

# RELATIONSHIP RESEARCH NEWS

OFFICIAL NEWS JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RELATIONSHIP RESEARCH

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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### Greetings from the President

by Bev Fehr

I live in a part of the world where the change of seasons is always dramatic. As I write this column (in early April), most of the snow has melted and there are tiny green signs of life emerging from the thawing soil. In a few weeks, buds of leaves and flowers should appear and perhaps an early crocus or two. I am awakened in the morning by the sounds of Canada geese returning from their southerly migration. This is my favourite time of year as I look forward to the almost magical appearance of green foliage, pink blossoms, and long daylight hours. The image of transformation and growth is a fitting one as I reflect on recent developments in our organization.

One extremely exciting development is IARR's new tax exempt status. This has been a long, arduous, process selflessly taken on by Chris Agnew. After 15 months and dozens of applications, the United States Internal Revenue Service has finally approved the association's tax exempt status. This is fabulous news and as Chris put it, this development "represents a very important milestone for the financial future of our association". We can now invest our balance and use the interest earned each year to further the mission of IARR. Kudos to Chris for his persistence, patience and countless hours spent making this happen. If you run into Chris in Greece (or anywhere else, for that matter), please buy him a drink. Although the tax exempt status ensures our continued financial health, buying drinks for the secretary treasurer apparently is still not a line item in our budget.

Speaking of Greece, the planning of the conference is progressing very smoothly. Thanks to John Caughlin and the program committee, a tentative program is now posted on the conference web site. Please check it out—the program looks fabulous! Kostas Kafetsios and the local organizing committee have also been working very hard to make this a successful, memorable experience. Submissions to this conference have been higher than expected which suggests there is a lot of enthusiasm out there. I am particularly pleased that the organizers were able to work out a reduced registration fee for presenters from less affluent countries. The inclusion of scholars from under-represented countries continues to be one of my goals for this organization. I am also hopeful that this conference will entice scholars from under-represented disciplines to become involved in IARR. I personally am thrilled that two of my practitioner friends will be attending their first-ever IARR conference.

Another delightful conference in the making is the New Scholars Workshop which will be held from July 27-30 at Bethel University in St. Paul, Minnesota. Many thanks to Nancy Eckstein for putting together a well-organized program that will be highly useful for new scholars in terms of teaching and research. Please check out the IARR website for more information.

To remain on the theme of positive developments and growth, I am delighted to report that the rate of submissions to *Personal Relationships* has been soaring. Editor Rebecca Adams recently appointed a sixth Associate Editor, but the number of submissions has increased so dramatically that she made a compelling case to the Board for the necessity of a seventh Associate Editor. It is extremely gratifying to see that our organization continues to grow and the association's journals continue to flourish in terms of visibility and impact.

In the midst of all of this exciting growth and development, I seem to be losing sight of the fact that my term as President is actually winding down. This is my last column as President (although I will be on

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*Relationship Research News* is published twice a year, once in September and once in April. Contributions are very welcome and will be published as space permits. Announcements, letters to the editors, cartoons/humor, teaching tips, and other information relevant to IARR members are all appropriate. If you would like to contribute a feature article or personal commentary, please submit a brief (one paragraph) description to the editors first (please do not send manuscripts). Submit all materials to Susan Boon, Department of Psychology, University of Calgary, 2500 University Dr. NW, Calgary, AB T2N 1N4, Canada; sdboon@ucalgary.ca. The deadline for final copy is September 1 for the Fall issue and April 1 for the Spring issue. (Inquiries regarding Feature Articles are welcome at any time.)

the board for another year as Past President) and I expect to be quite busy with IARR board and business meetings in Crete. I feel truly honoured to have been given the opportunity to serve this association and its members. The Board has been an absolute pleasure to work with. I have benefited immensely from the wisdom, insight, and good humour of each of my colleagues on the board. A heartfelt thank you to all of you for your dedicated service. I also would like to extend my deepest thanks to our journal editors, committee chairs, and committee members. Each of you has contributed significantly to the vitality and growth of this wonderful organization.

Hope to see you in Crete!

Sincerely yours,

Beverley Fehr

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

by Susan Boon  
University of Calgary

*I* am indebted once again to all those who contributed articles for this issue of RRN despite a submission deadline that falls just at that point in the term when it seems like the workload couldn't get heavier if it had to!

We have all of the usual fare for you in this issue of the newsletter—a feature article, updates on the IARR webpage, reports from the journal editors, member news and updates, and the latest in contributions from the Lighter Side and our retired professional. Kostas Kafetsios, Local Arrangements Chair, and John Caughlin, Program Chair, have also provided an extensive array of pre-conference details for the upcoming conference in Rethymnon.

The Teaching Tips Column takes a somewhat different format in this issue, however. With just a little coercion on my part, Ann Weber (who, as announced in the Spring 2005 issue, won the 2005 Board of Governors Award for Excellence in Teaching, the highest teaching honor bestowed by the state of North Carolina) agreed to take over the helm from Maureen O'Sullivan for this issue. As a huge movie fan, I was delighted when her column focused on the use of film in courses on interpersonal relationships. I hope you will learn as much from her experiences using movies as a teaching tool as I have. I have often wanted to make more use of popular media in my classes but been uncertain how to go about it. Ann offers valuable lessons in how to make movies work for you in your classes. Thanks, Ann!

Here's to spring (or fall, depending on where you are), the end of term, and the conference in Greece!

## FEATURE ARTICLE

### OF FLEECES AND FUNDING

*I*n the Fall 2005 issue of RRN, the Feature Article comprised a set of essays on ethics and the conduct of relationship research. With the exception of Brant Burleson's piece on the ethics of offering advice and suggesting interventions on the basis of our research findings, most of the contributions spoke of difficulties our IARR peers had encountered in their efforts to obtain ethical approval for their research, difficulties which resulted in major delays and setbacks in at least one contributor's case. We continue our focus on the challenges that sometimes beset researchers in this issue. Sandra Murray and Elaine Hatfield write for us about their experiences—recent and in the

past—with interference at the level of government.

For most of the past year I have had a newspaper clipping on my desk in which a journalist pointedly questions the value of spending taxpayers' money on a variety of research endeavours that have received funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada but which he considers of little or no value himself. One of my interpersonal relationships students brought me the clipping in response to a class discussion of Senator Proxmire's indictment of Elaine Hatfield, Mary Utne O'Brien and Jane Traupmann Pillemer's program of research some two decades ago. When I heard of Senator Neugebauer's actions concerning Sandra Murray's National Institute of Mental Health research grant last year, I thought of this newspaper clipping and of others I have seen throughout the years that poke fun at relationship research (suggesting, for example, that findings that conflict is bad for a relationship are so "obvious" and self-evident that researchers are wasting their time and taxpayers' money by conducting studies on the topic) and how such articles trivialize what we do and promote a disparaging and false view of relationship science. I then thought of contacting some of those who have been on the front lines in the battle to prove their research worthy and of asking them to relate their experiences and discuss what they have learned from the resistance their research has encountered. Thank you to Sandra Murray and Elaine Hatfield for accepting my invitation in this regard.

Susan Boon  
Editor, RRN

## **The Importance of Clarifying the Peer Review Process and Explaining the Value of Basic Research**

**Sandra Murray**  
**University at Buffalo, SUNY**

**O**n June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2005 my research life got an unexpected jolt. My NIMH grant, a longitudinal study of newlywed couples, was targeted for defunding by the US Congress! How did this happen? Representative Randy Neugebauer attached an amendment to the Labor, Health and Human Services bill to take funding away from two research grants. This amendment passed the House in a voice (i.e., non-recorded) vote. Fortunately, the Senate did not attach a similar amendment to their version of the LHHS bill, and the amendment was removed in conference. The LHHS bill, minus the Neugebauer amendment, was signed by the President on December 30<sup>th</sup>.

What happened between June 24<sup>th</sup> and December 30<sup>th</sup>? The day I found out that the amendment was pending I contacted Steve Breckler, the head of the Science Directorate at APA. APA was already on top of the situation, and Steve immediately put me in touch with Karen Studwell in APA's public policy office. Karen then assisted me in drafting a press release and in handling press inquiries. Later that summer, APA brought Dr. Wasserman and myself to DC to lobby our local House and Senate representatives to support the removal of the amendment. Although the circumstances surrounding the visit were less than positive, the visit itself was fascinating, and almost fun. With Karen's coaching, I finally felt like I had some control over the situation. I could defend the value of the scientific peer review process and the value of my research (and close relationships and social psychological research more broadly) to the people who decide how much money the federal government will provide for basic science.

Why did all of this happen? Representative Neugebauer believes that NIMH funding should

only be used to support research on serious mental illness. (He maintains this stance despite the fact that Congress has mandated NIMH to support basic research). In fact, over the past two years, Rep. Neugebauer has attached amendments to de-fund grants he thinks should fall outside of NIMH's mandate. In 2004, he targeted two social psychology grants; in 2005, he targeted my grant and a grant awarded to a cognitive psychologist, Ed Wasserman, at the University of Iowa.

