in their perceptions of others? Does accuracy relate to interpersonal outcomes? In this symposium, we explore whether individuals are able to achieve accuracy in various types of interactions and whether accurate and meta-accurate (i.e., accurate beliefs about what others think about us) perceptions influence interpersonal outcomes in both novel and established relationship contexts. Specifically, talks will address 1) whether people are accurate at perceiving their partners' sacrifices and the relational consequences stemming from these perceptions, 2) whether people accurately perceive their partners' social control behaviors (i.e., persuasion, pressure, autonomy support, undermining) and how this accuracy affects their daily experiences, 3) what factors predict meta-accuracy in various interpersonal contexts, and finally 4) whether meta-accuracy is associated with positive interpersonal outcomes during platonic and romantic relationship initiation.

Positive action in teaching relationships

Presenting Authors: Bartolic, Miller, Orbuch, O'Sullivan, & Verette Lindenbaum

Chair: Julie Verette Lindenbaum

Positive Action in Teaching Relationships unites the mission of the Teaching Symposium speakers. Perspectives on the process of teaching include Rowland Miller's move from traditional to online teaching (Fulfilling or Foolish? Lessons Learned from Teaching Close Relationships Online), Lucia F. O'Sullivan's advice on prudent technology use (Tech-enabled [not tech-eclipsed]!), and Terri Orbuch's experiences with extended teaching contexts (Teaching Relationship Science Outside the Traditional Classroom). Silvia Bartolic will describe her assignment (co-authored with Daniel Perlman) that promotes diversity in relationship

perspectives (International, Cross-Institution Undergraduate Student Diversity Assignment) and Julie Verette Lindenbaum will share her research indicating that students value teachers who demonstrate qualities consistent with perceived teacher responsiveness (Strengthening Connections: Students' Perceptions of Effective Teachers). Each member of this Teaching Symposium takes positive action toward enhancing the relationships between Teachers (via dynamic teaching processes, assignments, contexts, or characteristics) and Students (via engagement, application, and academic success).

The positive outcomes of the fast friends procedure in both the laboratory and real world

Presenting Authors: Aron, Clark, Fehr, & Sprecher

Chairs: Susan Sprecher and Arthur Aron

Closeness-inducing tasks, or “Fast Friends” procedures, have been developed to generate closeness between strangers and enhance satisfaction and closeness in existing relationships. This symposium highlights the use of Fast Friends procedures to study factors that enhance closeness and other positive outcomes. Art Aron will open the symposium by a brief review of the original purpose of the Fast Friends procedure. Susan Sprecher will then discuss research using a Fast Friends procedure to examine how various factors (including modality of communication) affect closeness outcomes in getting-acquainted dyads. Beverley Fehr will then discuss the role of the procedure (vs. a physical activity) for enhancing satisfaction in male-male vs. female-female existing friendships. Margaret Clark and Erica Boothby will discuss research that has examined the outcomes from the Fast Friends procedure, including for enhancing shared experiences. Art Aron will close the symposium by discussing other real-world applications of the Fast Friends procedure.

The protective roles of attachment security, partner support, and commitment in shaping relationship well-being

Presenting Authors: Daspe, Lessard, Morissette-Harvey, & Péroquin

Chair: Katherine Péroquin

Meta-analyses and epidemiological studies have shown that relationship distress is associated with lower levels of personal well-being and is a main risk factor for psychopathology (Braithwaite & Holt-Lunstad, 2017; Whisman & Baucom, 2012). These findings justify the empirical efforts aimed at preventing relationship distress and at identifying the mechanisms underlying optimal relationship functioning and well-being. The Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation Model (Karney & Bradbury, 1995) posits that relationship distress arises from the combination of enduring vulnerabilities, stressful events, and poor adaptive relational processes. This model states that relationship functioning deteriorates as partners' individual vulnerabilities and stressful life events undermine or even overwhelm the couple's adaptive processes. Yet, positive relational processes may buffer against the negative effects of personal vulnerabilities or stressors. This symposium will focus on the role of three relational protective processes in shaping relationship well-being in various relational contexts susceptible to impede relational well-being—namely, attachment security, partner support, and commitment.

To grow or not to grow? When and why self-expansion helps or hurts relationship quality

Presenting Authors: Carswell, Hughes, Emery, & McIntyre

Chairs: Kathleen L. Carswell and Lydia Emery

A growing body of research suggests self-expansion—adding positive content to the self—enhances both relationship and individual well-being. This symposium explores when and why self-expansion helps or hurts relationship quality. Kevin McIntyre first discusses why self-expansion within relationships benefits relationship quality and individual well-being, suggesting that basic psychological need fulfillment mediates these associations. Kathleen Carswell then examines how personal self-expansion—positive self-change and personal growth without the presence of a romantic partner—influences relationship quality and desire. Although brief increases in self-expansion benefit relationships, too much may lead partners to drift apart. Next, Erin Hughes explores individual differences in preferences for self-expansion and how they relate to individual and relationship well-being. Finally, Lydia Emery investigates why people might not support their partner’s self-expansion, finding that people with low self-concept clarity attempt to undermine their partner’s personal self-expansion, which corrodes relationship quality.

Welcome to the dark side: Exploring the influence of the dark side of personality on relationships

Presenting Authors: Boon, Paulin, Scharfe, & Visser

Chairs: Elaine Scharfe and Susan Boon

The “dark triad” of personality includes three overlapping but distinguishable traits (Paulhus & Williams, 2002): Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. Recently researchers have started to explore the associations between dark personalities and the dark side of relationships. In the current symposium, we propose to extend these findings to antecedents of the dark triad in family relationships (Scharfe et al.) as well as personality development (Visser et al.). We will also present data exploring the association of the dark triad with other dark relationship behaviours including revenge in social media (Paulin & Boon) and revenge, interpersonal violence and attitudes toward infidelity in romantic relationships (Boon et al). Overall, in this symposium, we will highlight the benefits of taking an integrative approach in explaining the origins and manifestations of dark relationship behaviours.

Symposia: Individual Abstracts

(grouped by symposium)

Symposium title: Automatic processes in close relationships: How implicit evaluations of significant others promote relationship-maintenance mechanisms

The heat is on ... Or maybe not: Implicit sexual desire in romantic couples

Harry T. Reis¹, David C. de Jong², & Gurit E. Birnbaum³

¹University of Rochester, ²Western Carolina University, ³Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya

We will discuss two studies using a new measure of implicit sexual desire for one's partner. We developed the SD-IAT (Sexual Desire-Implicit Association Test) to assess the strength of association between a single target concept (one's romantic partner) and an evaluative dimension (hot-sexy to bland-boring). In a community sample of 110 heterosexual couples, we found that, over and above explicit sexual desire, implicit desire predicted greater desire and arousal during sex, and perceiving that partners were more responsive and felt more desire and satisfaction during sex. In a second study, implicit sexual desire was shown to help inoculate women in a committed romantic relationship against attractive alternatives. The SD-IAT may be particularly relevance for predicting subjective impressions of a partner's experience—impressions that individuals cannot directly know and must therefore infer.

My gut says so, but do I listen to it? Executive control: When and for whom implicit partner evaluations predict forgiveness

Ruddy Faure¹, Francesca Righetti¹, Grace Larson², & Wilhelm Hofmann³

¹Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, ²University of Cologne, ³Ruhr-University Bochum

Recent work suggests that implicit partner evaluations are a powerful predictor of relationship success because they predict behavior when people have restricted opportunities to engage in more controlled responses. Yet, surprisingly, very little evidence shows whether implicit partner evaluations affect overt behaviors and decision-making processes under these circumstances. Consistent with dual-process theories, we predicted that when people have limited executive control, their implicit partner evaluations would influence their forgiveness decisions toward their partner; a crucial relationship-maintenance behavior. Results revealed that when temporarily impairing people's executive control with an experimental manipulation (Study 1), or for people with lower trait executive control (Study 2), more positive implicit partner evaluations were associated with more willingness (Study 1) and more real-life forgiving behaviors toward a partner's offense (Study 2). Together, our findings highlight the importance of implicit partner evaluations under specific, yet common, conditions for promoting repair behaviors that are essential for relationship success.

How I think of you? Positive implicit significant other evaluations predict motivated relationship maintenance

Vivian Zayas¹, Emre Selcuk², & Gizem Surenkok¹

¹Cornell University, ²Middle East Technical University

Interactions with significant others (SO) are affectively complex. People can recall positive memories, but also negative ones. How does recalling a negative memory involving a SO affect one's evaluations of the SO? Past work indicates that implicit evaluations may serve to color how people evaluate events, including past events. The present experiment examined 1) the effect of a memory recall (positive vs. negative) involving a SO on explicit evaluations of the SO, and 2) the extent to which changes in explicit evaluations in response to the negative memory recall were affected by implicit evaluations of the SO. We show that, following a negative memory recall, participants with stronger positive implicit evaluations maintained positive explicit evaluations towards the SO. In contrast, participants with less positive implicit evaluations expressed less positive explicit evaluations towards the SO. Findings highlight the role of implicit evaluations in relationship maintenance processes.

Symposium title: Broadening and building in the bedroom: Relationship processes that enhance couples' sex lives

The benefits of self-expansion for couples coping with low sexual desire

Stephanie Raposo¹, Natalie O. Rosen², & Amy Muise¹,

¹York University, ²Dalhousie University

Self-expansion in a relationship—expanding one's sense of self through novel and exciting experiences with a partner—may help couples cope with low sexual desire. However, self-expansion has not been applied to challenging relationship issues. In a study of 97 couples in which the woman was diagnosed with clinically low sexual desire, we found that when women reported higher self-expansion in the relationship, they reported greater relationship and sexual satisfaction, and had more desire for and were more affectionate with their partners. When their partners reported higher self-expansion, they felt more satisfied with their sex life and relationship (and so did the women), lower sexual distress and less relationship conflict. This is the first study to our knowledge to apply self-expansion theory to couples coping with low desire and provide evidence that self-expansion might help couples mitigate the negative consequences of a clinical sexual issue.

Sexual savouring as a pro-relationship process: Links with sexual satisfaction, sexual desire, and relationship satisfaction across three samples

Sarah A. Vannier¹, Stephanie Raposo², Amy Muise², & Natalie O. Rosen³

¹*St. Thomas University*, ²*York University*, ³*Dalhousie University*

Although sexuality is a key component of romantic relationships, sexual satisfaction and desire typically decrease over time. Savouring is an emotion regulation process that helps individuals to generate, prolong, and intensify their positive affective experiences. The current study examined savouring of positive sexual experiences. We propose that sexual savouring is a pro-relationship process that helps individuals maximize the positive aspects of their sexual relationship and ultimately maintain the quality of that relationship over time. We examined the links between sexual savouring, sexual satisfaction, sexual desire, and relationship satisfaction in three studies: 1) cross-sectional (n = 303), 2) dyadic daily-diary (n = 118 couples), and 3) experimental (n = 224). Across studies sexual savouring predicted greater sexual satisfaction, sexual desire, and relationship satisfaction. This study extends the small but growing body of research on pro-relationship processes. Sexual savouring may help people navigate the sexual ups and downs of a long-term relationship.

Gratitude is associated with greater sexual communal strength

Ashlyn Brady¹, Levi R. Baker¹, Emily A. Impett², & Amy Muise³

¹*University of North Carolina at Greensboro*, ²*University of Toronto Mississauga*, ³*York University*

Maintaining sexual satisfaction is a critical, yet challenging, aspect of most romantic relationships. Sexual communal strength (SCS)—the extent to which people are motivated to meet their partners' sexual needs—has been shown to determine whether or not couples maintain sexual and relationship satisfaction despite such challenges. However, research has yet to identify what qualities or behaviors promote SCS. Given that expressing and receiving expressions of gratitude motivate intimates to maintain valuable relationships, we predict that both expressing and receiving gratitude will increase SCS. Two studies tested these hypotheses by examining if expressing and receiving gratitude significantly predicted greater levels of SCS. Results from both studies revealed that feelings of gratitude toward the partner and receiving expressions of gratitude from the partner significantly predicted SCS. These findings extend past research by introducing a possible mechanism—expressing and receiving gratitude—that promotes SCS.

Being me and loving you: The balance of autonomy and connection in promoting desire and sexual satisfaction

Daphnée Genesse¹, Amy Muise², Audrey Brassard¹, & Katherine Péloquin³

¹*Université de Sherbrooke*, ²*York University*, ³*Université de Montréal*

Sexual desire and sexual satisfaction tend to decline over time in romantic relationships. According to self-determination theory (SDT), one way couples can maintain satisfaction is to balance both partners' need to act according to who they really are (autonomy need) and their

need to feel connected in their relationship (connection need). The goal of this study is to assess associations between the expression of autonomy and connection needs (and the balancing or conciliation of these two needs) and both partners' sexual satisfaction and desire. In a sample of 145 long-term, French-Canadian mixed-sex couples, we found that expressing both autonomy and connection needs and balancing the two was associated with both partners' desire and satisfaction. Securely attached people were more likely to conciliate their autonomy and connection needs, which is one reason why they reported higher sexual desire and satisfaction. Implications for SDT are discussed.

Symposium title: In the pursuit (or avoidance) of sexual pleasure: Relationships in context

Making it work: How intimate relationships provide a context to resolve problems in sexual functioning for young people

Lucia O'Sullivan¹, E. Sandra Byers¹, & Kathleen Hughes²

¹University of New Brunswick, ²University of Calgary

Young people experience high rates of problems in sexual functioning (i.e., desire, arousal, orgasm, sexual pain), similar to adults. Researchers have not examined experiences of such problems in the context of an intimate relationship even though most of young people's sexual activity occurs within romantic partnerships. The current study examined the extent to which individual and relationship factors predicted sexual functioning among late adolescents and young adults in romantic relationships. Participants (N = 409; 172 men, 237 women; 18 to 24) completed anonymous online surveys. More female (22.8%) than male participants (4.7%) reported a clinically significant sexual problem and a sexual problem in at least one sexual functioning domains (53.2% vs. 20.3%). Being male and reporting greater partner caring, relationship satisfaction, sexual frequency, and verbal sexual communication were unique predictors of sexual functioning. The findings indicate that being in a satisfying committed romantic relationship may be protective against poor sexual functioning for young people.

Attitudes about sexual intimacy: A comparison of asexual and sexual people

Alyssa Clark & Corinne Zimmerman

Illinois State University

There are large gaps in asexuality research. Although there is no agreed-upon definition of asexuality, there is support for asexuality being defined as either "low" or "no" sexual attraction. However, past research has not examined variations in attraction or in sexual behavior attitudes. Combining individuals across these measures may contribute to inconsistent findings in past asexual relationship research. We analyzed sexual intimacy attitudes among individuals who identified as sexual (n = 395) or asexual (n = 101). Participants were also asked to self-identify as sex-positive, sex-neutral, or sex-averse. As expected, most asexual people identified as sex-averse or sex-neutral, whereas the majority of sexual people identified as sex-positive. We report differences by sexual orientation and sex attitude with respect to sexual

history, attitudes about engaging in sexual intimacy, and future willingness to engage in various sexual behaviors.

Changes in sexual expression among older couples: A dyadic analysis

David F. Warner¹ & Heidi A. Lyons²

¹University of Alabama, ²Oakland University

Many adults continue to engage in sexual behavior as they age. There is little research that examines how relationship characteristics influence sexual expression at the dyad level among older adults. Using latent class mixture modeling and the nationally representative dyadic data on 955 couples from the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project (NSHAP), we examine how partners' characteristics and relationship quality influence the typology of sexual expression each member of the couple. Preliminary analysis shows that both appraisals of relationship quality and one's own and partner's health affect sexual expression. However, women are more influenced by appraisals of their relationship quality and partner's health, whereas men's sexual expression is more a function of their own health. Based on these findings, it is important to consider how couple-level factors both positively and negatively influence sexual expression.

Intimate behaviors that promote relationship satisfaction, sexual satisfaction, and orgasm: A cluster analysis of behavioral repertoires at last sexual event

Justin R. Garcia¹, Amanda N. Gesselman¹, Tania A. Reynolds¹, David A. Frederick², & Kristen P. Mark³

¹Indiana University Bloomington, ²Chapman University, ³University of Kentucky

Some intimate and sexual behaviors have been associated with interpersonal factors including relationship and sexual satisfaction in both men and women. The current study sought to understand what combinations of behaviors were associated with high vs. low relationship satisfaction, sexual satisfaction, and frequency of orgasm during sexual activity. We investigated the occurrence of 18 specific intimate and sexual behaviors during the last sexual event in a diverse national U.S. sample of 1,001 adult men and women in a committed romantic relationship. We conducted cluster analyses and identified analytic limitations to previous studies, namely that some behaviors were so common they were not unique to either high or low satisfaction quartiles. Other behaviors associated with greater intimacy and affection were unique to highly satisfied and highly orgasmic individuals: talking before, during, and after sexual activity, cuddling and caressing. Findings have implications for individual and couple relationship and sexual outcomes.

Symposium title: Perceiving you, perceiving me: Sources and benefits of accuracy and bias in interpersonal interactions

To “see” is to feel grateful? A quasi-signal detection analysis of romantic partners’ sacrifices

Mariko Visserman^{1,2}, Emily A. Impett¹, Francesca Righetti³, Amy Muise², Dacher Keltner⁴, & Paul A. M. Van Lange³

¹University of Toronto Mississauga, ²York University, ³VU Amsterdam, ⁴University of California

Although gratitude plays a central role in the quality of relationships, little is known about how gratitude emerges, such as in response to partners’ sacrifices. Do people need to accurately see these acts to feel grateful? In two daily experience studies of romantic couples (total N = 426), we used a quasi-signal detection paradigm to examine the prevalence and consequences of (in)accurately “seeing” and missing partners’ sacrifices. Findings consistently showed that sacrifices are equally likely to be missed as they are to be accurately detected, and about half of the time people “see” a sacrifice when the partner declares none. Importantly, “seeing” partners’ sacrifices—accurately or inaccurately—is crucial for boosting gratitude. In contrast, missed sacrifices fail to elicit gratitude, and the lack of appreciation negatively colors the partner’s satisfaction with the relationship when having sacrificed. Thus, these findings illustrate the power that perception holds in romantic couples’ daily lives.

