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# PENNSYLVANIA COMMUNICATION ANNUAL

## Journal of the Pennsylvania Communication Association

**Letter from the Editor**
Cem Zeytinoglu…….……..……..…….8

**Exploring the Direct and Indirect Effects that Network-Based Measures Share with Measures and Outcomes of Attachment Theory**
James B. Stein, Kathrine L. Fiori, & Blakely Murphy ……...11

**Societal Attitudes Towards the Single Woman A Metaphor Analysis**
Anna K. Turnage & Shuzhen Huang……...…….……...38

**Hovering over Graduate Students? The Relationship between Helicopter Parenting and Graduate Students' Depression**
Elizabeth Munz…..……..54

***Special Feature:***
***Celebrating Ronald C. Arnett's Contribution to the Discipline***

**Dorothy Day: The Sanctity of a Stumbling Saint**
Ronald C. Arnett……...……..…….74

Pennsylvania Communication Association
*Defining Communication Excellence in Teaching and Practice*

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## Editor

Cem Zeytinoglu, Ph.D.
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

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*The Pennsylvania Communication Annual* is a refereed journal of the **Pennsylvania Communication Association**. Manuscripts for the 2023 issue (v.79) are now being received. The acceptance rates for 2021 and 2022 journals were respectively 41 percent. Submission should follow the latest APA style sheet. Please format your papers for blind review and remove anything that may give away your identity. *Manuscripts should not exceed 8000 words including references, notes, tables and other citations. Also book reviews should not exceed 2000 words*. Please submit your articles to The *Pennsylvania Communication Annual* at *my.ejmanager.com/pca* website. The submission deadline is May 30, 2023. PCA Annual is indexed by the EBSCO Host's *Communication Source* database. Please visit *www.pcasite.org* for more information.

Some important details to follow when submitting your manuscripts, if you use footnotes or endnotes: Endnotes only and without formatting, no footnotes.; no superscript font to indicate an endnote, just regular numbers and we will superscript upon editing; insert tables and illustrations as images only or send separate PDF files of these portions of the documents; formatted hanging indents only on references or no formatting at all; no "return" and "tab" to create the look of a hanging indent.

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- Responding to student and societal needs
- Attending to and caring for the student inside and outside of the communication classroom

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**Service**
- Connecting the larger community to the communication discipline
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- Serving our students inside and outside of formal institutional structures

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## From the Editor

Cem Zeytinoglu
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

This issue will be marking the *Pennsylvania Communication Annual*'s return to print. It will also be the first one in the "post-pandemic" era. After two years of attending to conferences on electronic and hybrid platforms, having online journal issues, and remotely teaching our students, this year many of us have returned to lives that we were more used to before anyone heard the COVID-19.

In 2022, we will be able to convene for the 82nd Annual Conference for the *Pennsylvania Communication Association (PCA)* at the *East Stroudsburg University of PA* (ESU). The PCA is coming back to ESU after 12 years. Since we will be coming together in person at this convention, as the executive board agreed to do so last year, we will republish the 2020 (v76.1) and the 2021 (v77.1) issue in print, together with this year's 2022 (v78) issue at the same time and make them ready for our members at the convention.

The current issue has three original manuscripts, and a special feature that an essay written by Dr. Ronald C. Arnett, who is recently retired and had served as the executive director of our organization for so many years. The acceptance rate of the journal this year was lower than the last year. The acceptance rate for the 78th volume is lower than 33% and we have highly interesting subjects. Even though the effects of the pandemic were still felt in academia and publishing, *PCA Annual* relatively did well with the help and diligence of our authors and reviewers. We are also still working on the special issue on COVID-19 & communication, edited by Dr. Amanda McKendree of *University of Notre Dame*, will hopefully publish it as a part of the 78th volume. This year, we have two authors who are affiliated with the PASSHE Universities, and one article which has three authors who are all from different states.

The first full article on the issue is written by James B. Stein of *Utah Tech University*, Kathrine L. Fiori of Adelphi University, and Blakely Murphy of the George Washington University. In this piece, authors examine the attachment theory and positions measures of network uncertainty, interference/facilitation, and overlap as outcomes of anxiety and avoidance, and partial determinants of trust and depression. They demonstrate that attachment theory can benefit from the inclusion of network-based measures as both predictor and outcome variables.

