

RELATIONSHIP RESEARCH NEWS

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Greetings from the President

by Frank Fincham

As we Northern Hemisphere types wake up to spring and look around, here is what I see.

On the one hand, I see over 75% of the world (6.76 billion) professes a religious faith (Christianity 33%; Islam 20%; Hinduism 13%; others 12.2%)¹. On the other hand, I see that use of pornography on the internet (e.g., 25% of total search engine requests, 12% of total websites, \$3,075.64 spent every second)² and cybersex are pervasive.

So, I want to understand what role these “facts of life” play in intimate relationships. I am only interested in “hard core” science not the millions of relevant anecdotes and aphorisms (“the couple that prays together stays together”). Nothing but the bare facts please--show me the data!

What do I find? Not surprisingly, other researchers have noted the pervasiveness of religion in our world. Sure studies on religion and its correlates abound. There are even studies on the impact of praying for the recovery of hospital patients (though often methodologically rigorous they are scientifically and

¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica survey conducted in 2005.*

² Ropelato, J. (2008). Internet-Pornography-Statistics - 2006. Accessed at <http://www.internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com/internet-pornography-statistics.html>.

theologically bankrupt). But research on religion and intimate relationships is far less common.³ Why? Is it that we have tended to ignore this topic or have our journals shown a preference for work that is not tainted by the brush of religion? I do not know the answer. What I do know is that religious and spiritual experiences are pervasive and it is hard to imagine that they have no place in the study of intimate relationships. We ignore them at our peril!

Now when it comes to matters sexual, attention is easily gained. There is a burgeoning literature on cybersex (cybering), pornography addiction and so on. Substantial amounts of it are found outside of the relationships literature (e.g., in computer journals), and we have learned that both men and women view cybersex as an act of betrayal. But good solid research on cybersex and how it affects relationships? Not so much.

Here is what I learned. If we want the public to take our research seriously and pay for it, we need to incorporate the study of major spheres of human activity. What other areas of life have we as relationship researchers overlooked or studied insufficiently?

P.S. It is heartening to see that “Religion, spirituality, and relationships” has been included as an entry in the soon to be published, *Encyclopedia of Human Relationships*.

³ For some examples see, Wolfinger, N. H., & Wilcox, W. B. (2008). Happily ever after? Religion, marital status, gender, and relationship quality in urban families. *Social Forces*, 86, 1311-1337; Lichtor, D. T. & Carmalt, J. H. (2009). Religion and marital quality among low-income couples. *Social Science Research*, 38, 168-187; Mahoney, A., et al., (2001). Religion in the home in the 1980's and 1990s: A meta-analytic review and conceptual analysis of links between religion, marriage, and parenting. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 15, 559-596.

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RELATIONSHIP RESEARCH NEWS

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Relationship Research News is published twice a year. 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 editor first (please do not send manuscripts). Submit all materials to Lesley Verhofstadt, Université Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, BELGIUM; lesley.verhofstadt@uclouvain.be. 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.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

by **Lesley Verhofstadt**
Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium

Welcome to this issue of RRN! I'm sure you will find many interesting information in this edition of IARR's newsletter.

João Moreira and I are excited to bring you a special feature section on research collaborations. João has collected three columns on different types of research collaborations, including international, intercultural, and interdisciplinary collaborations. We are favored to have two pieces in this section that provide summaries of two roundtables –which focused on research collaborations- that were organized during the past IARR Conference in Providence. In the first piece, Jacki Fitzpatrick summarizes passive hindrances for US researchers to collaborate with international colleagues. The second column, written by Anita Barbee, discusses research collaborations within IARR, with a special focus on cross-disciplinary research. In addition, Omri Gillath, Glenn Adams, and Adrienne Kunkel, give us a preview of the upcoming IARR mini-conference, which will focus on cross-disciplinary communication and collaboration within the close relationships field. In addition they illustrate some of the concrete actions they have taken to promote integrative interdisciplinary work at the University of Kansas.

We also have a column by Michael Johnson on how he experiences life as a retired relationship researcher. Thanks Michael for accepting our invitation to write a piece (even when it involved a deadline!).

Ben Le gives us an update on the construction of our organization's new website. According to Ben, the new website can be expected by the end of the summer.

You will also find a column by Andrea Lambert, about how new (but also more experienced) professionals struggle to balance their personal and professional life.

Don't forget to read the announcement section which includes information about IARR's 2009 mini-conference as well as 2010 Conference in Herzliya.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to the special feature of this issue and special thanks to the several authors of our regular RRN columns, including our president Frank Fincham, IARR's journals' editors, Paul Mongeau, Rebecca Adams, and Lorne Campbell, new professionals representative Andrea Lambert, and webmaster Ben Le.

I would also like to thank my editorial team for their help in preparing this issue.

We will be back with the Fall issue of RRN, which will be the last issue of the newsletter to be published under my tenure as editor. Enjoy the summer!

**Submission deadline for
Fall 2009 issue of RRN**

September 1, 2009

**Submit all materials
to Lesley Verhofstadt**

!!! new e-mail address!!!

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FEATURE ARTICLES

Research Collaborations: From Talking the Talk to Walking the Walk

edited by

João M. Moreira

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Editor's introduction

*T*he current feature section is the result of a number of initiatives coming about at approximately the same time within IARR. Although these initiatives were not explicitly intended to be coordinated, they eventually converged into the main theme of research collaborations, and especially those collaborations occurring across national, disciplinary or, more broadly speaking, cultural borders. Most certainly, they represent a response from IARR members and governing bodies to pressing needs and challenges that needed to be addressed in today's context of relationship research. Therefore, the RRN editor Lesley Verhofstadt and I thought it would be useful to bring them together as a focus for this issue of the Special Features Section of RRN.

The topic of collaborations seems particularly important as we think of the future of the association in the mid-to-long term. This question is becoming a concern for leaders of other professional learned societies (Leslie, 2007; Schwartz, Hunter, & Boersma, 2008), as the research and publishing business undergoes dramatic changes (see Moreira, 2007a; Roth, Baskin, McGough, & Jaipen, 2007). The major issue, apart from recent economic troubles that cast a shadow on our near future (now hopefully starting to appear a little brighter) is that of the benefits provided to the membership. It is known

that one of the major benefits provided to the members of scientific societies used to be the lower prices for journal subscriptions. This seems to be changing, as journals are increasingly read online and subscribed electronically through institutions. Individual subscriptions are clearly on the decline, and paper copies are falling out of favor. Accompanying the trend, societies are offering "electronic only" or "no journal" membership options, usually for lower fees. This happens as one legitimately asks "What is the worth of paying three times as much for my IARR membership, just to receive paper journals with articles I have already read online, thanks to my library's subscription, and that will just take up a lot of space and collect dust in my office?" But to this a more disturbing question follows: "Is it worth to spend US\$ 30 a year just to receive a newsletter, e-mail announcements and a reduced fee at a conference I may or may not attend?" What could be the usefulness of a scientific association for its members, in the brave new world of electronic scientific publishing?

There may be many answers to this question, but the one most strongly on my mind at the time is NETWORKING. Associations are essentially ways of bringing together people that share a common interest and getting them to do things together they could not do on their own. In addition to things we might be able to do together as a group, an association is also a great way to find people with whom one may work and collaborate in joint projects. With big science becoming the norm (see Moreira, 2007b), collaborating across disciplinary and national borders is quickly becoming a necessity if one wants to conduct high impact research and succeed in landing grant money, and the trend can only increase in the future (see the fascinating article by Hill, 2007).

As it might be expected, IARR did not stand idle on this issue. At our latest conference in Providence, two round tables convened focusing on research collaborations. The first, chaired by Agnaldo Garcia and with the participation of Lesley Verhofstadt and Jacki Fitzpatrick, discussed international cooperation in relationship research. The second, chaired by

Dawn Braithwaite and with the participation of Anita Barbee, Mark Fine, Susan Hendrick, Sandra Metts, Sandra Petronio, Rowland Miller, and Valerian Derlega, heeded research collaborations in general, but with a special focus on cross-disciplinary research. Both of these sessions were well attended and generated lively, productive debate. Therefore, Lesley and I agreed it would be an excellent service to IARR and its members to provide summaries of these sessions in this issue of RRN. To this, we counted on the generous contributions of Jacki Fitzpatrick and Anita Barbee, who provided short pieces reporting on some of the issues and discussions.