Perceptions of daily partner social control use and its consequences for daily experiences

Judith Gere¹, Jessica E. LaBuda¹, & Tiffany L. Berzins²

¹Kent State University, ²Columbus State University

We examined accuracy and bias in people’s perceptions of their romantic partner’s daily social control attempts toward daily health behaviors. 109 community couples reported on their own and their partner’s daily social control attempts (i.e., persuasion, pressure, autonomy support, undermining) and their own daily experiences (i.e., positive and negative affect, relationship satisfaction, closeness) across 14 consecutive days (N = 2639 reports). We used multilevel path models to examine tracking and mean-level accuracy, and bias (projection) in reports of partner social control use, as well as daily consequences of mean-level bias. Perceptions of partner social control use contained significant tracking accuracy and projection, and showed mean-level accuracy in partner use of persuasion and pressure. People, however, overestimated their partner’s undermining of their health behaviors and underestimated their partner’s autonomy support of their health behaviors. Results also indicated that overestimating or underestimating partner social control use results in more negative daily experiences.

Does it take two to achieve accuracy? Testing individual differences and dyadic effects of meta-accuracy

Norhan Elsaadawy¹, Erika N. Carlson¹, & Lauren J. Human²

¹University of Toronto, ²McGill University

A growing body of work suggests that knowing how others experience our personality (i.e., meta-accuracy) can foster relationship quality (e.g., Carlson, 2016; Carlson & Oltmanns, 2018), but is meta-accuracy a skill we bring to our relationships or is it something that arises under special circumstances (e.g., with a specific partner)? In three samples spanning diverse social contexts (classmates, N= 240; platonic dyads, N=547; speed dating dyads, N=378), we tested the extent to which meta-accuracy for core personality traits was influenced by meta-perceivers, targets (i.e., who meta-perceivers interact with), and dyads (i.e., unique meta-perceiver-target pairings). Results demonstrated that meta-accuracy was largely driven by meta-perceivers and that good meta-perceivers were able to achieve accuracy across easy and difficult to read targets. However, targets and dyads also influenced meta-accuracy, suggesting that meta-accuracy is not always in the complete control of meta-perceivers. Possible factors that explain individual differences in meta-perceivers, targets, and dyads are discussed.

Knowing how you see me: The interpersonal correlates of meta-accuracy in first impressions and the role of social anxiety

Hasagani Tissera¹, Lauren Gazzard Kerr¹, Erika N. Carlson², & Lauren J. Human¹

¹McGill University, ²University of Toronto

Do people's metaperceptions (i.e., beliefs about how others perceive them) influence the likelihood of relationship initiation? The present research examined whether positivity, and accuracy of metaperceptions are related to positive interpersonal correlates during first impression contexts. Furthermore, we examined whether decreased positivity and accuracy in metaperceptions explain why some experience more difficulty initiating relationships, such as those higher in social anxiety. We collected data from two samples: a platonic in-lab setting (N=270) and a romantic speed-dating setting (N=172). Across both samples, 1) both greater positivity and accuracy in metaperceptions predicted greater liking, and 2) positivity and accuracy of metaperceptions contributed to the negative association between social anxiety and liking. Overall then, it is beneficial to hold both positive and accurate metaperceptions during first impressions and decreased positivity and accuracy in metaperceptions help explain why those higher in social anxiety experience interpersonal difficulties.

Symposium title: Positive action in teaching relationships

Strengthening connections: Students' perceptions of effective teachers

Julie Verette Lindenbaum
The Sage Colleges

As Close Relationship teachers, we enthusiastically strive to connect with students about theories, research, and applications that define our field. We reflect on – and refine - practices and teaching methods that successfully engage student learning. The nature of the relationship between teacher and student may also contribute to student perceptions of effective teaching, and in learning about Close Relationships. We can strengthen this student-teacher connection with awareness of dimensions that define students' perceptions of effective teachers, especially regarding learning and student success. This talk proposes that some of the mechanisms supporting successful functioning among partners in close relationships (such as perceived caring and responsiveness) may also support academic relationships between effective teachers and their students.

Tech-enabled (not tech-eclipsed)!

Lucia F. O'Sullivan
University of New Brunswick

Teaching about close relationships rarely raises issues of poor student engagement. We are providing information that is inherently applicable to their lives and addressing topics that are a preoccupation for most students. However, the technology we employ to support the content can distract from the messages themselves, and students are ever-willing to be passive recipients of information rather than active contributors to the learning process. This talk will review content display technologies that exist beyond the medium of Powerpoint® (such as Doceri®, OneNote®, Prezi®, Surface Pro®), as well as strategies for keeping students engaged but not overwhelmed with the information.

International, cross-institution undergraduate student diversity assignment

Silvia Bartolic
The University of British Columbia

This presentation will report on an assignment in which students from a Canadian and U.S. university interacted via videochat technology to discuss their ideas about healthy relationships and explore diversity in attitudes, behaviors and beliefs between the two groups. In this presentation we will describe: our educational goals, pedagogical underpinnings of the assignment, the universities and students involved, the assignment itself, the evaluation of the assignment, and final reflections.

Learning Goals:

An overarching goal of the assignment was to have an experience that would be informative, engaging for students and broaden their perspectives about relationships.

More specific goals included having students:

- identify and articulate their own culture's values, beliefs, norms and practices regarding close relationships;
- similarly explore close relationships in a different culture;
- compare the similarities and differences in close relationship in the two cultures; and
- develop active listening and empathy skills.

Teaching relationship science outside the traditional classroom

Terri Orbuch

Oakland University

Relationship scholars have focused on teaching undergraduate and graduate students about interpersonal relationships in the traditional classroom. But there are other ways that people can benefit by the theories, research findings, and methods used to study social and personal relationships in the growing science of interpersonal relationships. This presentation focuses on three ways to teach relationship science outside of the traditional classroom. First, undergraduate and graduate students can benefit from direct hands-on experience applying relationship scholarship in an internship experience. Second, the study of interpersonal relationships can be taught to people in community workshops, which focus on healthy marriage and relationship education. Lastly, the science of interpersonal relationships can be taught to professionals who are training to be dating and relationship coaches. These unique additional options in teaching relationship science will be discussed.

Fulfilling or foolish? Lessons learned from teaching close relationships online

Rowland Miller

Sam Houston State University

In this presentation, an IARR Teaching Award winner describes the pros and cons of offering a Relationships course online. Preparing such a course requires more work and creativity than a face-to-face course does, and administering the course is a comparatively mundane experience. The hassles and frustrations one encounters are also more varied and frequent, and one is more dependent on one's Support staff. Nevertheless, one can reach wider and more diverse audiences, teach the course from (nearly) anywhere, and (often) please one's bosses. An online Relationships course is not for everyone, but realistic expectations can make one fulfilling, and not foolish.

Symposium title: The positive outcomes of the fast friends procedure in both the laboratory and real world

Applying fast friends in the real world

Arthur Aron

Stony Brook University

Fast Friends, originally developed (Aron et al., 1995) to permit testing effects of closeness experimentally, has been used in diverse research (briefly reviewed), plus having apparent real-world public impact (e.g., a NY Times Article describing using it to fall in love seemingly inspired widespread increased self-disclosure in personal interactions), and systematic test of potential real-world applications (e.g., in Davies et al., 2007, most of a freshman class did Fast Friends; those randomly assigned to a cross-ethnicity partner showed less prejudice 2 weeks later). Regarding close-relationships specifically, Slatcher (2010) found that when two existing couples did Fast Friends as a foursome, it increased not only closeness to the other couple, but within-couple closeness (and even passionate love, Welker et al, 2014). Aron will open the symposium discussing briefly the development and history; and end the symposium with a review of the most recent research not covered by others, plus future directions.

Outcomes of the fast friends procedure for getting-acquainted pairs: Overview to a line of research and findings from a recent study on the effects of modality switching

Susan Sprecher

Illinois State University

In this presentation, I first summarize my research with getting-acquainted pairs using a Fast Friends procedure. Several experiments will be briefly reviewed, which have resulted in interesting findings about factors that enhance the closeness experienced as a result of a Fast Friends Procedure, as well as positive benefits for student participants and undergraduate student experimenters. After this overview, I will highlight one recent experiment which examines how the order of modality switching in communication (moving from face-to-face [FtF] to computer-mediated communication [CMC] versus the reverse) affects the outcomes experienced as a result of the Fast Friends Procedure. Results indicate that while those in the initial CMC condition had less positive outcomes than those in the FtF condition, there was no differential outcome (based on modality order) after the second segment of interaction. Additional findings will be discussed including how the participants' shyness affect their positive reactions within the two modalities.

The role of self-disclosure and shared activities in predicting friendship satisfaction

Beverley Fehr

University of Winnipeg

Women's friendships generally revolve around talking, whereas men's friendships tend to revolve around activities. Women also rate their same-gender friendships as more satisfying than do men. I tested whether men's friendship satisfaction could be increased by engaging in

intimate self-disclosure with a same-gender friend. In a series of studies, friend pairs were assigned to one of four conditions: the “fast friends” self-disclosure task (Aron et al., 1997); the neutral “small talk” task; playing an exciting sports activity; or watching an exciting sports event. For men, both intimate disclosure and participating in an exciting sports activity boosted satisfaction. Women’s satisfaction was high and not affected by the manipulations. Although men are not particularly motivated to open up to their same-gender friends, they reap the benefit of enhanced friendship satisfaction when they do so.

Sharing experiences with a friend or with a fast-friend enhances their impact: Lessons about people and relationships we can learn from this

Margaret Clark & Erica Boothby
Yale University

A series of studies reveals that sharing experiences with a friend or with a fast friend enhances the impact of those experiences making pleasant experiences more pleasant and unpleasant experiences less pleasant. Sharing experiences with a stranger does not result in such enhancement of experiences. As others have proposed, people seem to be built and very ready to be social creatures (Beckes & Coan, 2011). In the absence of having used our fast-friends-ice-breaker in this work, readers (and we!) might have imagined that the benefits of sharing take months or even years of relationship development to emerge. Yet that is clearly not the case. The benefits emerged very quickly once some minimally based trust and intimacy was established through our use of the fast friends technique. In turn, those benefits should feedback and further strengthen relationships likely carrying the fast friends effects forward in a rapid, quickly escalating fashion.

Symposium title: The protective roles of attachment security, partner support, and commitment in shaping relationship well-being

Cumulative childhood trauma, partner support, and couple satisfaction: The mediating role of mindfulness

Francis Morissette-Harvey¹, Gaëlle Bakhos¹, Alison Paradis, Yvan Lussier, Martine Hébert, & Natacha Godbout.

¹*Université du Québec à Montréal*

Research shows that cumulative childhood trauma (CCT) survivors are at higher risk of suffering from several interpersonal issues in adulthood, including couple dissatisfaction. Beyond previous research documenting mindfulness as an explanatory mechanism of post-traumatic symptomatology, mindfulness has also been found to predict increased mutual support between intimate partners, and higher couple satisfaction. This study aims to assess mindfulness as mediator in the relationship between CCT, dyadic support and couple satisfaction using a sample of 502 participants from the community. Path analyses confirmed that the association between CCT and couple satisfaction was fully explained by indirect effects

through mindfulness and couple support. The integrative model accounts for 32% of the variance in couple satisfaction. Findings allow a better understanding of the mechanisms through which CCT survivors may come to suffer from couple dissatisfaction.

Cumulative childhood trauma and couple satisfaction: Attachment as a protective factor

Marie-Ève Daspe¹, Mathilde Baumann², & Natacha Godbout²

¹Université de Montréal, ²Université du Québec à Montréal

A growing number of studies suggest that cumulative childhood trauma (CCT) tend to negatively affect romantic relationships in adulthood. Using a dyadic perspective, the purpose of this study was to (1) explore the associations between each partners' history of CCT and couple satisfaction, and to (2) examine the protective effect of attachment security on these associations. Based on 501 couples from the general population, results showed negative links from both own and partner CCT to couple satisfaction. Avoidance of intimacy moderated the association between own CCT and couple satisfaction, which was negative and significant at high levels of avoidance but nonsignificant at low levels of avoidance. Abandonment anxiety did not emerge as a significant moderator. The findings support the relevance of helping CCT survivors develop a more secure attachment, especially by reducing avoidance of intimacy, to improve the quality of their romantic relationships.

Attachment security and perfectionism: How do these factors relate to positive adaptation of both parents/partners following the birth of a child?

Isabelle Lessard, Anne-Sophie Gingras, Frédéric Mallette, Audrey Bernier-Jarry, Audrey Brassard, Patrick Gosselin, & Catherine de Pierrepont

Université de Sherbrooke

Many changes arise for couples welcoming a new child (Doss & Rhoades, 2017). Although attachment security is a well-known protective factor in the relationship adjustment of partners in this context, less is known about the potential role of perfectionism. This study explores the simultaneous role of attachment security (low anxiety and avoidance) and perfectionism (adaptive, maladaptive) on relationship satisfaction and parental alliance for both parents of a newborn. A sample of 85 French-Canadian heterosexual couples with a new child completed online questionnaires separately. Results revealed that in both partners, maladaptive perfectionism was related to their own lower relationship satisfaction; attachment security and adaptive perfectionism were related to their own higher relationship satisfaction; and attachment security was related to each partner's higher parental alliance. These results corroborate the key role of attachment security in the perinatal context and reveal the positive contribution of adaptive perfectionism tendencies for new parents.

Under, over, or optimal Commitment? Shedding additional light on the association between attachment and commitment in satisfied and relationally distressed couples

Katherine Péloquin¹, Audrey Brassard², Sabryna Bergeron¹, & Thalie Labonté¹

¹Université de Montréal, ²Université de Sherbrooke

Partners' levels of commitment and attachment orientations play a crucial role in the maintenance of romantic relationships. Yet, past studies have yielded contradictory results regarding the association between romantic attachment and commitment. Two dyadic studies were designed to clarify the cross-sectional and longitudinal associations between these variables using community (N = 208 couples) and clinical (N = 154 couples) samples and based on a multidimensional conceptualization of commitment. Results show that attachment-related anxiety was associated with over- and under-commitment, whereas attachment-related avoidance was associated with under-commitment and lower optimal commitment. Partner effects were also found. Longitudinal analyses revealed that attachment security (low anxiety and avoidance) was associated with an increase in healthier forms of commitment over time, while these forms of commitment also predicted more attachment security over time. Our findings provide new empirical evidence about the bidirectional linkage between attachment and commitment processes in happy and relationally distressed couples.

Symposium Title: To grow or not to grow? When and why self-expansion helps or hurts relationship quality

You fulfill me: Self-expansion and the satisfaction of basic psychological needs

Kevin P. McIntyre¹, Brent A. Mattingly², Magdalen Cheatham¹, & Gary W. Lewandowski, Jr.³

¹Trinity University, ²Ursinus College, ³Monmouth University

Self-expansion describes the increase in positive content of the self-concept that occurs via the formation and maintenance of romantic relationships. Abundant research has described the benefits of self-expansion for couples (e.g., increased relationship quality; increased passionate and companionate love; decreased breakup) and individuals (e.g., increased self-esteem; increased self-efficacy). Yet, we suggest that the literature currently lacks empirical evidence for why self-expansion has such wide-ranging benefits. This research seeks to examine self-expansion's role in satisfying basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Each of these needs is fundamental for human flourishing and all three are potential outcomes of self-expansion. This presentation will develop the theoretical rationale for why self-expansion should lead to basic need fulfillment and will present the results of three cross-sectional research studies that support the mediational role of need fulfillment.

Growing desire or growing apart? Consequences of personal self-expansion for romantic passion and sexual desire

Kathleen L. Carswell¹, Amy Muise², Emily A. Impett¹, & Cheryl Harasymchuk³

¹University of Toronto, ²York University, ³Carleton University

Elaborating on the assumptions of Self-Expansion Theory (Aron & Aron, 1986), we examine whether experiencing personal self-expansion—positive self-change and personal growth without the presence of a romantic partner—influences romantic passion and sexual desire. Previous research has almost exclusively explored the benefits of self-expansion for relationships by examining shared novel experiences in relational self-expansion (Mattingly & Lewandowski, 2014), whereas the consequences of personal self-expansion remain largely unexamined. Given that the majority of self-growth may occur without a romantic partner (e.g. at work), we investigated the consequences of such personal self-expansion in two 21-day experience sampling studies of community couples. Results suggest within-person increases in daily personal self-expansion are associated with greater passion and desire, potentially due to a transfer of positive affect. In contrast, between-person chronically high levels of personal self-expansion were associated with lower passion and desire, potentially due to couples drifting apart. Effects occurred over and above effects of relational self-expansion and time spent together.

What the self wants: Expansion versus Conservation

Erin Hughes¹, Erica B. Slotter², & Gary W. Lewandowski Jr.³

¹Northwestern University, ²Villanova University, ³Monmouth University

Self-expansion is a beneficial process for both individuals and romantic relationships. Despite this, there does seem to be some variability in how much people want to self-expand. We created a new measure called the Self-Expansion Preference scale to test this possibility. Those who scored higher in the scale were self-expanders, people who look to increase their self concept and those who scored lower in the scale were self-conservers, people who look to maintain their self-concept. After validating our new scale, we examined how similar preferences for self-expansion between romantic partners impacted both individual and relational well-being. We found a main effect of self-expansion, such that those who scored higher on the scale had greater individual well-being. We also found an interaction effect of self-expansion, such that couples where both partners scored high on the scale had the greatest relational well-being while couples with dissimilar preferences had the lowest relational well-being.

Don't change: Self-concept clarity and partner self-expansion

Lydia F. Emery¹, Wendi L. Gardner¹, Kathleen L. Carswell², & Eli J. Finkel¹

¹Northwestern University, ²University of Toronto

Self-expansion enhances well-being, both for individuals and for their relationships. Why, then, might people not support their partner's self-expansion? People with low self-concept clarity tend to resist self-expanding themselves, so we hypothesized that they may attempt to

undermine their partner's personal self-expansion. Across two longitudinal studies (4 weeks and 9 months, respectively), people low self-concept clarity did not support their partner's personal self-expansion (Studies 1 and 2), but only when a partner was self-expanding more (Study 2). Unsupportive responses to personal self-expansion predicted both members of the couple feeling less satisfied with the relationship (Studies 1 and 2). We also explored whether people with low self-concept clarity were actually successful at thwarting their partner's personal self-expansion (Study 2). This research underscores the role of partners in self-expansion, suggesting that although self-expansion tends to benefit people, those with low self-concept clarity do not support their partner's personal self-expansion.