The second manuscript comes from Anna K. Turnage, a returning author, and Shuzhen Huang of *Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania*. Their essay aims to explore the rhetoric surrounding single women. They employ a metaphor analysis of a social media self-help group along with a short book of affirmations, which analyzes how women frame their singlehood and work to fight back against the cultural stigma surrounding their status. They find a recurring theme of a tension between empowerment and struggle based on social narratives both linked to by singlehood.

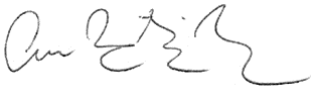
The third essay is authored by Elizabeth Munz of *West Chester University of Pennsylvania*, and studies graduate student mental health and helicopter parenting by surveys. Munz aims to find out if helicopter parenting predicts graduate student depression. Her results indicate that maternal and paternal helicopter parenting were significantly, positively associated with graduate student depression. She includes the variables of parental gender, age, and financial support to clarify the relationship.

We also feature an essay by Ronald C. Arnett, "Dorothy Day: The Sanctity of a Stumbling Saint," as a symbol of PCA's celebration of his contribution to the communication discipline which he dedicated himself over the many decades, as a professor, as a scholar, a writer and thinker; as a mentor and inspirational leader to many of his peers, colleagues, and students. I consider myself a lucky person and very fortunate student who started his journey in serious scholarship under his tutelage. Arnett's significance in

communication ethics scholarships is undeniably influential and guiding. Moreover, his creative and formatives ideas that has shaped the growth of the philosophy of communication and became the foundations for the future scholars. Our indebtedness to him is unmeasurable and incomparable. I wish him all the best with all my heart.

My job as the editor, as usual, was made easier by the exemplary work done by our esteemed reviewers. As I stated in the past many times, I cannot thank enough to some of the *Annual'*s long time serving and most reliable associate editors. I would like to thank all the authors for their contribution and dedication to our discipline. It is clear that I cannot do my job as the editor without the people at *Duquesne University* whose support never ceased over the years. I am greatly thankful to my colleagues at *East Stroudsburg University* who make me feel home every day and motivate me. Nothing I do would be possible without the unconditional love and support provided by my wife, my daughters, and close friends. Life is meaningful because of them. I look forward to seeing you all in person at the convention again back at ESU.

Sincerely,



Cem Zeytinoglu, PhD
Professor of Communication

*The Pennsylvania Communication Annual, 78, 2022*

# Exploring the Direct and Indirect Effects that Network-Based Measures Share with Measures and Outcomes of Attachment Theory

James B. Stein
Utah Tech University

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Adelphi University

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*Attachment theory proposes that adults' avoidance and anxiety levels relate strongly to relationship inferences as well as individual cognitions. Extant work suggests that attachment tendencies may relate to extra-dyadic factors as well. The present study positions measures of network uncertainty, interference/ facilitation, and overlap as outcomes of anxiety and avoidance, and partial determinants of trust and depression. A series of hierarchical models (using structural equation modeling) revealed that social network-based variables shared moderate-to-strong relationships with attachment variables included in the study. Moreover, network uncertainty mediated several relationships concerning attachment measures and gauges of both trust and depressive symptoms. Results exemplify attachment theory as one that can benefit from the inclusion of network-based measures as both predictor and outcome variables.*

*Keywords*: Attachment theory, social networks, uncertainty, close relationships.

Since its origins, attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) has been used to explain several phenomena across a variety of scientific fields, including sociology (Tucker & McKenzie, 2012), anthropology (Johow & Voland, 2014), psychology (Gillath et al., 2017), and communication (Guerrero, 1996). Indeed, the intersectional and heuristic value of attachment theory is arguably its greatest strength. There is an ever-growing push to identify the factors that are driven by the underlying mechanisms of attachment, particularly the transition from parent-child bonds to adult relationships (see Hazan & Shaver, 1987). One such relevant area of scholastic expansion involves exploring the role of the social network in attachment theory (Gillath et al., 2019). The general goal of this study is to further explore how social net-

work(s) mediate the relationship between attachment tendencies and individual perceptions.