Another IARR-sponsored initiative with a cross-disciplinary slant is the upcoming mini-conference to take place at the University of Kansas (KU), USA, next November 5–7. Under the theme “New Directions in Research on Close Relationships: Integrating Across Disciplines and Theoretical Approaches” it will try to facilitate integration and cooperation across diverse disciplines and perspectives in the study of close relationships. We are also favored by having a piece in this section authored by the hosts of this conference, Omri Gillath, Glenn Adams, and Adrienne D. Kunkel. In it, they not only give us a preview of the conference, but also present some of the concrete actions they have taken at KU to enhance cross-disciplinary communication and collaboration within the close relationships field. I think their text should be an inspiration for all of us.

Finally, I must mention the IARR Board of Directors’ initiative to address the needs of international members of IARR, who seem to be under-represented in many of the association’s activities. To this purpose, president Frank Fincham has appointed a task force charged with studying the issue and making recommendations the Board may implement to help IARR better serve its international members, and therefore retain and increase its worldwide membership. This task force, which was chaired by me, has now communicated its recommendations to the Board, and therefore we may expect some action on these matters soon. Not wanting to anticipate any specific policy from the Board, let me just

highlight that, after some serious discussion, the task force agreed that one of the most effective ways for IARR to serve its international members would be to help develop cross-national research projects and collaborations, especially those bringing together scholars from highly and less represented countries.

It should be obvious to anyone regularly involved with IARR that it has already done immensely in the past to promote collaboration among its members. Let us hope this contribution will not only continue, but increase in the near future, and that the fascinating ideas contributed in this feature section give a degree of help in that direction.

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Collaboration with International Colleagues: Passive Hindrances for US Colleagues

by **Jacki Fitzpatrick**

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*D*uring the IARR 2008 conference in Providence, Rhode Island, I participated in a panel discussion on collaborations among international colleagues. In my portion of the presentation, I was asked to summarize some hindrances and challenges for US colleagues. Given the brevity of this article, I will only summarize passive hindrances at this time. I do not present this article as a criticism of any colleagues. It is simply our hope that such articles will facilitate dialogue among IARR members. Unless specific references are noted, the following comments are based on a series of discussions with faculty, administrators and colleagues from various organizations. Thus, this summary is presented as a representation of viewpoints.

Some colleagues have identified passive hindrances to the collaboration process. Passive hindrances are factors that do not directly block a process, but might slow a process or would

require more effort to overcome them (e.g., Prudyus, Sumyk, & Mimrikov, 2008). It is simply easier to not engage hindrances in the social sciences, but rather to seek other career options. For example, one passive hindrance is the lack of study abroad opportunities for US graduate students. Although many universities have active study abroad programs for undergraduate students, there are few active programs for Master's and doctoral students. Given the time constraints for some graduate programs, students are encouraged to complete all of their coursework within a single university. They are not always encouraged to study at more than one university within the US, much less universities outside the US. Thus, if students want opportunities for a cross-national education, then they must actively find options. This can sometimes be accomplished with the assistance of faculty mentors, but relies upon faculty mentors' own experience with international colleagues. If faculties do not have such experience, then they might not be able to create opportunities for students (or for that matter, for themselves). Thus, it is simply easier for students and colleagues to limit their work to within US borders.

Similarly, the tenure/promotion process within the US does not actively encourage international collaboration. In tenure/promotion guidelines, there is often a statement that a colleague should demonstrate contribution to her/his professional field. However, there is not a requirement that the "field" be defined at the international level. Comparatively, US colleagues have many resources that allow them to conduct a full career without the use of cross-national data or perspectives. For example, there are hundreds of journals that are published in English (some colleagues would specify that the journals are published in "American English"). Given the options of learning a second language or hiring a translator service to have their work published outside the US, it is more efficient for US colleagues to simply publish in their own language. In addition, US colleagues have access to several large national data sets (e.g., Sweet, Bumpass, & Call, 1988) that afford opportunities to generate multiple publications and presentations. It is possible for colleagues to

build an entire career using only US resources and still be judged as productive, prominent and successful. In some universities or professional settings, colleagues do not gain any professional rewards for participating in cross-national work, nor do they lose any rewards if they don't engage in such work.

It should also be noted that colleagues have the option to attend multiple international conferences within US borders. Some conferences are commonly held in other countries, but rotate through the US in various years (e.g., 2008 International Association of Language and Social Psychology Conference in Tucson, Arizona; 2009 International Counseling Psychology Conference in Chicago, Illinois; 2010 International Society for Research on Aggression Conference in Storrs, Connecticut). In contrast, other conferences appear to be housed in specific settings (e.g., San Diego [California] International Conference on Child and Family Maltreatment). The availability of such conferences make it possible for US colleagues to 'be international' without ever leaving the familiarity of home. This conference arrangement is consistent with opposing viewpoints that have been expressed about settings such as the World Showcase at Disneyworld in the US (e.g., Fowler, 1983; Kratz & Karp, 2008). On the one hand, such settings might facilitate the viewpoint that there is a universalism of human experience and it is therefore unnecessary to learn about cultural differences. On the other hand, it is possible that such settings provide a glimpse into the unique qualities of various cultures/countries, but make it difficult for colleagues identify how much they actually know about cultures.

A final consideration is that some US colleagues hesitate to initiate collaborations in part because they recognize that they lack awareness of diverse countries/cultures. Although there are multiple handbooks for US business professionals to guide them through the initiation process (e.g., Bosrock & McGinnis, 2007; Morrison & Conaway, 2005), the process is not as clearly directed in academia. Similar to other formats in which ignorance is revealed or offense is unintentionally created (e.g., Brown,

2001; France, 2009), some US colleagues have expressed hesitation in contacting international colleagues. For example, if they habitually engage in direct communication with US colleagues, how should they contact colleagues in cultures that emphasize indirect communication? Is it more appropriate to seek a third party to make an introduction? The quandary of such questions is that it can be difficult for US colleagues to know from whom to seek guidance before they make initial contacts.

During the paper session at the IARR conference, some US colleagues expressed interest in learning more about how to begin cross-national collaborations. In addition, colleagues from several countries (e.g., Greece, England, Mexico, Turkey, Belgium) shared their insights into the cultural protocols of academic or practitioner communication. There appeared to be consensus in the room that this was a productive discussion. I hope that it will be one of many such conversations among IARR members. Thank you for your consideration.

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Research Collaborations in IARR: Report on a Round Table Convened at the International Association for Relationship Research Conference held in Providence RI, USA, on July 17-20, 2008

**by Anita P. Barbee
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University of Louisville, USA**

A team of long time IARR members, leaders, and personal relationship researchers from varied disciplines, led by Dawn Braithwaite, convened a roundtable discussion at the IARR conference in Providence. The formal participants in addition to Dr. Braithwaite (University of Nebraska, Communication) included Anita P. Barbee, University of Louisville (Social Psychology and Social Work),

Mark Fine, University of Missouri (Family Studies), Susan Hendrick, Texas Tech University (Counseling Psychology), Sandra Metts, Illinois State University (Communication), Rowland S. Miller, Houston State University (Social Psychology), Sandra Petronio, Indiana University, Purdue University Indianapolis (Communication) and Valerian Derlega, Old Dominion University (Social Psychology).

The purpose of the roundtable was to address the second part of the IARR mission statement which states that the association “seeks to stimulate and support the scientific study of personal relationships and encourage cooperation among social scientists worldwide.” The panelists discussed the intent of this goal statement, what it means to our members, and how well the association is addressing cooperation.

Sandra Metts conducted an analysis of all authors and affiliations from the two IARR journals *Personal Relationships* and *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* in the years 1998, 2003, and 2007-2008. She coded level of collaboration (multiple authors or single author), discipline (same or different), institution (same or different) and profession (academic or professional-practitioner). She coded a total of 277 articles. She found that 80% (N = 221) had multiple authors. Of these collaborative articles 23% included authors from different disciplines, 56% included authors from different institutions (some of which could be explained by graduate students moving on to other institutions after their Ph.D.s) and 7% included a non-academic co-author. When disciplines were different, 84% of those articles included authors from different institutions - a likely indicator of IARR collaborations. The pattern was consistent over time.

Anita Barbee coordinated a survey of the IARR membership. In May and June of 2008, the IARR e-newsletter printed a call to participate in an on-line survey about IARR collaborations. Only 28 people responded to the survey. Forty-six percent were psychologists (mostly social), 25% were family studies scholars, 14% were

communication scholars, 7% were sociologists and 7% were from education. Eighty-two percent had collaborated with someone outside of their department or from another university. Fifty-four percent of the collaborations were on research projects, 35% were on books, and 11% were on grants. Sixty-two percent of the book collaborations, 56% of grant collaborations, and 55% of research project collaborations were cross-disciplinary. Clinical psychologists were most likely to collaborate with colleagues from other disciplines. Of those responding, 85 IARR collaborations resulted in 147 publications and 13 out of 22 grant proposals were funded (60% success rate).