Symposium title: Welcome to the dark side: Exploring the influence of the dark side of personality on relationships

Mommy dearest: Attachment, dark triad and adverse childhood experiences

Elaine Scharfe¹, Virginia Brown, Scottie Curran, Ghinwa El-Ariss, & Jocelyn Enright

¹*Trent University*

How individuals come to have “dark” personalities as adults has been relatively unexplored. In this study, we tested whether adverse childhood experiences and attachment representations with mothers and fathers predict Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. Undergraduate psychology students completed measures of attachment (Trent Relationship Scales Questionnaire, T-RSQ; Scharfe, 2016), the Dark Triad (the Short Dark Triad Scale, SD3; Jones & Paulhus, 2014), and several surveys to measure adverse childhood experiences (Arrindell et al., 1999, Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979; Ports, Ford, & Merrick, 2016). Our preliminary analyses suggest that memories of parent rejection, adverse childhood experiences, and the view that parents were uncaring and overprotective independently predict Machiavellianism and psychopathy but not narcissism. Controlling for childhood experiences, maternal but not paternal attachment contributed additional variance to the predictions. Our findings suggest that the antecedents of Machiavellianism and psychopathy, but not narcissism, may be rooted in our relationship with our mother.

Mapping dark personalities and insecure attachment onto the HEXACO personality space

Beth A. Visser¹, Elaine Scharfe² & Susan Boon³

¹*Lakehead University*, ²*Trent University*, ³*University of Calgary*

We investigated the links between attachment style to romantic partner, HEXACO personality, and the Dark Triad (Machiavellianism, narcissism, psychopathy) personality traits in a sample of 447 Canadian undergraduate students. We found that psychopathy and Machiavellianism but not Narcissism were associated with romantic relationships that were characterized by insecure, fearful, and dismissing attachment. With regard to HEXACO personality, individuals who scored low on secure attachment were characterized by low Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Strikingly, Book, Visser, and

Volk (2015) found that the core of the dark triad was comprised of low Honesty-Humility, high Extraversion, low Agreeableness, and low Conscientiousness. This overlap suggests that individuals who report low attachment security in their romantic relationships may also show dark personality traits (albeit more introverted). Thus, “dark” relationships may reflect an intertwining of malevolent personality and an inability or unwillingness to form trusting, secure bonds with partners.

Dark relationship behaviour: Investigating personality predictors of antisocial behaviour between intimates

Susan D. Boon¹, Elaine Scharfe², & Beth A. Visser³

¹University of Calgary, ²Trent University, ³Lakehead University

Because the costs associated with destructive relationship behaviours can be very high, it is important to study those factors that predispose individuals to engage in such behaviour. In this study, we applied attachment theory and the dark tetrad to the task of predicting dark relationship behaviour. Undergraduate students (N = 609) completed measures of attachment, the Dark Triad, everyday sadism, and several “dark” relationship behaviours (vengeful tendencies, attitudes toward infidelity, couple violence). The Dark Triad traits of Machiavellianism and psychopathy accounted for variation in dark relationship behaviours controlling for attachment. Everyday sadism, however, generally added little to the variance accounted for once the Dark Triad traits had been entered in our models. Also, the combination of attachment and Dark Triad traits accounted for a reasonable proportion of variance in revenge intentions, but fared considerably less well in accounting for variance in interpersonal violence and attitudes toward infidelity. Implications for understanding antisocial relationship behaviour in romantic relationships will be discussed.

Dark triad, social media, & revenge

Mélanie Paulin & Susan D. Boon

University of Calgary

Users of social media platforms have the ability to use these platforms as a medium to take revenge following interpersonal provocations. One potential factor that may influence whether or not individuals take revenge on social media or evaluate these acts positively is the Dark Triad of personality. Individuals high on the Dark Triad traits are characterized as manipulative, exploitative, uncaring, and apathetic. Because social media platforms have defining features that may make acts of online revenge different than their offline counterparts (i.e., social media platforms are easily accessible, reach wide audiences, and facilitate remaining anonymous), we suspect that the associations between the Dark Triad and this form of revenge may be especially strong. In this presentation, I will present findings on two studies that examine how the Dark Triad relates to the enactment and evaluation of revenge behaviors carried out on social media platforms following interpersonal provocations.

Individual Talks: Abstracts

(sorted alphabetically by the last name of the presenter)

Interpersonal understanding promotes relationship identification and meaning in life

Emilie Auger¹, Sabrina Thai², Ian McGregor¹, & John Lydon³

¹University of Waterloo, ²Brock University, ³McGill University

Why do some people perceive their relationship as a central part of their identity? We theorize that relationships in which individuals feel understood may become personally relevant because they provide evidence that individuals' self-views and worldviews reflect reality and thus make sense—which is an important aspect of a meaningful life. Participants were asked to imagine an experience that would make them feel understood or misunderstood in a friendship (Study 1) or a romantic relationship (Study 2). In Study 1, the high understanding visualization increased felt understanding, which in turn increased relationship identification. In Study 2, the high-understanding, relative to low-understanding, visualization caused participants to feel more understood by their romantic partner. Increased felt understanding was then associated with increased meaning and, in turn, higher levels of relationship identification. Thus, understanding may help partners find meaning in life and foster relationships that are more central to one's identity.

Daily relationship threats as an obstacle to self-expanding couple activities

Chantal Bacev-Giles¹, Cheryl Harasymchuk¹, Amy Muise², & Emily Impett³

¹Carleton University, ²York University, ³University of Toronto

In a 21-day diary study of intimate couples, we investigated the role of relationship threats (e.g., rejection, disappointment, feeling misunderstood by one's partner) as a challenge to engaging in self-expanding (i.e., exciting) couple activities. We found that when people experience greater relationship threats (relative to their average), they are less likely to engage in exciting activities with their partner on that same day. Additionally, relationship threats negatively impacted people's evaluations during an exciting couple activity. On days where people reported greater relationship threats and engaged in an exciting couple activity, they were less satisfied with their relationship, felt less close to their partner, and rated the activity as less successful. These results suggest that daily relationship threats might be one obstacle in people's quest for relationship growth.

The dilemma of unmet sexual ideals and buffering effect of sexual communal strength

Rhonda Balzarini¹, Amy Muise¹, Kiersten Dobson², & Taylor Kohut²

¹York University, ²Western University

Research on sexual ideals, such as people's preferences for certain sexual activities or for how often they would like to engage in sex, suggests that differences in sexual preferences between romantic partners are common and can be associated with lower relationship and sexual

satisfaction. One factor that has been shown to help couples better navigate sexual disagreements is sexual communal strength (SCS) —or the extent to which a person is motivated to meet their partner's needs. Across two studies (N = 332 couples), consistent with our pre-registered predictions, we found that when a person perceives their partner to fall short of their sexual ideals, they feel less satisfied in their romantic and sexual relationship. However, people with partners who are high in SCS, maintained satisfaction in the face of unmet sexual ideals, whereas people with partners who were low in SCS reported lower satisfaction when their sexual ideals were unmet.

A dyadic daily diary study of romantic partners' responsiveness processes and experiences of shared reality

Yael Bar-Shachar & Eran Bar-Kalifa
Ben Gurion University of the Negev

Shared reality (SR) is the experience of having an inner state believed to be shared by others. One critical process in SR construction is the dyadic process of responsiveness. The present study tested this process among romantic couples. We predicted that a disclosure of personal events to one's partner [H1] as well as the partner's constructive response [H2] would be associated with SR, and that these associations would be more pronounced when one has low epistemic certainty regarding the event [H3]. To test these predictions, we collected daily diaries from 75 couples for 4 weeks. As predicted, we found that the disclosure of positive and negative events, as well as partners' constructive responses to such disclosures, were positively associated with daily SR. Furthermore, we found a significant interaction between partners' responses to the disclosure of negative (though not positive) events and actor's epistemic certainty regarding the disclosed event.

When youth talk to parents about sex: Impact of positive communication on relationships

Anita Barbee & Michael Cunningham
University of Louisville

Studies on the link between open communication with parents about sex and protective outcomes have found mixed results. The current study examined the role attachment, and ease in talking with parents about sex has on youth experiences in romantic relationships, the ability of youth to talk with partners about sexual history, and pregnancy outcomes. 1438 youth ages 14-19; 88% Black, 10% White, 4.3% Hispanic, 2% Asian, 62% girls participated. The more youth indicated an openness in communication with parents about sex, the more secure their attachment, the more they had ever been in a romantic relationship, the more likely they were to report loving their current partner, and the more ease they had in communicating about important aspects of sex with partners. There was no relationship of communication with pregnancy outcomes. Only anxiously attached youth were less communicative with both adults and partners and more likely to experience a pregnancy.

Attachment anxiety in daily experiences of romantic relationships: An expansion of the mutual cyclical growth model

Lindsey A. Beck¹, Edward P. Lemay, Jr.², & Celeste S. Witting²

¹Emerson College ²University of Maryland

This research provides a conceptual replication and theoretical extension of the mutual cyclical growth model. This model proposes that dependence promotes relationship commitment, which promotes pro-relationship behavior, which—when detected by partners—promotes partners' trust, which promotes partners' willingness to depend on the relationship. Previous research supports these links on a month-to-month basis, but romantic partners' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors may change on a day-to-day basis. The present research sought to replicate the model on a daily level, and to extend the model by considering an important potential moderator: individuals' attachment orientations. Results from a dyadic daily-report study of 200 romantic couples revealed that the links predicted by the mutual cyclical growth model replicated at the level of day-to-day fluctuations in partners' relationship experiences. Furthermore, the predicted links were especially strong for individuals high in attachment anxiety. This research provides insight into mechanisms through which close relationships develop and strengthen.

What are the characteristics of couples who maintain a high level of relationship satisfaction following the transition to parenthood?

Katherine Bécotte¹, Audrey Brassard¹, Anne-Sophie Gingras¹, Anne Brault-Labbé¹, & Katherine Péloquin²

¹Université de Sherbrooke, ²Université de Montréal

Several studies have shown that most parental couples experience a decrease in their relationship satisfaction during the transition to parenthood (TTP). Several explanatory factors have been studied, but most studies have focused on what can predict or buffer adjustment difficulties rather than what can promote optimal development. The goal of the current study is to explore the subjective experience of couples who perceived that they have maintained a good relationship satisfaction across the TTP to better understand what can promote the positive adaptation of the couple. The sample included seven couples whose first baby was aged between 12 and 24 months. Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with both partners and then were transcribed and analyzed qualitatively. Several themes have been identified: Showing gratitude, Communicating their expectations explicitly, and Balancing time for themselves, the couple, and the family. The findings highlight intervention targets to promote relationship satisfaction during the TTP.

How intimate partners divide speaking time during stress conversations: Changes across the transition to parenthood and intervention effects

Lisanne J. Bulling & Guy Bodenmann

University of Zurich

In conversations between romantic partners, does it matter how much each partner speaks? The quantity of each partner's contribution to a conversation, in terms of how many seconds of the total time each partner holds the conversational floor, could be an important aspect of the interaction. This study explores how first-time expectant couples divide speaking time in conversations about a stressful event or situation that affects one of the partners. The results show that men speak about three quarters of the time in conversations about a stressor that affects them and about half of the time in conversations about a stressor that affects their partner. Associations of speaking time with relationship satisfaction and the degree of feeling understood during the conversation indicate that an increase in speaking time for the partner who is affected by the stressor might be beneficial. However, speaking time of the partner affected by the stressor decreases at the transition to parenthood. This decrease may be halted by a relationship intervention.

Discrimination is not just Black and White in romantic relationships: A consideration of perspective taking and self-expansion

Abigail Caselli & Laura VanderDrift

Syracuse University

Like all relationships, interracial relationships can satisfy our human need for interpersonal bonds, but offer additional challenges that same-race relationships do not face (e.g., discrimination). Interracial couples are more likely to break-up compared to same-race couples (Zhang & Van Hook, 2009). However, many interracial couples prevail in the face of adversity. To understand why some interracial relationships prevail despite their challenges, we will examine processes that might buffer against discrimination to lead to better relationship quality (e.g., self-expansion). We predict White partners in an interracial relationship who engage in perspective taking after experiencing discrimination will be more likely to self-expand. However, White partners who do not engage in perspective taking after experiencing discrimination will be more likely to self-adulterate. Finally, White partners who engage in self-expansion will report better relationship outcomes (e.g., closeness, commitment and satisfaction), whereas White partners who engage in self-adulteration will report worse relationship outcomes.

Associations between perceived partner responsiveness and well-being for couples coping with low sexual desire

Serena Corsini-Munt¹, Justin Dubé¹, Amy Muise², & Natalie O. Rosen¹

¹Dalhousie University, ²York University

Women with clinically low sexual desire report lower quality of life, and lower sexual and couple satisfaction. Higher perceived partner responsiveness (PPR) is associated with higher

sexual desire and couple satisfaction in romantic relationships. This study examined how PPR was associated with relational, sexual and psychological well-being for couples coping with low sexual desire. Using an online cross-sectional survey, 97 couples in which women were coping with clinically low sexual desire completed self-report, standardized measures. When women with low desire reported higher PPR, they and their partners reported higher couple satisfaction and lower anxiety. Similarly, when partners reported higher PPR, they reported higher couple satisfaction and less anxiety. When women with low desire and their partners reported higher PPR they were each more sexually satisfied. Among couples coping with low sexual desire, PPR may serve as an important protective factor against the deleterious impact of low sexual desire.

People's motivations for and outcomes of engaging in technology-mediated sexual interactions in romantic relationships: A qualitative interview study

Erin Leigh Courtice & Krystelle Shaughnessy
University of Ottawa

Technology-mediated sexual interaction (TMSI) is the interpersonal exchange of self-created, sexual material via digital technology (e.g., sexting, cybersex). Researchers have found that TMSI use is most common in a romantic relationship context, yet few have examined people's motives for and outcomes of using TMSI within romantic relationships. Further, no researchers have applied motivational theory in their examinations of people's TMSI use. Using semi-structured qualitative interviews, we examined people's TMSI experiences with their current romantic partner(s). Interviews focused on people's motives for and perceived positive/negative outcomes of using TMSI with their current partner(s). We used a multi-grounded theory approach to incorporate the approach-avoidance theoretical framework into our qualitative analyses. We will discuss implications for future research on TMSI use within romantic relationships, and how positive outcomes of TMSI may be enhanced through motivational intervention.

In the mood for sex: Associations between positive and negative mood and couples' sexual wellbeing

Samantha Dawson¹, Sophie Bergeron², & Natalie Rosen¹
¹*Dalhousie University*, ²*Université de Montréal*

Sexual wellbeing (i.e., high sexual satisfaction, desire, frequency, and low distress) is critical to relationship satisfaction. Negative mood has consistently been found to be associated with poorer sexual wellbeing in individuals; however, much less is understood about the potential for positive mood to enhance sexual wellbeing. In the current study, mixed-sex couples independently completed measures assessing positive and negative mood and sexual wellbeing. Positive mood was positively related to one's own sexual desire and behaviours, whereas negative mood was more strongly associated with one's own and one's partner's subjective experience of their sexual relationship (sexual satisfaction and distress). This study is among the first to examine associations between both positive and negative mood and sexual wellbeing in couples. These findings suggest that targeting positive, as well as reducing negative

mood may be beneficial for sustaining or improving sexual wellbeing over time in both partners.

Alone, together? A registered report examining the group-y nature of single people

Alexandra Fisher & John Sakaluk

University of Victoria

Little is known about singles except that they are stigmatized and experience poorer well-being relative to people in romantic relationships. Given the potential benefits of group membership for identity and well-being, we examine the extent to which singles (1) identify as members of a group and (2) are perceived as a group by others. In Study 1, participants will be assigned a novel minimal group identity and then complete measures of group identification for four personal group memberships (e.g., relational vs. minimal vs. other established identities). In Study 2, participants will rate the perceived group-y-ness of similar identities as in Study 1. We expect most singles to have lower group identification and group-y-ness relative to other groups, with a minority of singles embracing and enjoying the single identity. We discuss the value of group-based theoretical perspectives for understanding and improving relational identity and the current and future well-being of singles.

“Can you pick up toilet paper?” How digital communication changes over romantic courtship

Jamie Foster Campbell

University of Illinois at Chicago

This study uses semi-structured interviews to examine how digital communication is reshaping romantic partners' interactions and the development of expectations for technology use over a couple's relational history. Participants' (N = 36) narratives were analyzed through four coding cycles and resulted in six main themes. For the majority of couples, their digital behaviors have changed from early courtship games to building intimacy and trust that enhances their mediated interactions. Additionally, relational milestones were a leading factor in how their digital communication naturally evolved. For instance, many couples acknowledged that their technology use and communication practices are different after they move-in together or enlarge their family. Finally, the content of digital messages changed, however, the frequency of these messages appears to remain the same. Results reveal that as dyads become closer and more committed, technology becomes a symbolic force of everyday talk that helps sustain and navigate their intimate partnership.

Covariance between relational trust and accommodation: Predictability as reflected in exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect

Stanley Gaines

Brunel University London

In the present study (n = 224), we examined covariance between relational trust and accommodation in heterosexual relationships. Results of multivariate multiple regression analyses indicated that (consistent with hypotheses) indicate that relational trust and

accommodation covary significantly (p 's < .01). Also, results of univariate multiple regression analyses revealed that (as expected) all four accommodation-related behaviors (i.e., exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect) were predicted significantly (p 's < .01). Surprisingly, the most consistent predictor of accommodation proved not to be faith (although it was a significant negative predictor of exit, p < .01). Rather, predictability emerged as a significant positive predictor of voice and loyalty (p 's < .01) and as a significant negative predictor of exit and neglect (p 's < .05). Unexpectedly, dependability was unrelated to any of the accommodation-related behaviors. We concluded that accommodation constitutes positive action.

Why might negative expressivity be good for relationships? The role of inviting instrumentality and responsiveness

Kori Krueger & Amanda Forest
University of Pittsburgh

The interpersonal costs of expressing negativity are well-documented, yet expressing negativity can also offer interpersonal benefits (e.g., Baker et al., 2014). We suggest that expressing negativity may be beneficial in part because it invites instrumentality and responsiveness. In Study 1 ($N = 272$), participants who imagined receiving a particular negative (vs. positive or neutral) disclosure from their romantic partner perceived more opportunity and invitation to be instrumental and reported greater motivation to help their partner. In Study 2 ($N = 103$ romantic couples), a behavioral observation study, the more that disclosure recipients perceived that their disclosing partners expressed their thoughts and feelings about their greatest fear to them, the greater post-interaction relationship satisfaction (controlling pre-interaction relationship satisfaction) and elevated mood recipients reported. The expressivity effect on recipient relationship satisfaction was mediated by recipients' self-reported responsiveness; the expressivity effect on mood was mediated by recipients' self-reported instrumentality and responsiveness simultaneously.