What have I learned? First, we don't always do a good job of explaining the value and place of the peer review system to the public. Rep. Neugebauer is able to gain traction for his amendments in part because he casts scientists as feathering one another's pockets. So we need to do a better job of explaining how rigorous and involved the peer review process is. NIMH grants, as an example, involve two different levels of review. Second, we don't always do a good job of explaining the value of basic science broadly, and the value of basic relationships research more specifically. If we remain relatively silent (and living in our academic bubbles, as I was happily doing until this happened), we are easy prey for politicians or critics who want to dismiss our research as a luxury that the government cannot afford. Instead, we need to be proactive in communicating that we can only understand the roots of both mental and physical illness if we understand the nature of the relationships that make up the core of people's lives. In this respect, I am (almost, but not quite) happy this happened to me. It made me think about my work in a "bigger picture" frame that will help me do better science. My newlywed study is currently ongoing, and I am incredibly grateful to the support I received from APA and the broader academic community. In fact, all of the major science organizations rallied to the cause of defeating this amendment because protecting peer review protects the basic freedom and value of science itself. For those friends and colleagues who contacted me (and contacted their own Congressional and Senate representatives), I'm forever grateful.

For the future. Rep. Neugebauer is likely to try this again, perhaps this summer during

the FY2007 LHHS debate. On behalf of the yet to be identified researchers to be targeted, I implore you to stay on top of this issue, and keep informed. If you would like to do so, you can go to the APA Public Policy website at <http://www.apa.org/ppo/> or sign up to receive policy alerts on science or other policy issues at <http://capwiz.com/apapolicy/mlm/signup/>.

### Proxmire's Golden Fleece Award<sup>1</sup>

**Elaine Hatfield**  
**University of Hawaii**

*I*n the Spring of 1975, I and two of my University of Wisconsin colleagues, Mary Utne O'Brien and Jane Traupmann Pillemer, had embarked on a program to learn more about the nature of passionate love and sexual desire. The National Science Foundation had awarded us a tiny grant, allowing us to investigate the importance of social justice and equity in romantic exchanges. Our early results were promising. We'd found considerable evidence that, in love relationships, equity mattered. Specifically, we'd found that:

1. The more socially desirable people are (the more attractive, personable, famous, rich, or considerate they are), the more socially desirable they will expect a mate to be.
2. Dating couples are more likely to fall in love if they perceive their relationships to be equitable.
3. Couples are likely to end up with someone fairly close to themselves in social desirability. They are also likely to be matched on the basis of self-esteem, looks, intelligence, education, mental and physical health (or disability).
4. Couples who perceive their relationships to be equitable are more likely to get involved, sexually.
5. Equitable relationships are comfortable relationships.

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<sup>1</sup> Portions of this article originally appeared in the APS Observer.

6. Equitable relationships are stable relationships.

When Wisconsin's U.S. Senator William Proxmire discovered what we were up to, he awarded us a "Golden Fleece Award," claiming we were "fleecing" taxpayers with our "unnecessary" and "frivolous" scientific research. The Senator had launched his well-publicized campaign against a bevy of love and sex researchers by firing off the first in a series of serio-comic press releases:

I object to this not only because no one—not even the National Science Foundation—can argue that falling in love is a science; not only because I'm sure that even if they spend \$84 million or \$84 billion they wouldn't get an answer that anyone would believe. *I'm also against it because I don't want the answer.*

I believe that 200 million other Americans want to leave some things in life a mystery, and right on top of the things we don't want to know is why a man falls in love with a woman and vice versa . . .

So National Science Foundation—get out of the love racket. Leave that to Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Irving Berlin. Here if anywhere Alexander Pope was right when he observed, "If ignorance is bliss, tis folly to be wise." (cited in Hatfield & Walster, 1978, p. viii).

In terms that will sound all too familiar to today's IARR members, the Senator urged the United States Senate to seize control over the NSF's and NIMH's scientific granting and peer review process.

In subsequent weeks, Senator Proxmire and his political allies issued a whirlwind of press releases. Alas for love and sex researchers, he and his scriptwriters possessed a diabolical and withering sense of humor. (Today's conservative critics and "no-nothings" tend to be

a bit dour, and more sinister and more effective than was Proxmire, I'm afraid.) Here is a mocking "Letter to the Editor" that appeared in *The Washington Post* a few hours after Senator Proxmire's original sneak attack.<sup>2</sup>

### **President Pierce-Martin Condemns NSF Grant To Study Sex Life of Polish Frogs**

Today Peter Croft Pierce-Martin, President of the Acme Wire and Spring Corporation in Dallas, Texas, and his seventy-two employees sent the President and the National Science Foundation an open letter. "We at Acme Wire and Spring object to our hard earned tax dollars being squandered on studies of the sex lives of Polish frogs, why kids fall off tricycles, and such."

President Pierce-Martin pointed out that last year the Acme Corporation and its employees paid \$2.82 million in taxes. He then went on to list NSF and NIMH grants, totaling exactly that amount. Among the projects listed were:

- \$375,000 for a Pentagon study of the Frisbee
- \$84,000 for a study of cross-cultural love
- \$70,000 to study the smell of perspiration given off by Australian aborigines
- \$5,000 to the author of the one one-word poem—"Light"
- \$20,000 to study the blood groups of Polish Zlotnika pigs
- \$5,000 for an analysis of violin varnish

Since this witty "Letter to the Editor" appeared only a few hours after the Senator's original press release, I couldn't help but wonder just how spontaneous President Pierce-Martin's *cri de cœur* was. How did Acme suck up all those

<sup>2</sup> I've mislaid the original newspaper attack, but it went something like this.

figures in an hour and a half? Still, I and all my colleagues had to admit the letter was funny.

A few days after President Pierce-Martin's letter hit the wire services, NSF proffered its earnest rejoinder. The *Washington Post* buried it on one of the inside pages. The NSF rebuttal informed readers—who probably didn't care in the first place—that the \$375,000 “Frisbee” study was actually a Pentagon project designed to develop a new aircraft-launched naval flare, the \$2,000 study of “why children fall off of tricycles” was a Federal FDA project to test the safety of children's toys, and the \$80,000 “down the toilet” program was actually part of the NASA Space program. A compelling rebuttal but, of course, nothing can kill a good joke.

Proxmire's attacks generated so much public attention that before Proxmire's siege ended, 13 scientists exploring the mysteries of love and sex had been attacked for their “scientific boondoggles” and “con games”—including such luminaries as Ellen Berscheid, Robert Baron, and Zick Rubin.

Amazingly, in that dangerous political climate, many distinguished citizens came to our support. Senator Barry Goldwater, three University of Chicago Nobel Prize Winners, and the Editor of *Science* wrote laudatory letters to the *New York Times*, the *Capital Times*, and *Science* magazine. So did columnist James Reston. In his column in *The New York Times*, Reston wryly agreed that love will always be a mystery.

But if the sociologists and psychologists can get even a suggestion of the answer to our pattern of romantic love, marriage, disillusion, divorce—and the children left behind—it would be the best investment of federal money since Jefferson made the Louisiana purchase.

The University of Wisconsin Madison Faculty Senate met, debated the Senator's charges, and voted to condemn the Senator's “unjust and misleading attacks” by a vote of 84 to 1.

Alas, not all our early relationship research garnered the public's unwavering support.

A friend, Dr. Roland W. Radloff (Program Director of the Social Psychology Program, of the National Science Foundation) suggested I refrain from submitting any grants to NSF for a while. “Let it blow over,” he advised. Research on this topic had become too hot to handle. I agreed. (And indeed, since then all my research has been privately funded.)

My mother's Roman Catholic Bishop got into the act. Right Reverend Richard S. Emrich issued a message to the Detroit parishes denouncing the NSF for supporting scientists' attempts to unravel the “most sacred mysteries of love and life.” “Who granted these ‘scientists’ the ability to see into men's minds and hearts?” he asked. Were our findings going to eliminate pride, selfishness, jealousy, suffering, and war?

Jesus Christ has taught us all that we need to know about love and life. . . . His Word waits there, in *The Holy Bible*, for us. He has been waiting for us for almost 2,000 years. It is *His* commands we must follow, not the childish “advice” of some arrogant, secular scientist, who presumes to know more than Our Lord.

A Chicago tabloid—*The Chicago Daily News*—ran a contest. Readers could call in and vote: “Who is right—Proxmire or Hatfield?” A massive number of readers (and even a few friends) wrote in to say I was “naive” to think love and sex could be studied scientifically. I lost the contest: Proxmire 87.5%, me 12.5%.

This silliness went on for many years. The news stories began to swirl around like some kind of toxic cosmic dust. Senator Proxmire would return to Madison on a Sunday (to attend a Badgers' football game); he'd take that opportunity to appear on a local TV show denouncing (sigh!) love research. I would be asked to reply. On Monday, one of Senator Proxmire's comic writers would issue a



The *Chicago Daily News*, April 19, 1975

devastatingly funny press release (inaccurate but beguiling) about the inanities of our love and sex research. By Tuesday morning, I'd be reeling from its aftershock. On Wednesday, the fallout would be settling in near Tokyo. Stories would appear in the *Asahi Shimbun*, *Mainichi Shimbun*, and *Yomiuri Shimbun*. A few weeks later, *The Bangladeshi Standard's* Geiger counters would be clicking out the news. Each time an editor in Japan, Bangladesh, or Mozambique translated the story, a name would get misspelled here, a word altered there, and the next thing you know, the *Wisconsin State Journal* would have picked up the challenge or comic riff yet again. The news story would be so altered and so sensationalized—by now, Dr. Hatfield, the mad doctor of love, would be caught slipping women dime bags of marijuana, asking students to confess their darkest secrets while both were doing God-knows-what in their bedrooms—that the *Journal* would assume that somehow they'd missed a heck of a story. Then once more the dust would start swirling around the earth, entering newer and higher orbits with each new news cycle.

