

COUPLES RESEARCH AND THERAPY

<https://abctcouples.org/>

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Happy November to all members of the SIG! It's hard to believe that ABCT is already next week, but we are so excited to see everyone!

We are thrilled to share with you the Fall 2024 edition of our SIG's newsletter. We appreciate those who took the time to share their lab accomplishments with us and look forward to hearing from other labs for future editions. There are many exciting updates from various researchers in our field, and there are also some great opportunities that are highlighted in this edition of the newsletter — this will be a new section, so we are hopeful it will yield positive outcomes!

Furthermore, as a personal note from Alyssa: It has been an honor to serve the SIG over the past few years and to have had a part in sharing all of your accomplishments. What a neat opportunity it has been to see the progression of our fellow colleagues and labs!

Thank you all for making the Couples SIG Newsletter possible!

- Alyssa Miville, M.S. | Binghamton University (SUNY)
(amivill1@binghamton.edu)

- Quinn Hendershot, M.S. | Binghamton University (SUNY)
(qhender1@binghamton.edu)



Letter from the SIG Co-Leaders

Dr. Kayla Knopp & Dr. Shelby Scott

We are looking forward to seeing many of you soon in Philadelphia! We have a number of exciting events at the conference this year. Read on for details and mark your calendars.

Conference Events

The Couples SIG Preconference is on **Thursday, 11/14 from 6:00pm -8:00pm in Room 307 (level 3), Philadelphia Marriott.**

The preconference will be a Speed Mentoring event, where mentees and mentors will have many opportunities for brief, supportive interactions. After the speed round, we will leave time for mentees to have deeper discussions with mentors, and for mentors to recruit from our SIG's talented students for upcoming opportunities.

We were excited to see more great representation of couples research in the ABCT program this year. See pages 4-5 for a list of these events. We would like to draw particular attention to the two SIG-sponsored symposia - come out and support your SIG colleagues!

Student symposium: "Identity's Role in Romantic Relationships: Exploring How Cultural and Identity-Specific Factors Influence Relationship Dynamics in Diverse Relationship Compositions and Marginalized Communities" on **Saturday 11/16, 8:30-10:00am, Grand Ballroom K/L, Level 5**

DEI symposium: "Experiences of CNM-partnered individuals across racial/ethnic, gender, and sexual identities" on **Friday 11/15 10:30am -12:00pm in Grand Ballroom K/L, Level 5**

Our SIG business meeting has been scheduled for **Friday 11/15, 3:30-5:00pm in Room 414/415 (level 4).** We hope you will join us! There are a number of exciting and important things happening at the meeting, including a discussion of the SIG name change (make your voice heard!), nominations for new SIG officers, presentation of the Weiss Student Poster Awards and Early Career Awards, and a visit from the ABCT Presidential candidates. If you cannot attend in person, you can join us via Zoom (or watch the Zoom recording after the conference).

We are excited about the **Couples SIG Cocktail Party**, hosted by student co-leaders Melissa and Kaitlin. Please join us **Saturday 11/16, 5:30-7:30pm at 1518 Bar & Grill (1518 Sansom St, Philadelphia, PA 19102).** The SIG will provide appetizers, and faculty/mentors are encouraged to treat your students to a round of cocktails or mocktails.

Finally, we have a new exciting event to highlight this year: our own **Dr. Anthony Chambers** will be featured in ABCT's **Advanced Clinician Seminar Series: Elevating Your Couples Therapy Practice**, moderated by **Dr. Kristi Coop Gordon**. Please join to learn from these experts on Saturday 11/16, 4:30-6:00pm in Liberty A, Level 3, Downtown Marriott.

SIG Officer Elections

We are so grateful for the service of the SIG officers who are wrapping up their terms this November! As a reminder, we have transitioned to an alternating election cycle for each role that has 2 co-officers, so that each year there is one new and one returning officer.

Shelby Scott has completed her term as a phenomenal SIG Co-Leader (Kayla is writing this). Ideally, Kayla Knopp will also step down as SIG Co-Leader, but she is willing to continue serving if we do not have two new volunteers.

We are looking for **1-2 new SIG Co-Leaders!** This position may be held by professional-level members (postdocs or later).

A huge thank-you to McKenzie Roddy, our fabulous Treasurer for the past 2 years! **We are looking for a new Treasurer this year.** This position is open to professional-level members.