Specifically, the primary aim of this study is to explore how measures of attachment in young adults (i.e., anxiousness and avoidance) correlate with network-based variables, such as network uncertainty (Stein et al., 2019), network interdependence (Stein & Davidson, 2019), and network overlap (Surra, 1988). The second aim is to explore how these network-based variables relate to two of the most-studied outcomes of attachment: trust and depressive symptoms. Ultimately, this study serves to better understand the ways in which individual and network perceptions contribute to the relational communication that occurs between partners, as well as between a person and their network about their partner/relationship. Better understanding the cognitive and behavioral components of partners will inform further investigation into their communication.

## Attachment Theory

Originally devised to explain the bond that occurs between toddler and caregiver (Bowlby, 1969), attachment theory has evolved into one of the most widely studied and tested theories across the social sciences. Attachment theory explains that an individual's sense of both self and others is established during their formative years, and that these perceptions contribute to relationship formation throughout adolescence and adulthood (see Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Importantly, the tenets of attachment theory are often influenced by both environmental and relationship-specific factors. For example, Fraley and colleagues (2011) explain that attachment styles are relevant to a variety of close relationships beyond caregivers and romantic partners. Moreover, environment (be it shared or unique) plays a role in the security of child attachment (Gillath et al., 2016).

The most cemented element of attachment theory is security versus insecurity. Attachment theory posits that when children bond appropriately with warm, sensitive, and attentive caregivers, they develop a secure attachment to both the caregiver and people in general (barring mental illness; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Insecure attachment types stem from distorted views of the self, others, or both (Gillath et al., 2016). Such views are engendered by a rearing environment in which caregivers are insensitive, hostile, and/or neglecting (Kerns & Brumariu, 2014).

Over time, insecure attachment has been conceptualized in a variety of ways. For example, Bartholomew (1991) explores the four-category approach, with secure attachment characterized by positive views of both self and other, and insecure attachment characterized as follows: dismissive (positive view of self, negative view of others), fearful-avoidant (negative view of both the self and others), and preoccupied (negative view of self, positive view of others). Tests of this model have revealed important differences between these categories (see Guerrero, 1996; Welch & Houser, 2010).

Another similar, yet distinct categorization of attachment styles uses three categories: secure, anxious/ambivalent (i.e., individuals who express anger and protest in the face of distress), and avoidant (i.e., individuals who express detachment in the face of distress; Ainsworth et al., 1978). As with the four-category model, tests of this model have displayed significant statistical differences between categories (e.g., Simpson, 1990).

Finally, continuous measures of attachment style (e.g., Fraley et al., 2011) traditionally prove to me more nuanced and robust than categorical approaches (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). When compared to categorical measures, continuous measures tend to allow for clearer, more pronounced results (Collins, 1996). We employ this reasoning in our study.

## The Importance of The Social Network

As articulated earlier, the attachment process varies due to factors at the individual and relational level (Cohen & Finzi-Dottan, 2012; Gillath et al., 2016). As such, it stands to reason that in addition to caregivers (during formative years) and partners (during adolescence and adulthood), people also develop attachments with social network members (Gillath et al., 2016).
The social network can be understood as a group of people with whom an individual generally enjoys spending time and intends to interact with voluntarily and repeatedly (Stein et al., 2019). Network members are an integral part of childhood, adolescent, and adult development (e.g., Curran et al., 2018) via their role in forming blueprints for how to interact in romantic relationships. Thus, the attachments developed within and between a person's network members are likely to influence that person's romantic relational development. One way this can occur is by altering the communication between/about partners, as exemplified by post-deployment relational communication stemming from uncertainty

and insecurities (Knobloch et al., 2020).

In the present study we consider four network-based measures that relate to both attachment tendencies as well as levels of trust and depressive symptoms. First, we consider network uncertainty (Stein et al., 2019), which is the degree of confidence that people have in their networks' accepting and encouraging of their partnerships. The network uncertainty measure (NUM) is negatively associated with relationship satisfaction (Stein et al.) and longitudinally linked to negative relational perceptions (Stein, 2021). As such, avoidant and anxious attachment patterns may help explain some of the variance in levels of network uncertainty.

Second, network interdependence (i.e., the extent to which network members inhibit or aid in everyday goal completion; Stein, 2018) may also be associated with attachment measures. Moreover, network interdependence measures a person's perceptions of both interfering (negatively valanced) and facilitating (positively valanced) behaviors. Given that interdependence is one of the cornerstones of attachment theory (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), gauging associations between network interdependence and attachment measures may help to illuminate the link between attachment styles, social network construction, and important life outcomes such as trust and depressive symptoms.