I got to know the postman very well indeed as he dragged in mail by the bag full. I saved the best of those letters, and recently, when I decided to write a comic novel about *Rosie*, a young sexuality researcher who gets in trouble for *her* research, I had those Proxmire newscasts, comic attacks, and letters to draw on. *Rosie's* adventures are pure fantasy—except for the amazing letters I received. I could not construct missives more stunning.

Crazy persons' letters, with blood curdling threats. Spiky letters, painstakingly, tremblingly constructed. Letters written in Day-Glo colors. Words marching in an orderly way across the top of the page, down the sides, and along the bottom, but then they began to sprawl in upon themselves, growing smaller and smaller as they whirled around the page. At the vortex, the microscopic calligraphy ended in a sinister inkblot. Letters filled with pain and suffering. Most people, of course, wanted to know how they could scam some of the U. S. Government's "loot" for themselves. When they discovered they would have to dash off a grant—and actually get that grant reviewed—they were irate.

Scientists were not without their own John Stewart's, and their own biting humor, of course. Art Buchwald (the Molly Ivens of his day) and a host of lesser known commentators caricatured Senator Proxmire's "paroxysms," and "love spats" with relationship researchers. Researchers such as Ronald Hutchinson began to sue Senator Proxmire for his distortions—and won!

How did I cope? Not very well, I'm afraid. I am a shy person, not on the lookout for conflict; I just like to pursue my intellectual interests. So *L'Affaire Proxmire* was actually painful to me. When I remember those days, I do so mostly with embarrassment, despite the eventual positive and rewarding outcome.

Thank God for longevity! I have hung around long enough to see things change for the better. When Ellen Berscheid and I wrote *Interpersonal Attraction* (in 1969), we were able to ferret out precious little research on passionate love and sexual desire. It was pathetic. We had to speculate about the nature of love with little or no data (and shockingly little experience of our own) to guide us.

What a change has occurred in 30+ years! There are historical periods when scientific and technological advances allow scientists to take giant strides forward. This is certainly one of those times. In spite of the fact that since George Bush has taken over and it sometimes

feels as if the Taliban is controlling American science policy, we still live in a time of amazing scientific ferment. Today, scholars from a variety of theoretical disciplines— social psychologists, anthropologists, evolutionary psychologists, microbiologists, neuroendocrinologists, and more—are addressing the same issues with which we struggled. They are employing an impressive array of new techniques as well: they are studying primates in the wild and in captivity and pouring over fMRIs. Historians are now studying history from the “bottom up” rather than the “top down.” They are examining less the lives of kings and queens and more those of the majority of our deceased sisters and brothers, utilizing demographic data (marriage, birth, death, and divorce records) architectural and archaeological remains, medical manuals, church edicts, law cases, song lyrics, and whatever diaries and letters they can find.

Recently, my husband, Richard L. Rapson, and I summarized this impressive research in: *Love, Sex, and Intimacy: Their Psychology, Biology, and History*, and also in *Love and Sex: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. (The first book details everything scientists and scholars know about passionate love and intimacy in the West, including the formation, maintenance, and ending of relationships. The second text considers passionate love worldwide.)

In the very near future, I suspect that social psychologists will be well on the way to answering some of the questions that have plagued researchers for centuries. These inquiries will undoubtedly raise hackles in some quarters of society, but the quest for knowledge and understanding cannot be stilled for very long.

Senator Proxmire may not have intended it, but in Greek mythology the search for the Golden Fleece was considered a noble and heroic undertaking—as indeed it has proven itself to be.

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## THE LIGHTER SIDE OF RELATIONSHIPS

### Angelina and Brad

by David A. Kenny

You may have learned, in an earlier column, about RelNet, the television channel devoted to relationships. I have been able to obtain a transcript from the RelNet interview of the stars Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt. You may notice from the interview that the couple has hired a relationship coach. What is a relationship coach? It is someone who uses their knowledge of relationships to help people understand what is happening in their lives. Here is that interview:

RelNet: Angelina, let me begin by asking about your estranged father, Jon Voight.

Angelina: First, he is not my “estranged” father, but rather my father is just strange. The problem with him is his dismissing attachment style. He is highly avoidant and low anxiety. According to our relationship coach Rowland, he is a total narcissist, he has tremendous difficulty showing normal emotions. The only time I have ever seen him emotional was with Ratzo Rizzo, Dustin Hoffman, on a Greyhound bus in *Midnight Cowboy*.

RelNet: While your relationship with your dad is strange, is not your relationship to your brother Haven even stranger? Is not one of your numerous tattoos an "H" for him, and did you not plant a big wet kiss on him during the Academy Awards?

Angelina: A women needs a father figure in her life and Haven was that for me.

Brad: Actually the "H" is for Timothy Hutton. Angelina likes to show her commitment to her partner. I will not tell you where she has my last name tattooed and it is not in her armpits.

RelNet: Angelina, you were married to Billy Bob Thornton. I have to ask about the vials of each other's blood that you wore around your necks.

Angelina: You have to understand that his mother was the town psychic in the small town where he grew up. I guess being psychic has low heritability, or maybe he inherited just the psycho part of psychic. As for the vial of blood, it was a symbolic expression of our mutual commitment. I also pretended to lose my vial so I could get Billy Bob's blood periodically tested, for reasons I will not reveal.

RelNet: You are now pregnant with Brad's baby. Are you worried that a child from the two of you is going to be too beautiful?

Angelina: It was indeed a worry. However, you have to factor in regression toward the mean. The expectation using Galton's formula is that the child will be about half as beautiful as we are. The expectation for any kid of Billy Bob's is for regression up toward the mean.

RelNet: I guess that is why you adopted children with Billy Bob, Maddox from Cambodia and Zahara from Ethiopia.

Angelina: Although our children are living in the United States, we give Maddox a chance for a strong Cambodian identity by trying to feed him rice and Zahara an Ethiopian identity by trying to feeding her nothing.

Relnet: Let me now turn to Brad Pitt, who attended the Missouri School of Journalism and was two credits shy of graduating. Brad, you were married for many years to America's sweetheart, Jennifer Aniston.

Brad: Yeah, I was a bit of a zombie during the Bradafier years, but eventually I did an Exit thing and she did the Loyalty thing. I still think Rachel is a great person, and when we broke up I asked her if we could stay friends.

RelNet: What did she say?

Brad: She engaged in an act of physical assault on the Conflict Tactics Scale scale.

RelNet: What does that mean?

Brad: She slapped me in the face. You know I played Achilles but I am no heel. Hey, I have moved beyond the grave dressing state of relationship dissolution.

RelNet: When did you first get interested in Angelina?

Brad: It started years ago when I got PlayStation and I beat Tomb Raider.

RelNet: Since Angelina had repeatedly fallen in love with her costars, are you worried she may dump you for someone else?

Brad: Abandonment issues are not part of the person called Brad Pitt. However, I have been urging her to sign up for a remake of Cocoon with Wilfred Brimley. No way she does Oceans 13.

RelNet: Can you comment on the tattoo on Angelina's belly that says "Quod me nutrit me destruit" ("What nourishes me also destroys me").

Brad: At first I thought it was a Nike ad, but then she told me that milk makes her puke (oh, I mean vomit). Rowland says it is really an unconscious reference to her father.

RelNet: So what is it like being an adoptive father?

Brad: I do find it difficult to accept, you know from an evolutionary point of view, that I share none of my genes with Maddox and Zahara. But then I learned that people share 98 percent of their genes with a *Drosophila* or fruit fly and I felt better.

RelNet: One last question: When you two check into a hotel and you want to remain anonymous, what name do you give?

Brad: Laura and I sign in as Mr. and Mrs. Smith.

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## MEMO

**TO: IARR Members**

**FROM: Dan Canary**

**RE: Division of the Really Applied [Relationship] Division (T)**

**Date: April 1, 2006**

**T**he study of personal relationships will never ascend to the level of scholarly appreciation that other disciplines, such as swing mechanics, enjoy until we really apply what we know in some very real ways to some very real people. Accordingly, I propose the creation of a new division in IARR: the "Division of the Really Applied [Relationship] Division (T)" (DRADT).

A "top-up, bottom-down" approach to theory-building could be used, though most of the gains would clearly be atheoretical. After all, there is nothing as valuable as knowledge in the service of pure knowledge, except of course pure knowledge in the service of not-so-pure knowledge. To really make a statement, the application would require really invasive methods. The following five ideas suggest only

an initial glimpse of the kinds of research that could be done:

*1. Experimental auto-ethnographic research.* Here the researcher keeps careful entries about various relationships that she or he "manipulates." Of course, the relationships need to vary in "systematic ways" that are not confounded with the researcher's mood. Accordingly, this project would necessitate simultaneous "between-partner" designs, with the researcher as a "repeated" factor. Given that the researcher would need to devote "full time" to the "field," "funding" would be "mandatory." I should stop using "quotes."

*2. Experiments that forcibly mismatch singles.* Another idea would be to match people who are all wrong for each other, for example, whose attachment styles are bad for each other (e.g., two arrogant dismissives). We would need to use highly intimidating incentives ("I have pictures of you at the zoo, kissing a monkey"). After forcing these people to date for three months, we could place them in confined, hot quarters somewhere in the Midwestern U.S. and videotape their discussions of complaints about each other. In this way, we can learn more about such constructs as interdependence, conflict, and aggression that we would not normally see using attachment theory, or any theory.

