



**Welcome back!**

# **Psychology of Close Relationships!**

January 30, 2024



# Head TF: Alison Hui

## (PGP: They, Them, Their)

Hello everyone!

I'm delighted to explore the Psychology of Close Relationships with you this term!

I am a huge nerd for neuroscience, nature, and the cultural/ linguistic influences on cognition and relationships.

In my free time, I like to spend time in nature with friends and family as well as photographing wildlife (the photos from this slide are all from my collection).

I look forward to working with you all! Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about sections or the course in general.

Happy Learning! ~Alison



# Holly Parker

## (PGP: She, her, hers)

Hello Everyone! ☺

I'm a psychologist in private practice, and I deeply love to teach and write too. At home, I live with the love of my life and best friend, Guille, and get bossed around by my hilarious and awesome parrot, Edgar...admittedly, I obey.

I love this field because close relationships are the bedrock of a well-lived life. Even though we can't literally control the outcomes of our relationships (thankfully!), we all have much more influence over those outcomes than we realize.

Thank you so much for being a part of this class! I'm so excited to get to know you over the course of the semester, and greatly hope you enjoy the learning journey!

My husband and I love to travel and go on biking/hiking adventures and explore ancient ruins together. Some of our favorites include climbing down into a dead volcano and exploring a cave with 40,000 year old Neanderthal paintings. Since the pandemic, we've also embraced jigsaw puzzles and cooking dishes from around the world.





# Paper Preparation and Writing Tips

## Start with Research

It can be (understandably!) tempting to choose a topic entirely based on your interests.

Before you move forward, research the scientific literature first.

Why?

- Enables you to see if there's research on your topic of interest

- Highlights the nuances in the research, including what's not known, possibly boundary conditions, methodological issues, variations across circumstances or populations, and areas of debate

- Reveals theoretical underpinnings to deepen your understanding

- Can potentially inspire you to expand or refine your topic, or even find a new one

# Paper Preparation and Writing Tips

There are excellent research resources available to you

HOLLIS

<https://library.harvard.edu/services-tools/hollis>

Click on “Launch HOLLIS”

Can search in the search window under “Catalog & Articles”

If you wish, you can refine your search in the column on the right-hand side

- Online

- In the library

- Date

- Language

- Articles, books, book chapters

# Paper Preparation and Writing Tips

There are excellent research resources available to you

HOLLIS

<https://library.harvard.edu/services-tools/hollis>

Click on “Launch HOLLIS”

Click on “Databases” at the top of the page

Great examples of databases

PsycINFO

Google Scholar

Academic Search Premier

PubMed

Web of Science

# Paper Preparation and Writing Tips

## PsycINFO research tips

Experiment with your search terms

Use “\*” at the end of words

“Coupl\*” will give you “couple,” “couples,” “coupling,” and “coupled”  
Will expand your search

Use “and”

“Couple and love and openness” will give you articles with these terms together  
Will narrow your search

Use “or”

“Couple or marriage or marital or partner or spouse” will give you articles with any of these terms  
Will expand your search

Clicking “Linked Full Text” will give you the full text of the article



# Paper Preparation and Writing Tips

Review the references of papers that are useful to you

One of the best ways to find additional references

Can find the articles for those references directly in HOLLIS, PsycINFO, or Google Scholar

# Paper Preparation and Writing Tips

## Writing Tips

- Start the research and writing process early

  - Enables you to break up the work into segments, making it easier

  - Allows you to write and refine a draft

  - Eases writing pressure

  - Spares you the stress of trying to meet a deadline at the last minute

- Make an outline of your main points

  - Helps organize your writing

  - Facilitates writing

  - Enables you to organize your references

# Paper Preparation and Writing Tips

## Writing Tips

Give yourself permission to write a bad first draft

Assume the paper you're about to write is the the same one you're going to turn in.

Allow yourself to experiment and take chances with what you write.

Let yourself step away from it for a few hours, or a day or two.

Come back and reread it.

# Paper Preparation and Writing Tips

## Writing Tips

Revise what you have

Create a new document in case you want to save old language from the previous draft.

Expect that you're not going to like everything you've written. That's okay! It's part of the process.

Plan to reread and revise it at least one more time.

Try reading it out loud. This will help you catch typos and language that may be unclear.

Double-check your paper for APA formatting.

Try to be encouraging toward yourself through the writing process!

# Research in Psychology of Close Relationships

## A Relationship: Nuts and Bolts

- Must not be interacting in a social role:

Two people behave with each other in a way that is different from how they would behave with others.

The relationship is unique.



(Regan, 2011; Berscheid & Regan, 2016)



# Research in Psychology of Close Relationships

## A Relationship: Nuts and Bolts

What is a relationship? (Romantic relationships)

### Uniqueness

The specific qualities of each person

The particular dynamics arise as partners (and their qualities) interact

### Integration

Opportunities and interests to be interdependent

Greater likelihood of a blend in cognition, affect, and motivation

### Trajectory

Partners continue to revise how they see experiences with their partner.

These perceptions impact how relationships change over time.