Third, network overlap (the extent to which a person shares network members with his/her partner; Stein 2018b) may be another factor related to attachment style. Coromina and collages (2008) explain that duocentered (i.e., shared) networks between partners are imperative for both relationship development and network maintenance. People with insecure attachment styles tend to struggle with making and growing close to friends, due to their negative outlooks on themselves and/or others (Weimer, Kerns & Oldenburg, 2004 Gillath et al., 2011). As such, it is worth considering that network overlap mediates the associations between attachment tendencies and relevant outcomes (e.g., trust and depressive symptoms).

## Relevant Outcomes of Attachment

Extant research on attachment theory has noted two (of many) important outcomes: relational perceptions and mental health. For example, anxious attachment patterns correlate strongly with feelings of loneliness (Stroebe et al, 1996). Avoidant attachment styles negatively relate to mental health and well-being following

a divorce (Cohen & Finzi-Dottan, 2012). Additionally, research has noted that insecure attachment styles tend to inhibit symptomatic recovery in schizophrenic patients (Harder, 2014). In the present study, we explore trust and depressive symptoms as relevant measures related to attachment tendencies and network-based perceptions.

## Trust

The relationship between trust and attachment is important because, as summarized by Gillath and colleagues (2017), trust is a key element of multiplexity, which describes the extent to which a person is able to fulfil multiple roles in a close relationship. At the network level, multiplexity can mean that the member(s) of a network fill such roles, and also that the network as a unit fill multiple roles (e.g., recreational basketball teammates who are also part of one's church group). Folks with insecure attachment styles tend to be less likely to have relationships that feature multiplexity and, therefore, trust (Gillath et al.). As such, the relationship(s) between attachment tendencies, network-based measures, and levels of trust are of key interest in this study.

Specifically, we intend to explore how network uncertainty (Stein et al., 2019), network interference/facilitation (Stein & Davidson, 2019), and network overlap (Surra, 1988) mediate the relationships that anxious and avoidant attachment tendencies share with trust. It is well documented that the attachment that a person shares with their central attachment figure (e.g., a romantic partner) alters the hierarchy of that person's network, and vise-versa (Gillath et al., 2019). Missing are the specific network-based variables that help explain this phenomenon. From a communication perspective, it is important to remember that both network perceptions (Stein, 2021; Stein & Davidson, 2019), as well as attachment processes (Guerrero, 1996; Fraley, 2011) are linked (in) directly to communication patterns between partners. Uncovering these relationships would help further parse the mechanisms of attachment theory as well as offer a clearer picture of the role that social networks play in the attachment process.

## Depressive Symptoms

Depressive symptoms are linked to chronic pain (Meredith et al., 2007), eating disorders (Cole-Detke & Koback, 1996) and of course, chronic depression (Bifulco et al., 2002). Depressive symptoms are also linked to perceptions of relation quality, an

association mediated by relational uncertainty (Knobloch & Knobloch-Fedders, 2010). Not surprisingly, individuals with insecure attachment styles are quite prone to depressive symptoms (Gillath et al, 2011). Moreover, individuals with insecure attachment styles also tend to hold unstable network perceptions (Gillath & Karantzas, 2015). It is at this intersection that the present study finds relevancy.

In this investigation, we hope to extend the above findings to explore the role that network-based variables play in mediating the relationship between attachment measures and depressive symptoms. Social networks (and the members in them) are integral to relationship development (Parks et al., 1983; Sprecher 2011). Moreover, previous research has positioned the social network as a meaningful factor in the attachment process. For example, Gillath and colleagues (2011) demonstrated that people who properly manage their social networks (e.g., through healthy interpersonal communication, resource sharing, task management, etc.) experience lower levels of depressive symptoms. Moreover, networks with multiplexity breed more trusting relationships (Gillath et al., 2017). As such, levels of network interdependence, uncertainty surrounding that network, and network overlap are all likely candidates when considering the factors that interrupt the relationship between attachment and depression.

## Present Study

This study explores the ways in which network uncertainty, network interdependence, and/or network overlap mediate the associations that avoidant/anxious attachment measures share with levels of trust and depressive symptoms. Importantly, because we consider the social network as an integral role-player in relational development, we gauge both partner-based and network-based attachment measures in this study.