*3. Web sites that target children.* There is no reason not to do this, just as there is no reason to do it--but ties go to the runner so here we go. Given the dearth of research on the topic, this is obviously an area in need of study to find what kind of parent allows their children to surf the web, let alone use a computer. Personally, I did not own a PC until I was 30, which is when PCs became standard. I still prefer my 1929 Underwood manual typewriter, with keys so high and stiff that I had to use a mallet simply to spell "mallet." Children should use Underwoods and watch public television.

*4. Honeymoon ride-alongs.* For a truly invasive research idea, this one can be quite interesting. And the perks of doing this research can be quite varied, as most honeymoons take place in exotic

locations--such as Madison, Wisconsin. Relationship researchers make excellent relationship consultants that could affect real people in immediate and real ways on honeymoon ride-alongs. This idea hit me when I observed this guy who couldn't eat correctly. What an embarrassment. So I taught him how to hold a fork and knife, how to stop scratching himself in public, and how to kiss gently. Now the people at the zoo are happier with their monkey.

5. *Relational smack-down*. This could be a fun radio program. Inspired by Pepper (not Pepper Schwartz, but my dog Pepper), we could have relationship researchers bark answers at contestants about some relationship problem they have. The smack-downs are worth points based on an arbitrary system that I created.

"The next question is from Abby from Madison. She wants to know how to get her roommate from stealing all her money and lovers."

"I don't know—ask your roommate" is an empirical answer worth 17.23 points.

"Abby, you have no chance because your roommate is so much hotter!" is a value statement worth *pi*.

"Abby, what makes you think you can keep a lover in the first place?" is an integrity threat that would be worth say a compass and a calendar.

"Abby, your roommate is a dog" is irrelevant, worth a free video rental.

These five ideas are only the beginning of the next big thing! As you can see, there is room for growth here. So the next time you renew your membership, BE SURE to check the line next to the Division of the Really Applied [Relationship] Division (T), or DRADT. Chris Agnew assures me that if enough people check the box, we could be our own separate unit. Also, *please* let me know if you have any research ideas along these lines and if the acronym is a stretch.

## RETIRE PROFESSIONALS COLUMN

### A Belated Tribute: Just for the Record

by Paul Wright

**F**or several years, I've been looking for a way to pay published homage to Efraín Sigisfredo Sánchez-Hidalgo. This column seems convenient for that purpose and may, in fact, be the only place available to me. Please indulge me. This is a mostly personal thing that may be of scarcely passing interest to other IARR members, particularly those who are not especially concerned with the study of friendship.

"And why," you may ask, "do you wish to pay tribute to this gentleman?" Simply this: In the summer of 2001, I happened upon an article by Professor Sánchez-Hidalgo that:

- a) argued strongly for the value of studying friendship as a relationship worthy of detailed conceptual/theoretical consideration in its own right;
- b) criticized past studies of friendship as (1) placing too much emphasis on "external" and "non-dynamic" factors such as propinquity and various forms of similarity, (2) studying almost exclusively factors that are measurable and, hence, (3) negating the interplay of individual dynamics within friendship that cannot be assessed quantitatively;
- c) proposed that, except in rare cases, friendships originate spontaneously and develop in a non-deliberate way;

- d) proposed that friendship involves each of the partners in an expansion of her/his ego (self);
- e) interpreted friendship as a symbiotic integration in which each partner cooperates in meeting certain needs in the other, but in an unselfconscious and unpremeditated manner;
- f) identified the major needs met in (e) as (1) protection of the ego, (2) exaltation of the ego, (3) expression of the ego, and (4) help (“practical” assistance and support);
- g) observed that the friendships of women and men differ in that those of women are more “internally” oriented (subjective and emotional) and those of men more “externally” oriented (objective and “practical”); and
- h) insisted that friendship is an “imperfect” relationship, i.e., subject to potential strain due to one or both partners’ problematic personal mannerisms.

“So?” (you may note), “This stuff is commonplace, even outdated. Why a tribute to the author?” Simply this: the article was published in 1953. Better (or worse?) yet, it was based on the author’s doctoral dissertation completed at Columbia University in 1951.

1951! That’s the year I graduated from high school. That was way back when the idea of persons p balancing their relationships with persons o was hardly more than a gleam in Fritz Heider’s eye. Moreover, it was...

before Theodore Newcomb had college dorm mates straining toward symmetry,

before Anthony Smith and Donn Byrne had student volunteers inexorably attracted to hypothetical strangers with similar attitudes and values,

before R. F. Winch had people yearning for mates with complementary needs,

before Carroll Izard had partners pairing off on the basis of similar personality profiles, and

before William Schutz found couples getting along best when they experienced different kinds of compatibility in their Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientations.

I could go on at this general level but, more to the point, the article in question appeared 15 years before friendship itself started capturing major interest among social/behavioral scientists as reflected, for example, in ...

my own efforts to build a friendship model and develop the Acquaintance Description Form hypothetico-deductively,

John La Gaipa’s virtually simultaneous activity in building a similar model and generating his Friendship Expectations Inventory empirico-inductively,

Susan Kurth’s and Gerald Suttles’ zeroing in on the characteristics of friendship as a social institution, and

Martin and Paula Fiebert’s preparation of a conceptual guide to friendship formation.

In other words, with respect to conceptualizing and exploring friend-ship, Efraín Sánchez-Hidalgo was way ahead of all of us.

It would be reasonable to ask why, if the article was so foresightful, I did not discover it, cite it, and build on it in the mid-60s when I was beginning work on friendship. This was due, I believe, to a combination of factors. First, as I noted obliquely in a previous column, today’s computer-based literature searches are amazingly quick and efficient. Back around 1966, they were not. Culling through volumes

of abstracts was a cumbersome undertaking, and the abstracting process itself was not the epitome of efficiency. It was easy to miss or disregard articles in low circulation and/or non-English journals. Second, the article appeared under the title, “La psicología de la amistad,” in the Spanish-language (duh!) journal, *Pedagogía*, published in Puerto Rico. This journal is geared primarily to Spanish-speaking educators and, at that time, had apparently little circulation outside of Puerto Rico. Hence, for too long, Sánchez-Hidalgo’s “ahead of its time” psychological approach to friendship was (as they say) “hidden in plain sight.”

But then, in 2001, one of those “amazingly quick and efficient” searches uncovered the article and I obtained a copy via Interlibrary Loan. I was able to recover enough of my familiarity with Spanish *de aquellos tiempos* to know that I needed an English translation, which was graciously provided by a friend from the UND Summer Institute of Linguistics.<sup>3</sup>

By current standards of PR writing, Sánchez-Hidalgo’s presentation was, at times, somewhat lacking in precision and clarity. However, a careful reading and “sorting through” yielded, for me, the “theory about friendship” (Sánchez-Hidalgo’s expression) distilled above. Obviously, I see in that distillation an overall anticipation of work on personal relationships that came much later. However, what struck me on my first reading was more specific and more personal than that. Much of what Sánchez-Hidalgo had to say about friendship bore an uncanny resemblance to many --and I mean *many*-- of the concepts and propositions that unfolded piece by piece in my own work from 1967 to about 1980. And he said it all in one article. In 1953 yet! Talk about being humbled!

And now for a reasonable question: Were there any aspects of Sánchez-Hidalgo’s article that I would take issue with? Yes, several. After all, PR work on friendship has come a long way

since the late ‘60s, not to mention the early ‘50s. I’ll cite just one instance. As implied above, Sánchez-Hidalgo insisted that the interplay of dynamics in friendship cannot be measured and therefore must be studied qualitatively --as he did for his dissertation. Whereas I agree that there is much to be learned from qualitative research, I also believe that some of us have done a creditable job of developing techniques for assessing some of those important “dynamics” quantitatively.

I sometimes wonder what Sánchez-Hidalgo would have thought of our measuring techniques. I would love to discuss this with him. But (alas!) he died in 1974 at the tender age of 66 years. Not to put too fine a point on it, I would love to know what he would think about the whole PR field as it developed and exists today. I think he would have liked what we are doing and how we are doing it. If he had been younger and academically active when the field started taking shape, I think he may have joined us as a productive participant.

Then again, maybe not. From what I have been able to learn about his career both before and after 1953, he was wholeheartedly devoted to public education at all levels. He became an apparently indefatigable teacher, administrator and organizer, and a prolific writer, mostly on themes related to educational psychology. Indications are that he was a highly influential figure in Puerto Rican education who is still remembered there with near awe. But to the best of my knowledge, he did nothing with friendship *per se* after 1953.

So here you have it, my tribute as a retired relationship scholar to a figure from the past I wish I could have known. The tribute is, perhaps, an empty gesture. Efraín Sánchez-Hidalgo had apparently no impact on the field of personal relationships or its precursors. No one knew about his work.<sup>4</sup> But it is a gesture I wanted to make anyway... just for the record.

<sup>3</sup> I will gladly honor requests for copies of this translation.

<sup>4</sup> Meaning, of course, that I could find no citations. If any readers have ever come across references to S-



## Net News

by Ben Le

**T**he IARR web site ([www.iarr.org](http://www.iarr.org)), which was redesigned last summer, continues to evolve to suit the organization's needs. In particular, the information posted by the 2006 IARR Conference organizers is especially useful as members plan their travels to Crete. If you haven't seen the fantastic pictures of Rethymnon and surrounding areas on the web site, check them out. I can't wait for July!

As you know, the web site includes a list of member's home pages. Currently, nearly 80 IARR members have their pages linked to the web site. If you see that your home page is not listed, or the link is out of date, please send it to me. The listing of home pages is a great way for us to see what each other are doing and keep in touch with each other.

