

## Celebrating Personal Relationships.

By: Rebecca G. Adams

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### **Abstract:**

Like the articles published in other issues of Volume 14 of *Personal Relationships*, those published in this issue collectively reflect my editorial team's commitments to theory development, contextualized research, and the journal's interdisciplinary and international mission. The articles appear in the order in which they were submitted.

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### **Article:**

Like the articles published in other issues of Volume 14 of *Personal Relationships*, those published in this issue collectively reflect my editorial team's commitments to theory development, contextualized research, and the journal's interdisciplinary and international mission. The articles appear in the order in which they were submitted.

Three articles, written by teams of psychologists from the United States, contribute to the enrichment and expansion of attachment theory to consider the influence of relationships other than the relationship between a parent and child. Amy J. Rauer and Brenda L. Volling ("Differential Parenting and Sibling Jealousy: Developmental Correlates of Young Adults' Romantic Relationships") point out that previous studies of attachment have assumed that the only parenting that matters is the direct parenting an individual receives. Their research demonstrates that the definition of parenting used by attachment researchers must be broadened to include the parenting siblings receive as well. Similarly, Claudia Chloe Brumbaugh and R. Chris Fraley ("Transference of Attachment Patterns: How Important Relationships Influence Feelings Toward Novel People") note that partner attachment seems to affect person perception independently of general approaches to relationships, and Jaye L. Derrick and Sandra L. Murray ("Enhancing Relationship Perceptions by Reducing Felt Inferiority: The Role of Attachment

Style”) report that relationship insecurities expressed by people relatively low in attachment security might result from their inability to believe that they are as valuable as their partner.

Two other teams of psychologists from the United States report findings regarding the relative importance of physical attractiveness and personality in mate preference. Gary W. Lewandowski, Jr., Arthur Aron, and Julie Gee (“Personality Goes a Long Way: The Malleability of Opposite-Sex Physical Attractiveness”) report findings that suggest one way to be perceived as more attractive is to work on your personality. In their research they found that positive personality traits lead to a person being desired as a friend, which makes them a more desired dating partner, which in turn makes them perceived to be more physically attractive. In contrast, in their brief report based on data collected by a speed-dating firm in the United States involving more than 10,000 people in their 20’s, 30’s, and 40’s, Robert Kurzban and Jason Weeden (“Do Advertised Preferences Predict Behavior of Speed Daters?”) report that people who attend speed-dating events select partners based on physical attractiveness and other observable characteristics despite their advertised preferences regarding personality, education, income, and family orientation. Together the findings from these two studies suggest that people with good personalities who are not attractive physically will find mates more easily in contexts in which they become acquainted with people over a longer period of time than is possible at a speed-dating event.

Like this study of speed daters, the remaining studies are based on samples collected outside of the academy. Two of these articles were written by teams of psychologists including members from outside the United States. Guy Bodenmann (Switzerland), Thomas Ledermann (Switzerland), and Thomas N. Bradbury (United States) studied 198 intact heterosexual couples residing in the German-speaking part of Switzerland (“Stress, Sex, and Satisfaction in Marriage”). Their research demonstrates a link between both marital satisfaction and sexual functioning and spouses’ experiences of daily hassles in the relationship, daily hassles, and acute life events encountered outside of the relationship. In addition, a team of psychologists from The Netherlands (Susan J. T. Branje, Tom Frijns, Catrin Finkenauer, Rutgers Engels, and Wim Meeus, “You’re My Best Friend: Commitment and Stability in Adolescents’ Same-Sex Friendships”) examined data from a two-wave longitudinal study of 678 early and 317 middle Dutch adolescents and demonstrated that Rusbult’s investment model is useful in predicting commitment and stability of adolescents’ best friendships. Finally, a team of family studies scholars from the United States studied data on the parents and an adult child from 213 families (Elizabeth L. Hay, Karen L. Fingerman, and Eva S. Lefkowitz, “The Experience of Worry in Parent-Adult Child Relationships”). The extent to which parents and adult children worried about each other and how often they communicated these worries affected perceptions of relationship quality both positively and negatively.

These articles comprise the fourth and final issue of Volume 14, the first volume of three my editorial team and I will produce. We have been working with the Editorial Board, reviewers, and authors since June 1, 2005. Although we do not have personal relationships with all of them, we

have certainly gotten to know many of them much better than we did before we began to fill our editorial roles. The way in which people participate in the peer review process, which is a fairly intense form of collaboration, reveals much about how they might act as partners, family members, and friends. We feel fortunate that our scholarly community is populated by such committed, generous, and thoughtful human beings and look forward to face-to-face encounters with each of them at conferences of the International Association for Relationship Research and elsewhere.

My editorial team and I would like to thank the 83 members of the Editorial Board, 296 ad hoc reviewers, and 93 new scholar reviewers for their service to *Personal Relationships*. It sounds trite, but we really could not do this without them. We are also grateful that many other scholars have agreed to review manuscripts in the future. The Editorial Board members are listed, as always, on the inside cover of this issue. The ad hoc and new scholar reviewers who evaluated manuscripts for us between the beginning of our term and the end of May 2007 are listed at the back of this issue just before the subject and author indices for Volume 14. We would also like to thank outgoing Editorial Assistant Brandi McCullough, who did an excellent job copyediting manuscripts, corresponding with authors and reviewers, maintaining databases, and training her replacement, Sarah Hosman.

While I was attending the Editor's Forum that Blackwell Publishers held at the Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association in August, it occurred to me that many of the editors present did not serve tight-knit communities like I do. Unlike the submitters, editorial board members, and reviewers of many of the other journals represented at the Forum, a large proportion of ours know and care about each other. This is particularly remarkable given how many countries and disciplines are represented in our community. This is one of the things that makes serving on the editorial team of *Personal Relationships* so rewarding.

In this spirit, I would like you to join me in congratulating the following authors of articles published in Volume 14 of this journal on the changes in their own personal relationships which occurred while they were working on their contributions: Ximena Arriaga (and Chris Agnew) gave birth to their second daughter on April 30, 2007; Gurit Birnbaum was married on April 17, 2006 to co-author Ohad Cohen; Wayne Denton was married on June 8, 2007; on May 20, 2007, Jaye Derrick became engaged to be married; on December 30, 2006, Eli J. Finkel became engaged to be married; Katy Gibson (formerly Carpenter) was married on July 28, 2007; Elizabeth Hay and her husband welcomed their second child into their family on November 6, 2006; Andrew M. Ledbetter's wife gave birth to their first child on December 6, 2006; Gary Lewandowski's wife gave birth to their first child on July 12, 2007; Candida Peterson's second grandchild was born on May 15, 2006; Colleen Saffrey was married in June, 2006; Keith Sanford was married on July 23, 2005; Phil Shaver's twin daughters celebrated their 11<sup>th</sup> birthday on April 11, 2007; and Brenda Volling's only child had his first day of high school on September 4, 2007. Oh yes, and my personal favorite: Harry Reis, our 2007 Distinguished Scholar, reports that he has added a 7-year-old thoroughbred horse to his network of personal

relationships (the most pertinent relationship is between the horse and his daughter). So we would like to end the first year of our term by congratulating the authors of articles in Volume 14 of *Personal Relationships* on their contributions to our field and by celebrating the personal relationships of the members of our scholarly community.

On behalf of the editorial team of *Personal Relationships*,

Rebecca G. Adams