# Research in Psychology of Close Relationships

## Romantic relationships



May be sexual

Different expectations, dynamics, and norms than friendships

Can be committed or uncommitted

Choose them

## Friendships



Choose them

Generally less structured than romantic relationships

May be sexual

# Research in Psychology of Close Relationships

## What does it mean to be close and intimate?

- Personal sense of being intimate

Feel close and connected

- Objective intimacy

How you behave and influence each other

Frequent

Strong

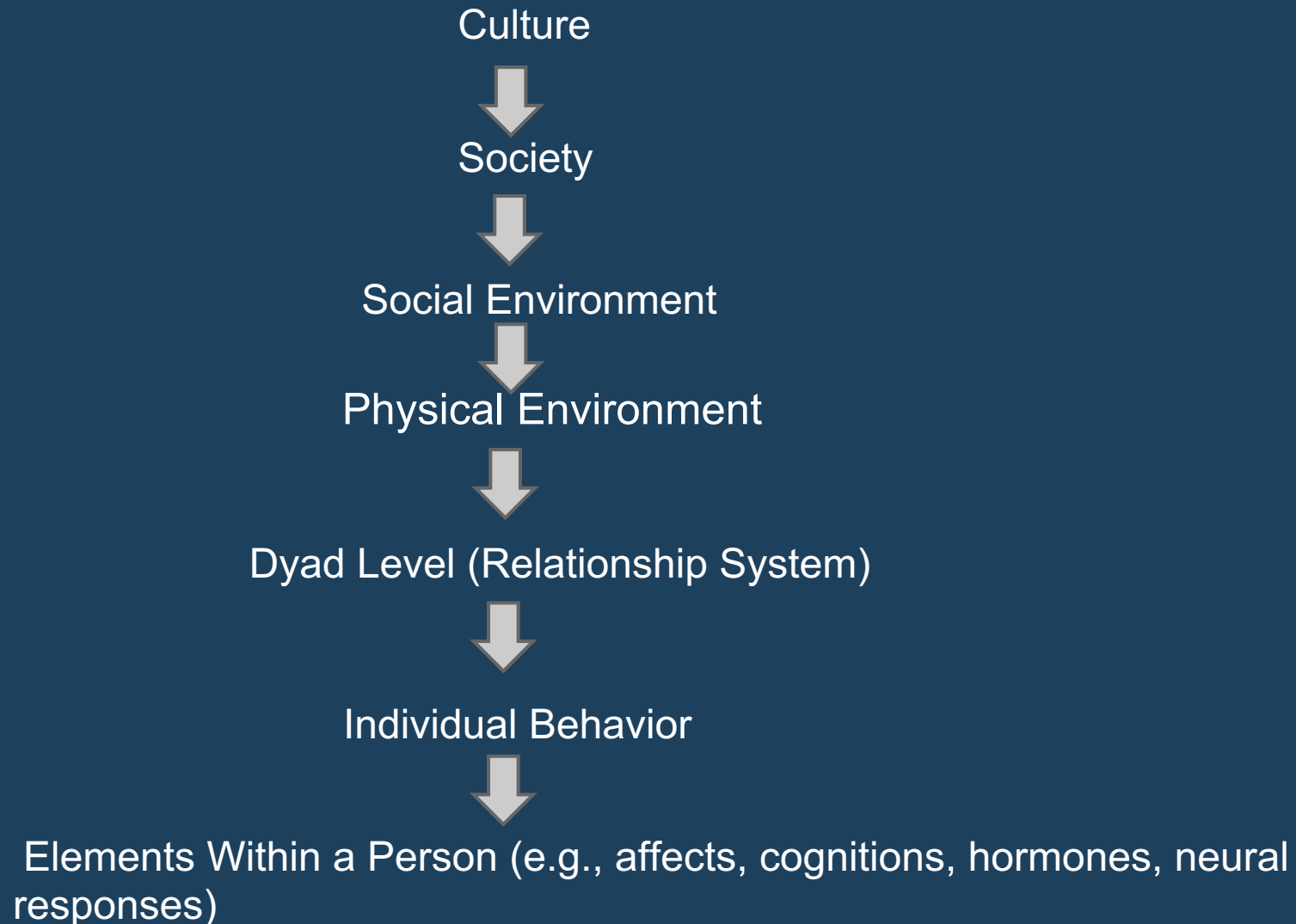
Diverse

Longer duration



# Why is Relationship Science a Bit Tricky?

Relationships exist across multiple levels of analysis and are nested within other systems.



# How Do We Do Relationship Research?

How to look at couples:

## Actor-Partner Interdependence Model

Results of interactions in a dyad reflect:

Your own personal characteristics and behavior

Your partner's personal characteristics and behavior

Your thoughts, feelings, and behavior both influence and are influenced by the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of your partner.

$X$  and  $X'$  = Something we would measure about Person A and Person B that would predict  $Y$  and  $Y'$

$Y$  and  $Y'$  = Outcomes of an interaction for Person A and Person B



# How Do We Do Relationship Research?

Meet Josh and Heidi

$X$  = Heidi's characteristic

$X'$  = Josh's characteristic

$Y$  = Heidi's reaction

$Y'$  = Josh's reaction

$a$  = actor effects

$p$  = partner effects

# How Do We Do Relationship Research?

(a)

\*Josh's impulsivity -----> Josh's reduced marital satisfaction with Heidi

(a)

\*Heidi's impulsivity-----> Heidi's reduced marital satisfaction with Josh

(p)

\*Josh's impulsivity-----> Heidi's reduced marital satisfaction with Josh

(p)

\*Heidi's impulsivity-----> Josh's reduced marital satisfaction with Heidi

Thank you!

Have a lovely rest of your week!

See you next Tuesday!



# References

- Berscheid, E., & Regan, P. (2016). *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships*. New York, NY: Routledge
- Cook, W.L., & Kenny, D.A. (2005). The actor-partner interdependence model: A model of bidirectional effects in developmental studies. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 29(2), 101-109.
- Finkel, E.J., Simpson, J.A., & Eastwick, P.W. (2017). The psychology of close relationships: Fourteen core principles. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 68(1), 383-411.
- Regan, P. (2011). *Close Relationships*. New York, NY: Routledge
- Tan, K, Jarnecke, A.M., & South, S.C. (2017). Impulsivity, communication, and marital satisfaction in newlywed couples. *Personal Relationships*, 24(2), 423-439.