And we are so grateful to our wonderful student officers who are completing their terms: Kaitlin Brunett (Student Co-Leader), Jacinda Lee (Media Coordinator), and Alyssa Miville (Newsletter Co-Editor). Thank you for your contributions! **We are looking for 1 student (current undergraduate, graduate, or post-bacc) for each of these three roles.** As a reminder to students, these are great opportunities to establish yourself as an emerging leader in our SIG and network with other professionals.

This year, nominations for the SIG Officer positions can be made either via email to Kayla (kayla.knopp@gmail.com) and Shelby (shelby.scott@utsa.edu) before the conference, or in person during the SIG business meeting. Voting will take place after the conference via a Google form. **Please nominate yourself or a colleague!**

***A note to faculty and mentors:** Student engagement in the SIG has really taken a hit following COVID-19. **Please talk with your students and mentees**, and encourage and support their involvement in the SIG as student officers! Students are the future of our SIG, and we hate to see positions go unfilled.

Service to the SIG

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to these additional members for their generous service to the SIG:

Feea Leifker and ***Danielle Weber*** are this year's returning Jr. Awards Committee, coordinating both the Weiss Student Poster Awards and the SIG Graduation Ceremony for a second time.

Beth Allen and ***Sarah Whitton*** are this year's Sr. Awards Committee, administering the SIG Early Career Award.

Michelle Ramos, ***Nick Perry***, ***Jasara Hogan***, ***Jessica Hill***, and ***Quinn Hendershot*** are the SIG DEI Committee, heading up initiatives to help the SIG continue to improve diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. Thank you!

See you in Philly!

Your SIG Co-Leaders,
Shelby Scott, Ph.D., and Kayla Knopp, Ph.D.

Letter from the SIG Treasurer

Dr. McKenzie Roddy

Hello SIG Members!

This is my last update as your Treasurer. It has been an honor to serve. We are electing a new treasurer at ABCT in November. Please reach out if you are interested in the role! My contact information is at the bottom.

An update on our membership status and dues:

- We have 170 active members (92 professional, 78 students).
- Our current balance is \$4,246. Since my last update, I have collected \$185 in dues and we received \$167 from ABCT.
- The Underrepresented Scholar Fund has a balance of \$1,350. Since my last update, I have collected \$25 from dues and directed donations towards this fund.

Dues are \$30 for professional members and \$5 for students, first-year post-docs, and retired members. For every professional membership, \$5 of dues automatically go toward the Couples SIG Underrepresented Scholars Fund.

Please complete the **membership form** (scan QR code or use <https://forms.gle/3xustNBLzbfApjgT8>) and send your **dues electronically** via Venmo (send to @McKenzie-Roddy) or via PayPal (send to mckroddy@gmail.com).

It is important to designate the payment as “*Send to friends and family*” to avoid processing fees. For all dues, indicate “ABCT Couples SIG” in the note.



venmo

Please don’t hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns about dues or membership.

My best,
McKenzie

McKenzie K. Roddy, PhD
McKenzie.Roddy@vumc.org

Letter from the SIG Student Co-Leaders

Melissa Gates and Kaitlin Brunett
(mgates5@binghamton.edu & kaitlin.brunett@my.utsa.edu)

We have some exciting events planned for ABCT this year: The **SIG Cocktail Hour** will be held on Saturday, November 16th from 5:30pm-7:30pm at 1518 Bar & Grill (<https://1518barandgrill.com>), just a short 10-minute walk from the conference. Join us for happy hour drinks and appetizers and mingle upon old friends and new! All are welcome.

The SIG Mentorship Program was a success! This year, we matched just under 15 mentor-mentee pairs, and we hope to continue expanding this program in future years. If there are any suggestions for improvement, please let us know.

Our representation at ABCT continues to increase. We’ve created a schedule outlining all the couples-related presentations and Couples SIG events below. We look forward to attending these research and clinical talks! See you all in Philly! (All times below are in Eastern Standard Time.)