One feature of the IARR web site that has been underutilized is the discussion board hosted by Bill Dragon. I encourage members to check out this forum—go to the “IARR Resources” link from the web site to find out how to use the

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H's work, or even heard of him except from me, please let me know.

discussion board. Hopefully we'll be able to have some lively exchanges using this space.

As always, if you have any announcements you'd like posted on the website, edits to specific pages, or other suggestions or comments regarding the website, please direct them to me at ([ble@haverford.edu](mailto:ble@haverford.edu)). See you in Crete!

Ben

**IARR Members:  
Check the website for IARRC 2006  
conference information:**

[www.iarrc2006.org](http://www.iarrc2006.org)

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### ***Composing Relationships: Communication in Everyday Life***

**Edited by Julia T. Wood and Steve Duck  
(2006). Wadsworth Series in Communication  
Studies. 256 pp.**

**reviewed by Guy Bodenmann  
Institute for Family Research and  
Counseling  
University of Fribourg, Switzerland**

The book “Composing Relationships: Communication in Everyday Life” by Julia Wood and Steve Duck is a very interesting and creative contribution to the topic of everyday communication. The aim of the authors is, in their own words, not to write about everyday communication, but to make this phenomenon comprehensible to the reader by showing what everyday communication is and why it matters. For this purpose the different chapters are all organized in an inventive way, starting with a short narrative illustrating different facets of everyday communication. By these means the reader is introduced to conversations between partners, parents and their children, coworkers

or siblings. These vignettes are examined and discussed from a theoretical perspective. The analyses aim primarily to highlight specific communication processes (such as perspective taking, engaging in rituals etc.), and to make them understandable to the reader. One fascinating aspect of this kind of reading is that the reader engages directly in the interactions between the different protagonists and gains a first hand perspective on how positive and negative features of communication take place. The author's exploration of positive aspects of communication (such as affirmation, cohesion building, and coordination of interactions) is as interesting as their exploration of the negative elements of everyday conversation (e.g., tensions).

The book is structured in three main parts which examine everyday communication in three spheres of life: (a) personal relationships, (b) social relationships, and (c) workplace relationships. Scholars from different relevant domains have contributed to the various chapters, and this in turn has enhanced the overall quality of this book. The authors present theory in direct relation to the dialogues, which serve as effective illustrations of the concepts embodied within the theories. Doing this enriches the overall quality and scientific value of this book. The list of contributors reads like a who's who of experts in communication, adding to the values and scientific depth of this book. For the interested reader who may wish to pursue the subject further, the book also offers several references related to the topic of communication

There are many things about this book that I really liked. First it is well written and a pleasure to read as the different examples of everyday communication are engaging. Instead of a classic presentation of theoretical constructs and information, which often tends to dry or dull, the link between the case example and the theoretical reflections is not only enjoyable for the reader, it also gives a better understanding of theoretical assumptions or constructs. Second, the different chapters are short and concise, thereby giving an excellent overview of the topic, accompanied by references for readers

who may wish to learn more about this topic. Third, this is one of the first books that addresses different kinds of inter-personal relationships in relation to the extent of emotional closeness (e.g. partners, siblings, parents), and the setting in which the relationship occurs (e.g. family, workplace). Writing about the broad landscape of relationships allows the reader to more fully realize and appreciate concrete differences between the different forms of communication. Fourth, I like the selection of issues, which ranged from everyday communication to topics such as relational technology (cell phones, e-mails, online-communication), and how lesbian families are constructed in social conversation.

Overall, this is an engaging and informative book. It is broad in scope, interesting in the different perspectives on communication it presents and gives the reader a clear and focused appreciation of the link between theory and "real life examples."

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## TEACHING TIPS COLUMN

### **Intimate Cinema: A Movie Series for Your Relationships Course**

by Ann L. Weber

*M*y students and I look on from a safe distance as a college student tells a female acquaintance that he and she--men and women in general--simply cannot be friends because "the sex thing" always gets in the way. Incredulous, the young woman protests that his attitude is narrow-minded and archaic. My

students and I eavesdrop shamelessly, knowing the couple are bound to fall in love. They are obviously meant for each other: He is just so glib, and she protests too much. "He" is Billy Crystal, "she" is Meg Ryan, and their conversation comes from the 1995 movie "When Harry Met Sally."

Since I first began teaching my undergraduate course on Psychology of Close Relationships (CRs), I have always included movie showings among the class experiences. In addition to text, readings, guest lectures and panel discussions, I've had students watch movies about relationships. I show brief clips from various films over several class sessions, to illustrate everything from proximity effects to "love at first sight" to arguments. But in addition I try to show at least three feature-length films for all students to view and, most importantly, to understand in terms of course concepts. Students tell me the movies are among the highlights of an already popular course. Films provide a window into literature and popular culture, and give us a chance to have a good time and discussion. By watching together, we collect a common set of scenes and dialogues to refer to in class meetings. And best of all for me, I get the chance to hook yet another generation on movies, classic as well as contemporary.

I'm a movie nut. I was raised on melodrama and romance, from musicals and suspense to triple-hankies with swelling soundtracks. Plunked down from toddlerhood in front of "The Morning Movie" on local television, I once thought that when adults fell in love, they burst into song like Gene Kelly and Debbie Reynolds—that was how you *knew* it was really love. My understanding of intimacy became a little more sophisticated over the decades, but I never got over movie love. Now I find most of my college students have no movie vocabulary at all. They take color for granted and are surprised to learn the nuance of black-and-white. Most of my students have never seen a movie made before they were born (which I don't even consider "old" movies). They don't even know who Alfred Hitchcock is! How can you consider yourself to have a liberal arts education

if you haven't seen *Rear Window* (1954) or *Vertigo* (1958)?

Our students need to see the importance of relationship scholarship all around them. They need to appreciate the value of thinking carefully and critically about art and media. They need to know about the great movies as well as great literature and the fine arts. Relationships classes can be one forum for such discovery and fun. Faced with this challenge, I chose to accept the mission: I began to weave classic and contemporary movies into my class presentations in Psych of CRs. So for this edition of Teaching Tips, I argue that if you haven't tried it, you can—and you should.

### "No, But I Saw the Movie"

You don't have to be among the *cahiers du cinema* or even a movie fan, much less a nut like me, to find and incorporate movies into your relationships classes. Video rentals and affordable purchases have made movies accessible and indispensable "literature" for our time. So many movies are about love, loss, and other aspects of relationships, such films are a natural resource to be mined for our classes. And movies can be incorporated into your class material more palatably than many required readings. For good or ill, it's much easier for a student to commit two hours to watching a movie than untold hours deciphering the novel on which it is based (never mind nonfiction!).

For my Psychology in Story class, I use short stories and excerpts from novels. I rely on one great source titled *No, But I Saw the Movie: The Best Short Stories Ever Made into Film* (Wheeler, 1989). Ideally I'll assign the story as reading before we watch the movie. Perhaps you are old enough to remember the temptation to read the "Classic Comics" version of, say, *A Tale of Two Cities* rather than the novel or even the Cliffs Notes for a school assignment. Some movies are based (if loosely) on written works: e.g., *The Dead* (1987; based on the James Joyce story in his collection *Dubliners*); *Ordinary People* (1980; based on Judith Guest's novel); and *The End of the Affair* (1999, based on the Graham Greene novel). Other, original (or play-based) screenplays deserve to be seen and

appreciated on their own merits, including the most essential *Casablanca* (1942) and *Annie Hall* (1977), and even *50 First Dates* (2004). The vividness and conciseness of a good dramatic film or romantic comedy can readily be turned into a great teaching tool.

### A Movie-Series "Lab"

I've seen so many movies in my life, I can usually identify a couple from memory to illustrate any particular lecture. If I want more recent examples, I rely on my students' suggestions; they are eager to share these in class. (Requesting movie suggestions per chapter or lesson unit also makes a great course assignment.) Over the years I've accumulated a growing list of titles that work well in clips or in their entirety, for Psych of CRs as well as other psychology courses. The challenge now is not finding the right movie; rather, the problem in recent years is *time*. How do I find the time both to run class sessions and fit in movie showings? A short movie clip makes a great demonstration, but even that needs to be set up, and it falls short of capturing the power of the whole movie. More challenging is the feature-length film, whose running time well exceeds one and even two class sessions. In the past, I've tried showing entire movies in two parts, beginning in one session and finishing in the next. But the interruption breaks the flow of most stories, and destroys the suspense or empathy. And each movie eats up two class meetings among the precious few we had to cover so much in the life cycle of relationships.

So now I run a parallel movie series *outside* class meetings, instead of using class time for full-length viewings. This is easier to arrange than you might think. For two sections of Psych of CRs this Spring, I added a weekly 2-hour Monday evening "lab" meeting in a specially equipped movie-viewing auditorium. (You don't need a special room, however; a good-sized video screen and VCR will work if the students' seats are comfortable enough). Students signing up for either section had to set aside the Monday Movie Night period as well. In a 16-week semester, I show seven movies on pre-announced dates, leaving the other Mondays free for students to make other plans. This parallel

movie series leaves my class meetings movie free, while guaranteeing that everyone in the class has indeed booked that time to see every film. So the movies aren't optional, and attendance is good, creating a critical mass that produces terrific post-movie discussions.

My CRs course reviews lessons in a "life-cycle sequence," beginning with beginnings, attraction, and liking; moving on to friendship, communication, and love; and concluding with conflict, dissolution, and maintenance. The movies I show illustrate processes in this sequence, but with considerable overlap. Here are the movies I've shown in their entirety this semester, with brief descriptions and observations:

1. *Sliding Doors* (1998); directed by Peter Howitt, starring Gwyneth Paltrow and John Hannah. A woman living with a cheating boyfriend either catches or misses her train home, and thus finds him (or not) *in flagrante delicto*. Alternating scenes from her two lives show us how the tiniest events can set in motion entirely different lives, loves, and fates.