### Attachment and Network Measures

We are first interested in the ways in which measures of anxiety and avoidance relate to the network-based variables discussed above. Foundational work has noted that anxious and avoidant attachment tendencies can apply to both a person's partner (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and his/her network (Gillath et al., 2017). Extant work that shows a positive relationship between increased anxiety/avoidance and relational uncertainty (e.g., Fox & Warber, 2014; Wright et al., 2017). We therefore propose that

these attachment tendencies toward both a partner (H1a) and a network (H1b) will positively associate with levels of network uncertainty.

Next, we wish to explore how measures of attachment relate to network interdependence (Stein, 2018). Importantly, network interdependence contains both positively (network facilitation) and negatively (network interference) valanced reports. Given that avoidant and anxious tendencies are positively related to perceptions of a partner's negative behaviors (Knobloch and Donovan-Kicken 2006), it is likely that measures of anxiety/ avoidance positively relate to measures of network interference and negatively associate with measures of network facilitation. We expect this to be true for both partner-focused attachment measures (H2a), as well as network-focused attachment measures (H2b).

Third, we propose an inverse relationship between measures of attachment and the extent to which a person's network overlaps with his/her partner. Partners with shared networks can aid often experience heightened individual and relational development (Kennedy et al., 2015). Moreover, Gillath and colleagues (2019) summarize that both the size (the number of potential members within a network) and density (i.e., the number of actual connections that a person has within a network vis-à-vis the number of potential connections within that network) of network ties are linked to a person's (in)secure attachment tendencies. We therefore expect that levels of anxiety and avoidance will negatively relate to network overlap at both the partner (H3a) and network (H3b) level.

**Network Measures and Trust/Depressive Symptoms**

We also seek to explore how network-based variables are related to trust and depressive symptoms. These variables were chosen because trust and depressive symptoms represent a perception of one's dyadic and individual state, respectively. The broader goal of this study is to explore how, if at all, perceptions of one's social network alters the association(s) between attachment tendencies and perceptions related to both the self and one's relationship.

Research shows that measures of uncertainty are inversely related to levels of dyadic trust (Knobloch et al., 2020). Moreover, Gillath et al. (2017) explain that trust in one's close relationships can

be associated with perceptions of one's network ties. Thus, we hypothesize that levels of network uncertainty will be negatively associated with levels of trust (H4a). Furthermore, perceived dyadic interdependence in relationships is closely related to levels of trust (Geyskens, et al., 1996). As such, we hypothesize that levels of network interference will be negatively associated with levels of trust (H4b), whereas levels of network facilitation will be positively associated with trust (H4c). Lastly, given that trust between partners is positively related to the extent that the share network(s) (Utz & Beukboom, 2011), we anticipate that network overlap will be positively associated with trust (H4d).

We next hypothesize about the role of network-based variables in predicting depressive symptoms. Gilath et al. (2011) explain that network management can lessen a person's depressive symptoms, especially for securely attached individuals. Given the known relationship between uncertainty and depressive symptoms (Knobloch & Knobloch-Fedders, 2010), we predict that levels of network uncertainty would be positively associated with depressive symptoms (H5a). Furthermore, depressive symptoms are mediated by the innerworkings of interdependent relationships (Maroufizadeh et al., 2018). As such, we predicted that whereas levels of network interference would be positively associated to depressive symptoms (H5b), network facilitation would be negatively related (H5c). Finally, given that depressive symptoms can spread within especially dense social networks (Rosenquist et al., 2011), we predict that levels of network overlap would be negatively associated with depressive symptoms (H5d).

## The Mediating Effects of Network Variables

The most substantive investigation in this study concerns how network-based variables mediate the association(s) between attachment measures and the outcomes of trust and depressive symptoms. Although we expect a series of direct relationships between attachment variables and network variables, we are also curious about to the extent to which these same network variables mediate the associations between attachment measures and trust/ depressive symptoms. Because we do not yet know which network variables (if any) are directly linked to trust and/or depressive symptoms, we are hesitant to make specific predictions regarding indirect effects. Instead, we offer two research questions concerning these relationships. First, we wonder which network

variables (if any) mediate the relationship(s) between attachment measures and levels of trust (RQ1). Second, we ask which network variables (if any) mediate the relationship between attachment measures and depressive symptoms (RQ2).