Participants rated that the nature of the working relationship was the most important contributor to positive collaboration (Mean = 4.04 on a 5 point scale). The mean satisfaction rating was high (Mean = 4.20). When asked what facilitates collaboration among IARR members, respondents indicated a) attendance at IARR conferences, b) citing work from multiple disciplines, and c) mentoring young scholars. Barriers to collaboration included a) time demands, b) distance, c) lack of motivation, d) university expectations for sole authorship, e) discipline bias, and f) infrequency of conferences.

For those who had not collaborated, the reasons included a) not knowing people well enough to know if they would want to work with them, b) not being able to evaluate another person's working style, personality or strengths, c) not being active in IARR, and d) fear of rejection from members of the psychology discipline.

The panelists added their insights. Dawn Braithwaite talked about the collaborative research projects she had worked on and chapters she had written with scholars from other disciplines. She and others on the panel all found these experiences to be positive and to have enhanced their understanding of an issue better as a result of the cross fertilization of ideas. Val Derlega elaborated and said that he feels a great debt to the scholars in IARR like Hal Kelley, Steve Duck and Robin Gilmour who

had the foresight to create an interdisciplinary organization and journal.

Susan Hendrick noted that not everyone can collaborate. A scholar needs to be like Val Derlega to be a good collaborator. A person with humility, openness, trust, willingness to learn, respect for others and other disciplines, enjoyment of different working styles, and a sense of humor.

Rowland Miller noted that no other discipline specific, basic scientific journal has articles that are written by members of different disciplines. We need to be proud of JSPR and PR and the accomplishments we have achieved. We can build from that strength and appreciate that there are still missed opportunities.

Sandra Petronio noted that federal funding agencies are insisting more and more on interdisciplinary work. These funding agencies are only funding proposals that have PIs and Co-PIs from different disciplines. Something she learned from collaborating with health professionals was that funders are also emphasizing translational research. So, the fact that our journals include only 7% collaborations with practitioners may be something we need to target as an area to improve upon.

The panel and audience discussed several ways that could facilitate collaboration. Ideas generated from the surveys, panelists and participant discussion at the conference session to facilitate more collaboration in IARR included:

Facilitation of Collaboration through Communication Tools

1. Initiate a grants announcement section in the e-news.
2. Make sure that the articles in our journals cite the literature across disciplines. Several editors in the audience weighed in on this part of the discussion. Editors share this value. One way that this is handled is choosing reviewers from different disciplines to review any given manuscript so as to

expand the critique beyond methodology to the literature and implications.

3. Edit more volumes on research areas that cut across several disciplines.
4. Make the website more interactive.
5. Create topical discussion boards.
6. Keep the membership directory up to date.

Facilitation of Collaboration at Conferences

7. Institutionalize yearly conferences.
8. Create a ribbon for newcomer name tags so that senior scholars instantly know they are new to our conference and can seek them out and meet them.
9. Host sessions on how to get grant funding.
10. Put a premium on symposia that are inter-disciplinary.
11. Include topical small group sessions to brainstorm research and grant ideas.
12. Host mini-conferences with specific sessions in which prospective research collaborations can be created.
13. Include ice breakers at social hours to facilitate meeting new people.
14. Create more informal get-togethers that facilitate getting to know each other.
15. Set aside a period of time for “Speed Collaboration” (much like speed dating).

Facilitation of Collaboration through Organizational Structure

16. Add interest groups to the organization.
17. Track and nurture cross-cultural and cross-national research and collaborations as well.
18. Make sure that the culture of the organization is respectful of all disciplines.

Our hope is that the IARR Board will see these ideas as recommendations to enhance collaboration in IARR so that we can fully realize our organizational mission.

Making Interdisciplinary Work in Relationships Research

**By Omri Gillath, Glenn Adams
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University of Kansas, USA
&
Adrienne D. Kunkel
Department of Communication Studies
University of Kansas, USA**

*I*nterdisciplinary is defined as "...drawing from or characterized by participation of two or more fields of study; for example – *interdisciplinary studies* and *an interdisciplinary conference*" (Princeton on-line dictionary, 2009). Within the past year or so, we have launched both examples of interdisciplinary work here at the University of Kansas.

With respect to the latter, we are busily planning the 2009 mini-conference of the IARR, which we will host November 5-7th in Lawrence, KS. Although the IARR emphasizes interdisciplinary and international perspectives as one of its defining principles, observers have noted that the work and membership of the organization as well as its conferences tend to be concentrated in a few (sub)disciplines and national settings. Our goal for the 2009 mini-conference has been to expand the disciplinary bases and national settings of researchers and presentations. An additional goal is to integrate broader approaches or theoretical orientations that cut across disciplinary boundaries but often create divisions within disciplines or departments (e.g., evolutionary, neuroscience, and sociocultural perspectives in psychology). We have found that discussions across these *intra*-disciplinary approaches can reveal as much ignorance and misunderstanding – but also hold the same potential for enlightenment – as discussions across interdisciplinary boundaries. We hope that you will join us for this event.

With respect to the former, we have created an interdisciplinary research forum – the KU Close Relationships Interest Group (CRIG;

http://web.ku.edu/~gillab/CRIG_popup.html)

designed to concentrate expertise and resources relevant to relationship research here at the University of Kansas and in the surrounding area. CRIG provides an institutional space in which to disseminate research, facilitate scientific/intellectual collaboration, and coordinate efforts related to graduate training and teaching in relationship research fields. CRIG also sponsors a monthly research seminar that has featured presentations from a variety of disciplinary perspectives describing research conducted in diverse national settings. Some examples include the following:

- A student in the KU Psychology Department presented work on the sociocultural foundations of attractiveness effects, drawing upon comparative research in North American and West African settings.
- A professor in the KU Communication Studies Department presented research on homophobic communication norms.
- A postdoc in the KU Psychology Department presented work on social networks and aggression among adolescents.
- A professor in the KU Economics Department presented research on the impact of marriage on earnings, drawing upon comparative analyses of data from Sweden and the US.
- A professor in the KU Anthropology Department presented research on the social construction of romantic desire based on her ethnographic field research in Tokyo host clubs.
- Researchers from local universities (Emporia State University and Kansas State University) presented research on social influence in communication patterns of young romantic partners and intercultural communication in relationships.

So far the audience for these presentations has resembled the familiar mix of disciplines that one finds represented in the IARR: mostly faculty and students in communications studies and psychology, with a few people from other social science disciplines. We continue to try different strategies to encourage sustained participation from broader disciplinary bases.

Our experience organizing these events has taught us a few lessons, some of which we can share here. First, interdisciplinary work poses challenges (Klein, 1990). Academic disciplines have different practices for presenting work (e.g., PowerPoint presentations versus reading a paper, qualitative versus quantitative analyses) and different standards of evidence. Researchers who conduct laboratory experiments frequently regard qualitative fieldwork as unscientific reportage, and researchers who conduct context sensitive, qualitative analyses often regard experimental research as intellectually trivial and politically hegemonic. Different disciplines often have different terminology for talking about similar concepts, but also use the same word in very different ways that reflect histories of debate about fine points of meaning that can appear trivial and obscure from outside the discipline. People who desire a thriving interdisciplinary program need to be aware of these potential challenges and develop ways to overcome them, or at least warn their potential audience.

Given these challenges, why would one bother to engage in interdisciplinary work? As most readers of this article are IARR members, we suspect that we don't need to convince you that interdisciplinary work has substantial rewards that can more than compensate for the occasional challenges. Still, we feel it is important to let people know that interdisciplinary competence becomes increasingly important as people progress through their academic career and the bases for evaluation become located in university-wide, trans-disciplinary spaces. Moreover, we see substantial benefits to interdisciplinary engagement at earlier stages of academic career trajectories. Interdisciplinary spaces offer students an important opportunity to gain a critical perspective on their disciplinary practice – an appreciation for its weaknesses and strengths – that is difficult to achieve when they work in an insulated, disciplinary bubble. Interdisciplinary engagement offers new assistant professors rare opportunities to make important collegial contacts (and raise awareness about their work) outside their home departments. Finally, interdisciplinary research

can offer anyone and everyone opportunities for renovation and personal development.