In the post-movie discussion, we explore the balance between personal intentions in making relationship decisions, versus the role of luck or chance. What if you had arrived late for the party—and never met that person? Would you and your partner still have found each other if friends or circumstances hadn't thrown you together? How is the answer to this question important to your own relationship life?

2. *When Harry Met Sally* (1989); directed by Rob Reiner, starring Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan. Over the years, a man and woman develop from acquaintances to friends and face the temptation to become romantically involved. My students love the dialogue and dilemmas, and talk up a storm about cross-sex friendships and commitmentphobia.

3. *The Accidental Tourist* (1988); directed by Lawrence Kasdan, starring William Hurt, Geena Davis, and Kathleen Turner. After the death of his son and the end of his marriage, a rule-bound introvert from an eccentric family is drawn into

a surprising new love and life with a confident but unusual woman. Post-movie discussion examines how our personalities and routines become part of our expectations in intimacy. How readily can any of us change for the sake of love?

4. *About a Boy* (2002); directed by Chris Weitz and Paul Weitz; starring Hugh Grant, Nicholas Hoult, and Toni Collette. A selfish single man forms an unlikely friendship with a lonely, quirky boy whose mother is chronically depressed. The situations and characters are familiar yet they defy categorization. The central themes are friendship and support, and the many threads that help us connect to each other, sometimes much to our own surprise.

5. *The Age of Innocence* (1993); directed by Martin Scorsese; starring Daniel Day-Lewis, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Winona Ryder; based on Edith Wharton's Pulitzer-Prize-winning novel. The privileged scion of an affluent family in 1870s New York risks his position by falling in love with his new wife's cousin. Some of my students observed that the story "moves slowly," yet they seemed riveted by the vivid production and compelling characters. Day-Lewis's strong central character inspired most of my male students in particular to speak up about the constraints of power and "freedom." Somewhat to my surprise, this movie prompted one of our liveliest discussions of the semester.

6. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1966); directed by Mike Nichols; starring Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Sandy Dennis and George Segal. Based on Edward Albee's play, a middle-aged academic couple host a younger couple for what turns into an all-night session of accusation and argument. A must-see for any discussion of marital conflict, the film also surprises students with its vicious language (though tame by modern standards) and intense drama—and all in glorious black-and-white.

7. *Truly, Madly, Deeply* (1991). Directed by Anthony Minghella; starring Juliet Stevenson, Alan Rickman, and Michael Maloney. When a woman cannot get over her grief after her lover's untimely death, he returns to her as a corporeal

ghost, so she is soon forced to choose between an ideal love with no future and a real life with an uncertain love. The situations are funny and touching, the dialogue sparkling. We laughed, we cried--and this discussion of handling grief is one of the best I've had in any course.

### **Outlines, Discussions, and Movie Reviews**

Before showings, I preview each movie carefully, taking notes to create a one-page outline and question list. Each outline includes details of the movie's production and cast, courtesy of print and online movie guides. (I particularly recommend Leonard Maltin's annual *Movie Guides* and the online International Movie Database ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com))). At the start of every Movie Night, I distribute copies of the outline, and I read them aloud in the minutes before each showing. I exhort the assembled students to keep the questions and themes in mind as they watch *and enjoy* the film.

I want the students to enjoy each movie as entertainment, and to find psychology *in* the movie—not merely to dissect or critique it without experiencing pleasure or poignance. It's important for me not to confuse the validity of some movie ideas ("Would a healthy person really grieve for months after a one-week affair, as Diane Keaton's character did in the film?") with the value of presenting an absorbing story and engaging characters ("How did Erica channel her grief? Did she become more likeable after Harry broke her heart?"). We use these movie outlines to guide post-movie discussions. By the way, I always encourage my students to bring friends and dates to Movie Nights, and I invite these guests to chime in while we are "debriefing." Students often tell me these class "labs" make for great (and cheap) dates and lead to ongoing discussions of interests and values.

Finally, despite the intrinsic appeal of a good movie and a relevant course, I find it necessary to offer "incentive" for attending the movies in the first place. Movie plots and characters are covered on my tests. I require one-page reviews of any two movies in our course series, applying movies to course lessons and vice versa. This gives students a reason to show up and pay

attention, as well as an opportunity to show off later what they have seen and learned. Knowing the movies' material will show up in later evaluations, my students are motivated to attend, especially if the movies I choose are hard to find in rental outlets. I'm not opposed to some students' making up missed movies by watching on their own, but the class assembly and discussion is a crucial part of the course experience. I want them there, creating a special audience for their own cinema experience.

Over the seasons, I have varied my movie series offerings. Some films have become favorites for me, including offerings by Woody Allen (see especially *Hannah and Her Sisters* [1986]), as well as new discoveries (my recent favorite is *Love, Actually* [2003].) I make it a point to show some older and classic films, features that students aren't likely to see on their own. In class we often discuss movies worth seeing, renting, or attending. A good movie—or even a bad one—can be a memorable demonstration of abstract or unfamiliar ideas. Students learn to notice what's playing locally, to check out the movie channels, and to build higher standards and become better consumers of cinematic experience. Movies engage and surprise, and remind us that relationship lessons are ubiquitous—as we look within, or at either the big or little screen. I hope you find them useful in or with your own course experiences as well.

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## JOURNALS UPDATE

### A Report on *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*

by Paul A. Mongeau,  
Editor

**2005** was another banner year for JSPR.

While all the final numbers aren't in yet (e.g., acceptance rate, time to decision, etc.), we processed 175 manuscripts during the calendar year. This is down from the 200 we received in 2004. However, it is at the higher end of the historical trend for the journal. So far in 2006, submissions are running ahead of both 2004 and 2005. The diversity of the topics, disciplines, methodologies, and countries of origin continues to amaze me.

In addition to very healthy submission rates, other positive things continue to happen with the journal. First, I trust you have noticed the new cover and design for *JSPR* (OK, I *hope* that you noticed). I mentioned the idea of a new cover to Sage with no small amount of trepidation. As it turns out, Sage had also considered a new cover design but was reticent to bring it up as well. As one advisory board member put it, "I wouldn't have thought there was anything in particular wrong with the other one, but this is clearly better." The new look was designed by the staff at Sage, though several of us were able to provide feedback on it.

The silver on the new cover design marks the journal's upcoming (2008) Silver Anniversary volume. I would like to mark this important (though admittedly somewhat random) milestone in some way, but I have not decided how. I would appreciate any suggestions on how we can mark this important landmark in the study of relationships.

The other major development with the journal is that SAGE has contracted with Scholar One to provide Manuscript Central, a customized web-based system designed to streamline the submission, review, and decision-making processes. I have just started working on it, but it certainly looks as though it is going to streamline several editorial processes. Every task performed manually in the current system will be performed automatically in the new one. I have just started to work with the system and we have to customize it to our unique workflow (and the unique styles of the Associate Editors), but it looks slick. I can't think of an editorial task or process that won't be facilitated by this system. I expect that the system will be working some time in the next several months. My best guess is toward the end of summer (in the Northern Hemisphere, that is).

For the most part, the editorial team has remained intact since my last report. The one upcoming exception is that Kristin Davis, my editorial assistant for the past 2+ years is stepping down as she has accepted a faculty position at the University of Central Florida (US) that starts in the fall. I will miss her and the working relationship we have established. I can't thank her enough for all her hard work in support of the journal. I am looking forward to working with Beth Babin-Gallagher, another doctoral student here in the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication, who will be assuming the reigns some time over the summer.

---

**IARR Members:**

**Submission deadline for Fall issue  
of RRN**

**September 1, 2006**

**A Report on**

***Personal Relationships:*  
Report from the New Editorial Team of  
*Personal Relationships***

**by Rebecca G. Adams,  
Editor**

**S**ince my last report on the status of *Personal Relationships (PR)* to *Relationship Research News*, our editorial team has grown. Rodney Cate (*Emeritus*, Family Studies, University of Arizona, United States), Catrin Finkenauer (Social Psychology, Free University, The Netherlands), and Susan Branje (Adolescent Development, Utrecht University, The Netherlands) began serving terms as Associate Editors in October 2005, December 2005, and April 2006, respectively. They joined Susan Boon (Psychology, University of Calgary, Canada), Mario Mikulincer (Psychology, Bar-Ilan University, Israel), and Denise Solomon (Communication Studies, Pennsylvania State University, United States), who have been serving as Associate Editors since last summer. Thus far 73 scholars, who represent 11 countries and 8 disciplines, have agreed to serve as members of the Editorial Board. In addition, 221 established and 80 new scholars have reviewed one or more of the 150 manuscripts which were submitted to *PR* between June 1, 2005 and April 4, 2006.

Nonetheless, our team is not yet complete. We plan to recruit a seventh Associate Editor. We are also still recruiting members to the Editorial Board to increase its international and disciplinary diversity even further and to address gaps in coverage of personal relationship topics. As always, we are interested in adding names to our *ad hoc* and new scholar reviewer databases. If you are interested in reviewing manuscripts for *PR*, please contact me at [Personal\\_Relationships@uncg.edu](mailto:Personal_Relationships@uncg.edu). Editorial Assistant Brandi McCullough ([predasst@uncg.edu](mailto:predasst@uncg.edu)) will then contact you for some information about your areas of expertise. Please note that Information for *PR* Reviewers is posted at

<http://lilt.ilstu.edu/personalrelationships/editorialteam/editorialteam.htm>. This information will be useful to all reviewers, but especially to new ones.