## Method

### Participants and Procedures

Data were collected from 254 adults (63% women) at a large, Southwestern university in the United States using convenience sampling. Students were compensated for their participation with extra dredit in their classes. To qualify for the survey, participants needed to have been at least 18 ($M_{age}$ = 25.35 *SD* = 8.35) and currently involved in at least one committed romantic and/or sexual relationship at the time of data collection ($M_{\text{relationshiplength}}$ = 3.81 years, *SD* = 5.99). Relationship types described in this study included seriously dating (*n* = 117), married or engaged (*n* = 51), in a "friends with benefits" (or something similar) relationship (*n* = 47), casually dating (*n* = 35), and other (*n* = 4). Ethnicity was predominantly Caucasian (*n* = 168), but also included Asian (*n* = 27), Latino/Hispanic (*n* = 23), Mixed race (*n* = 15), Black/ African American (*n* = 13), and "other" (*n* = 6) ethnicities. There was one Pacific Islander and one Native American in this study. Moreover, despite most participants being heterosexual (*n* = 221), bisexual (*n* = 16), homosexual, (*n* = 9), and "other" (*n* = 8) individuals reported as well.

The average amount of network members for respondents, excluding the partner, was 14.78 (*SD* =3.18). The average amount of inner-most network members was 3.89 (*SD* = 1.01). Participants included immediate and (rarely) distant family members in their inner circles, as well as best friends, friends, roommates, and people of reverence. It is these relationships that people considered as they answered questions during data collection.

As part of a larger survey about close relationships, participants responded to several Likert-style questions designed to gauge their self-reports concerning the substantive variables used in this study. Participants engaged in hierarchical mapping technique (Rowe & Carnelley, 2005). In this style of data collection, subjects are shown a picture of a large bullseye in which they are represented in the center. Next, respondents fill in the initials of people within the confines of each of the three surrounding circles, ranging from the people in their lives who they cannot live

without, to moderately close network members, to less close ne work members[1]. When answering questions related to their network, participants were asked, using piped text, to refer only to the network members who preside within their inner-most circle. We found this appropriate, as there is precedent for exploring attachment within the context of one's closest network members (Gillath et al., 2011).

## Measures

**Depressive Symptoms.** Radloff's (1977) measure of depressive symptoms was used in this study. Twenty Likert-style items were proceeded the prompt, "during the past week:" (e.g., "I did not feel like eating," "I had crying spells," "I felt people didn't like me"). These items were gauged on a scale of one through seven, with one meaning strongly disagree and seven meaning strongly agree. Several items were reverse coded during analysis. This scale was deemed reliable ($\alpha = .93$)

**Trust.** Rample et al.'s (1985) gauge of trust was used in this study. Seventeen Likert items measured agreement on a scale of one through seven, with one meaning strongly disagree and seven meaning strongly agree, in relation to a series of prompts (e.g., "I can rely on my partner to react in a positive way when I expose my weaknesses to him/her," "I can rely on my partner to keep the promises he/she makes to me"). This scale was deemed reliable ($\alpha = .94$).

**Attachment**. To measure attachment, Fraley et al.'s (2011) measure was used. Ten Likert items (six for avoidance and four for anxiety) measured agreement on a scale of one through seven, with one meaning strongly disagree and seven meaning strongly agree, related to a series of prompts (e.g., "I prefer not to show this person how I feel deep down," "I'm afraid this person might abandon me"). This measure was then modified to reflect attachment tendencies related to participants' inner-most network members, as opposed to their partners. Subscales for partner anxiety ($\alpha = .87$), partner avoidance ($\alpha = .85$), network anxiety ($\alpha = .89$), and network avoidance ($\alpha = .88$) were reliable.

**Network uncertainty.** Network uncertainty was measured using the NUM (Stein et al., 2019), and features 18 items from five different subscales. These Likert-style items range on a scale of one through seven, with one meaning completely certain and seven meaning entirely uncertain. Each item follows the prompt

"How certain are you that…" (e.g., "your partner's social network likes you," "your partner dos not feel threatened by anyone in your network, "you never have to 'chose' between your partner and your network"). During analyses, the five subscales are combined into one latent variable, which was deemed reliable ($\alpha$ = .94).