Perhaps the most obvious benefit of interdisciplinary work can be seen within our own topic of study – close relationships – where many phenomena do not cut themselves up neatly into disciplinary pieces. Accordingly, an adequate account of these phenomena requires interdisciplinary engagement of the sort that the IARR tries to promote. In this respect, we have found it useful to distinguish between merely *multidisciplinary* work, which refers to the juxtaposition of two or more disciplines with no real integration between them (Moran, 2002), and fully interdisciplinary work, which refers to the integration of knowledge and practice from different disciplinary perspectives (e.g., Klein, 1990). Multidisciplinary teams can bring together people from the diverse backgrounds needed to conduct some kinds of relationship research (e.g., people with knowledge of neuroimaging techniques, genetic and hormonal analysis, ethnographic and linguistic expertise, etc.). However, multidisciplinaryity is essentially additive, not integrative. Although multidisciplinary teams can foster the illusion that some form of conceptual integration is taking place, they typically leave participating disciplines unchanged and unenriched, and the lack of integrated connections means that contacts across disciplines are likely to be limited and transitory.

In contrast, a primary strength of relationship research lies in its potential to be an integrated, interdisciplinary field of study. Our plan for the 2009 IARR mini-conference is to consciously promote this form of integrative interdisciplinary study along three primary directions at the intersection of psychological science and related disciplines.

One such direction lies at the intersection of psychological and sociocultural sciences. Despite its interdisciplinary scope, research on personal relationship retains a distinctively North American character (Adams, Anderson, & Adonu, 2004). It tends to emphasize relationship forms (e.g., dating and mating rather than family and kinship) and phenomena (emotional support

and attraction rather than instrumental support and obligation) that resonate with the (North American university) worlds that disproportionately inform scientific imagination. There has been surprisingly little focus within psychological science and the IARR on the sociocultural context of relationship experience (Gaines, 2006).

A second direction lies at the intersection of psychological and biological sciences. In the past two decades there have been impressive developments in imaging techniques (e.g., functional magnetic resonance imaging – fMRI, and event related potentials – ERP), and mapping of the human genome. Although these new techniques have begun to inform the work of individual relationship scientists (e.g., Gillath et al., 2005; Gillath et al., 2008), they have yet to impact the mainstream of the field and be fully integrated with other approaches that traditionally had been in the focus of relationship research.

A third direction lies at the intersection of psychological and evolutionary sciences. In contrast to sociocultural and biological perspectives, there has been abundant research on personal relationships – especially on topics related to mating strategies, attractiveness, and jealousy – from evolutionary perspectives. However, much of this research contributes to conversations within the scientific community of evolutionary psychology; it does not necessarily filter into conversations within the broader scientific community of relationship research. As a result, even the potential of evolutionary perspectives to inform mainstream relationship research has remained unrealized.

Our main challenge in organizing the conference has been to combine these directions in ways that shift people from a multidisciplinary to an interdisciplinary mindset. With this goal in mind, the 2009 IARR mini-conference will have the following features:

- We have selected topics at the cutting edge of relationship research, where early-career scholars do the work of integrating across different research programs.

- We have invited featured presentations from speakers who are exemplary in their integration of theories, methods, and tools at the intersection of disciplines or research areas.
- We will organize symposia to include slates of speakers who address a relationship topic from different disciplines or perspectives.
- We have designed the structure of the mini-conference to encourage all participants to experience it as a coherent, interdisciplinary unit (rather than "shopping" for sessions that fit their perspective and ignoring sessions that do not).
- The final session of the mini-conference will be a roundtable discussion that devotes explicit attention to the topic of integrating new directions.

We suspect that many IARR members will find this sort of integrated, interdisciplinary approach appealing (as many already have based on the submissions we got). If you too think this is a worthy topic, please consider joining us at KU for the IARR mini-conference in November 2009

http://www.continuinged.ku.edu/programs/new_directions/.

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RETIRED PROFESSIONALS COLUMN

I Heard Mike Johnson Retired

by Michael P. Johnson

*E*vidently it was hard to tell that I retired in July 2005 at the age of 62. Four years later people are still astonished to hear that I've retired. Well, I'm not entirely surprised that people who weren't at my retirement party find the news hard to believe. Of course, there are my youthful good looks; they fool people. My mother didn't turn gray until well into her 70s, and in these days of good health 66-year-olds just don't look as old as they used to. But the confusion is probably more a function of the nature of our work, which allows us to stop collecting a regular paycheck without any obvious immediate public consequences.

My public professional self hardly appears to be retired. Since July 2005 I have continued to serve on editorial boards and to review manuscripts, served on multiple committees in professional organizations, attended eight national or international meetings, presented six invited and three refereed papers at those meetings, been a discussant in three meeting sessions, published twelve articles or book chapters and one book, presented a few lectures at universities, attended a number of policy development workgroups, and conducted

workshops for government agencies that deal with domestic violence. This may sound like a lot, but keep in mind that it *has been* four years, I do tend to say/write the same thing over and over again, and a lot of this was either finished or in progress by the time I “retired.”

But all of this public stuff masks a very relaxing private reality. I am now an *Emeritus* Professor of Sociology, Women’s Studies, and African and African American Studies at Penn State. I don’t collect a paycheck, but I also don’t prepare thirty or more lectures every semester, or walk into classrooms every other day to try (without embarrassing myself) to make a difference in the way undergraduate and graduate students think about gender in their professional or personal lives. I have more time for cooking, more time for family and friends. And I don’t have committee meetings or faculty meetings or bureaucratic paperwork. More time for reading and listening to music and going to concerts. No endless memos. More time for birding and backpacking. Fewer emails. More time for whatever. No deadlines. Relaxing.

If that’s all so relaxing, why on earth am I still so professionally active in other, more visible ways? I think the answer to that question has its roots in the timing and substance of a major change in my research agenda. Until the early 1990s I was pretty much focused on the development of theory in the area of commitment to personal relationships, a research agenda that had begun with my Master’s thesis work in 1966. But in 1993, I was asked to join a group of feminist family scholars on a trip to Vietnam. In the course of developing a project that I thought would be helpful to the women of Vietnam, I shifted my focus to domestic violence.

As it turned out, the typology of intimate partner violence that I developed had major implications for theory, research, intervention, and policy development, implications that were central to a feminist analysis of intimate partner violence—and it took the field by storm. However, the change in thinking that was required by the recognition that intimate partner violence is not a unitary phenomenon was not entirely

welcome. It called into question much of what we thought we “knew” about intimate partner violence, and it challenged the meaning of some of our most cherished methods. For example, many researchers either resisted or ignored the possibility that general survey data tell us little or nothing about the coercive controlling violence that we confront most often in law enforcement, the courts, and hospital emergency rooms. In addition and not surprisingly, anti-feminist resistance has been fierce. Thus, I have felt the need, and had the opportunity, to continue to document empirically my central message: intimate partner violence is not a unitary phenomenon, gender is implicated in important but different ways in all types of intimate partner violence, and feminist theory is central to understanding these disparate phenomena. The paid and unpaid work that I do in the service of that message keeps me pretty busy—and pretty visible.

In 2005 I felt like I’d started something important with respect to our understanding of domestic violence, and I felt that I needed to finish that job. But now the book on types of domestic violence is finished and, I hope, changing the perspectives of a wide range of researchers, theorists, and practitioners. The requests for my services in workshops for domestic violence personnel and in educational conferences for judges indicates that the typology has become a part of common thinking about intimate partner violence. I can in good conscience turn things over to the next generation of intimate partner violence researchers and activists. I’m now more inclined to say no to an invitation to present a paper or conduct a workshop, and I almost never accept a task that involves a deadline (the current column being one exception).

There are a few papers still in the pipeline, and I expect I’ll continue to write a paper now-and-again when the urge comes upon me. But this is the beginning of the next step in my retirement. Next week I head down to Austin, Texas for a few weeks at the home of my friends Ted and Chris Huston (on my own while they work during the day, having fun with them in the evening). Then we head to Belize for a week of

birding, followed by a week of sailing and snorkeling. When I head home to State College, Pennsylvania it will be for a lot of cooking, spending time with family and friends, and general relaxing—and a little bit of finishing up the next paper. I should gradually fade from professional view. If you think you'll miss me, check out my Web site every once in a while (www.personal.psu.edu/mpj) or find me on Facebook. And of course I'll see you in Herzliya.

Please submit to Relationship Research News. We are putting together the next issue and would like to receive any member news or updates:

Have you received an award or other professional honor?

Have you found a new job, received tenure or been promoted?

Do you have any other announcements to share with IARR members? For example, do you know of an upcoming conference, funding opportunity, special issue of a journal, or new world wide web source? Or, perhaps you have some personal news.

Please submit your news via email to lesley.verhofstadt@uclouvain.be

NET NEWS

**by Ben Le
Haverford College**

*L*ast fall I solicited feedback from members regarding the IARR website. Although the lack of responses could indicate that the site is perfectly fine as it is ☺ we are moving ahead with a revamping of the site in the coming months. In January we circulated a call for proposals to a number of web design firms with the goals of finding a designer that could (1) help expand the audience for the site, (2) increase the functionality of the site for both IARR members and website administrators, (3) decrease our reliance on outside services for key organizational functions (e.g., membership), (4) improve the site's visual aesthetics and organization, and (5) stay within a reasonable budget.