We have been receiving submissions at a higher rate than Sue Sprecher's editorial team. Her team received between 100 and 120 submissions per year. With two months still to go in our first year, we have received 150 (M=3.4 per week, SD=1.7). I suspect our turnaround time has suffered as a result. For the first 60 submissions we received, our average turn-around-time from submission to decision was almost 4 months (M=113.6 days, SD=26.7). I expect this to improve now that our team is closer to complete. We are very grateful to authors for their patience and to members of the Editorial Board, *ad hoc* reviewers, and new scholar reviewers for helping us keep turn-around-time as short as possible by returning reviews promptly. Another potential consequence of the increased submission rate might be a lower acceptance rate. I am not yet sure what our acceptance rate will eventually prove to be, but the other action editors and I invited 26.7% of the authors of the first 60 submissions to revise and resubmit their manuscripts and rejected the remainder. All but two of the 16 authors we invited to revise and resubmit their manuscripts have indicated that they intend to do so.

The Associate Editors and I are looking forward to the IARR meetings in Crete this summer, where we will meet face-to-face for the first time. We also look forward to meeting with the Editorial Board at a time yet to be scheduled. Note that a "Meet the Editors of *PR* and *JSPR*" reception is tentatively scheduled for 6-7 p.m. on Friday, July 7, at Theartemis Hotel. I look forward to meeting our reviewers and authors then or at other times during the conference. Please do not hesitate to introduce yourself.

---

## Contents of Upcoming Journals

***Journal of Social and Personal Relationships,***  
**Volume 23, Number 2, April, 2006**  
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**Special Issue Editor: Kory Floyd**

FLOYD, K.

Physiology and human relationships: An introduction to the special issue.

LUECKEN, L. J., APPELHANS, B. M., KRAFT, A., & BROWN, A.

Never far from home: A cognitive-affective model of the impact of early-life family relationships on physiological stress responses in adulthood.

DIAMOND, L. H., HICKS, A. M., & OTTER-HENDERSON, K.

Physiological evidence for repressive coping among avoidantly attached adults.

KAISER, H., & POWERS, S.

Testosterone and conflict tactics within late adolescent couples: A dyadic predictive model.

HEISEL, A. D., & BEATTY, M. J.

Are cognitive representations of friends' request refusals implemented in the orbitofrontal and dorsolateral prefrontal cortices? A cognitive neuroscience approach to "theory of mind" in relationships.

GRANGER, D. A., KIVLIGHAN, K. T., BLAIR, C., EL-SHEIKH, M., MIZE, J., LISONBEE, J. A., BUCKHALT, J. A., STROUD, L. R., HANDWERGER, K., & SCHWARTZ, E. B.

Integrating the measurement of salivary  $\alpha$ -amylase into studies of child health, development, and social relationships.

MACDONALD, G., & KINGSBURY, R.

Does physical pain augment anxious attachment?

ROBLES, T. F., SHAFFER, V. A., MALARKEY, W. B., & KIECOLT-GLASER, J. K.

Positive behaviors during marital conflict: Influences on stress hormones.

***Journal of Social and Personal Relationships,***  
**Volume 23, Number 3, June 2006**

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Relational and Physical Victimization by Peers  
and Romantic Partners in College Students

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KAREN L. DAAS, WESLEY T. DURHAM  
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KHANH T. DINH AND HUONG H. NGUYEN  
The Effects of Acculturative Variables on Asian  
American Parent-Child Relationships

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Validation of a New Measure for Stepfamily  
Relationship Research

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When Parents Lay Their Children to Rest:  
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LAURA L. ELLINGSON AND PATRICIA J.  
SOTIRIN  
Exploring Young Adults' Perspectives on  
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***Journal of Social and Personal Relationships,***  
**Volume 23, Number 4, August, 2006**

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## **MEMBER NEWS & UPDATES**

### **Congratulations to the following members for their outstanding recent accomplishments**

**MARIAN MORRY** received tenure at the University of Manitoba, Department of Psychology.

**MAHZAD HOJJAT** was granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor of Psychology at UMASS Dartmouth as of September 1, 2005.

**CINDY WHITE** would like to announce the publication of her new edited book, "Together Alone: Personal Relationships in Public Places," co-edited with C. Morrill and D. S. Snow. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. The summary from the back of the book follows:

Exploring locales such as city streets, bus stops, parking lots, bars, retail establishments, and discussion groups, *Together Alone* ventures into what is often thought of as the realm of passing strangers to examine the nature of personal relationships conducted in public spaces. While most studies of social interaction have gone behind closed doors to focus on relationships in the family, school, and workplace, this innovative collection pushes the boundaries of the field by analyzing both fleeting and anchored relationships in the seldom-studied communal areas where much of contemporary life takes place. The contributors shed light on the diversity and character of day-to-day negotiations in public spaces and at the same time illuminate how these social ties paradoxically blend aspects of durability and brevity, of emotional closeness and distance, of being together and alone.

## IARRC 2006 UPDATE

### 3<sup>rd</sup> International Association for Relationships Research Conference Rethymnon, Crete, Greece 6-10 July 2006



K18.1 Eros, Hebe, Herakles, Hymenaios

**Submitted by Kostas Kafetsios  
University of Crete  
Chair of the Local Arrangements  
Committee**

### Conference Program at a Glance

Dear colleagues,

The date of the IARRC2006 Rethymnon Conference is fast approaching and many may be making preparations for attending it. This note provides an update of the meeting program and a glimpse at the main events planned.

The Detailed Program is now in full view on the conference website ([www.iarrc2006.org](http://www.iarrc2006.org)) evidence of the scientific committee's and the Chair's hard work. A glimpse at the numerous papers, symposia, oral papers and posters planned provides every guarantee for a scientifically exciting meeting.

The Conference sets off officially on *Thursday July 6* at 7.30 with the first invited talk, opening talks and wine reception and buffet at the

Rethymnon Venetian Castle. Participants may wish to attend one of the pre-conference workshops on statistical, methodological and counselling issues that are taking place on Thursday morning (no extra charge). There will be spaces available but if you wish to reserve a place please follow the instructions at the end of this note.

*Friday July 7* is a full day with talks starting at 9 am and ending at 5:15. The first poster session will be at 6-8 pm in Theartemis hotel. On Friday Night we have planned a Social with Drinks & BBQ food on the beach starting at 8.30 until late. Those who would like to help the DJ in shaping the music program are welcome to suggest songs they would like to listen (and dance to) by sending an email to *Efrosini Mitsopolou* ([psy1235.mh@gmail.com](mailto:psy1235.mh@gmail.com)). Music and dance are also planned during the later parts of the Awards Dinner on Sunday night (at the Metohi Traditional Farm) and those music preferences will be used there too.

*Saturday July 8* is a half day with Symposia, Paper and Poster sessions ending at 2:30. After that, participants can follow their chosen trip to either: Knossos, Preveli beach or Chania (indicated with your registration). The evening is free for people to explore the Rethymnon old town and port and suggestions as where to dine will be available on site.

*Sunday July 9* is a full work day with Oral presentations and talks ending at 5:15 and the final poster session taking place at Theartemis Hotel between 5:45 and 7:45. At 8:00 we will depart for the Awards dinner that will take place in a Traditional Farm outside Rethymnon overlooking the Chania Bay. Participants who are on vegetarian only diet (or a variant of that) could indicate that in an e-mail to Efrosini in the e-mail above. The meeting concludes on *Monday July 10* with work ending at 12:30 and lunch after that.

#### *E-mailing facilities*

During the conference there will be several spaces on campus where participants can check their e-mail and keep in touch with their work

(there will also be some Wi-Fi opportunities for those who wish to bring their laptops).

#### *Post-conference Santorini Trip*

For those of you who plan to stay an extra couple of days on the island, there is a trip organised to Santorini. A fast and modern Ferry boat (MTS Golden Prince) leaves Rethymnon at 7.30 on Tuesday morning and after a pleasant 4 hour trip you arrive on Santorini island. One can choose to take part in an organised tour around the island's sites (Akrotiri archaeological site, Pyrgos, Oia) that also includes lunch. The cost of the return trip is 75 E and bus tour and lunch cost an extra 20E. The visit concludes at 17:30 with departure from Santorini and live music and dance on the way back to Rethymnon. To book a place please contact *Maria Leventis* at [reservations.iarrc@ibisलगreco.gr](mailto:reservations.iarrc@ibisलगreco.gr) (with a subject heading: Santorini trip).

#### *Visiting Museums and Archaeological sites in Crete*

There are several Archaeological sites that participants may wish to visit during their stay in Crete. We are happy to inform that the Hellenic Ministry of Culture has accepted the LOC's application and IARRC participants can enjoy reduced entrance fee to Museums and archaeological sites in Crete (in Rethymnon, Heraklion, Chania & Agio Nikolao) paying the equivalent of students' fee which varies according to each site. The documents you should hold with you to claim the reduced entrance fee will be e-mailed to you after registering and by mid June.

#### *Family*

For those of the delegates who are travelling with family and young kids, there will be some help with the taking care of the young by a group of student volunteers that have relevant training and experience. Please indicate whether you would like such help with taking care of the young by sending an e-mail to Paraskevi Lydaki ([kopesitsa@yahoo.com](mailto:kopesitsa@yahoo.com)) in order to have your details (Name, place of stay, number of kids, ages).