SIG Events	Workshop	Symposium	Panel Discussion	Clinical Round Table
Date/Time	Location	Presentation/Event	Presenters	
THURSDAY (11/14) 6:00pm-8:00pm	307, Level 3, Downtown Marriott	ABCT Preconference “Speed Mentoring” Event		
FRIDAY (11/15) 8:30am—10:00am	Grand Ballroom K/L, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	Symposium 04: Adapting evidence-based cognitive and behavioral interventions for individual, couple, and family delivery for individual psychopathological distress relief	Chair: Katherine OConnell, M.S. Discussant: Steffany Fredman, Ph.D. Presenter: Sarah Carter, Ph.D. Presenter: Kayla Knopp, Ph.D. Presenter: Kristen Lamp, Ph.D. Presenter: Rachel Liebman, Ph.D. Presenter: Shira Olsen, Ph.D.	
10:30am—12:00pm	Grand Ballroom K/L, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	Symposium 21: Experiences of CNM-partnered individuals across racial/ethnic, gender, and sexual identities (<i>sponsored by Couples SIG</i>)	Chair: Quyen Do, Ph.D. Discussant: Kayla Knopp, Ph.D. Presenter: Quyen Do, Ph.D. Presenter: Ellora Vilkin, M.A. Presenter: Mia Semelman, Psy.D. Presenter: Dannie Klooster, M.S. Presenter: Christopher Smith, Ph.D.	
12:30pm—2:00pm	Grand Ballroom K/L, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	Symposium 36: Getting better together: Couple interventions for individual psychopathology	Chair: Sonya Varma, M.A. Presenter: Sonya Varma, M.A. Presenter: Steffany Fredman, Ph.D. Presenter: Emily Carrino, M.A. Presenter: Chandra E. Khalifian, Ph.D.	

Date/Time	Location	Presentation/Event	Presenters
FRIDAY (11/15) 2:30pm—3:30pm	Grand Ballroom K/L, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	Symposium 51: Identifying modifiable relationship factors to strengthen development and dissemination of health-focused interventions for sexual and gender minority people	<u>Chair:</u> Nicholas Perry, Ph.D. <u>Discussant:</u> Sarah Whitton, Ph.D. <u>Presenter:</u> Dominique Harlan, B.A. <u>Presenter:</u> Nicholas Perry, Ph.D. <u>Presenter:</u> Audrey Harkness, Ph.D. <u>Presenter:</u> Michael Newcomb, Ph.D.
3:30pm-5:00pm	414/415 Level 4, Downtown Marriott	Couples Research and Treatment SIG: Business Meeting	
6:30pm-8:30pm	Grand Ballroom E/F/G/H, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	SIG Expo and Cocktail Hour	
SATURDAY (11/16) 8:30am-10:00am	Grand Ballroom K/L, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	Symposium 62 (<i>Student symposium sponsored by Couples SIG</i>) : Identity's Role in Romantic Relationships: Exploring How Cultural and Identity-Specific Factors Influence Relationship Dynamics in Diverse Relationship Compositions and Marginalized Communities	<u>Chair:</u> Kaitlin Brunett, M.A. <u>Chair:</u> Melissa Gates, M.S. <u>Discussant:</u> Kayla Knopp, Ph.D. <u>Presenter:</u> Quinn E. Hendershot, M.S. <u>Presenter:</u> Allison Tobar-Santamaria, B.S., B.A. <u>Presenter:</u> Jacinda Lee, M.S., MFT <u>Presenter:</u> Alyssa Miville, B.A., M.S. <u>Presenter:</u> Claire Chapman, B.S.
8:30am-10:00am	Grand Ballroom C, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	Mini Workshop 9: Motivational Interviewing with Couples: Helping People Change Together	<u>Presenter:</u> Tyrel J. Starks, Ph.D.
10:30am-11:30am	Grand Ballroom C, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	Symposium 73: Learning from Risk Studies in Military and Veteran Couples: Embracing Complexity Across Levels of Care	<u>Chair:</u> Dev Crasta, Ph.D. <u>Discussant:</u> Brian Baucom, Ph.D. <u>Presenter:</u> Mollie Shin, M.A. <u>Presenter:</u> Hajra Usman, B.A. <u>Presenter:</u> Dev Crasta, Ph.D. <u>Presenter:</u> Alexis May, Ph.D.
12:30pm-2:00pm	Grand Ballroom K/L, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	Clinical Round Table 14: More Than Just Stopping the Fight: Enhancing Positive Behaviors and Building Resilience in Couple Therapy	<u>Moderator:</u> Melanie Discher, Ph.D. <u>Presenter:</u> Alexandra K. Wojda-Burlij, M.A. <u>Presenter:</u> Anthony L. Chambers, ABPP, Ph.D. <u>Presenter:</u> Candice Monson, Ph.D. <u>Presenter:</u> Shelby B. Scott, Ph.D. <u>Presenter:</u> Scott M. Stanley, Ph.D.
2:30pm-4:00pm	Grand Ballroom K/L, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	Panel Discussion 27: Extending Our Reach: Utilizing Clinical and Research Approaches to Bolster Community Engagement and Social Advocacy Among Underrepresented and Harder-to-Reach Couples	<u>Moderator:</u> Melissa V. Gates, M.S. <u>Panelist:</u> Christina M. Balderrama-Durbin, Ph.D. <u>Panelist:</u> Hannah C. Williamson, Ph.D. <u>Panelist:</u> Anthony L. Chambers, ABPP, Ph.D. <u>Panelist:</u> Shelby B. Scott, Ph.D. <u>Panelist:</u> Amy D. Marshall, PhD.
4:30pm-6:00pm	Liberty A, Level 3	Advanced Clinician Seminar Series: Advanced Clinician Seminar Series: Elevating Your Couples Therapy Practice	Presenter: Anthony L. Chambers, ABPP, Ph.D. Moderator: Kristina Coop Gordon, Ph.D.
5:30pm-7:30pm	1518 Sansom St, Philadelphia, PA 19102	Couples SIG Cocktail Hour	
SUNDAY (11/17) 8:30am-10:00am	Grand Ballroom K/L, Level 5, Downtown Marriott	Symposium 116: Love among the margins: A critical examination of individual and relationship functioning within traditionally under-represented couples	Chair: Alexandra Wojda-Burlij, M.A. Discussant: Shelby Scott, Ph.D. Presenter: Melanie Fischer, Ph.D. Presenter: Alexandra Wojda-Burlij, M.A. Presenter: Yunying (Annie) Le, Ph.D. Presenter: Alexandra Long, M.A. Presenter: Melissa Gates, M.S.