We received proposals from over a dozen design firms, and by the time you read this hopefully a design team will have been selected and we'll be well underway in building the new site. If all goes according to plan there will be a new site in place by the end of the summer.

If you have any comments/suggestions that you'd like heard during this process, please let me know as soon as possible. In the meantime, 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).

NEW PROFESSIONALS COLUMN

Balancing Your Personal and Professional Life: Advice for New Professionals

by **Andrea N. Lambert**
New Professional Representative
Northern Kentucky University

As my third year on the tenure-track comes to an end, I, and many in my cohort are beginning a difficult transition from focusing on our professional lives to focusing on our personal lives. During graduate school the goal was just to finish graduate classes, then to pass comprehensive exams, and then to finish the dreaded dissertation. After the dissertation was complete the hope was to land the elusive tenure-track job. Once that was accomplished many of us used the first-year on the tenure-track to prove ourselves, and the second year was used to understand the culture of the department - or in some cases to figure out how to get the heck out of dodge and land a new tenure-track job. Now, the next coveted rite of passage is achieving tenure. However, many of us have fleeting moments of feeling unfulfilled, primarily because we have neglected our personal lives for so long. As relational scholars we are quite skilled at studying relationships, but what do we do to manage our own? In order to uncover the holy grail of life balance I consulted distinguished IARR members, Dr. Steve Duck, Dr. Brant Burleson, Dr. Anita Vangelisti, and Dr. Leanne Knobloch. What follows are a few guidelines that will hopefully help you achieve personal and professional bliss (or content at the very least).

1. *Prioritize*

Clearly it is important to rank order what is important in your life, but sometimes personal

concerns can take a back seat when you are preparing for that next big stage in your career. I have overheard many peers tell their significant others and family members, "just wait until I finish my dissertation," or "as soon as I get tenure I will be home more." Unfortunately, for many of us, that day never comes. There is always data that needs to be collected, graduate students who are having thesis or dissertation emergencies, or new committees that we are asked to serve on. As Burleson notes, you have to set priorities in advance: "The principle is the same as saving money. If you're going to save, it is essential that you budget your saving goal FIRST, because if you just try to save what's "left over" each month, you'll quickly discover that NOTHING is left over, and that consequently, you save nothing. But, if you save a certain amount each month first, you don't really miss it and manage to get by somehow."

2. *Develop time-saving strategies*

While many of us feel like every minute of our day is overscheduled and that we should be working on something else rather than spending time with our loved ones, often, we just need to manage our time better. One great piece of advice offered by Vangelisti is to "use wait time. Most of us spend a fair amount of time waiting - we wait for students to show up to office hours, we wait to be seen by our doctors, and we wait in the car pool line to pick our kids up from school. Wait time can be incredibly productive. I review manuscripts, grade, and even edit my own written work while I'm waiting."

Duck also offered a fascinating narrative that gives great insight into how we can use time management strategies to create time for the things that we love.

"I visited Donn Byrne once and as he was preparing dinner I noticed that he never crossed the kitchen without carrying something from one side to the other, never carried only one thing, was ceaselessly and efficiently carrying this pan with that unprepared ingredient to the side of the kitchen where one would be used to cook and the other could be prepared and on his return trip his hands would be full with things that were

needed the other side of the kitchen. I realized at that moment how he managed to get so much done in his magnificent publishing career. Do not waste time and don't waste effort, then it is not at all a question of maintaining sanity but simply doing everything in the minimum time with the minimum effort and then you find you have a lot of both left over."

3. Take care of yourself

In the process of negotiating your personal and professional life, it can be easy to forget about taking care of yourself physically, spiritually, and emotionally. As poignantly noted by Knobloch, you need to "carve out time to exercise, sleep, and eat healthy. You won't get much done (or enjoy time away from work) if you're exhausted or sick." Knobloch further notes that finding a passion and helping others can put things into perspective. For example, "donate an hour of your time at a local soup kitchen or homeless shelter. I guarantee that you'll gain immediate perspective on those negative manuscript reviews or the failed lesson plan." Also in taking care of yourself emotionally, Knobloch encourages new professionals to reflect on their motives for choosing this career path: "remind yourself why you've chosen an academic career. If you truly love what you do, it won't feel like work. If you hate what you do, you'll never find the right work/life balance."

4. Realize balance is an ongoing struggle

To me, the most fascinating aspect about the interviews conducted for this column was the modesty of the scholars -all of them noting that they had not quite figured out the life/work balance yet. When asked to contribute to this column, Duck cheekily mused "you are of course making the assumption that I do indeed manage work and family life successfully and my family might not agree about that. They have a picture of the back of my head stuck up on the fridge as a silent accusation."

It is important that in recognizing the struggle you must also remain flexible. Vangelisti tells new scholars to "be incredibly flexible. No

matter how well you prioritize and how far in advance you plan, unexpected things happen. Some unexpected things are bad; some are good. You can either embrace the unexpected or waste incredible energy being frustrated that your plans have gone awry."

Overall, one of the best points of advice to remember is that the life/work balance is a Sisyphean task - it never ends. There will be times in your career when you do it exceptionally well and times when it seems like the sky is falling. As elegantly remarked by Vangelisti, "one of my biggest lessons has been learning that perfection and orderliness often are not attainable or even desirable. Often imperfection and messiness are more instructive, interesting, and fun."

5. Use IARR for support

Lastly, remember that IARR is not only a resource to advance your academic career, but also an organization that can be rewarding on a personal level. As new professionals, try to use IARR conferences to develop relationships with peers and take advantage of the many opportunities that IARR offers for mentorship. Through many interactions and candid conversations at IARR conferences I have discovered that many of our senior IARR colleagues can definitely provide an accurate and candid account of the trials and tribulations of the academy. I think Duck provides an apt call to action when he encourages new professionals to "get fully involved in the association, the journals and the conferences and enjoy what you do. Who else gets PAID to study relationships? Is this heaven? No its IARR."

Special thanks to the scholars who contributed to this column: Dr. Anita Vangelisti (University of Texas at Austin), recipient of the 2008 Berscheid-Hatfield Award for Distinguished Mid-Career Achievement; Dr. Steve Duck (University of Iowa); Dr. Brant Burleson (Purdue University); and Dr. Leanne Knobloch (University of Illinois), recipient of the 2008 Gerald R. Miller Award for Early Career Achievement. I am deeply indebted to your time and advice.

JOURNALS UPDATE

Editor's Report on the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*

by Paul A. Mongeau,
Arizona State University, USA

Loyal readers of this column (both of you) might tire of reading this, but 2008 was indeed another banner year for the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. There are two pieces of especially good news to report. First, we received a record 268 new manuscripts in 2008. This represents a 12% increase over 2007 (the previous record year for submissions) and a one-third increase over any other year on record. Submissions have slowed a bit thus far in 2009, however, this is consistent with historical trends. During my tenure, there have been fewer submissions in years where there is no full IARR conference (i.e., odd-numbered years are a bit slower than even-numbered years).

Second, as I mentioned in my previous column, Sage has agreed, for the second time in my tenure, to increase the page allotment for JSPR. So beginning in 2009, JSPR will appear eight times a year, with each issue averaging 144 pages (for a total of 1152 pages per volume). In the past few years, there have been six issues per volume, each averaging 168 pages (for 1008 pages per volume). Put in historical comparison, in 2004, the journal appeared six times a year and averaged 144 pages per issue. In summary, the page allotment has increased by one-third over the past five years.

I can hear readers all over the globe asking 'well, Paul, that's great, but what are you going to do with the extra pages?' That's an excellent question. For the next three years, each volume

will include a special issue. The February 2009 issue was a special issue on social support edited by Barbara and Irwin Sarason. The March 2010 issue will be a special issue on Attachment Theory edited by Phil Shaver and Mario Mikulincer (more about Mario later). These two special issues are part of my effort to mark the journal's silver anniversary. They will look backward at what we have learned and look forward to what we still need to investigate. The February 2011 issue will be a special issue on Relationships in Later Life edited by Pearl Dykstra. Look for a call for papers for this issue elsewhere in this newsletter. In addition to special issues, I will try to publish one review piece and one measurement piece each year until the new editor takes over.