Agreeableness and expressing affection in romantic relationships.

Sherman Shiu Man Kwok, Joanne V. Wood, & John G. Holmes
University of Waterloo

How do agreeable people attain relational harmony through their communal motivations? We expected that expressing affection may help explain the influence of agreeableness on relationships. First, people who are high in trait agreeableness may show affection as a way of satisfying their motive to build social bonds and second, affection may contribute to their relatively high relationship satisfaction. Three studies supported these ideas: Higher agreeableness was associated with expressing more affection and with expressing affection in especially responsive ways, and frequency of expressing affection mediated the relation between agreeableness and relationship satisfaction. Analyses also examined the roles of love and self-esteem. These findings further our understanding of agreeableness, affection, and their associations with relationship quality.

I'm happy to help: The role of perceived self-control in guiding helping intentions in close relationships

Veronica Lamarche
University of Essex

Our close others are an important source of help and support in times of need. However, even in close relationships, people may hesitate to offer help when they feel the recipient is untrustworthy, self-motivated and unlikely to reciprocate. Five studies examined whether a close other's perceived self-control, an indicator of trustworthiness, influenced helping intentions. Studies 1-4 (Ntotal=1,043), found that people offered more help to a close other with high perceived self-control (HPSC; Study 1 & Study 4), believed people with HPSC endorse less selfish reasons for accepting and reciprocating help (Study 2), and felt more satisfied and less cautious offering help to close others with HPSC (Study 3). Finally, Study 5 (N=323) found no differences between the amount of help people believed close others high versus low in self-control need, suggesting differences in the willingness to help was more likely linked to the likelihood of reciprocity. Implications are discussed.

Positive conflict resolution in adolescent couples: Daily variations of attachment, conflicts, and use of negative strategies

Andreanne Lapierre, Alison Paradis, & Emily Helen Todorov
Université du Québec à Montréal

Conflict resolution is one of the major challenges of dating in adolescence. By learning about intimacy and about maintaining harmony for the first time, adolescents develop and use negative (NS), and positive strategies (PS). Attachment is associated with NS, but it remains unclear why insecurely attached adolescents are also able to use PS to resolve conflicts. The aim of this study is to explore daily variations of anxiety and avoidance in adolescents' attachment and their associations with the occurrence of conflicts and NS. A preliminary sample of 105 adolescents completed a 14-day daily diary, which measured variations in anxiety and avoidance, conflict occurrence, and NS. Multilevel models show that only avoidance was associated with conflicts inter-individually, while both anxiety and avoidance were associated with conflict and NS intra-individually. These results suggest that daily personal variations in attachment influence daily conflict and NS beyond mean levels of anxiety and avoidance.

The effects of close relationships on the link between discrimination and health among sexual minorities

Katelin Leahy & William Chopik
Michigan State University

Individuals in the LGBT+ community face a number of challenges that put them at risk for worse health. However, there are likely factors that make individuals resilient to these risk factors. The current study examined how social network size might attenuate some negative health disparities faced by LGBT+ older adults. Can the size of an individual's social network can lessen

the effect of discrimination on health? We found that stress mediated the negative relationship between discrimination and health and well-being indices. We also found that social network size moderated the relationship between discrimination. Implications for these findings will be discussed.

May you be mindful and feel sexual satisfaction and desire: A biopsychosocial model approach to the associations of sexual satisfaction and desire

Chelom Leavitt, David Allsop, & Rebecca Clarke
Brigham Young University

This study used the biopsychosocial model to examine the association of sexual mindfulness and sexual satisfaction and desire. Participants included 191 US midlife men and women ranging from 35 to 60 years old ($M = 45.3$, $SD = 6.01$). A hierarchical regression using measures representing biological (age, health), psychological (presence of children, life satisfaction) and social (relationship satisfaction, length) factors indicated an important factor for women's sexual desire was sexual mindfulness ($\beta = .19$, $p < .01$) and health ($\beta = .15$, $p < .02$) and the presence of young (0-5 years old) children ($\beta = .17$, $p < .01$) were the important factors for men. Each of the biopsychosocial categories showed significant associations for men's and women's sexual satisfaction. Additionally, sexual mindfulness was associated with sexual satisfaction above and beyond the biopsychosocial factors indicating that being aware and non-judgmental are useful practices in sexual experiences.

Virtual relational curation: How concerns about former or future partners affect virtual artifact management

Leah LeFebvre¹, Nicholas Brody², & Kate Blackburn³

¹*University of Alabama*, ²*University of Puget Sound*, ³*University of Texas at Austin*

The study investigated the relational curation process by examining how keeping and deleting strategies might be predicted based on concerns about former or future partners. As relational partners carry out and document their romantic relationships in mediated contexts, they must also manage these virtual relational possessions. Participants ($N = 234$) who had experienced a breakup in the previous six months were recruited to complete an online survey. When individuals based their artifact decisions on their relationship with their former partner, they were more likely to keep items. When individuals based their artifact decisions on their relationship with a potential future partner, they were more likely to delete items. Results are extended to propose an addendum to Rollie and Duck's (2006) Relational Dissolution Model process. The relational curation process builds on the grave-dressing and resurrection processes to explore virtual archival practices.

Sanctification or inhibition? Religious dualities and sexual satisfaction

Nathan Leonhardt¹, Dean Busby², Veronica Hanna-Walker², & Chelom Leavitt²

¹University of Toronto, ²Brigham Young University

With an Amazon Mechanical Turk sample of 1,683 individuals, we used structural equation modeling to better understand how global religiosity is indirectly associated with sexual satisfaction through sexual sanctification and inhibited sexual passion. Our study showed that religiosity had no total effect on sexual satisfaction, but it had an indirect positive effect through sexual sanctification, a small negative indirect effect through inhibited sexual passion (but only for men) and a negative direct effect when everything was accounted for simultaneously. Overall, the study highlights the dualistic nature of religiosity on sexual satisfaction, by shaping positive and negative attitudes about sexuality in relationships. The presentation will also include APIM results, exploring these associations in a sample of 500 couples recruited through the company Bovitz.

Speed-dating at comic con

Connor Leshner¹, Jessica Maxwell², Emily Impett³, & John Sakaluk¹

¹University of Victoria, ²Florida State University, ³University of Toronto

Speed-dating offers the ability for researchers to measure initial attraction toward dating partners. We examined the effect of costume, physical attractiveness, romantic and sexual interest in speed-dating partners. Analyses were completed within a multilevel modeling framework, nesting individual dates in the total dates of the respondent. Romantic and sexual interest, as well as physical attractiveness, were significant positive predictors of whether the respondent expressed interest in their date, while costume was a negative predictor. These effects were moderated by the respondent's gender and sociosexual orientation, where men rated women higher on physical attractiveness and sexual interest, and respondents with a high SOI rated partners higher on sexual interest. This research finds evidence for predicting how speed-dating participants may view their date partners based on initial reactions toward attractiveness and interest in future dates or sexual activity.

“Don't get above yourself”: Heterosexual cross- (vs. same-) social class couples are viewed less favorably, especially when the woman is in the higher status position

Cara MacInnis & Elena Buliga

University of Calgary

There are subtly increasing numbers of heterosexual couples where partners differ in terms of socioeconomic class. How are these couples perceived? We hypothesized that a) cross- (vs. same-) class couples would be perceived more negatively, b) cross-class couples with the woman (vs. the man) in the higher class position would be evaluated more negatively, and c) same-class low-low (vs. high-high) couples would be evaluated more negatively. In 4 studies, participants read descriptions of couples that were either same-(e.g., highF- highM, lowF- lowM) or cross-social class (e.g., highF- lowM, lowF- highM) defined based on income, education or occupational status differences. We found support for our predictions, with some

exceptions. In general, high-high couples were perceived most positively. In 3/4 studies, couples where a higher class woman was paired with a lower class man were evaluated most negatively of all couples.

Is bad sex a deal-breaker? Longitudinal associations between sexual satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and marital instability

Meghna Mahambrey

The Ohio State University

Sexual satisfaction predicts marital satisfaction, and marital satisfaction predicts marital instability. Less is known about direct and indirect associations between sexual satisfaction and marital instability. Marital instability has been conceptualized in two ways; doubts within an intact marriage (i.e., likelihood of separation) or disruption of a prior marriage (i.e., separation or divorce). The current study investigates the influence of sexual satisfaction on both doubts and disruption in two samples drawn from the National Survey of Midlife Development in the United States, a longitudinal study of the health and well-being of adults ages 25-74. Structural equation modeling was used to test hypotheses on associations between sexual satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and both conceptualizations of marital instability across three waves. Preliminary results and next steps will be discussed.

How self-esteem influences both perceptions and actual offerings of social support

Denise Marigold¹, Justin Cavallo², & Alexandra Hirniak²

¹*Renison University College*, ²*Wilfrid Laurier University*

Delivering responsive social support can be quite challenging, especially when support recipients are overly pessimistic about their situation and resistant to others' attempts to regulate their mood, as is the tendency for people with lower self-esteem (LSEs). The current studies test the hypothesis that low (vs high) self-esteem people receive less responsive support, by examining both recipient and provider perspectives. Indeed, LSEs believe the support they receive on a daily basis (Study 1) and for a major past event (Study 2) is relatively less responsive (compared to the beliefs of people with higher self-esteem, or HSEs). Providers confirm that they tend to give less responsive support to LSEs even when they perceive them to be equally distressed as HSEs (Study 3), and indicate that they find it more difficult and upsetting to support a hypothetical LSE person than a HSE person in the same circumstances (Study 4).

Well, this is awkward: Attachment anxiety, social anxiety, and self/other focus at speed-dating

M. Joy McClure¹, Federica Pinelli², Maya Rossignac-Milon², & Katherine Zee²

¹*Adelphi University*, ²*Columbia University*

Previous work has shown that attachment anxiety compromises relationship initiation. Might this be due to challenges in balancing self-other focus in initial interactions with romantic prospects? States of anxiety, especially social anxiety, can heighten self-focus; this could

decrease the likelihood of having a successful initial interaction (e.g. interfering with coordination, with communicating liking to partner). 166 heterosexual participants attended 1 of 12 speed dating events (Ndyads = 518). Before the events, participants completed a web survey, including measures of attachment and social anxiety. At the event, after each speed-date, participants and their partners rated each other, including measures of self- and other-focus, state anxiety and awkwardness, attraction and interest in pursuing future dating contact. Data will be analyzed using multilevel mediation models. We predict that attachment anxiety and social anxiety will compromise relationship initiation opportunities due to self-focus increasing awkwardness and interfering with communication of liking for the partner.

Good news? Can we preserve fair coping of new parents with couple-based interventions during pregnancy?

FM Meier¹, Anne Milek², Valentina Anderegg³, Holger Schmid⁴, Christelle Benz-Fraginière⁴, W. Kim Halford⁵, & Guy Bodenmann¹

¹University of Zurich, ²University of Münster, ³Harvard Medical School, ⁴University of Applied Science Northwestern Switzerland, ⁵University of Queensland

Becoming parents is accompanied by joy in most couples. However, most couples also experience a decrease of perceived fairness across the transition to parenthood alongside a decreased relationship satisfaction. Rather than domestic fairness, we examine fairness of a more relationship-specific skill like mutual support (i.e., dyadic coping). More importantly, we want to know whether fairness in dyadic coping can be preserved. Two couple-based interventions were administered to 307 heterosexual couples (N = 614 individuals) who were becoming parents. Self-report data was collected at five time-points from the 27th week of pregnancy to 40 weeks postpartum. As expected, fairness of dyadic coping decreased across the transition to parenthood similarly to relationship satisfaction. However, fairness of dyadic coping differed for couples in the intervention groups compared to couples in the control group. But directions were different for men than for women. We discuss aspects of role division as well as clinical implications.

The effects of actor and partner optimism on cognitive ability among older couples

Jeewon Oh & William Chopik

Michigan State University

Optimism, the tendency to hold positive expectations about the future, affects not only perceptions of people and events but also an individual's physical, relational, and mental health (Chang & Sanna, 2001). Given that spouses play an important role on people's health (Kim, Chopik, & Smith, 2014), we examined how actor and partner optimism in couples affect their cognitive ability (N=4,457 couples). Results showed positive associations between actor optimism and cognitive ability ($.03 \leq r_s \leq .17$) and partner optimism and cognitive ability ($.03 \leq r_s \leq .04$), over a period of 8 years. Being married to an optimist was particularly beneficial for people lower in optimism ($r = .05, p < .001$). People had the lowest cognitive ability when both they and their partner were low in optimism.

Psychological violence and relationship satisfaction among dating adolescent: A dyadic analysis

Alison Paradis & Emily-Helen Todorov
Université du Québec à Montréal

The quality of romantic relationships in adolescence has notable implications for youth, as well as for their future relationships. To date, few studies have examined the link between psychological dating violence (DV) and relationship satisfaction, and none have included data from both partners. The aim of the current study was to use dyadic data analysis to examine the associations between perpetration of psychological DV and relationship satisfaction. A sample of 126 adolescent couples who were in a dating non-cohabitating relationship completed a set of online questionnaires. Results revealed that for both girls and boys, one's own perpetration of psychological DV was related negatively to self-reported relationship satisfaction. A significant partner effect was also found between psychological DV perpetrated by the girlfriends and their partner's satisfaction suggesting that for young men, romantic relationship satisfaction is compromised both by their own psychological DV as well as by their partner's.

The link between sacrifice and relational and personal well-being: A meta-analysis

Francesca Righetti¹, John Sakaluk², Ruddy Faure¹, & Emily Impett³
¹*Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam*, ²*University of Victoria*, ³*University of Toronto*

Different theoretical accounts would predict that sacrifice is either positively or negatively associated with personal and relational well-being. Empirical work in this regard is inconclusive. We conducted a meta-analytical investigation of 65 datasets and 1,249 effect sizes (N = 26,395) to test the link between sacrifice and relationship satisfaction and personal well-being for both the individual who performs the sacrifice and their partner. Although we found small positive associations between general sacrifice and relationship satisfaction, results revealed an important distinction between willingness to sacrifice (i.e., the motivation to sacrifice) and actual behavioral sacrifice. Willingness to sacrifice was positively related to well-being, while this association was not present for behavioral sacrifice.

The influence of accurately detecting women's pain self-efficacy for postpartum pain during intercourse on couples' sexual well-being: A dyadic longitudinal investigation

Meghan Rossi¹, Jessica Maxwell², & Natalie Rosen¹
¹*Dalhousie University*, ²*Florida State University*

Postpartum pain during intercourse is a prevalent problem that jeopardizes couples' relational and sexual well-being. Women with pain during intercourse and their partners (N = 89) completed online surveys at three and six months postpartum assessing women's and partner perceptions of pain self-efficacy (i.e. confidence in managing the pain), sexual functioning, and women's report of pain intensity. Using the Truth and Bias Model of Judgement and Response Surface Analysis, partners were both accurate and biased in their estimations such that they tended to underestimate women's pain self-efficacy at three months. This underestimation was

not associated with women's pain or couples' sexual functioning. However, when couples showed agreement for lower, compared to higher, levels of pain self-efficacy, women reported greater pain during intercourse and both members of the couple experienced poorer sexual functioning at each time-point. Enhancing couples' pain self-efficacy may improve partner provision of support and couples' sexual well-being.

Awe promotes relationship quality and willingness to sacrifice through gratitude

Kristina Schrage¹, Ming Ma¹, Jennifer Stellar¹, Emily Impett¹, Dacher Keltner², & Geoff MacDonald¹

¹University of Toronto, ²University of California, Berkeley

Awe makes us more satisfied with our lives, but can it enhance our close relationships? We investigate if awe can increase relationship quality and willingness to sacrifice for a romantic partner. In Study 1, correlations indicated that dispositional awe was positively linked to relationship quality and likelihood of making sacrifices for a partner. In Study 2, an experimental design, those who watched an awe-inspiring video clip reported significantly higher willingness to sacrifice and commitment relative to those who watched a neutral video clip. In Study 3, a 14-day dyadic daily diary study, daily awe was associated with higher relationship quality and prosocial motives for sacrifice. Studies 2 and 3 provided support for gratitude as a mediator of the effects of awe on both willingness to sacrifice and relationship quality. Taken together, the present research demonstrates that awe may serve a vital function in the development and maintenance of close relationships.

Relationship motivation in the context of sexual encounters with new partners

Shayna Skakoon-Sparling

Ryerson University

Relationship Motivation (RM) is the degree to which an individual is motivated to establish and/or maintain a long-term romantic relationship. RM may interfere with safer sex practices among those who are anxious to establish a new long-term relationship. We investigated the association between RM and the negotiation of condom use across two studies. Study 1 showed that participants higher in RM were more likely to consider their perceived partner's interest in condom use, as well as their own, when deciding whether to suggest condoms. In contrast, among those low in RM only personal interest in condom use was a significant predictor. In Study 2, sexually aroused women who were high in relationship motivation showed increased risk taking intentions (compared to those low in relationship motivation). These findings suggest that RM is an important factor to consider, since it can have an impact at multiple stages of the condom negotiation process.

Shared activities in retirement: Effects on individual and relationship well-being

Jennifer M. Tomlinson, Emma Meyer, Fanyi Zhang, & Caroline Hashagen
Colgate University

Engaging in shared self-expanding activities predicts individual and relationship well-being. Because previous studies have focused on younger couples, we wanted to understand the effects of shared activities in retirement. We predicted that participation in exciting activities would lead to greater individual and relationship well-being in two studies. In Study 1, 188 retired, married Mturk workers completed measures of frequency of participation in exciting and pleasant activities, and individual and relationship well-being. Participation in both exciting and pleasant activities was positively correlated with relational self-expansion, closeness, positive affect, and curiosity. In Study 2, 60 retired couples were randomly assigned to participate in exciting, pleasant, or no activity and reported on individual and relationship well-being. Participation in exciting activities (compared to pleasant or no activity) predicted increased self-efficacy. In addition, attachment anxiety moderated the effects on marital satisfaction such that secure individuals benefited more from exciting activities compared to anxious individuals.

Time is in the eye of the beholder: How fear of being single predicts subjective duration

Sarah E. Wall, Vivian Nelson, & Anne E. Wilson
Wilfrid Laurier University

In the present research, we examined the relationship between fear of being single, subjective duration (i.e., how slowly or quickly time feels like it is passing), and emotional experiences of being single using correlational and experimental research designs. Our research thus far has tested and supported our hypotheses such that, for the same period of objective time in the future (i.e., the next one year), (1) participants who were more fearful of being single perceived that time spent being single for the upcoming one year will pass by more slowly and (2) reported greater expectations of negative emotional experiences towards being single for one year, compared to participants who were less fearful. Additional results demonstrating the effects of manipulating subjective duration on how more fearful individuals' perceive their time spent being single will be discussed.