For any questions regarding your travel arrangements, hotel reservations or related

questions please contact IBIS El Greco and Maria Leventis at [reservations.iarrc@ibisलगreco.gr](mailto:reservations.iarrc@ibisलगreco.gr).

Finally, if you are planning to travel a bit around Crete before or after the meeting you will find that Cretan people may look rough on appearance but they hide a very hospitable 'soul'. Efforts to think and act 'Relational' on the island are strongly encouraged.

Looking forward to welcoming you in Rethymnon in July,

Konstantinos Kafetsios  
IARRC2006 LOC Chair

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESERVING A PLACE AT ONE OF THE FIVE PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS TAKING PLACE ON THURSDAY JULY 6 MORNING.**

#### **9am-12pm**

1. David Kenny Actor-partner interdependence model
2. Ann Buysse and colleagues Observational Methods in Dyadic Interactions

#### **12pm-15.00pm**

3. John B. Nezlek Multilevel Random Coefficient Models and Diary Method
4. T. Striano, & A. Cleveland Adult-Infant Social Relationships: Approaches and Methods
5. Karen Prager Intimacy-oriented couple therapy

To reserve a place at one of the Preconference workshops on Thursday morning please send an e-mail to : Efrosini Mitsopoulou [psy1235.mh@gmail.com](mailto:psy1235.mh@gmail.com) indicating your best three preferred workshops you would like to attend.

e.g.

- 1- No 2, A. Buysse & colleagues Observational methods in dyadic interactions
- 2 - No 4 T. Striano etc.
- 3 – No 1 D. Kenny etc.

**MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW FOR  
THE IARR CONFERENCE IN  
RETHYMNON, CRETE  
JULY 6-10**

**submitted by John Caughlin**

The 2006 IARR Conference in Rethymnon is fast approaching! Opening ceremonies are set for Thursday July 6 in a gorgeous setting: a Venetian Castle. The program promises to be equally splendid, with William Cupach giving an invited talk on the first evening, and other invited talks from Cigdem Kagitcibasi, Mario Mikulincer and Phillip Shaver, Terri Orbuch, Caryl Rusbult, and Theo van Tilburg. As always, there will also be a very rich slate of paper sessions, symposia, roundtables, and interest group discussions.

There will also be a special scholarly event. Anisa Zvonkovic has organized a unique combination of activities on the topic of contextual influences on relationships. This will include a special invited panel and interest group. Robert Milardo and Jacki Fitzpatrick will also present at the invited panel, and the idea is that the panel will serve as a "launching pad" for the discussions that will occur in the associated interest group.

**IARR Members:  
Update address, phone, and  
email changes via our website:  
Please go to [www.iarr.org](http://www.iarr.org) and  
click on "Membership"**

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**New Scholars' Workshop –Mentorship  
Committee  
International Association for Relationship  
Research**

**July 27-29, 2006**

**Dates & Location**

This workshop will start on Thursday, July 27<sup>th</sup> and will end on Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup>. Cost of the workshop includes housing until Sunday morning so if you want to take in the Mall of America or other sites in Minnesota you will be able to do that on Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup>. Conference is hosted by Bethel University in Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN.

**Definition of a New Scholar:**

Individuals in a Ph.D. program or the first five years of employment post-Ph.D.

IAAR is pleased to announce that the New Scholars' Workshop will now begin to accept submissions. The workshop will give developing scholars the opportunity to interact with established scholars in one-on-one consultations. Featured speakers will address issues on

- 1) The How & Why of Networking, Mentoring, Relationships, and Social Support
- 2) Ideas for Teaching Relational Classes
- 3) Conducting Research in a School that Emphasizes Teaching
- 4) Publishing Relational Research
- 5) Interviewing & Job Skills

In addition, new scholars will have the opportunity to present current research proposals, projects, and papers to established scholars and peers for feedback and discussion.

**Applications are to include:**

- (1) A title page with the applicant's name, address, university or company affiliation, email address, phone number, and status in grad school or faculty position title.
- (2) A one-page abstract of a personal research project to be presented at the New Scholars'

workshop. The project can address any topic in relationship research and be at any level of completion, including initial conceptualization, measurement of variables, data analysis, or completed projects. The abstract is to also include a paragraph that details two issues the new scholar would like to work on, or have addressed by the established scholars conducting the workshop.

- (3) Members of the IARR Mentorship committee will evaluate the submissions for quality and suitability.

Send your application materials electronically as a word document or email attachment to:

Dr. Nancy J. Eckstein  
nancy\_eckstein@yahoo.com

***Deadline for submissions is June 5, 2005***

Enrollment is limited to 25 New Scholars. The cost of the workshop is \$125.00. This includes three (3) nights housing (27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>) in the campus suites, three (2) breakfasts, two (2) lunches, and one (1) dinner and LOTS of snacks! ☺

This workshop is sponsored by IAAR and organized by the mentorship committee. For more information, contact Dr. Nancy J. Eckstein, Comm Studies, Bethel University, nancy\_eckstein@yahoo.com

**Please encourage your students and new faculty members to participate in this workshop.**



**A Portrait of A Relationship** (Stan Gaines and his son, Luther. With permission.).



The Australian Psychological Society



Australian Catholic University

Australian Psychological Society  
Relationships Interest Group

## PSYCHOLOGY OF RELATIONSHIPS CONFERENCE

***RELATIONSHIPS – NEAR & FAR***6<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference 2006

11-12 November – Australian Catholic University

**Invitation to Participate**

The Committee of the APS Psychology of Relationship Interest Group proudly announces its 6th Annual Conference. The Conference is auspiced by Australian Catholic University and the School of Psychology within ACU.

The Conference will include keynote speakers, exciting symposia, individual papers, posters, and professional roundtables. The two Interest Group Prizes will be awarded during the conference and time will be set aside for the AGM of the Interest Group.

The Annual Interest Group Conference is an ideal opportunity for practitioners and researchers in the field of relationships to network as well as participate in an inspiring conference. So if you have an interest in the psychology of relationships, come along.

**Conference Proceedings and Conference Abstracts**

As in previous years we are proud to announce that abstracts from early bird registrants will be included in the *Australian Journal of Psychology*. Abstracts from late registrants will be included in the Conference program.

The Conference Proceedings will contain refereed paper presentations from the conference and will be a separate publication. The Conference Proceedings will attract DEST points (E1 full written-refereed proceedings) and will be publicly available in the form of a Volume of Conference Proceedings at a date following the Conference.

Interested parties will need to submit their paper (approximately 5 pages i.e., 1250 words) in full before the conference to allow adequate time for external review.

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**Key Note Speakers**

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Each day of the Conference will begin with a Key Note Speaker. This year we are honoured to have as our Key Note Speakers two very active researchers in the field of Relationships. Julie Fitness from Macquarie University has accepted the invitation to be one of our key-note speakers and Garth Fletcher from Canterbury University, Christchurch, New Zealand will be the other.

**THE APS PSYCHOLOGY OF RELATIONSHIPS  
INTEREST GROUP CONFERENCE**

**Relationships – Near & Far  
NOVEMBER 11-12, 2006**

The 6th Annual Conference of the APS Interest Group on the Psychology of Relationships will be held this year at the Australian Catholic University, 115 Victoria Parade, Victoria. 3065.

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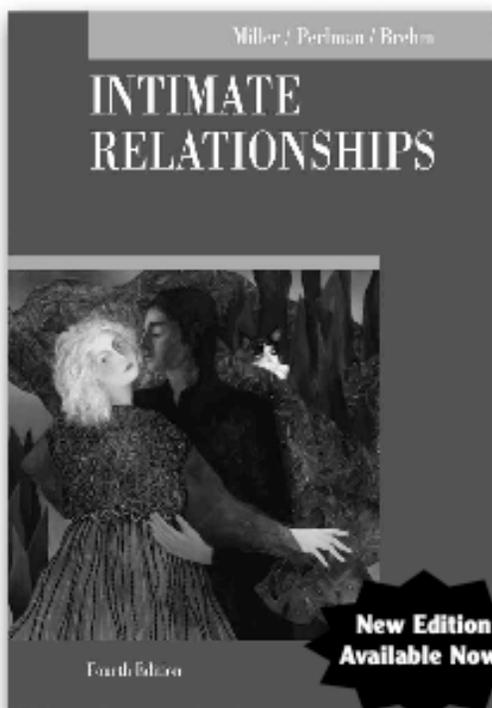
- You are invited to submit abstracts for individual papers, posters or organise a symposium (a set of three or four related papers that address a particular topic) or organise a professional roundtable
- Papers that address the Conference Theme are particularly encouraged
- Abstracts will be reviewed for consideration for inclusion in the conference program.

**REFEREED PUBLISHED PROCEEDINGS**

The Interest Group intends to publish the proceedings of the Conference in such a way that they will be recognised as a DEST publication.

**Abstract Submission Details**

- Each abstract should be no more than 200 words (for a symposium there should be a symposium abstract as well as the individual abstracts)
- You should indicate whether your submission is for a paper, a poster, a symposium, or professional roundtable
- You should clearly indicate the names of the author(s) and especially the presenting author
- The affiliation of each author should also be included
- For communication of the outcome of the abstract review process you should provide an email address
- Email your submission to [b.fallon@patrick.acu.edu.au](mailto:b.fallon@patrick.acu.edu.au) by Monday 29 May 2006.



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## INTERNATIONAL AND STUDENT MEMBERS: RRN wants to hear from you!

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\*term ends June 30, 2007