Finally, the really big news. I am very pleased with Sage's and the IARR Publication Committee's decision to name Mario Mikulincer as the next JSPR editor. As is described elsewhere, Mario will take over as receiving editor on 1 January 2010 (i.e., in 231 days as I type these words...but who is counting). Mario and I have communicated both via e-mail and a transcontinental 3-way phone call (London, Herzliya, Scottsdale) concerning the transition. I believe that we are both committed to making the editorial transition as seamless and painless as possible for submitting authors. I'm sure that many of us have heard about, and some have experienced, the difficulties associated with being "caught" between editors. I believe that I was able to perform an easy transition with Mark Fine a few (OK, several) years ago and pledge to do my best to repeat that feat over the next year or so. My Associate Editors and I have engaged in some preliminary discussions and we agree that we should continue to work with manuscripts submitted through the end of the year (even if they are resubmitted in 2010). Given the technological wonder that is Manuscript Central, such an easy transition certainly seems within our grasp. There are many details to be worked out, but I urge readers to submit their work to the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* without hesitation.

Report from the Masthead Editor of *Personal Relationships*

by Rebecca G. Adams,
University of North Carolina
at Greensboro, USA

As you know, my editorial team and I stopped receiving new submissions last June when Lorne Campbell became the new Editor of *Personal Relationships*, but we have continued to process the manuscripts we had already received and to serve as the Masthead Editorial team. We are now almost finished with our work. The March issue of *Personal Relationships* (Volume 16, Number 1) has already been mailed to subscribers and the June issue (Number 2) is in press (though I have not as yet written the Preface). My editorial team and I will continue to accept revised and resubmitted papers as they are recommended for publication by our reviewers until we have filled our remaining two issues. I suspect we will reach this point sometime in July, so this makes it **extremely important for any author who has received an invitation to revise and resubmit a paper to do so in a timely way**. Similarly, any author who is not planning to accept our invitation to revise and resubmit his or her manuscript should let me know immediately so we can plan accordingly (Personal_Relationships@uncg.edu).

In addition to 9 articles that have already been recommended for publication (but still need minor editorial revisions) and a distinguished scholar article authored by Ted Huston (now scheduled to be published in the September issue), we have approximately 20 manuscripts still active in our queue. After my team has filled our issues, Lorne and I will decide how to handle each outstanding manuscript on a case-by-case basis. At this point, however, it looks like our term will finish pretty neatly, with no extra manuscripts from our term for Lorne to publish in Volume 17 and no room left in

Volume 16 for manuscripts Lorne has accepted. Time will tell. I intend to publish detailed submission statistics for our entire term when we have submitted our last issue.

Since the fall issue of RRN was published, Wiley-Blackwell has prepared two press releases for *Personal Relationships* articles. Last fall, they prepared a press release for Jeffrey K. Snyder, Lee A. Kirkpatrick, and H. Clark Barrett's article, "The Dominance Dilemma: Do Women Really Prefer Dominant Mates?" (Volume 15, Number 4). This spring, a press release focused on Lauren M. Papp, Chrystyna D. Kouros, and E. Mark Cummings' piece titled "Demand-Withdraw Patterns in Marital Conflict in the Home" (Volume 16, Number 2). They will prepare two more press releases this year, increasing the number by one for the second year in a row. How extensively the authors discuss the practical implications of their findings is an important consideration in the selection process.

It has been a delight to work with IARR President Frank Fincham, the IARR Board, Treasurer Michael Cunningham, Publications Chair Susan Sprecher, the Editorial Board, the reviewers, and the authors. I would also like to give special thanks to the Associate Editors and Editorial Assistant Sarah Hosman for their exceptional work.

Editor's Report on *Personal Relationships*

by Lorne Campbell
University of Texas at Austin, USA

To begin my first journal report for Relationship Research News, I want to express that it is a tremendous honor to serve as the editor of *Personal Relationships*. I want to thank Rebecca Adams for her invaluable assistance during the transition of editorial teams. I also want to thank Sue Sprecher and Jeffrey Simpson, past editors of PR, for providing advice on

editing a journal that is diverse in both readership and authorship. Additionally, I want to thank members of the IARR publication committee, particularly Dan Perlman, for expressing confidence in my unproven ability to serve as editor of this fine journal.

Prior to my editorial team beginning to process new manuscripts on June 1, 2008, I was fortunate to have six excellent scholars agree to serve as associate editors: Chris Agnew, Anita Barbee, Gurit Birnbaum, Susan Branje (continuing from Rebecca Adams' editorial team), C. Raymond (Chip) Knee, and Theo van Tilburg. Each of these individuals has done a terrific job, and without the hard work and dedication of these associate editors my job would be very difficult indeed. I was also fortunate to have approximately 100 scholars, representing many different disciplines and geographic regions, agree to serve on the editorial board. Since we began processing new manuscripts we have also relied on a number of ad hoc reviewers and new scholars to assist with reviewing articles. Reviewers have been very kind to us to date, with a large percentage of individuals agreeing to review manuscripts when asked and returning their reviews in a timely manner. A number of guest editors have also assisted with the review process, including Margaret Clark, Adam Davies, John Holmes, João Moreira, and Mark Leary. Lastly, I am very happy that Rachel Harvey agreed to serve as my editorial assistant—she is the ghost in the editorial machine. The wonderful work of the associate editors, and the excellent response of reviewers, has served to enhance the efficiency of the review process. I feel very privileged to be working with such an exceptional group of individuals.

The most significant change that my editorial team made to the submission and review process was adopting the manuscript central online platform. Prior to making this change I spoke with editors of other journals that used this, and other, programs to process manuscripts, as well as with authors familiar submitting manuscripts via such online platforms. The response was unanimously positive, and I am pleased that the transition to manuscript central has gone very

smoothly (with only a few bumps along the way). Authors wishing to submit a manuscript to PR need to complete an online profile on the manuscript central website for the journal (<http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/pere>), and then follow a set of straightforward steps to complete their submission. People wishing to review for PR need to complete an online profile at the same website and their names, as well as research interests, will be available to the editorial team when searching for appropriate reviewers. If you experience any difficulties with the manuscript central website, as an author or reviewer, please contact Rachel Harvey (rachelharvey@canada.com) for assistance.

At the time of writing (April 21, 2009), we have received a total of 181 submissions to PR. With almost six weeks remaining in our first year processing manuscripts, this year promises to witness a significant increase in submissions to PR over previous years. This increase in submissions suggests that PR has a solid reputation as a high quality outlet for close relationship research, a reputation we plan to improve upon during our four year term. Our editorial team has handled this increase in submissions very well, taking an average of 70 days to make an initial decision on submitted manuscripts. The average reviewer turnaround for original submissions is 34 days, and is 28 days for revised manuscripts. To date we have accepted 9 manuscripts, and we are awaiting the submission of many other revised manuscripts, a number of which will ultimately be accepted for publication. The first issue that my editorial team is responsible for filling with accepted manuscripts is the March 2010 issue. The publication lag for the first group of manuscripts that our team accepts is therefore fairly long, but once we begin filling issues we plan to significantly reduce this lag. In terms of diversity of authorship, 65% of new submissions have come from scholars based inside the United States, whereas 35% have been submitted by scholars based outside the United States. In the fall report I will provide more statistics on the diversity of authorship for new submissions. Overall, our editorial team is processing new submissions in a very efficient manner, and we always strive to make the best decision on each

manuscript in the shortest amount of time possible.

In the near future an announcement will be sent out soliciting submissions for a special issue of PR. The guest editor for this special issue is Timothy Loving, and I am excited to have the opportunity to work with Tim on this project. We feel the topic area will generate interest among prospective authors and ultimately readers of PR. During my editorial term I plan on publishing at least 2 special issues that focus on important, and in some cases understudied, areas of inquiry into close relationship processes.

It is a pleasure serving as editor of PR, and the editorial team will continue working hard to improve the efficiency of the review process and publishing high quality close relationship research.