We would like to celebrate these amazing milestones from the following SIG members. Congratulations on your accomplishments!

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Dr. Christina Balderrama-Durbin’s Couple Adjustment to Stress and Trauma (CAST) Lab, Binghamton University—SUNY

- ☺ Jessica and her husband, Mike, welcomed their precious daughter, Freya, this past May 2024! They are completely in love and Dr. Balderrama-Durbin is one proud grad-ma. :)
- ☺ Melissa received a Dissertation Fellowship for this spring!

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Dr. Shelby Scott’s Promoting Resilience In DiversE (PRIDE) Family Studies Lab at the University of Texas at San Antonio

- ☺ Kaitlin Brunett passed her dissertation proposal.
- ☺ Allen Brown-Zubillaga is the recipient of the prestigious Archer Fellowship and will be spending next semester working as a full-time intern in Washington D.C.
- ☺ Casper Haight and Alex Graelles won 2nd and 3rd place, respectively, at the University of Texas at San Antonio’s Psychology Department Posters Symposium.

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Roddy Lab at Vanderbilt University Medical Center

- ☺ Congratulations to Dr. Roddy on her K23 award from NIDDK titled, “Optimizing an Adaptive Self-care Support Intervention for Adults with Type 2 Diabetes Leveraging their Social Relationships”
- ☺ Congratulations to Dr. Roddy on being awarded a Junior Faculty Development Award from the American Diabetes Association. This award provides three years of funding for effort (75%) and research (\$50k/yr)
- ☺ Congratulations to Dr. Roddy on her promotion to Assistant Professor of Medicine on the tenure track at Vanderbilt University Medical Center
- ☺ Congratulations to Dr. Roddy (co-I) and collaborators for an R01 from NIDDK titled, “Tailoring Diabetes Support to Social Contexts for Adults Living with Type 2 Diabetes” (Mayberry, PI)

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Dr. Hannah Williamson: The Williamson Lab at UT Austin

- ☺ Dr. Hannah Williamson is the recipient of the 2024 Reuben Hill Award from the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR). The Reuben Hill Award is presented to the author of the best research article from the prior year, which makes a substantial and significant contribution to family research and theory (with a requirement of theory development).