Thank you, my love, will you support me? On the value of expressing partner-directed positivity in support-seeking contexts

Rebecca Walsh & Amanda Forest
University of Pittsburgh

Drawing on the broaden and build model (e.g., Fredrickson, 2001) and theories of motivation, we tested the hypothesis that support seekers who expressed more (vs. less) positivity about their support provider (e.g., expressing affection toward and gratitude for the provider) when seeking support for negative events would receive more responsive support. Across two behavioral observation studies (N = 240 romantic couples), support seekers who expressed more (vs. less) partner-directed positivity when disclosing about an upsetting event (Study 1) or

their greatest fear (Study 2) received more responsive support from their partners. These effects held when controlling for the seeker's expressed negativity and key personality and relationship variables (e.g., seeker's self-esteem; partner's relationship quality). Mediation analyses (Study 2) suggested that expressing partner-directed positivity may elicit responsive support by increasing (a) the partner's desire to connect with the seeker and (b) the partner's confidence in the effectiveness of his/her support attempts.

The development of an implicit association test for the sexual double standard

Corinne Zimmerman & Alexis L. Pandelios

Illinois State University

As part of a larger project on hookups, we hypothesized that sexual double standard attitudes (whereby men and women are judged differently for engaging in the same sexual behaviors) might predict hookup outcomes and hookup reactions. In particular, we were interested in examining explicit and implicit Sexual Double Standard (SDS) attitudes. Although an Implicit Association Test (IAT) has been developed to examine implicit SDS attitudes, the stimulus materials used by Sakaluk and Milhausen (2012) to represent the attribute dimensions of "sexually positive" (e.g., clean, healthy) and "sexually negative" (e.g., sleazy, unacceptable) may not have strong sexual connotations. We report the results of a pilot test (n=147) to create materials for an IAT in which participants associate the target concept (male/female) with the attribute dimensions "sexual" or "romantic." We report preliminary findings from participants who completed the IAT, explicit SDS attitudes, and hookup reactions and outcomes.

Data Blitz: Abstracts

(sorted alphabetically by the last name of the presenter)

Sexpectations: Expectations of emotional closeness, orgasm, and pleasure (own and partner's) from sex with a romantic partner

Shari Blumenstock

University of Wisconsin-Madison

What we expect from an experience influences our desire for it, and this includes sexual experiences within romantic relationships. For young adults, emotional closeness and pleasure are top reasons they have sex with a romantic partner. However, it is unclear whether young adults actually expect to experience these outcomes. This study will draw from an online survey of ~290 young adults (50% women). Preliminary results (n=214) indicated most expected to experience emotional closeness and pleasure during sex with a romantic partner. Men reported higher expectations for orgasm and sexual pleasure, whereas women reported higher expectations for difficulty with orgasm. No significant gender differences were found for emotional closeness. Men reported lower expectations for their partner to experience orgasm and sexual pleasure, and higher expectations their partner would experience difficulty with orgasm. The roles of sexual history and functioning in expectations, and associations between expectations and desire will also be explored/discussed.

Scared to socialize or eager to engage? Introducing a new measure of individual differences in dispositional social expectancies

Bonni Crawford¹, Marcel Meyer², Nils Muhlert³, Marta García López⁴, Geoff MacDonald⁵, & Andrew D. Lawrence¹

¹Cardiff University, ²Universität Mannheim, ³University of Manchester, ⁴Ruhr-Universität Bochum, ⁵University of Toronto

Our research examines individual differences in dispositional social expectancies - tendencies to expect social situations to be pleasurable or distressing. We have developed a scenario-based self-report scale, the Levels of Dispositional Expectancies for Social Threat and Reward Scale (LODESTARS). The LODESTARS exhibits a clear two-factor structure and excellent psychometric properties (n>1000). Correlations with other well-established constructs (e.g. attachment style) demonstrate that the LODESTARS has good concurrent and predictive validity. In the brain (n=100), we found that individual differences in LODESTARS scores are reflected in the structure of hub regions that implement affective appraisal. Following this up, we examined links between LODESTARS and affective appraisal, focussing on emotion regulation (ER; n>600). Preliminary results indicate that higher social threat expectancies are associated with less adaptive ER strategies, while higher social reward expectancies are associated with more adaptive ER. Our findings have implications for understanding neurocognitive risk factors for poor social wellbeing.

Tripartite commitment and relationship quality: A person-centered approach

Melissa Curran¹, Mi Kyoung Jin², Shannon Corkery³, & Xiaomin Li¹

¹University of Arizona, ²Sookmyung Women's University, ³Penn State University

We examined associations between tripartite commitment -- personal (want to stay in relationship), moral (ought to stay) and structural (have to stay) -- and relationship quality (conflict, ambivalence, maintenance, satisfaction; N=717 individuals). We used latent profile analysis specific to tripartite commitment to understand how each profile is associated with relationship quality. Results showed four distinct subgroups for tripartite commitment: Lower Tripartite Commitment, Higher Tripartite Commitment, Higher Moral and Structural Commitment, and Personal Commitment Driven. Individuals in the profile of Lower Tripartite Commitment experienced more ambivalence and less maintenance and satisfaction versus individuals in the other three profiles. In comparison, individuals in the profiles of Higher Tripartite Commitment and Personal Commitment Driven experienced higher maintenance and satisfaction and lower conflict and ambivalence than individuals in the two other profiles. We discuss the value added by the additional consideration of moral and structural commitment in the understanding of relationship quality.

Non-consensual condom removal across different relationship contexts

Konrad Czechowski, Erin Courtice, & Krystelle Shaughnessy

University of Ottawa

Non-consensual condom removal (NCCR; “stealthing”) refers to the removal of a condom before or during sexual intercourse without one’s partner’s consent. Despite a plethora of news articles describing the trend, there is no empirical research to date on NCCR. The purpose of this study was twofold: to (1) examine the prevalence of NCCR in three partner contexts: committed partner, known but not committed partner, and stranger; and (2) whether participants find the practice more bothersome in one of the three contexts. We collected screening data on 3031 undergraduate students and found that 11% had NCCR perpetrated against them. A sub-sample (n = 651) completed an in-depth questionnaire about their experiences. This study is the first to include the relationship context in NCCR experiences and found that more participants reported the experience with their committed partners. Implications for condom use negotiation across relationship contexts will be discussed.

Managing negative emotions about sex: Associations between emotion regulation strategies and sexual well-being

Justin Dubé & Natalie Rosen

Dalhousie University

People often experience negative emotions related to sex. Yet, little is known about the strategies that people use to regulate negative emotions in their sexual lives. Via an online survey, we examined associations between five emotion regulation strategies—avoidance, problem solving, distraction, reappraisal, and suppression—and the sexual well-being of

individuals (N = 223) involved in committed relationships. Greater use of avoidance to regulate negative emotions about sex was linked to lower sexual satisfaction and desire, and greater sexual distress. In contrast, greater use of problem-solving and reappraisal were each associated with greater sexual satisfaction, and greater use of distraction was linked to greater desire. There were no associations between suppression and outcomes. Findings provide the first empirical evidence that strategies to manage negative emotions about sex are differentially associated with facets of sexual well-being, suggesting that some strategies may be more adaptive than others.

I will follow you, but it will cost me: Trailing partners' exchange motives predict lower relationship quality through costly perceptions of relocation

Rebecca M. Horne, Mariko L. Visserman, & Emily Impett

University of Toronto

We conducted an online study of 175 romantic partners who recently relocated for their partner's job, providing the first look at trailing partners' experiences after undertaking a life-changing sacrifice. We explored how trailers' exchange orientation (desire for equal exchanges of benefits in relationships) shapes their perceptions of the relocation (how big of a sacrifice it was and how costly it was), and in turn their satisfaction with the move and their relationship. The results revealed that the more exchange oriented trailers were, the more they viewed the relocation as a large sacrifice and personally costly. In turn, these perceptions of the sacrifice were associated with lower satisfaction with the move and their relationship. Thus, the experience of relocation may be particularly challenging for trailing partners who are exchange oriented, as they orient themselves towards the costliness of the move which detracts from their relationship quality and happiness with the move.

Frequencies and Perceptual Accuracy of Sexual Rejection in Romantic Relationships

James Kim¹, Amy Muise², & Emily Impett¹

¹University of Toronto, ²York University

Experiencing sexual rejection by a romantic partner can be highly impactful for relationships. But how frequently does sexual rejection occur in established relationships, and how accurate are partners in detecting sexual rejection? In the present research, we examine and compare the frequency of sexual rejection in a cross-sectional study of individuals in relationships and 28-day dyadic daily experience study. We also investigate how often partners agree on the occurrence of sexual rejection, and the degree of perceptual accuracy and bias exhibited towards reassuring, hostile, assertive, and deflecting sexual rejection behaviors. Results showed that romantic partners disagreed on whether sexual disinterest was communicated a third of the time. During these instances, hostile and deflecting rejection behaviours were overperceived. Further, while all four rejection behaviors are accurately detected when exhibited, the effect size for detecting reassuring behaviors was relatively small, aligning with literature highlighting the difficult nature of sexual communication for couples.

What you give is not always what they get: Autonomy support from family and friends benefits goal pursuit and well-being when perceived as so

Shelby Levine, Anne Holding, & Richard Koestner

McGill University

Many young adults seek out support from family and friends while pursuing their goals. The current research explored autonomy and directive support across different sources of support to determine whether individuals accurately perceive support from different sources, and how support predicts well-being, and goal progress. 387 students completed a study about their goals, support systems and well-being, as well 252 family members, and 225 peers completed reports on support. Familial directive support was perceived to be directive, but familial autonomy support was also perceived as directive. Conversely, peer support was accurately perceived as autonomous and directive. Perceived autonomy support from family and friends predicted increased subjective well-being and goal progress. Directive support from family and friends did not predict well-being or goal progress. Overall, these results provide evidence that autonomy support from family and friends is instrumental for helping young adults to not only succeed, but thrive.

Tell me what you want, what you really really want: Gender, sexual assertiveness, and pleasure in hookup experiences

Allison McKinnon, Parker, M.M., Wagner, S.A., Mattson, R.M., Massey, S.G., Merriwether, A.M.

Binghamton University

Sexual assertiveness, or the ability to initiate, negotiate, and/or reject specific sexual behaviors, is vital for individuals to maximize their safety and enjoyment in sexual relationships, but tends to be a less developed ability in women compared to men. To explore the influences of gender, sexuality, and attitudes, 1181 college students reported on aspects of their most recent hookup experience. Individuals' own sexual assertiveness enhanced their reported pleasure from the hookup, while partner assertiveness was linked to pleasure only for women. Moderation analyses suggested that the degree to which individuals endorse traditional gender role norms affected their own and partner's assertiveness enhancement of their pleasure. These findings characterize the nuances of sexual experiences that young adults must navigate, as well as highlighting intervention points for improving their own repertoire of assertive behaviors and responsiveness to those of their partners.

To talk or not to talk? Discussing relationship boundaries in newlywed Marriage

Lauren D. McRae & Rebecca J. Cobb

Simon Fraser University

Discussing relationship boundaries (i.e., the extent to which emotional and sexual involvements outside of the relationship are acceptable) is related to sexual and relational benefits, at least in male same-sex partnerships (Hoff & Beougher, 2010; Mitchell et al., 2012). The relationship literature is replete with evidence of the benefits of open communication between partners (e.g., Montesi et al., 2010; Timm & Keiley, 2011), and sexual self-disclosure is positive for

couples (Laurenceau et al., 2005; MacNeil & Byers, 2005); however, little is known about the role of relationship boundary discussions in the context of mixed-sex relationships. Mixed-sex newlywed couples (N = 149) recruited from the community completed measures of marital satisfaction (QMI; Norton, 1983), relationship boundary discussion (e.g., "Since you and your spouse began your relationship, have you two ever discussed whether romantic and/or sexual involvements with other people were acceptable?"), and acceptability of extra-dyadic involvement (EDI; e.g., "How acceptable is it for your partner to have a sexual involvement with another person?"). Regression analysis indicated that discussing relationship boundaries predicted increases in wives' relationship satisfaction over one year when husbands rated extra-dyadic involvements as relatively acceptable. However, discussing relationship boundaries predicted declines in husbands' and wives' relationship satisfaction when husbands rated extra-dyadic involvements as relatively unacceptable. Results suggest that interpersonal contexts can change the role of boundary discussions in romantic relationships. When partners are strongly adherent to monogamy norms and are less accepting of EDI, discussing boundaries might be inherently uncomfortable, might instill a sense of insecurity or jealousy, and could be detrimental to partner's satisfaction with the relationship over time compared to when partners less strongly adhere to monogamy norms. This suggests that relationship boundary discussions may benefit some relationships but should be approached with caution because of their inherently sensitive nature and potential for disrupting positive evaluations of the relationship.

Patterns of physical proximity as indicators of relationship health in older adult couples

Brian Ogolsky, Shannon Mejia, Alexandra Chronopoulou, Kiel Gilleade, Christopher Maniotes, TeKisha Rice, & Jaclyn Theisen
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Marital relationships are crucial to health and well-being across the life-span, and especially in older adulthood. The marriage benefit, however, is conditioned by relationship health, which is characterized by relationship satisfaction and the presence of behavioral markers of relationship maintenance. This interdisciplinary research project demonstrates a method to measure relationship health in a way that is unobtrusive, objective, and responsive to moment to moment variations in couples' lived contexts by means of wearable proximity sensors. We will discuss the strengths and opportunities of an interpersonal proximity sensors system (IPROX) for understanding physical proximity. The system measures recorded signal strength to estimate the distance between each partner's sensor and the position of each sensor within the home by means of telemetry. These measurements were paired with physiological heart rate data and self-reported psychological variables to generate unique behavioral signals among older adult couples.

Conflict and Marital Well-Being Over 16 Years of Marriage for Black Couples and White Couples

Rosie Shrout¹, Terri Orbuch², Randal Brown³, & Daniel Weigel¹

¹University of Nevada Reno, ²Oakland University, ³Widener University

Married couples experience conflict in multiple ways. Spouses can disagree often and across several important issues. Disagreements can also pile-up over time, creating an accumulation of disagreements. This research took a multidimensional approach to conflict and examined how frequency, breadth, and the accumulation of disagreements related to marital well-being in the contexts of gender and race. Longitudinal data of 373 married couples spanning 16 years were analyzed. Multilevel models indicated that frequent conflict had stronger negative implications for wives' and White spouses' marital well-being, whereas an accumulation of disagreements over time was more impactful for Black spouses' marital well-being. The results will be discussed in the contexts of race and gender.

Perceiving gratitude from a romantic partner predicts decreases in attachment anxiety

Yoobin Park¹, Matthew Johnson², Geoff MacDonald¹, & Emily Impett¹

¹University of Toronto, ²University of Alberta

Individuals high in attachment anxiety tend to struggle in romantic relationships, which carries serious implications for their broader physical and psychological well-being. In this research, we used 7-year longitudinal data (n = 2,057) to examine whether perceiving gratitude from a romantic partner predicts decreases in an individual's attachment anxiety toward the partner. Random intercept cross-lagged panel analyses supported our prediction that perceiving more than typical levels of gratitude from a partner in a given year was linked with reduced attachment anxiety at that time and, importantly, one year later. These data provide evidence that interpersonal environments can indeed shape attachment anxiety and demonstrate one powerful way that gratitude can contribute to relationship and personal well-being.

Motivational dynamics between romantic partners' goal pursuit

Kaitlyn Werner¹, Marina Milyavskaya¹, & Richard Koestner²

¹Carleton University, ²McGill University

In the present research, we examined the motivational dynamics between romantic partners as they pursue their goals over the course of a year. We recruited 130 individuals (65 couples) and asked them to set four goals that they planned to pursue over the next year, as well as had them rate their autonomous and controlled motivation for pursuing each goal, their partner's motivation for the partner's goal, and goal progress at four different time points (between September and April). Using multi-level analyses, we examined (1) the extent to which partners' motivational compatibility at T1 predicted goal progress over the course of the year, and (2) the extent to which partners' motivation converges over time. Discussion will focus on the role of shifting motivation in self-regulatory success (e.g., Inzlicht, Schmeichel, & Macrae, 2014) and how interpersonal relationships can facilitate this process (e.g., Shea, Davisson, & Fitzsimmons, 2013).

Posters: Abstracts

(sorted alphabetically by the last name of the presenter)

Solidarity in couple relationships

Ayhan Adams, Katrin Golsch & Kai-Olaf Maiwald
Osnabrueck University

In family research, to the best of our knowledge, solidarity in couple relationships has not been analysed theoretically and empirically – a gap this study addresses. The purpose of this paper is to develop a theoretical framework to understand solidarity as an overarching structural element of cooperation in couple relationships and positive outcomes for both partners. We then propose, in the best possible way, a measurement of solidarity to be used in quantitative analysis. With data of the German Family Panel (waves 2008-2017), we offer an empirical test of our measurement by employing dyadic autoregressive cross-lagged analyses ($n = 2,588$ couples) and establish the cause-and-effect relationship between solidarity and two dimensions of relationship quality: relationship satisfaction and perceived fairness in the division of work. The results of this analysis lend general support to our assumption that couples cooperate on a basic rule of solidarity, having a unidirectional influence on relationship satisfaction.

Spanish Translation of Five Relationship-Oriented Questionnaires: Psychometric Equivalence Within and Across Ethnicities

Erin F. Alexander¹, Karen Aizaga, Rebecca E. Osterhout, Antonio J. Polo, Matthew D. Johnson¹
¹*Binghamton University*

Spanish translations of brief questionnaires assessing relationship-related constructs will improve and expand couples interventions among Latinos. Five relationship-oriented scales were translated from English to Spanish by a team of bilingual native Spanish speakers using a rigorous translation method. A sample of 570 participants was divided into the following two groups: Latinos answering in English and Latinos answering in Spanish, based on whether they elected to answer in English or Spanish. Participants were recruited through the internet and answered all questionnaires online. The psychometric properties of the measures were compared across the two groups. The translated measures were deemed valid and reliable, with few statistically significant coefficient differences across the two groups. This includes tests of internal consistency, temporal reliability, concurrent validity, and factorial invariance. The translated measures are appended and discussed. Finally, we offer suggestions for the use of these measures in a clinical setting.