Tentative Contents of Upcoming Journals

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Deciphering Spousal Intentions: A fMRI Study
of Couple Communication

JAMILA BOOKWALA AND ERIN FEKETE
The Role of Psychological Resources in the
Affective Well-Being of Never-Married Adults

ANNE J., WOODWARD, BRUCE M.
FINDLAY, AND SUSAN M. MOORE
Peak and Mystical Experiences in Intimate
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CATHERINE L. COHAN, STEVE W. COLE,
AND ROBERT SCHOEN

Divorce Following the September 11 Terrorist
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Investigating a Four-Pathway Model of Adult
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SURRA

A Qualitative Analysis of On-again/Off-again
Romantic Relationships: "It's Up and Down, All
Around"

WYNDOL FURMAN AND LAUREN B.
SHOMAKER

Parent-Adolescent Relationship Qualities,
Internal Working Models, and Styles as
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EDITOR'S PREFACE

ARTICLES

JENNIFER L. BEVAN

Interpersonal Communication
Apprehension, Topic Avoidance, and the
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Editor Named for the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*

*I*n the fall, we distributed a call for nominations for Editor of *JSPR*. We were fortunate to have several highly qualified candidates for this important position. Sage Publications and the IARR Publications Committee are pleased to announce the appointment of Mario Mikulincer as the next Editor of the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. Mario is Professor and Dean

of the New School of Psychology at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya, in Israel. Mario will prepare his editorial office and organize his editorial team over the next six months and begin processing new manuscripts submitted to *JSPR*, effective January 1, 2010. Paul Mongeau, the current editor, will process all submissions through the end of 2009. In addition, Paul will continue, with his Associate Editors, to process revisions of manuscripts originally submitted through 2009 for one year to fill the issues making up the 2010 volume. The IARR publication committee has been very thankful for Paul's dedication to *JSPR* and pleased to know that the journal will continue to be in good hands, under the leadership of Mario. The committee would also like to thank the other candidates, who also impressed the committee.

In the fall, we also distributed a call for nominations for Editor of RNN. The review process for that position is still underway.

From Susan Sprecher (Chair) and Members Walid Afifi, Leah Bryant, Rodrigo Carcedo, Eli Finkel, Pearl Dykstra, Robert Milardo, and Daniel Perlman.

IARR Mini-Conference 2009 New Directions in Research on Close Relationships November 5-7, 2009 in Lawrence, KS

*T*he interdisciplinary [Close Relationships Interest Group](#) (CRIG) at the University of Kansas is proud to announce the 2009 mini-conference of the [International Association for Relationship Research](#) (IARR): "New Directions in Research on Close Relationships: Integrating Across Disciplines and Theoretical Approaches." The goal of the conference is to

integrate ideas and research from diverse disciplinary and theoretical approaches, especially cultural, neuroscience, and evolutionary perspectives on close relationships. The list of confirmed speakers includes (in alphabetical order): Art Aron, Karen Bales, Brant Burleson, Jim Coan, Lisa Diamond, Bruce Ellis, Alan Fiske, Olcay İmamoğlu, Benjamin Karney, Deborah Kashy, Heejung Kim, Jon Maner, Jeffrey Simpson, Steven Wilson, and Masaki Yuki. A sample of topics includes sociocultural influences on relationships, social networks, genetic and neural substrates of love, and implications of close-relationships research for health and well-being. The ambitious purpose of the meeting is not merely to present the latest work within these different areas, but also to promote a more integrated science of personal relationships.

Please visit the following website to register: http://www.continuinged.ku.edu/programs/new_directions/

For further information, please contact Omri Gillath (ogillath@ku.edu.). We hope to see you this coming November in Lawrence, KS!

The Program Organizing Committee Omri Gillath (Chair), Glenn Adams, Melanie Canterbury, Tara Collins, Adrienne Kunkel, and Tuğçe Kurtiş

IARR 2010 Conference

We want to announce the 2010 Conference of the International Association for Relationship Research to be held at the Campus of the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya, Israel in July 22-25, 2010. Mario Mikulincer, Professor of Psychology and Dean of the New School of Psychology, IDC Herzliya will act as the head of the local organization committee. Ruth Sharabany, Associate Professor at the Department of Psychology, University of Haifa, will act as the head of the conference scientific committee.

Herzliya is one of Israel's most special cities. It is located 10 miles north of Tel-Aviv. Established in 1924 and named for the founder of modern political Zionism, Theodore Herzl, the city is a microcosm of 21st century Israel. It is renowned for its affluent homes, exclusive beach resort, flourishing high-tech industrial and commercial zones, shopping malls, leisure and entertainment center. Whatever the interests of participants, they should be able to have a very enjoyable and exciting time while here. There are many places to visit in Israel beyond Herzliya. People might want to visit Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, the Dead Sea, Eilat and the desert, The Galilee Sea, Nazareth, and other cities and places.

We look forward to welcoming you to the IDC campus, Herzliya in July 2010 for a highly stimulating intellectual exchange and what promises to be a rich, provocative, and enjoyable conference.

Mario Mikulincer
Gurit Birnbaum
Yair Amichai Hamburger

Local Organization Committee

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS Special Issue of JSPR: Personal Relationships in Late Life

by Pearl Dykstra
Netherlands Interdisciplinary
Demographic Institute

The *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* is planning a special issue on *personal relationships in late life*. By 'late life' we mean 65 years and older. The special issue is planned for the February 2011 issue of the journal (i.e., volume 28 #1). The deadline for submissions is 1 October 2009. Pearl Dykstra will be the guest editor.

Improvements in living standards have brought unprecedented increases in longevity. Most people in industrialized societies can expect to celebrate their eightieth birthday and many birthdays beyond that. Moreover, epidemiological studies consistently show that personal relationships are among the best predictors of a long life. Despite the importance of late life relationships, research on this cohort lags behind what we know about other groups. Therefore, it is important that the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* should devote a special issue to personal relationships and older adults.

We expect that submissions will take any of several approaches to relationships in late life. Here we suggest three possible approaches, however, contributors clearly have the liberty to develop their own points of departure. One option is to consider historical change. For example, older adults grew up at a time when people had a more fatalistic view of life rather than a spirit of individualism with its emphasis on self-actualization and reflexivity. How has modernization influenced late life adults' personal relationships? Second, research could spring from the length of late life adults' relationships. What are the secrets of a long-lasting marriage or what role do long-time friends and/or siblings play in older adults' lives? What distinguishes those with age-homogeneous networks from those who have replenished their networks with young(er) people over the course of their lives? Finally, research could focus on the ageing process (e.g., functional declines and losses in personal networks). In what ways do older adults accommodate their personal relationships to meet the transitions that accompany old age? Conversely, in what ways do personal relationships contribute to older adult well-being and how do they help older adults maintain an autonomous and fulfilling lifestyle? In addition to these suggestions, contributors should feel free to develop other foci for this special issue.

Manuscripts representing scholarship from a variety of disciplines are welcome. Scholarship can reflect a variety of methods (e.g., longitudinal representative samples, cross-

national comparisons, social and group comparisons, qualitative designs) or combination of methods. Theoretical work, reviews, and meta-analyses are also welcome.

Manuscript submission will occur through the *JSPR* section of the Manuscript Central system. Authors should indicate that this manuscript is a candidate for the special issue on relationships in late life edited by Pearl Dykstra. Authors can begin the submission process at: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jspr>.

Address inquiries about potential submissions to the guest editor, Pearl Dykstra, via e-mail at: dykstra@nidi.nl.

CALL FOR COMPETITIVE CHAPTERS ON POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

The bright side of communication

Submission Deadline: June 1, 2009.

In conjunction with the 2010 Southern States Communication Association Conference Theme, *Positive Communication*, and in response to a significant movement in the field of psychology on positive psychology (e.g., Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Martin Seligman), we invite communication scholars to submit a proposal for a chapter on positive communication. Accepted chapters will appear in a new edited volume, *The Positive Side of Interpersonal Communication* (Socha & Pitts). Positive communication emphasizes the role of communication in what Aristotle called *eudemonia*, or happiness. Positive communication seeks to move communication research beyond understanding communication competence towards understanding communication *artfulness*, beyond good speech to *eloquence*, beyond communication satisfaction to *communication joy* by focusing collective attention on topics such as positive

communication processes, communication and positive character development, communicating positive emotions, communication and civility, positive relational communication, pro-social media, positive organizational communication, positive communication and lifespan development, and more. We invite you to participate in the bright side of communication. Interested contributors should submit (1) a working chapter title, (2) 2-3 paragraphs that describe the proposed chapter in general terms, and (3) a one paragraph biographical statement for each author. Please e-mail proposals as a Word Document or address inquiries to us at Old Dominion University: Maggie Pitts mpitts@odu.edu (757-683-3833) and Thomas Socha, tsocha@odu.edu (757-368-4114).

CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2011 Mini-Conferences

*T*he Future Conferences Committee (FCC) of the International Association for Relationship Research (IARR) invites proposals to a host regional, thematic, or graduate student / new professional conference to be held in 2011. The deadline for submission is **November 10, 2009**.

Hosting an IARR conference is an excellent way to showcase your school and your city. It also provides your team with the opportunity to develop new organizational skills, and establish contacts with the business community in your area. Based on past conferences, you can project a financial impact of several hundreds of thousands of dollars on the local economy.

Proposals to host a 2011 mini-conference can be submitted by an individual or a small group of individuals, but all applicants must be IARR members. Proposals will be evaluated according to three criteria: (a) potential for interest among IARR members;

(b) capacity to provide opportunities for education, collaboration, and networking among attendees; and (c) ability to generate revenue equal to expenses (i.e., all mini-conferences must be self-funded). Proposals will be reviewed by members of the Future Conferences Committee and the IARR Board.