**Network interdependence.** Network interdependence was measured with Stein's (2018) measure of network interference/ facilitation. Ten Likert-style items measured agreement with a series of prompts (e.g., "My network helps me in my efforts to make plans," "my network interferes with the things that I do each day") ranging from one through seven, with one meaning strongly disagree and seven meaning strongly agree. the subscales of interference ($\alpha$ = .90) and facilitation ($\alpha$ = .81) were deemed reliable.

**Network overlap**. Network overlap was measured using a modified version of Aron and Aron's (1992) relational closeness scale. This measure was accompanied by a subsequent question that asked participants to estimate the percentage of shared network that they have with their partners. The means of both measures were standardized and converted into a composite variable[2]. Means, standard deviations, and alphas for all substantive variables can be viewed in Table 1.

## Results

Structural equation modeling (using SPSS and AMOS) was used to test all hypotheses as well as perform preliminary analyses. To test for model fit several indices were used: the $\chi^2/df$, with values under 5.0 indicating good fit and under 3.0 indicating excellent fit (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004); the comparative fit index (CFI), with values at or above .90 indicating adequate fit and .95 indicating excellent fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999); the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), with values under .10 indicating good fit and values under .06 indicating excellent fit (Browne & Cudek, 1993; Hu & Bentler, 1999); and the Standardized Root Mean Residual (SRMR), with values under .08 indicated adequate fit and values under .05 indicated excellent fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

### Preliminary analyses

Several preliminary tasks were necessary. First, the measure of

**Table 1.** *Means and standard deviations for all substantive variables*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Partner Anxiety | 2.33 (.78) | .87 |
| Partner Avoidance | 3.16 (1.82) | .85 |
| Network Anxiety | 2.38 (1.40) | .89 |
| Network Avoidance | 4.83 (0.69) | .88 |
| Network Uncertainty | 3.78 (1.37) | .94 |
| Network Interference | 3.34 (1.47) | .90 |
| Network Facilitation | 4.67 (1.14) | .81 |
| Network Overlap | 4.83 (1.66) | N/A |
| Trust | 4.28 (0.74) | .94 |
| Depression | 3.02 (1.30) | .93 |

*Note.* Network uncertainty mean is a composite variable of all 18 measured items. In substantive analyses, itis represented by a third-order, unidimensional variable. Network overlap is the composite of two measures, standardized, and then converted to a Likert scale ranging from 1-7.

network-based anxiety and network-based avoidance needed to be subjected to exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses (EFA; CFA, respectively). Results of EFA (which used a direct oblimin rotation and a maximum likelihood extraction) showed two distinct factors with an Eigenvalue above 1.0. Specifically, six items loaded on to the factor labeled "network-avoidance" and four items loaded on to the factor entitled "network-anxious[3]." These results provided sufficient justification to proceed with CFA. When performing CFA, both measures were included in the same model, as high correlation between latent constructs was expected. Results confirmed these expectations and demonstrated excellent model fit ($c^2$/df = 1.993, CFI = .990, RMSEA = .063, SRMR = .071). Intercorrelation between the two latent factors was 0.46.

Next, bivariate correlations were performed (see Table 2). Third, several variables[4] were tested as potential covariates through ANOVA and multiple regression. Three covariates were significantly related to our variables of interest: relationship length, intimacy, and relationship satisfaction. These three measures were included in all substantive analyses. Finally, we ran measurement models for each proposed set of hypotheses. All measurement models displayed excellent fit, and it was thus deemed appropriate to proceed with hierarchical analyses.

**Table 2.** *Bivariate Correlations for all Measured variables in this study.*

| Variable | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. | 7. | 8. | 9. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Anx. Att. (P) | --- | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Avd. Att. (P) | .61*** | --- | | | | | | | |
| 3. Anx. Att. (N) | .43*** | .37*** | --- | | | | | | |
| 4. Avd. Att. (N) | .20** | .04 | -.01 | --- | | | | | |
| 5. Network Uncertainty | .41*** | .50*** | .35*** | .02 | --- | | | | |
| 6. Network Interference | .21** | .13* | .24** | .02 | .37*** | --- | | | |
| 7. Network Facilitation | -.35*** | .07 | -.13* | .31** | .03 | -.14* | --- | | |
| 8. Network Overlap | .15* | -.21** | -.06 | -.04 | -.17** | -.05 | .02 | --- | |
| 9. Trust | -.41*** | -.57** | -.25** | .17** | -.27** | -.02 | -.02 | .19** | --- |
| 10. Depression | 38*** | .33*** | .44*** | -.01 | .43*** | .27** | -.05 | -.09 | -.17** |

*Note*. *$p > .05$, **$p > .01$, ***$p > .01$.