Sex and marital competencies: A more holistic view of sexual satisfaction

David Allsop, Chelom Leavitt, Joshua Timmons, & Jason Carroll
Brigham Young University

Research investigating satisfaction with sex has largely focused on the association between a couple sexual communication and sexual satisfaction. However, there are likely more variables

that need consideration. Marital competencies provides a framework which utilizes three marital domains of marital ability – communication, virtues (qualities such as forgiveness), and identities (characteristics such as attachment) (Carroll, Badger, & Yang, 2006; Burleson & Denton, 1997). Utilizing data from 2117 couples from the CREATE study and structural equation modeling, we explore sexual satisfaction within marriage through this framework to provide a more holistic approach to understanding couple sexual satisfaction. A latent variable representing the three domains of marital competency significantly predicted couple sexual satisfaction after controlling for demographic and family characteristics (Beta = .736, $p < .001$, R-square = .552). Implications of this study include the notion that therapists, researchers, and couples can use this more comprehensive framework to better understand sexual satisfaction.

Examining the role of mindfulness in long-distance relationships

Leena Anand¹, Bassam Khoury¹, Kelly Manser², Seema Saigal³, & Steve N. Du Bois²
McGill University¹, ²Illinois Institute of Technology, ³Adler University

The aim of this exploratory study was to assess the predictive role of mindfulness on relationship and health outcomes within long-distance relationships (LDRs). Linear regressions yielded mixed findings for LDR participants ($n=224$). Consistent with prior research addressing proximal couples, mindfulness was a significant positive predictor for relationship satisfaction ($F(1, 222)=31.16$, $p < .001$), $\beta = .351$) and of global health ($F(1, 222)=124.73$, $p < .001$, $\beta = .600$) for LDRs. Deviating past findings, mindfulness was a significant negative predictor for relationship maintenance, $F(1,222)=13.781$, $p < .001$, $\beta = -.243$; and, a significant positive predictor for relationship stress ($F(1, 222)=19.052$, $p < .001$, $\beta = .281$) and overall stress ($F(1, 222)=67.82$, $p < .001$, $\beta = .484$) in LDRs. Taken together, the results yielded from our exploratory study illuminate unique findings pertaining to the role of mindfulness in LDRs. LDR-specific stressors may contribute to these inconsistent findings and will be further discussed.

Analyzing emotional regulation and its relationship with domestic violence in Mexico

Carolina Armenta-Hurtarte
Universidad Iberoamericana

This study aims to analyze the relationship that may exist between violence and emotional regulation among young people from Mexico. In order to achieve this objective, a sample was conformed with 1,686 young people between 18 to 29 years old that answered individually: 1) Inventory of Strategies of Emotional Regulation (Sánchez-Aragón, Díaz-Loving & Armenta-Hurtarte, 2015), and 2) Inventory of Violence exercised and Received (Cienfuegos-Martinez, 2010). The results shown that there is a relationship between violence received and the strategies of evasion in the emotions of sadness, fear and anger. Likewise, it was found that the strategy of reflection of anger is associated with the violence exercised, particularly with physical violence. These results allow us to identify an area that need more studies in order to provide a new vision on the prevention of violence in relationships between the perpetrator of violence and its victim.

Good partner, good parent? Links between romantic attachment, caregiving and a positive coparenting quality

Stéphanie Azzi, Marie-France Lafontaine, & Jean-François Bureau
University of Ottawa

Positive support between romantic partners is crucial to the wellbeing of all romantic relationships. Prior to having a child, support provided between romantic partners focuses on maintaining and nourishing the relationship. However, once a child is born, the partners are required to provide each other with an additional form of support: coparenting. Research on the factors contributing to a positive coparenting quality in intact families is sparse. Attachment theory provides an important framework from which to understand coparenting in the context of intact families. The goal of this study is to examine how parents' romantic attachment and caregiving are associated with their perception of coparenting quality. Eighty-two couples completed the Experiences in Close Relationships-Short form, the Caregiving Questionnaire and the Coparenting in Relationship Scale. Results highlight the importance of understanding coparenting in the context of romantic relationships and shed light on factors contributing to a positive coparenting relationship.

An open-trial study testing a new capitalization intervention.

Eran Bar-Kalifa, Bar Rehani, & Sagi Lopata
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

A growing number of studies has indicated that a key relational process contributing to relational and personal wellbeing is capitalization. However, to date, little is known about whether couples can be trained to improve their capitalization skills. The central aim of this study is to start filling this gap by pilot testing a novel short-term capitalization intervention structured to reflect evidence-based practices in optimizing learning and change processes, by integrating experiential learning cycle practices, implementation intention techniques, as well as daily automated monitoring and feedback procedures. To provide a first examination of the intervention's efficacy, twenty couples will be recruited, and a multi-method design will be employed (including self-reports, implicit evaluation tasks, observations, and diaries). Although preliminary, the results obtained from the first four couples who have already received the intervention appear promising. For example, non-parametric permutation tests indicated that partners displayed greater responsiveness behaviors post-intervention.

Sexual communal motivation in couples coping with low sexual desire

Amanda Bockaj¹, Jacqueline Hogue¹, Natalie Rosen², & Amy Muise¹
¹*York University*, ²*Dalhousie University*

Sexuality is a key factor that shapes well-being, yet low sexual desire is a common issue, especially among women. Sexual communal strength (i.e., being motivated to meet a partner's sexual needs; SCS) is associated with higher sexual desire and satisfaction, while unmitigated sexual communion (i.e., being focused on a partner's sexual needs to the exclusion of one's own needs; USC) is associated with lower desire and satisfaction. In a sample of 97 couples

coping with low sexual desire, women higher in SCS reported higher desire and relationship satisfaction and both partners reported higher sexual satisfaction, but women higher in USC did not reap these benefits. Partners higher in SCS reported higher desire, relationship satisfaction, and lower sexual distress, but partners higher in USC reported higher sexual distress. There are benefits to being motivated to meet a partner's sexual needs, but only when a person does not exclude their own needs.

Primary stories told in marriages

Renee Bourdeaux, Sarah Drivdahl, & Caleb Netterfield
Northwest University

A major goal in the study of relationships is learning how individuals craft and maintain strong, positive relationships. However, relationships are more dynamic to manage and study because relational pairs are impacted by individual communicative actions. Each individual in a married partnership is unique and brings his/her own communication style to the relationship. One communicative action that impacts relationships is that of telling stories. This research parses out how stories that are told in social situations may impact relationships. We interviewed 50 happily married people to identify dominant stories told, individual interpretation of such stories, and the meanings situated in narratives that may impact relationships.

Is alcohol or substance use associated with Intimate Partner Violence recidivism in a rural community?

Laura Bracken, Rodina Scott, & Danney Rasco
West Texas A&M University

Clinicians and researchers have recognized the high co-occurrence of substance abuse and intimate partner violence (IPV), and illicit drug use and problematic alcohol consumption are both linked to IPV and recidivism (i.e., repeated criminal behavior). Despite this documented connection, criminal justice policies often fail to acknowledge and address this comorbidity of substance abuse and IPV. Individuals convicted of IPV frequently are barred from mandated, state-subsidized substance abuse treatment. We intend to evaluate the impact of offenders' and victims' recorded alcohol and substance abuse during an initial IPV arrest on recidivism for approximately 3,500 IPV arrests. This will be measured at a 12-month follow-up. Recommendations for policy changes will be provided.

Does having a cross-political relationship influence interpersonal or intergroup attitudes? It depends on relationship quality

Elena Buliga¹, Cara MacInnis¹, & Gordon Hodson²
¹*University of Calgary*, ²*Brock University*

In general, having close, intimate cross-group relationships can reduce prejudice. Does this apply to the political domain, where prejudice can be quite intense yet relatively socially acceptable? We examined whether cross-political friendships (Study 1) or romantic relationships (Study 2) predict more positive interpersonal or intergroup attitudes. In Study 1 (N

= 301), cross- (vs. same-) political group friendships were not associated with more positive intergroup attitudes. With regard to interpersonal attitudes, however, a friendship being cross- (vs. same-) political was associated with less positive attitudes toward the friend when perceived friendship quality was low. In Study 2 (N = 383), having a cross- (vs. same-) political romantic relationship was associated with more negative attitudes toward the political outgroup via lower empathy when relationship satisfaction was low. Findings are inconsistent with the contact hypothesis but consistent with research demonstrating that negative contact has a strong negative influence on attitudes.

Temporal patterns of dyadic coping in romantic partners talking about stress

Lisanne J. Bulling & Guy Bodenmann

University of Zurich

In people who interact often, like intimate partners, communication patterns might form as a function of social learning mechanisms such as positive and negative reinforcement. The content and structure of these communication patterns could be linked to the predictability of the partners behavior which has been shown to increase trust, closeness, and self-disclosure in couples. This study aims to detect communication patterns in romantic partners who talk about stressful events using a novel analytical approach: T-pattern analysis. An advantage over other pattern recognition algorithms is the ability of the T-pattern algorithm to detect connections between events while disregarding intervening events. A conceptual model will be introduced to integrate theories and serve as a framework for hypotheses about the content and meaning of T-patterns in intimate partners interactions.

Relationship between nuclear family emotional system and adult health: Mediating role of general self-efficacy

Viktorija Cepukienė

Vytautas Magnus University

This study aimed to evaluate the mediating role of general self-efficacy between the nuclear family emotional system (NFES) and adults' physical health. A sample consisted of 282 married or cohabiting participants (95% female; age 36.27 ± 5.78 years) having children from 3 to 18 years old. SEM was used to evaluate the hypothesized relationships among variables. Results revealed partial mediation between total score of the NFES and subjective indicators of health as well as full mediation between three components of NFES and subjective indicators of health. More constructive NFES predicts higher self-efficacy, which in turn predicts better subjective evaluation of health. The mediation model for objective indicators of health could not be calculated. Findings are partly consistent with Bowen theory and suggest that family emotional system, directly and indirectly, affects personal health, however only subjective indicators of health.

Couple relationship satisfaction: do differentiation of self, attachment to parents and parents' relationship quality matter?

Viktorija Cepukienė

Vytautas Magnus University

The aim of the study was to compute the mediation model of the relationships among person's differentiation of self, attachment to parents, parents' relationship quality and couple relationship satisfaction. It was hypothesized that attachment to parents mediates between parents' relationship quality and persons' differentiation of self, while the latter acts as a mediator between parents' relationship quality and person's satisfaction with couple relationship. The study sample consisted of 983 participants having a partner/spouse, of whom 91% (n = 898) were women and 9% (n = 85) men, the mean age was 40.12 (SD = 10.71) years. Results revealed that parents' relationship quality has an indirect effect on a person's satisfaction with couple relationship through mediators – differentiation of self and secure attachment to parents. Better parents' relationship quality predicts more secure attachment to parents and higher differentiation of self while two latter variables predict higher satisfaction with couple relationship.

Challenging assumptions: Are findings from white, non-hispanic couples applicable to latinx/hispanic couples?

Alexa Chandler¹, Atina Manvelian¹, & Erika Lawrence²

¹*University of Arizona*, ²*The Family Institute at Northwestern University*

Most relationship research has focused on marital satisfaction among White, non-Hispanic, heterosexual, middle-class, college-educated couples, and most couple interventions were designed based on this research. Comparatively less is known about relationship functioning and satisfaction among diverse populations. Further, it is not known whether existing interventions are relevant to the needs of more diverse groups. In particular, individuals of Latinx/Hispanic background are one of the fastest growing ethnic-minority groups in the United States and yet it is entirely plausible that existing relationship interventions are not addressing the domains of relationship functioning that are most relevant for their relationship satisfaction. The current research will test the widely held assumption that White, non-Hispanic couples are the standard by which we understand and intervene with all other couples. Our research will also investigate culturally relevant factors that are uniquely important to Latinx/Hispanic families. Implications for research, clinical interventions, and public policy will be discussed.

Personal versus joint leisure goals in close relationships: Understanding the role of relational boredom, satisfaction and secure base support

Shamarukh Chowdhury & Cheryl Harasymchuk

Carleton University

The present study investigated the role of relational boredom and secure base support in the pursuit of personal goals and shared leisure goals in romantic relationships. Relationship

satisfaction was also examined. Assessment of both types of projects was made using Little's (1983) Personal Project Analysis (PPA) where participants appraised these projects on dimensions such as importance, challenge, outcome and responsibility. Appraisal scores were obtained from one relationship partner's perspective. 111 participants were recruited in this study. Results showed that for both personal and shared goals, a perceived discrepancy in goal appraisal by a partner relates to low relationship satisfaction and this relationship is mediated by relational boredom. Furthermore, when participants' perceived difference in evaluation of their personal goals between self and partner on importance dimension, they also felt low secure base support, that is, low availability and low encouragement towards their projects from their partner.

Self-monitoring and empathy: A give and take in romantic relationships

Kathryn Coduto¹ & Ryan Rasner²

¹The Ohio State University, ²Louisiana State University

Communication plays a significant role in the initiation and maintenance of romantic relationships, wherein individuals vary in self-monitoring--their abilities to recognize and control their behaviors in social and relational contexts. Conversely, empathic individuals recognize the altered emotions and behaviors of others in these situations. Yet little is known about the association between self-monitoring and empathy in romantic relationships. This study (N=316) of undergraduate students was conducted to investigate the relationship between self-monitoring and empathy in relational contexts. In discussing positive and negative interactions with their significant others, participants answered open- and closed-ended questions. The open-ended questions were coded through thematic analysis. Preliminary results indicate an inverse relationship between participant's reported self-monitoring behaviors and empathy. This investigation offers insight into the relationship between self-monitoring and empathy, as well as the varying communication topics discussed by high and low self-monitoring individuals reporting on both positive and negative encounters in romantic relationships.

Rose coloured glasses: The upside of optimism in understanding the attachment-depression link

Scottie Curran & Elaine Scharfe

Trent University

Bowlby (1969) proposed that our working models of self and others directly influence how we seek and maintain proximity with attachment figures when ill, distressed, or afraid. Not surprisingly, considerable research has demonstrated significant associations between attachment and distress (e.g., Kidd, Hamer, & Steptoe, 2011; Lee & Hankin, 2009; Scharfe, 2007; Vogel & Wei, 2005; Wei et al., 2005). However, Bowlby was clear that attachment representations would only guide behaviour when ill, distressed, or afraid. To date, there are no studies that directly test Bowlby's proposal that attachment effects on distress would be less pronounced in individuals who are optimistic. In this study, we tested whether the effects of attachment would be reduced in individuals who reported high levels of optimism compared to

individuals who reported low levels. Specifically, we tested whether the associations between distress (depression, anxiety, and stress) and attachment representations with peers would be significantly different between individuals who report high versus low levels of optimism.

Romantic love is inversely associated with number of biological offspring for U.S. American adults

Kory Floyd & Benjamin Custer
University of Arizona

Evolutionary psychologists have proposed that love endures in the human species primarily due to its contributions to reproductive success. A recent study by Sorokowski et al. (2017) documented positive associations between marital love and number of biological offspring among the Hadza, an indigenous ethnic group in north-central Tanzania that maintains a hunter-gatherer social structure. Using life history theory, the present investigation replicated the associations between love and reproductive success among married U.S. American adults, hypothesizing that love is inversely related to number of biological offspring. Results revealed that number of biological children was negatively associated with reported intimacy, passion, and commitment with one's spouse. Implications for life history theory are identified.

Contact comfort and chronic pain: A revised laboratory experimentation

Marie-Pierre Daigle Marie-France Lafontaine, Camille Ferland & Michelle Lonergan
University of Ottawa

Research demonstrates that the provision of contact comfort within a couple's relationship is one of the factors that helps individuals to feel better during a stressful event. This pilot study first tested a revised version of a novel laboratory experiment that sought to recreate a stressful situation for four patients reporting chronic pain. Further, it examined how exposure to contact comfort (absence or presence) affects their psychophysiological response (electrodermal activity). We used a single case experimental design, which allowed for a comparison of within-subject change across conditions. During the experiment, patients watched a stressful video on chronic pain as well as a neutral video. During each video, their romantic partner alternated between holding their hand and letting go for segments of 2.5 minutes. The stressful video on chronic pain was effective for two participants out of four, which was confirmed by them qualitatively. This suggests that the experience of chronic pain is highly subjective and that a person might be activated differently depending on whether they had made peace with their pain. This type of information suggests that it might be important to tailor stressors to each individual participant who reports chronic pain in order to further test the impact of contact comfort.

Committed to being single? Relationship norms and single peoples' well-being and desire for relationships

Brittany Dennett & Yuthika Girme
Simon Fraser University

People in relationships often experience greater wellbeing compared to single people, however, peoples' fears of being single can motivate them to stay in less fulfilling relationships. Across two 14-day diary studies of university students (Study 1, N = 128) and community participants (Study 2, N = 67) we demonstrate that single people who endorse greater pro-relationship norms (i.e., the belief that people need to be in a relationship to be happy) report greater fears of being single, which undermines their daily life satisfaction. In Study 3 (N = 209), we use experimental data to test whether participants primed with pro-relationship norms report greater fears of being single, and thus are more receptive to entering into relationships and are more likely to want to be in a committed relationship. This research can foster a better understanding of how endorsement of relationship societal norms can impact single individuals' wellbeing and dating experiences.

Keep your friends close and your frenemies closer: Attachment, benign attributions, and relational aggression

Ghinwa El-Ariss & Elaine Scharfe
Trent University

Background/rationale: Hostile attributions have been consistently used to explain aggression in adults (e.g., Bailey & Ostrov, 2008; Coccaro, Fanning, & Lee, 2017). However, the role of benign attributions in predicting aggression in adult peer relationships has received scant attention. In this study, we tested the hypothesis that benign attributions would contribute unique variance to proactive relational aggression after controlling for the variance predicted by peer attachment. Method: To date, 258 Psychology undergraduate students have completed a questionnaire to assess attachment to peers (Trent Relationship Scales Questionnaire; Scharfe, 2016), vignettes to assess attributions in response to relational aggression between peers (Social Information Processing-Attribution and Emotional Response Questionnaire; Coccaro, Noblett, & McCloskey, 2009), and both a questionnaire (Self-Report of Aggression and Social Behavior Measure; Morales & Crick, 1998) and follow-up questions after the hypothetical vignettes to assess relational aggression. Results: Our findings suggest that, after controlling for the variance predicted by peer attachment, benign attributions significantly predicted proactive relational aggression (measured using the questions following the vignettes). Conclusions: These findings demonstrate the importance of assessing benign attributions when exploring proactive relational aggression in peer relationships.