The winning article was: Williamson, H. C., & Schouweiler, M. T. (2023). Household income differentiates quantity and quality of shared spousal time. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 37(4), 528. <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0001078>

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Dr. Sarah Whitton’s The Today’s Couples and Families
Research Program

- ☺ Abby Fischbach joined the lab as a first-year student in the doctoral program for Clinical Psychology.
 - ☺ Charlie Giraud received a University Research Council Graduate Student Research Fellowship for their project, “Does Resilience Promote Sexual Minority Women’s Mental Health? An Examination of Within-Person Associations Over Time.”
 - ☺ Charlie also is currently completing the Family Process New Writer’s Fellowship
 - ☺ Margaret Lawlace graduated with her PhD in Clinical Psychology in August 2024
 - ☺ Former lab member Lisa Godfrey began a clinical position in her hometown of Vancouver, British Columbia, and got engaged in May!
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Dr. Richard Mattson’s Center for Transdisciplinary Research on
Intimate Relationships (CTROIR)

- ☺ Michael Shaw defended and passed his dissertation this month! Congratulations, Mike! He plans to finish up his internship year in the spring of 2025. We are so excited for him and look forward to hearing about his next steps!
 - ☺ Alyssa Miville was selected to serve as a mentor for the LGBTQ+ Community Health Scholars Program, which she was a participant of last year. She received additional funding to continue her oral histories project centered on LGBTQ+ experiences in religious spaces.
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Dr. Matthew Johnson’s Marriage and Family Lab

- ☺ Quinn Hendershot was selected to be a scholar in the NIAAA-sponsored Enhancing Diversity in Alcohol Research program through the Medical University of South Carolina.
- ☺ Quinn Hendershot also received a Dissertation Year Fellowship to support her dissertation work over the Fall semester.



Lab Updates

Lab Name:

Couple Adjustment to Stress and Trauma (CAST) Laboratory;
Binghamton University – SUNY

Head of Lab:

Christina Balderrama-Durbin, Ph.D.

Lab Update: The CAST Lab is dedicated on understanding the unique needs and experiences of couples from marginalized and high-risk communities. Our team has been actively focused on completing data collection and beginning data analyses for the Up-Armoring military couples randomized controlled trial, which examined a web-based prevention program for entry-level Air Force service members. Results from this exciting project are forthcoming. We are also preparing to launch our Guatemalan youth migration project aimed at understanding the impact of psychological and social determinants, including gender-based violence, on the propensity toward irregular migration. This ambitious international project has already yielded valuable insights!

Fifth-year graduate student member, Melissa Gates, has been busy publishing, applying for predoctoral internships, and wrapping up her dissertation data collection. Her dissertation project explores association between sexual and gender minority-specific adverse childhood experiences and adult romantic relationship functioning. Third-year graduate student, Jessica Hill, has been focused on several Air Force manuscripts with particular emphasis on understanding increased risks for negative relationship outcomes among female service members. Jessica is also dedicated to completing her comprehensive exams which includes the preparation of a systematic review on the association between childhood maltreatment and adult relationship functioning with a particular focus on sex differences in the strength and pattern of these associations. All of this while balancing the transition to parenthood! Finally, the CAST Lab welcomed Rebecca Smith, first-year graduate student, this fall. Rebecca has been adjusting impeccably to graduate school and has begun to delve into existing data from our previous study focused on health disparities among lesbian, gay, and bisexual+ couples.

We also want to acknowledge our exceptional undergraduate research assistants, whose dedication and hard work are vital to advancing all of these projects!



Lab Name: Clinical Couple and Family Psychology, Department of Psychology, University of Marburg, Germany

Head of Lab: Melanie Fischer, Ph.D.

Lab Update: Our research foci include psychopathology in couples and families (basic and intervention research) as well as topics related to couple relationships more broadly (understanding, preventing, and treating relationship distress). Current doctoral students are Sophie Blum, M.Sc. (research focus on OCD and parenthood), Negin Boryri, M.Sc. (couple communication and observational methods), Anne Vogel, M.Sc. (couple relationships among sexual minorities), Laura Weber, M.Sc. (family accommodation in OCD and other disorders), and Nina Winkelmann, M.Sc. (depression in couples and network analyses).