A proposal to host a 2011 mini-conference should contain the following information:

1. Name, title, and contact information of applicants. Include mailing address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address for all applicants. Designate one or more applicants to serve as the Local Arrangements Chair or Co-Chairs. (In the case of a single Local Arrangements Chair, designate a second applicant willing to take charge if the Local Arrangements chair is unable to fulfill his or her duties.)
2. Theme. Explicate the theme of the conference. Discuss how the theme fits into the mission of IARR.
3. Site. Include city, state or province, and country. Specify the physical site of the conference, such as a university campus or a conference center. Provide a brief description of the ambience and amenities of the site. Describe the transportation options for traveling between the local airport and the site.
4. Proposed dates.
5. Projected number of attendees.
6. Any possible co-sponsors. Estimate their degree of financial involvement.
7. Major venues. Include descriptions of the following:

- a. Meeting places, including rooms for plenary sessions and paper sessions.
 - b. Eating facilities, including cafeterias, banquet halls, and restaurants in the vicinity.
 - c. Lodging facilities, including local hotels, dormitories, and on-site housing. Describe any low-cost housing options.
8. Any stipends offered to invited speakers and / or students.
 9. Projected costs of travel and lodging. Provide current airfares from gateway cities around the world (i.e., Beijing, Sydney, Chicago, Montreal, Buenos Aires, London, and Cairo). Estimate lodging costs for participants. Describe any low-cost housing options.
 10. Projected registration fee. The fee structure should include (a) a rate for members of IARR; (b) a rate for non-members of IARR; (c) a rate for graduate students; and (d) a rate for participants from underrepresented countries (based on World Bank classifications).
 11. Projected budget. Complete and attach the *Mini-Conferences Budget Form* available on the IARR website (www.iarr.org). Estimate revenue (from registration fees, co-sponsors, etc.) and costs (for venue, meals, equipment rentals, conference program, speaker honorariums, etc.). Provide both overall and itemized estimates of revenues and costs.

12. Projected Sponsorship. Report the money and services that your school, local business community, and others will provide to defray the cost of the conference

To apply, please submit a proposal and a completed budget form via e-mail attachment to Omri Gillath, Chair of the Future Conferences Committee (ogillath@ku.edu) by **November 10, 2009**. Please direct questions to him.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2012 Conference

*T*he Future Conferences Committee (FCC) of the International Association for Relationship Research (IARR) invites preliminary proposals to host the 2012 conference. The deadline for proposal submission is **November 10, 2009**.

Hosting an IARR conference is an excellent way to showcase your school and your city. It also provides your team with the opportunity to develop new organizational skills, and establish contacts with the business community in your area. Based on past conferences, you can project a financial impact of several hundreds of thousands of dollars on the local economy.

Proposals to host the 2012 conference can be submitted by an individual or a small group of individuals, but all applicants must be IARR members. Applicants will act as Local Arrangements Chair (or Co-Chairs) for the conference. The Local Arrangements Chair will be responsible for coordinating the venue, meeting spaces, lodging, and meals for the conference. (The Local Arrangements Chair will also work closely

with the Program Chair, an elected IARR member who is responsible for developing the program [e.g., conference presentations, order of meetings]).

The FCC will begin by reviewing preliminary proposals. The preliminary proposals contain only the most essential information needed to evaluate potential conference sites. The preliminary proposals should be approximately 8 pages and address the topics listed below. After screening preliminary proposals, the FCC may solicit a full proposal. The full proposal contains the detailed information the IARR Board needs to make a final decision about the conference location.

The typical attendance at prior conferences has ranged from 350 to 450 people.

A preliminary proposal to host the 2012 conference should contain the following information:

1. Name, title, and contact information of applicants. Include mailing address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address for all applicants. Designate one or more applicants willing to serve as the Local Arrangements Chair or Co-Chairs. (In the case of a single Local Arrangements Chair, designate a second applicant willing to take charge if the Local Arrangements chair is unable to fulfill his or her duties.)
2. Site. Include city, state or province, and country. Specify the physical site of the conference, such as a university campus, hotel or a conference center. Provide a brief description of the ambience and amenities of the site. Describe the transportation options for traveling between the local airport and the site (e.g., trains, taxis, rental cars). The

primary language of the conference will be English. So, please note the degree of English accessibility at the conference site and within the city (e.g., most hotel staff is fluent in English, signs are posted in native language and English).

3. Proposed dates. Specify the proposed dates of the event. The conference is usually held during a 4-5 day period in July, which is a reasonably convenient time for most IARR members.
4. Proposed schedule. Provide a preliminary outline of the conference schedule. Include time for lunches, dinners, coffee breaks, approximately six plenary sessions (90 minutes in length), and approximately eight paper / poster sessions (90 minutes in length). (Note: The Local Arrangements Chair(s) will work closely with the program planner on the final schedule to accommodate the number of submissions accepted for presentation.)
5. Major venues. Include descriptions of the following:
 - a. Meeting places, including (a) auditoriums for plenary sessions; (b) a central area for breaks between sessions; (c) large rooms for symposia, book exhibits, registration, and poster sessions (with the capacity to house at least 70 posters); and (d) smaller rooms for paper sessions and interest groups. (Note: A plenary session is a 90-minute period for a well-known presenter. The presenter should have a national and/or international reputation for high-quality research in the relationship field. The presenter should address a topic that would

- be of general appeal to IARR members.)
- b. Presentation equipment, including access to (a) overhead projectors; (b) computers for power point presentations; (c) computer projectors for power point presentations; and (d) poster stands for poster sessions.
 - c. Eating facilities, including cafeterias, dining rooms, and banquet halls.
 - d. Lodging facilities, including local hotels, dormitories, and on-site housing. Describe any low-cost housing options (e.g., campus rooms, hotels/motels, hostels, bed & breakfast inns).
6. Hospitality. Describe plans for lunches, dinners, and coffee breaks. Traditionally, lunches and at least two dinners are served in community (e.g., at hotel, local restaurant, special university dining hall) to encourage interaction among attendees. We also typically have a lunch or dinner out in the local community. One coffee break in the morning and one coffee break in the afternoon (with beverages and light snacks) also should be included in the registration fee.
 7. Awards dinner. Include plans for an awards dinner with a social event (typically a dance) afterwards. The awards dinner can be included in the registration fee or available at an additional cost.
 8. Optional excursion. Describe plans for an optional excursion (if desired). This excursion should not be included as part of the registration fee. Sample excursions might include tours of natural wonders, historical sites, or cultural sites (e.g., museums). Recreational excursions (e.g., snorkeling) might also be offered. Such excursions can be arranged and managed through local travel agencies/tour companies.
 9. Projected costs of travel and lodging. Provide current airfares from gateway cities around the world (i.e., Beijing, Sydney, Chicago, Montreal, Buenos Aires, London, and Cairo). Estimate lodging costs for participants (for both regular and low-cost housing options). If lodging is not easily within walking distance of the conference site, then note daily transportation options (e.g., buses, taxis).
 10. Projected registration fee. The fee structure should include (a) a rate for members of IARR; (b) a rate for non-members of IARR; (c) a rate for graduate students; and (d) a rate for participants from underrepresented countries (based on World Bank classifications).
 11. Projected budget. Complete and attach the *Main Conference Budget Form* available on the IARR website (www.iarr.org). Estimate revenue (from registration fees, co-sponsors, etc.) and costs (for venue, meals, equipment rentals, conference program, speaker honorariums, etc.). Provide both overall and itemized estimates of revenues and costs.
 12. Projected Sponsorship. Report the money and services that your school, local business community, and others will provide to defray the cost of the conference.

To apply, please submit a proposal and a completed budget form via e-mail attachment to Omri Gillath, Chair of the Future Conferences Committee (ogillath@ku.edu) by **November 10, 2009**. Please direct questions to him.

**MEMBER NEWS
& UPDATES**

*R*ecently published: *Marriage at Midlife: Counseling Strategies and Analytical Tools* by VINCENT WALDRON and DOUGLAS KELLEY. This book provides counselors, mental health professionals, and marriage educators with the tools they need to assist couples who are experiencing the challenges of the post-childrearing years. Enter code **IARR2** upon checkout from the Springer Publishing Company website and receive a 20% discount off the list price of this title. Shipping is additional. For more information and to order, go to: http://www.springerpub.com/prod.aspx?prod_id=2562x

STACEY MACKINNON has received tenure at the University of Prince Edward Island and is expecting her first child in June.

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