Resisting temptation: Approach-avoidance bias in romantically-involved individuals

M. Catalina Enestrom¹, Emilie Auger, Mandy Wu, & John E. Lydon

¹*McGill University*

The presence of attractive individuals may benefit singles seeking a dating partner but threaten those in existing romantic relationships. The current study examined the tendency for romantically-involved individuals to avoid attractive alternatives as an automatic relationship maintenance response. Further, we investigated whether this tendency would vary depending on relationship identification (i.e., the extent to which one's relationship is central to one's sense of self). Participants (N=313) completed the implicit manikin approach avoidance task (AAT) in which they were asked to approach or avoid landscape or portrait images of faces of their preferred sex. Overall, participants were significantly faster to approach faces. Further, participants were marginally faster to approach attractive faces compared to unattractive faces. While there was no significant effect for relationship status, those higher in relationship identification were marginally faster to respond across conditions and faces.

Behind the prime: Analyzing the effectiveness of security priming

Jocelyn Enright & Elaine Scharfe

Trent University

An increasingly popular methodology in the field of attachment research is the use of security priming to change mood, however, to date, the effectiveness of security primes has not been studied. In this study, we explored whether secure and insecure individuals responded differently to a security prime. Participants completed measures of attachment (Scharfe, 2016), were asked to list positive words to describe someone close to them (i.e., the security prime) and completed the PANAS to assess their mood (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). We counted the number of words listed, as well as the number of "secure base" and "safe haven" words. Interestingly, the total number of words positively predicted negative mood after the prime. Specifically, individuals who reported insecure attachment also listed fewer secure base words and reported higher negative mood. These findings suggest that security primes may not have the same effects on secure and insecure individuals.

French validation of the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory for adolescents in romantic relationships

Andréanne Fortin, Alison Paradis, Emily-Helen Todorov, Andréanne Lapierre, & Martine Hébert
Université du Québec à Montréal

Romantic relationships during adolescence have a decisive influence on those that will take place in adulthood by allowing a unique learning opportunity to develop constructive conflict management skills. Furthermore, the use of destructive strategies is associated with numerous negative consequences on adolescents' psychological well-being. Currently, there is no instrument that measures which conflict management strategies adolescents in Quebec use in the context of their romantic relationships. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the psychometric properties of an adapted version of the Conflict Resolution Style Inventory (CRSI,

Kurdek, 1994) among 262 francophone adolescents from the province of Quebec aged between 14 and 19 ($M=17$, $SD =1.51$). The factor structure, internal consistency and convergent validity of the instrument are examined. The results reveal a 3-factor structure (i.e., conflict engagement, withdrawal and positive problem solving).

Attachment and Personal Growth Following Romantic Breakups Among Emerging Adults: Forgiveness of Self and Others as mediators

Monica Guzman-Gonzalez

Universidad Catolica del Norte

Although individual differences in reactions to romantic breakups, divorces and/or separations are well-established and generally associated with negative psychological consequences, recent literature points out that there might be a silver lining of a breakup. The main goal of the present study was to examine the association between individual differences in attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance and posttraumatic growth after a separation. Secondly, we explored the role of participation in psychotherapy in enhancing the perception of growth. The sample consisted of 919 separated or divorced Chileans participants. The results indicate that only attachment avoidance was inversely associated with posttraumatic growth in both men and women. In contrast, attachment anxiety did not have a significant effect. Additionally, those who attended to psychotherapy experienced higher levels of posttraumatic growth. Finally, among those who attended psychotherapy, the avoidance of attachment ceased to be a factor that hinders growth.

Coping with dilemmas in marital relationships during later life, when a spouse has a mental health problem

Mari Helin

Tampere University

I focus on my doctoral studies to the marital relationships during later life, when a spouse has a mental health problem. Research question in this paper is to study ways tellers find to cope with dilemmas in marital relationships during later life. I interviewed nine elderly tellers who had a spouse with a psychiatric diagnosis. I used narrative interview and analyse. Results: Themes of dilemmas: reciprocal interaction, sexuality, taking care of and the existence of marital relationship. Ways to solve dilemmas: defining meanings, conditions and consequences, arguing the extension of the situation, defining the working order and roles, comparing own situation and expectations to the cultural narratives, and using concrete ways. Ways to justify solutions for dilemmas: it's good for someone, it is something that has to be done, someone's personality and moral reasoning.

Assessing validity and reliability of the multi-dimensional forgiveness inventory

James Hillman & James Hillman

Queen's University

Baumister, Exline, and Sommer (1998) developed a model of forgiveness positing that forgiveness consists of an interpersonal (external) and intrapsychic (internal) component. Accordingly, individuals can exhibit “Incongruent” forgiveness, in that they can express (but not feel) forgiveness, or feel (but not express) forgiveness. To date, there is no scale designed specifically to assess these subtypes of forgiveness. We are developing a scale called the Multi-Dimensional Forgiveness Inventory (MDFI) with subscales assessing three dimensions of Forgiveness: Affect, Cognition, and Behavior. Affect and Cognition represent the internal component of Baumeister et al.’s model, whereas Behavior represents the external component. Here, we present data to explore associations between the MDFI and other forgiveness scales, as well as individual differences (such as attachment orientation and personality traits). Furthermore, we compare factor structure and model fit between a University student sample (n=200) and two Mechanical Turk samples (n=300 and n=200).

LGBTQ+ belongingness in collegiate fraternity and sorority life

Zachary Hopkins & Chana Etengoff

Adelphi University

LGBTQ+ college students often face microaggressions and social exclusions from campus spaces, such as fraternity and sorority life, termed Greek Life. However, in recent years, Greek Life has become increasingly diverse and a more inclusive superordinate Greek Life identity is emerging. The current project, therefore, aims to answer two primary research questions: How do Greek Life and LGBTQ+ campus experiences and relationships intersect? Does the superordinate identity of Greek Life create a sense of belongingness for LGBTQ+ Greek Life members? We are recruiting 50 LGBTQ+ Members in Greek Life across the US to complete a semi-structured online survey focusing on the intersectional relationship between LGBTQ+ and Greek Life identities and belongingness. This study is unique in that it explores sociorelational development as it unfolds within a previously hostile and exclusionary space. Narrative analyses will build on the positive psychological models of Queer theory, LGBTQ+ identity Models, and Intersectionality.

Disagreements in romantic relationships: Individual differences that predict the impact of disagreement on incompatible relationship outcomes

Kathleen Huber & Laura VanderDrift

Syracuse University

Research on romantic partner incompatibility often rests on the assumption that dissimilarity between partners has a negative impact on relationship stability. Dissimilar partners inherently encounter various conflict and/or disagreement situations, and such situations often elicit negative outcomes on the individuals involved. However, previous research also demonstrates that not all conflict and/or disagreement situations produce consistent negative outcomes on the relationship. This project incorporates individual-level predictors of disagreement outcomes into a model that dissects the association between partner incompatibility and relationship outcomes. We test various individual differences that predict the extent to which an individual is negatively impacted by disagreements in the relationship. We then test this

disagreement impact factor as a moderator in the association between partner incompatibility and relationship outcomes. Results from this study will be presented as well as the implications for disagreement processes on incompatible partners' relationship outcomes.

Understanding date night: How insecurity affects relationship activities and relational boredom

Barbara Ippolito & Melissa Joy McClure
Adelphi University

Relational boredom is associated with numerous relationship issues, including dissatisfaction and disengagement, but has only recently begun to receive attention from researchers (Harasymchuk & Fehr, 2012). We examine how differences in attachment security and relational self-efficacy are associated with dating activities, comparing familiar activities (which enhance security but do not alleviate boredom) to novel activities (which enhance growth and alleviate boredom, but may be higher in risk; Harasymchuk et al., 2017). Participants in committed relationships completed a web survey measuring attachment security, relational self-efficacy, relational boredom, familiarity versus novelty of preferred dating activities, and plans for their next date. We expect to find that insecurity and inefficacy will be associated with preferences for familiar rather than novel dating activities, and so higher levels of relational boredom. Knowing how individual differences contribute to relational boredom will help researchers develop targeted interventions to solve this crucial problem.

Moderating effect of family income in the link between parental attachment relationships, negative automatic thoughts and depressive symptoms among late adolescence in Pakistan

Siddrah Irfan & Nor Sheereen Zulkefly
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Low family income is documented as one of the important factor which strengthened the association between insecure attachment, maladaptive thoughts and depressive symptoms among youngsters. However, little is known on the moderating effect of family income among these linkages, specifically in non-Western countries such as Pakistan. Thus, this study (N=936) tested the moderating effect of family income in the link between negative automatic thoughts, parental attachment and depressive symptoms among late adolescents in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Results indicated that adolescents from low income families with insecure maternal and paternal attachment were more likely to be at risk of having high levels of negative automatic thoughts and depressive symptoms. Meanwhile, adolescents from high income families with insecure paternal attachment relationships were found to be more vulnerable to negative automatic thoughts and depressive symptoms. This study has many implications for future research in non-Western societies and clinical intervention for the youngsters in Pakistan.

Association between communication patterns and relationship satisfaction in longitudinally studied couples

Stephanie Jolin¹, Marie-France Lafontaine¹, Yvan Lussier², & Audrey Brassard³

¹University of Ottawa, ²Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, ³Université de Sherbrooke

This study seeks to establish the association between demand/withdraw communication patterns and relationship satisfaction in longitudinally studied couples, looking at both actor and partner effects. We expect that for both genders, self-demand/partner withdraw and partner demand/self-withdraw communication patterns at Time 1 will be: a) negatively related to their own and their partner's level of relationship satisfaction at Time 1, and b) associated with a decrease in both, their own and their partner's level of relationship satisfaction over a period of a year. One hundred and fifty-one couples completed the Communication Pattern Questionnaire – Short Form (Christensen & Heavey, 1990) and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976; Sabourin, Valois, & Lussier, 2005). Cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses showed that demand/withdraw communication patterns are related to relationship satisfaction, but results differ according to gender. These results will be discussed in the light of attachment theory.

The relation between self-concept clarity and relational self-expansion: Examining the types of dates people with low self-concept clarity engage in

Chloe Jones

Carleton University

Joint participation in self-expanding activities (i.e., exciting) has been found to increase relationship satisfaction in long term-relationships. However, little is known about the factors that influence the engagement in shared self-expanding activities. The goal of this study was to examine the link between self-concept clarity and the likelihood of engaging in self-expanding dates. In Part 1 of the study, participants planned a date and completed a measure of self-concept clarity. In Part 2 (one week later), participants described the date they went on and answered questions about the properties of the date (e.g., novel, arousing, creative). I hypothesized that people with low self-concept clarity will be less likely to engage in self-expanding dates and will be less likely to self-expand on the dates they engage in. Contrary to my predictions, self-concept clarity was not associated with the types of dates people engaged in or the amount of relational self-expansion.

Undergraduate students' attitudes on the moral acceptability of ghosting

Caitlyn Kay, Erin Leigh Courtice, & Krystelle Shaughnessy

University of Ottawa

“Ghosting” refers to ending a relationship by cutting off contact and ignoring a former partner's attempts to reach out, without providing an explanation. The purpose of this study is to examine: (i) the prevalence of ghosting among undergraduates, and (ii) attitudes about the acceptability of ghosting. We presented participants (n = 414) with nine scenarios varying in relationship length, intensity, and perspective. Participants indicated their beliefs about the

acceptability of ghosting on a 7-point bipolar scale. Of our sample, 52.5% reported ghosting someone and 43.5% reported being ghosted. The results of a 2(perspective) X 3(relationship length) X 3(relationship intensity) mixed ANOVA revealed a significant three-way interaction between length, intensity, and perspective ($p < .001$), a significant two-way interaction between length and intensity, and main effects of length and intensity ($p < .001$) within each level of perspective. That is, ghosting in low intensity and short relationships was more acceptable than in high intensity and long relationships.

Effects of self-concept clarity on introjected approach vs avoidance motivation in romantic relationships

Dita Kubin & John E. Lydon

McGill University

We examined the link between clear and stable self-beliefs (i.e., self-concept clarity) and introjected motives for being in a romantic relationship. We created a scale to disambiguate introjected relationship motives into approach-oriented vs avoidance-oriented motives, and validated it with two diverse samples of individuals in committed relationships (Emerging adults, $N = 96$; Middle-aged adults, $N = 114$). In exploratory analyses of the two studies, we found that for emerging adults in dating relationships, but not middle-aged adults in more invested relationships, self-concept clarity uniquely predicted introjected approach motives. Conversely, we found that for middle-aged adults, but not emerging adults, self-concept clarity uniquely predicted introjected avoidance motives. Our preliminary results suggest that introjection may be expressed differently in younger dating vs older established adult relationships, and that an unstable/unclear self-concept may undermine volition and lead people to cling to relationships for less self-determined reasons.

A dyadic model of caregiving and sexual functioning in partners seeking couples' therapy

Thalie Labonté¹, Sawsane El Amiri¹, Sabrina Laplante¹, Audrey Brassard² & Katherine Pélouquin¹

¹*Université de Montréal*, ²*Université de Sherbrooke*

Few studies have examined the link between the caregiving and sexual behavioral systems empirically. Given that distressed couples are more likely to experience problems in sexual functioning (Brassard et al., 2012) and that relational distress may disrupt caregiving processes (Feeney & Collins, 2001), examining the link between caregiving and sexual functioning in a clinical sample seems highly relevant. Using a dyadic framework, the present study examined the associations between perceptions of received and given partner support and sexual function and satisfaction in 299 heterosexual couples seeking couples therapy. Path analyses revealed that men's perceptions of received support, as well as support given to their partners were positively related to their own sexual satisfaction. Women's perceptions of received support were positively related to their own sexual function and satisfaction, as well as the sexual satisfaction of their partners. Women's perceptions of given support were negatively associated with their partners' sexual satisfaction.

Emerging adult couples and housework: Examining the pathway from cleanliness preferences to frustration

Mylene Lachance-Grzela, Andréanne Charbonneau, & Geneviève Bouchard
Université de Moncton

Women generally assume the lion's share of housework. Alberts and colleagues (2011) proposed that cleanliness preferences are the root of relational conflicts concerning the division of housework. The current longitudinal study examined a two-stage model of conditional effect in which perceived partner skill and perceived fairness moderate the indirect effect of relative standards of cleanliness on increased feelings of frustration through the division of household tasks. A total of 186 emerging adult couples completed questionnaires at two points within a 6-month period. Results revealed that women's higher standards of cleanliness relative to their partner were associated with a more unbalanced division of housework when they considered their partners as being poorly skilled at doing housework. In turn, the unbalanced division of housework was linked to increased feelings of frustration when women considered the housework arrangement to be unfair. The model was not supported for men. Gender differences will be discussed.

Personal and relational self-expansion as predictors of relationship satisfaction in long-distance couples

Brittany Lasanen & Rebecca J. Cobb
Simon Fraser University

Living long-distance from a romantic partner can contribute to dissatisfaction with intimacy (Mietzner & Lin, 2005) and fears about growing apart (Arditti & Kauffman, 2004). However, long-distance and geographically close relationships are equivalent in many relationship qualities (Dargie et al., 2015). We predicted that personal and relational self-expansion (SE) could explain how couples maintain relational well-being while apart. Long-distance couples (N = 193) completed online measures of personal SE (Xu et al., 2010), relational SE (Mattingly et al., 2014), and relationship satisfaction (Funk & Rogge, 2007). Individuals' relational SE positively predicted individuals' and partners' relationship satisfaction. However, individuals' personal SE negatively predicted individuals' relationship satisfaction and was unrelated to partners' relationship satisfaction. Thus, meaningful change independent from a partner might be detrimental to individuals', but not partners', relationships. However, when partners feel they have an enriched sense of self through their partnership, their relationships might benefit.

A daily diary study of the effects of dyadic planning in facilitating goal progress

Ophir Leshets¹ Nina Knoll, Gertrud Stadler, & Eran Bar-Kalifa¹
¹*Ben Gurion University of the Negev*

Goal attainment is robustly related to well-being. One key process in translating people's intentions into goal promoting behaviors is planning – constructing a well-defined course of action for promoting goal achievement. Importantly, dyadic processes within romantic relationships have been recently identified as playing a significant role in goal attainment. In

the current study we focused on the effect of dyadic planning (DP) –the process through which individuals formulate plans with their partner (vs. alone). Specifically, we tested whether DP is associated with enhanced goal-related action control (i.e., awareness of standards, self-monitoring, and regulation effort), as well as with actual goal progress. To this aim, we collected daily diaries from 75 couples for 4 weeks. The results of multi-level models revealed that dyadic planning was associated with greater daily action control. Moreover, on days in which individual planning was low, dyadic planning was associated with greater goal progress.

Commitment and values among African American engaged couples

Emily McKnight

Iowa State University

The purpose of this study was to obtain the perspectives of marriage enrichment facilitators about commitment and values, and understand how these relationship dynamics serve as facilitators/barriers to a successful transition to marriage. The focus group participants were facilitators of a pre-marital preparation program at a faith-based community in Los Angeles, with a predominantly African American congregation. Facilitators participated in a roundtable in-person discussion. The following qualitative themes emerged: couples who value the institution of marriage, have a wedding date, actively participate in the course and seek help of counselors when issues arise, are said to most likely transition from engagement to marriage. Couples who are currently cohabiting, exhibit lack of trust, and have different beliefs than their faith-based practices, most often discontinue the program and do not proceed with their wedding plans. This research hopes to advance understanding about commitment and values for those who still desire marriage.

Supportive interpersonal messages and their relationship with healthful behaviors

Kathryn Nydegger & Dr. Kelly Dillon

Wittenberg University

Does the sender, and their relationship to the receiver or topic, matter in supportive, encouraging mediated messages? What if that topic is health related, specifically encouraging physical activity? A two-part qualitative and quantitative study was conducted to further develop research using socially supportive messages sent via SMS to determine if a message from senders, related to healthful behaviors, were considered more impactful than messages from uninvolved individuals. Our results suggest one should not worry whether they are involved in the healthful activity in order to support a message receiver. In other words, want to offer someone social support in healthful behaviors? As another supportive slogan suggests, just do it!

The role of self-compassion as a mediator between attachment and social indices of well-being

Katie O'Connell & Enrico DiTommaso

University of New Brunswick

Self-compassion is gaining recognition for its role in promoting positive well-being. The current study investigated whether self-compassion mediates the relationship between attachment (i.e., anxiety and avoidance) and relationship-oriented indices of well-being. It was predicted that more insecurely attached individuals would report lower self-compassion, which in turn would contribute to poorer well-being (Neff & McGehee, 2010). To test this hypothesis, 225 undergraduate students (mean age = 20.86; range 17-52) were recruited to complete a battery of self-report questionnaires. Results provided partial support for this hypothesis: those with higher attachment anxiety and avoidance reported less self-compassion; which in turn was associated with lower well-being in areas of belongingness, sense of community, and perceived respect. However, self-compassion failed to act as a mediator between attachment and perceived social support, trust, or loneliness. These findings will be discussed in the context of clinical intervention and future directions for research.