Current projects focus on accommodation and emotion regulation in couples with OCD (funded by the German Research Foundation), the evaluation of an online training for parents considering separation (funded by the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Klaus-Grawe Foundation), a randomized-controlled trial of couple-based CBT with a focus on changes in dynamic networks of symptoms and interpersonal factors (funded by the State of Hesse, Germany as part of the DYNAMIC consortium), observational coding of couple communication processes, the utilization of large scale panel data to study couple relationships of sexual minorities, along with other ongoing research efforts and collaborations. Dr. Fischer also continues her dissemination efforts for couple therapy for depression in the National Health Service, England.

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Lab Name: Penn State Couple and Family Adaptation to Stress Lab

Head of Lab: Steffany Fredman, Ph.D.

Lab Update: We're excited about our ongoing research projects focused on couples, stress, and trauma. We're actively recruiting couples for our DoD-funded RCT to compare a weekend retreat version of cognitive-behavioral conjoint therapy for PTSD (AIM-CBCT for PTSD) to the Prevention and Relationship Education Program (PREP) for the treatment of PTSD in active duty military and veteran couples (PI: Fredman). Treatment is being delivered in San Antonio as part of the STRONG STAR consortium, and eligible couples from anywhere in the U.S. can come to San Antonio to receive treatment! We're also excited about other work on couples and mental health taking place in the lab. Jeeseun Lee is leading work on the link between relationship quality and mental health among adults at mid-life, using both longitudinal and daily diary methods, and we're thrilled to continue our collaborations with CFAS alums Annie Le, August Jenkins, and Emily Taverna on work related to the couple/family context of PTSD and its treatment. We're also delighted to welcome our newest grad student, Ruoxuan Wang, to our lab!

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Lab Name: Relationships and Stress Lab, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Head of Lab: Amy D. Marshall, Ph.D.

Lab Update: Big news!: Amy and, by extension, the lab have moved from Penn State to Virginia Tech where Amy will be serving as DCT of the VT clinical science program. Two new graduate students, Emma Nilsson Read and Julia Rohde, have joined the lab, providing an excellent new foundation as we grow Virginia roots. We will soon be recruiting a Project Coordinator and 1-2 Postdoctoral Scholars to join us as we rebuild the lab (if interested, please contact Amy). The CIRCLES Study R01 is wrapping up and we will be presenting results and lessons learned for community recruitment of couples at ABCT.

Lab Name: Roddy Lab | **Head of Lab:** McKenzie K. Roddy, Ph.D.

Lab Update: Dr. Roddy continues to work with a fantastic team at Vanderbilt University Medical Center developing and testing mobile-delivered interventions to support diabetes management leveraging family and friends

She also works with collaborators at the Houston VA and SC MIRECC developing and delivering one-day ACT- and IBCT-informed workshops for Veterans and their romantic partners



(Image: Dr. Roddy (left) and colleagues at the Society for Behavioral Medicine annual meeting, spring 2024).

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Lab Name: Promoting Resilience In DiversE (PRIDE)
Family Studies Lab, the University of Texas at San Antonio

Head of Lab: Shelby B Scott, Ph.D.

Lab Update:

The PRIDE Family Studies lab has been having a wonderful year. We recently completed data collection for a project on Black sexual minority women in same-gender relationships. This project has a focus on the role of communalism and sexual minority stress on individual mental health and relationship outcomes. We have also continued to publish from our study on transgender and nonbinary adults in intimate relationships.

Doctoral student, Kaitlin Brunett has completed data collection for her dissertation on attitudes toward sexual consent toward sexual minority women. This semester, Kwame Gatlin will be defending his thesis on the role of communalism on psychological distress and alcohol use among Black sexual minority women. Harmony Huttegger will be proposing her thesis on the role of sex education on sexist beliefs and rape myth acceptance.

At ABCT this year, our lab will collectively present five posters and at two symposia. Dr. Scott will also serve as a panelist on a clinical round table and panel. We look forward to seeing everyone soon!



Lab Name: Williamson Lab at UT Austin

Head of Lab: Dr. Hannah Williamson , Ph.D.

Lab Update: Dr. Williamson has returned to Austin after an incredible year as a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Granada in Spain. She continues to work on projects with her collaborators there, including cross-cultural studies of relationship processes and cultural adaptation of measures. The lab is now in the final year of data collection on four major projects, including an RCT of relationship and financial interventions for low-income couples, a longitudinal study of the transition to parenthood among low-income couples, and two studies of youth relationship and sexual education.