It's not you, it's my attachment style: Examining risk and protective factors of relational cycling

Maggie Parker

Binghamton University

Despite being associated with a variety of negative relational patterns and outcomes, cyclical relationships -- or those that break-up and get back together -- are common (Dailey, Middleton & Green, 2012) and relatively understudied. To address this and examine other risk and protective factors, an initial study was run using 379 college-aged individuals, which focused on possible predictors of cycling (e.g., relationship attributions, communication, attachment style, etc.). Using a bivariate logistic regression, results indicated that insecure-anxious attachment style was predictive of cycling, with relational ambivalence acting as a partial mediator. Based on these results, we conducted a follow-up study (N=448) with increased sample diversity to replicate and expand on these findings by examining factors that may mitigate risk of cycling, as well further understand how these differing trajectories of relationship stability develop and persist over time.

Feelings of unfairness following sexual rejections and their role in predicting romantic revenge and forgiveness

Mélanie Paulin, Pooja Sohal, & Susan D. Boon

University of Calgary

When a romantic partner is not "in the mood" for sex, navigating the task of communicating such disinterest to a partner can be tricky. Based on Kim et al.'s (in press) "Sexual Rejection Model", we investigated whether different types of sexual rejection (i.e., hostile, deflecting, assertive, and reassuring) lead to different perceptions of fairness in the relationship. We also examined whether perceptions concerning the fairness of the rejection influences whether rejected partners' inclinations to take revenge or to forgive their romantic partner following rejection. Our findings suggest that an assertive rejection is perceived as the most fair, and consequently, partners who are rejected in an assertive manner are the least likely to take revenge, and the most likely to forgive. Additionally, a deflective rejection is perceived as the

least fair, and is least likely to result in partner forgiveness. Lastly, a hostile rejection is most likely to result in revenge.

Supporting the victim after romantic infidelity: Communication processes and challenges of their personal network

Joshua Pederson, Leah LeFebvre, Reilly Lockwood, Brooklyn Pfanstiel, Abigail Slusser, & Caroline Ward
University of Alabama

This study investigates how victims and personal network members manage supporting the victim after experiencing romantic infidelity and explores the role third-parties play in coping and repair processes. Collegiate participants who experienced cheating (victims, $n = 9$) and support providers ($n = 13$) in their personal network completed semi-structured interviews. Networks included strong ($n = 6$), weak ($n = 5$), or absent ($n = 2$) connections. Employing an iterative emergent thematic analysis, we highlight the processes of disclosure, support, and interplay between victims and network members. Six themes – visceral, hesitancy, challenged, confirmed, comforted, and withholding – were identified for comforting and advising the victim. Network members, faced with complex choices, were challenged to decide how spill over affected them and their relationship to victim and perpetrator. Findings suggest that infidelity in adolescence and emerging adulthood poses dilemmas for support, coping, and relational repair and that ripple through the network.

The impact of ambiguous sacrifices on the expression of gratitude

Morgan Proulx & Laura V. Machia
Syracuse University

The expression of gratitude is an especially beneficial process through which positive individual and relational outcomes can be obtained. Whereas researchers have examined how pro-relational behaviors (e.g. sacrifices) promote gratitude and have made distinctions between the impacts of different type of sacrifices, the impact of ambiguity on the interpretation of sacrifices and the promotion of gratitude is less clear. It seems plausible that a sacrificing behavior enacted by one partner may not be recognized as a sacrifice by the benefactor. If the sacrifice is ambiguously interpreted by the benefactor, how might the benefactor interpret and react to this behavior? The present work will examine the impact of ambiguity of a sacrifice on the likelihood of expressing gratitude. Data from a study examining passive and active sacrifices will be presented, to explore how ambiguity ratings for different types of sacrifices impact the likelihood of expressing gratitude.

The benefits of mindfulness for individuals high in attachment anxiety

Rachael Quickert & Tara MacDonald
Queen's University

Although mindfulness has positive outcomes for relationships (Karremans et al., 2017), little research has explored the mechanisms underlying these benefits. Mindfulness may be

particularly helpful for individuals high in attachment anxiety, who fear rejection by their romantic partners (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). These individuals engage in “hyperactivating strategies” such as rumination and excessive reassurance-seeking (Simpson & Rholes, 2012). We reasoned that mindfulness may reduce hyperactivating strategies in individuals high in attachment anxiety. In the laboratory we randomly assigned participants to meditate or listen to an informational talk. We then elicited feelings of rejection by having participants imagine a scenario where a romantic rival texts their partner. We collected data on attachment anxiety and anticipated responses to the scenario (examining hyperactivating strategies). Attachment anxiety was related to less dispositional mindfulness. Our mindfulness induction did not reduce hyperactivating strategies; however, we are conducting a follow-up study to further explore this hypothesis.

Leveling the relational playing field: Examining the friendzone through experiential accounts

Ryan Rasner¹ & Leah LeFebvre²

¹Louisiana State University, ²University of Alabama

This study investigated the friendzone phenomenon through laypersons’ prior accounts. Building on the notion of relationship statuses – friends with benefits (FWB; Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013; Mongeau et al., 2013) and friendzone (Akbulut & Weger, 2015) – these statuses represent a desire or attempt to shift from friends to a romantic relationship by one person in the relationship. We explored the colloquial terminology through their experiences and illuminated the communicative distinctions by both role and sex. Collegiate participants (N = 780) completed open-ended responses about their experiences. We employed multiple methodologies: (1) Meaning Extraction Method to obtain common themes from participants’ responses in a corpus using principal component analysis, and (2) thematic analysis to identify changes to relationship trajectories. These findings highlight the complexity in friendship, interplay between role and sex in initiating and responding to romantic interest, and begin to untangle the FWB and friendzone colloquial terminology.

“I gave birth, I got the leave”: A content analysis of Canadian parents’ decision to share parental leave

Mylène Ross-Plourde & Véronique Savoie

Université de Moncton

Few parents having access to a paid parental leave choose to share it with their partner, with mothers most often taking the leave entirely (Statistics Canada, 2017) and the factors considered in this decision remain largely unknown. This study explores how couples decide on the division of parental leave. One hundred and fifty Canadian parents completed an online questionnaire. Results indicate that on average, mothers took 45 weeks of leave (S.D. = 15.05), while fathers took 7 weeks (S.D. = 11.47). Although parents frequently cited financial factors and breastfeeding as reasons for the mother to take the leave, the belief that the parental leave belongs to the mother appears to be present in many parents. Moreover, some parents consider that the presence of the mother provides more benefits to the child. Overall, the

present results provide insight on the beliefs and social norms that are still present regarding parenting roles.

What are the rewards? What are the threats? How insecurity affects online dating behaviors

Jennifer Ryan & M. Joy McClure

Adelphi University

The purpose of this research is to see if individuals that score relatively higher in insecure attachment act in ways that are characteristic of their insecurity on online dating apps/sites. We are also interested in perceived social reward and social threats of using dating sites/apps and how individuals decide to use them. Individuals with higher avoidant attachment are insensitive to social rewards while individuals with higher anxious attachment are sensitive to both social rewards and especially social threats. If an individual is higher in the anxious or avoidant forms of insecurity, we expect that there will be characteristic preferences in their use of online dating sites/apps, higher avoidance predicting strategies to minimize intimacy and higher anxiety predicting strategies to maximize intimacy but also reactivity to potential rejection. Online dating apps and sites are preferred by some to traditional dating because there is less stress in the situations.

Do dual-arrest policies increase Intimate Partner Violence recidivism?

Rodina Scott & Danney Rasco

West Texas A & M University

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) negatively impacts victims and their relationships, and recurrent IPV is particularly problematic. Legal responses have evolved from mediation via police-assisted conflict resolution to mandatory arrest laws and dual-arrest policies. Mandatory arrest laws – required arrest of suspected IPV perpetrator – have proved useful in decreasing recidivism. However, dual-arrest policies – both individuals involved are arrested – can misidentify victims as perpetrators or co-perpetrators and lead victims to hesitate in reporting future violence. Additionally, these cases are difficult for prosecutors as there often is not sufficient evidence to determine who instigated the violence; this may lead prosecutors to drop all charges resulting in perpetrators not being punished. We intend to evaluate how these factors impact likelihood for recidivism within a 12-month period following initial prosecution or dismissal for the first offense using a dataset with approximately 3,500 arrests.

Development and analysis of a Partner Regulation Communication Strategies scale

Natalie Sisson¹, Justin Cavallo², Christian Jordan², Emily Impett¹ & Yoobin Park¹

¹University of Toronto, ²Wilfrid Laurier University

One of the ways couples tackle persistent conflicts is by asking each other to make behavioural changes, which can lead to successful conflict resolution. Despite a growing body of literature on partner regulation, there is not a well-validated or published measure of communication strategies that romantic partners implement to communicate their desire for each other to change. Across two studies (N = 75; N = 349), a 24-item scale was developed to assess a

partner's use of partner regulation communication strategies, building on previous literature, which has demonstrated the distinct effects of four categories of partner regulation communication strategies that fall across two orthogonal dimensions. In each sample, exploratory factor analysis revealed four factors with good internal consistency, which mapped onto negative-direct, positive-direct, negative-indirect and positive-indirect communication strategies outlined in the literature. Future studies will conduct confirmatory factor analysis and test the scale's ability to predict successful partner change.

Can't swipe me love: Approach and avoidance goals are associated dating success on tinder

Julieta Strugo & Amy Muise

York University

Tinder, the mobile dating app, is widely used, but little research has investigated the dating experiences of users. We applied approach-avoidance theory of social motivation to understand the association between goals for Tinder use and perceived and actual dating success. In an exploratory study with 334 Tinder users (167 men; 162 women), we found that people higher in approach goals for Tinder use, such as to develop intimacy, reported more positive beliefs about people on Tinder and in turn, perceived greater dating success on Tinder and had more relationship partners from Tinder. People with higher avoidance goals, such as to avoid embarrassment, reported more anxiety when using Tinder and in turn, reported less perceived dating success. In Study 2—a preregistered replication—we largely replicated the findings. The role of motivation in dating success on Tinder and novel mechanisms for the association between dating goals and success are discussed.

Emotional regulation and satisfaction in adolescent romantic relationships: The role of negative conflict resolution strategies

Emily-Helen Todorov & Alison Paradis

Université du Québec à Montréal

By the age of 15, approximately 71% of Canadian adolescents report having been in a dating relationship. Such relationships have implications for adolescents' psychosocial development and for the quality of their adult relationships. However, the literature on romantic satisfaction in adolescence is scarce. This study aims to examine how two factors identified in the adult literature are related to satisfaction in adolescence: emotional dysregulation and negative conflict resolution strategies. A sample of 138 dating adolescents completed an online survey. After controlling for gender, age, and relationship duration, an indirect effect model using the MEDIATE SPSS macro revealed a significant indirect effect of emotional dysregulation, through the use of negative conflict resolution strategies, on relationship satisfaction. These results highlight the need to intervene on emotions in adolescence, in order to encourage the learning of healthy conflict resolution strategies, and ultimately to promote satisfying concurrent and future romantic relationships.

Optimism and relationship satisfaction in dyads undergoing open heart surgery

Kara Turcotte & Susan Holtzman
University of British Columbia

The importance of the patient-spouse dyad in cardiovascular disease is increasingly recognized. Limited research has assessed dispositional optimism and perceived relationship satisfaction in dyads where one member has cardiovascular disease. The purpose of the present research was to investigate the extent to which optimism in a patient-spouse dyad is related to their perceived relationship quality, and that of their partner. Standardized measures of dispositional optimism and relationship satisfaction were completed by 75 patient-spouse dyads prior to cardiac surgery. The effects were examined using Actor-Partner Interdependence Modelling. The results revealed significant actor effects, suggesting that higher levels of optimism were associated with higher levels of relationship satisfaction in both the patient and the spouse. A significant partner effect emerged revealing that patient optimism was associated with their spouse's relationship satisfaction. These findings reveal a complex dyadic pattern in the association between optimism and relationship outcomes in dyads undergoing open-heart surgery.

Attractive at a distance: Perceptions of autonomy in romantic relationships.

Samuel E. van Ginkel & Cheryl Harasymchuk
Carleton University

Abstract: In her best-selling book *Mating in Captivity*, romantic relationships author Esther Perel prescribes that "desire needs space" in relationships. Specifically, she claims that that feelings of sexual desire and attraction arise when there is separateness between partners (autonomy), and when one's partner is being admired by others (social admirability). These claims, however, remain empirically untested. We conducted an exploratory investigation into perceived relationship outcomes associated with autonomy and social admirability. Specifically, we asked participants (N = 512) to imagine high and low autonomy and social admirability relationship scenarios and to rate the subjective experiences of a partner in the relationship. While participants perceived that increased autonomy was related to reduced relationship security, closeness, and satisfaction, they also perceived that it related to greater attraction to the autonomous partner.

Want for interpersonal closeness: How past experiences and internal working models of self and others impact touch avoidance

Samantha Wagner
Binghamton University

Physical touch plays an important role in human bonding and while past research strongly supports that touch plays a crucial role in facilitating healthy relationships some individuals are more avoidant of touch than others. This study utilized a diverse sample (N= 448) and explored the way an individual's working model of themselves and others (e.g. attachment), as well as past relationship injuries (e.g. being cheated on), explain individual differences in wanting

interpersonal closeness. Utilizing linear regression modeling we found that individuals lower in avoidant attachment tendencies, those who experienced less psychological maltreatment, and those who were younger, were less likely to avoid touch. Surprisingly, we also found that those who endorsed having been cheated on in the past were less likely to be avoidant of touch. Overall, our findings support that want for interpersonal closeness is, in part, impacted by past experiences and perceptions of others and self.

Challenges in shared relationship activities: Towards a perceptual model of growth in self-expanding activities

Deanna L. Walker¹, Cheryl Harasymchuk², & Chantal Bacev-Giles²

¹Western University, ²Carleton University

Self-expansion literature has suggested that couples significantly benefit from engaging in novel and exciting activities; however, what happens when roadblocks get in the way? At present, there is limited research to explore the manner in which couples experience and overcome obstacles in the context of shared activities. Across two studies, the present research examines the occurrence of obstacles within planning and engaging self-expanding activities. We investigate individual differences in the experience and perception of obstacles, and suggest that these differences are one possible mechanism for the development, and hindrance, of relationship growth. First, we predict that individuals' perception of obstacles will significantly predict their ability to overcome such obstacles and achieve relationship growth. Additionally, we explore individual differences in these perceptions, with a focus on growth and destiny beliefs.

Gender differences in how affectionate touch promotes willingness to sacrifice

Delancey Wu¹, Brittany Jakubiak², Brooke Feeney³, & Nancy Collins¹

¹University of California, ²Syracuse University, ³Carnegie Mellon University

We examined how affectionate touch influenced couple members' willingness to sacrifice for each other and what factors may influence this decision. We randomly assigned participants to receive affectionate touch (or not) from their partner and then gave both participants an opportunity to sacrifice for their partner. We predicted that participants would be more willing to sacrifice when they received affectionate touch than when they did not. Although results did not support this hypothesis in the full sample, we found that women were more willing to sacrifice than men when they did not receive touch, but this gender difference is reversed when receiving touch. This effect may be driven by perceived partner responsiveness (PPR), as participants receiving touch reported significantly higher PPR than participants who did not. This study has the potential to advance our understanding of the conditions under which touch is more likely to benefit individuals and relationships.

Secret-keeping within romantic relationships: The fear of discovery

Elisabeth Bailin Xie, Hannah Brazeau, & Christopher Davis
Carleton University

Keeping secrets from one's romantic partner has been associated with lower relationship satisfaction, commitment, and well-being with more preoccupying secrets being associated with worse consequences. Previous research has suggested that individual differences in self-concealment contributes to these negative effects. However, we propose that the fear of discovery (FoD) – defined as the fear that one's secret may be revealed by some means other than deliberate disclosure – may also help explain the negative consequences of secret keeping through predicting one's level of preoccupation with the secret. To test this proposition, we conducted three surveys (combined N = 851) to assess the extent to which adults in a romantic relationship experienced FoD, self-concealment tendencies and preoccupation with one's secret. FoD predicted greater preoccupation with the secret over and above that of self-concealment across the three studies. Moreover, greater preoccupation was associated with lower levels of relationship satisfaction.

Self-control and relationship satisfaction among heterosexual couples: How strong is the effect really?

Peiyong Zuo¹, Johan C. Karremans¹, William J. Burk¹, Anouk P.J. Scheres¹, Esther S. Kluwer^{1, 2}, & Catrin Finkenauer^{2, 3}

¹Radboud University, ²Utrecht University, ³Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Background: Accumulating evidence has indicated that self-control may impose positive effects on one's own and the partner's relationship satisfaction. However, But do partners high in self-control have more satisfying relationships? Perhaps surprisingly, evidence is mixed. Objectives: The pre-registered study examined 1) the dyadic effects of self-control on relationship satisfaction among married couples cross-sectionally and longitudinally, 2) do any effects hold when controlling for other important factors for relationship satisfaction, in particular relationship commitment and attachment insecurity, and 3) explored the potential moderating role of relationship commitment and attachment insecurity on the association between self-control and relationship satisfaction. Method: To address the first research questions, APIM models were tested among heterosexual couples from three studies (S1: N = 195 couples, longitudinal; S2: N = 249 couples, longitudinal; S3: N = 929 couples, cross-sectional). APIMoM models were tested to answer the third research question. Results and Conclusion: Results indicated that 1) both positive actor and partner effects of self-control on relationship satisfaction were found for both genders (effect size: from small to medium). However, consistent evidence was obtained only for the cross-sectional actor effect. 2) After controlling for relationship commitment and attachment insecurity, both actor and partner effects diminished. 3) Both relationship commitment and attachment insecurity moderated the relationship between self-control and relationship satisfaction (particularly for male's satisfaction), which suggested that both variables could compensate the negative impact of low self-control on relationship satisfaction. However, no consistent moderating pattern were found across studies. Additionally, the moderating effects not only happened within a partner,

but also between partners, which further validated the need to investigate the relationships between those variables with a dyadic perspective.