This Fall Jayda Branch joined the lab as a first year PhD student, after completing a BA in Psychology at the University of Houston. Her research interests include relationship wellbeing among racial and sexual minorities. Dr. Clare Thomas joined the lab as a post-doctoral fellow after completing her PhD in Human Development and Family Science at the University of Georgia. Her research interests include co-parenting and paternal depression.

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Lab Name: Binghamton University Marriage and Family Lab

Head of Lab: Matthew D. Johnson, Ph.D., ABPP

Lab Update: We welcome Adriana Paola Méndez-Fernández and Alana Riso to the lab. They are both first-year students in the Clinical Psychology PhD program at Binghamton University.

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Lab Name: The Today’s Couples and Families Research Program

Head of Lab: Sarah Whitton

Lab Update: Phase 2 of FAB400, our longitudinal cohort study of sexual and gender minority young people assigned female at birth (SGM-AFAB), has begun! We began wave 8 of data collection in February and wave 9 in August of 2024. This year we will begin analysis of the new data, including biomarkers of inflammation and couple processes that we hypothesize are mechanisms through which minority stress affects SGM mental health.

This spring we completed the PaST Study (PI: Charlie Giraud), which used a qualitative approach to explore romantic partners’ experiences during their partner’s medical gender transition. This fall we are launching a new phase in which we will interview the transitioning partners about how their relationship was affected during and after the transition.

This year, with collaborators in UC’s College of Medicine, we are launching the R25-funded Higher Academy, an interdisciplinary extracurricular course in transgender health research for graduate students in health-related fields (e.g., medicine, nursing, psychology, social work, public health)

Keep Up the
Good Work!

Opportunities!

Special Issue: Improving the Validity of Interpersonal Relationship Assessments



Drs. Hannah Williamson, Samantha Joel, and María Alonso-Ferres are editing a special issue of *Personal Relationships*, focused on measurement and assessment issues (broadly construed) in the field of close relationships. We are looking for articles on topics such as: Careful validity testing of existing, widely used measures within close relationship (e.g., convergent validity, divergent validity, predictive validity)

Careful generalizability testing of existing, widely used measures within close relationships (e.g., to different populations, languages, and contexts)

Validity testing of non-self-report measures in close relationships (e.g., experimental manipulations, observational coding schemes, implicit measures)

The development and validation of new, improved measures of existing, widely used constructs in close relationships

Initial abstracts will be due **December 1, 2024**, and the full manuscript will be due a year from then, providing ample time to complete any projects that are currently at a nascent stage. You can find our full call for papers here: <https://osf.io/egha5>

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Research Study Participants Needed

The CAST Lab wants to learn more about how different types of minority stress (e.g., prejudice, discrimination, unsupportive family and friends) affect us and our romantic relationships. The Lab is looking for lesbian, gay, bisexual or otherwise non-heterosexual (LGBQ+) couples in a committed relationship for six months or longer to participate in a study conducted by researchers at Binghamton University.

This project is interested in couples who experience a broad range of everyday stress, including people who have experienced highly stressful events. Individuals will be compensated for participation with a \$10 Amazon gift card, and you can participate in the comfort of your home. This survey study takes approximately 30 minutes to complete.

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Seeking Graduate Student Applications

Dr. Shelby Scott from the PRIDE Family Studies Lab at the University of Texas at San Antonio will be reviewing both Masters and Ph.D. applications for this application cycle. Please note that both programs have a focus on experimental psychology.

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Tenure-Track Positions Available

The Department of Psychology at the University of Texas at San Antonio is recruiting for two tenured positions (Associate or Full) in Clinical Psychology, including a position with an [Open Specialty Area](#) and a position that is part of a larger cluster hire on [Brain Health and Trauma](#). Both of these positions will contribute to the department’s anticipated development of a Clinical Psychology PhD program in the near future.

Hot off the Press!

Recent or Upcoming Contributions to the Couples Literature

Alexander, E. F. & Johnson, M. D. (2023). *Couples discord*. In S. Hupp & C. Santa Maria (Eds.), *Pseudoscience in therapy: A skeptical field guide* (pp. 328-341). Cambridge University Press.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/9781009000611.021>

Alexander, E. F., & Johnson, M. D. (2023). On categorizing intimate partner violence: A systematic review of exploratory clustering and classification studies. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 37(5), 743-752.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0001075>

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