## Substantive Analyses

**Tests of direct relationships.** Five distinct hierarchical models H1-H5. All five of these models demonstrated good-to-excellent fit[5]. Results indicated several important trends. First, levels of anxiety and avoidance, at both the partner and network level, shared a series of strong relationships with all four network-based variables in this study. Specifically, partner-based anxiety was negatively related to network facilitation ($\beta = -.24$) and positively related to network uncertainty ($\beta = .32$); whereas partner-based avoidance positively related to both network uncertainty ($\beta = .23$) and network interference ($\beta = .21$), while sharing a negative relationship with network overlap ($\beta = -.40$). Alternatively, network-based anxiety shared positive relationships with network uncertainty ($\beta = .27$) and network interference ($\beta = .24$); whereas network-based avoidance was negatively related to network facilitation ($\beta = -.44$). Lastly, only network uncertainty shared significant relationships with trust ($\beta = -.15$) and depression ($\beta = .42$). This dramatically limited the number of mediation tests needed. In short, H1-H5 all received partial support.

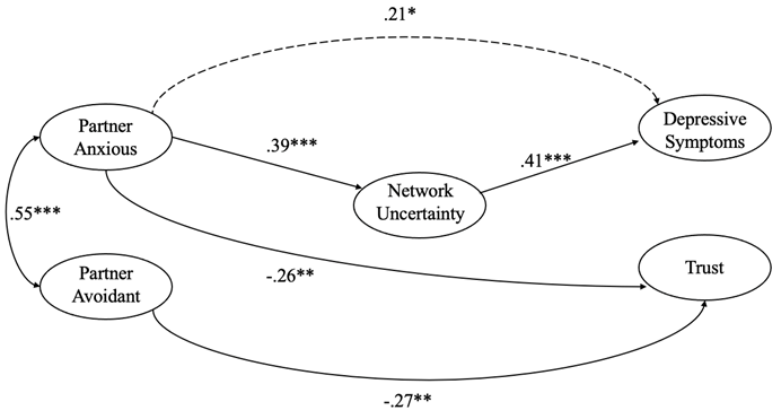
**Mediation tests.** Because network uncertainty was the only vari-

able to share significant associations with trust and depression, it was the only variable tested as a mediator. Mediation tests required two distinct hierarchical models. In each model, one set of attachment measures (either partner or network-based) were used as predictor variables, with network uncertainty as the mediating variable, and depressive symptoms and trust as the outcome variables. When testing mediation, the Preacher and Hayes (2008) method was employed. This method considers three possible effects: the direct effect of the independent variable on the outcome variable (path C), the direct effect of the independent variable on the outcome variable while controlling for the mediating variable (path C'), and the indirect effect of the independent variable on the outcome variable (through the mediating variable; path AB). If all three paths are significant, this indicates partial mediation. If only paths C and AB are significant, this indicates full mediation.

The first mediation model (testing RQ1) used partner-based attachment measures as the predictor variables, network uncertainty as the mediating variable, and both trust and depressive symptoms as outcome variables. This model displayed good fit, $\chi^2/df = 2.17$; CFI = .90; RMSEA = .068; SRMR = .071. In this model, both avoidance ($\beta = -.27$) and anxiety ($\beta = -.26$) were significantly and directly related to trust. Tests of mediation revealed that neither indirect relationship through network uncertainty were significant for avoidance ($\beta = -.04$) or for anxiety ($\beta = -.04$). When considering depressive symptoms as an outcome variable, neither anxiety ($\beta = .01$) nor avoidance ($\beta = .10$) showed direct relationships. There was a significant indirect relationship between anxiety and depressive symptoms through network uncertainty ($\beta = .21$). Combined with nonsignificant direct results, this indicates that network uncertainty fully mediates the relationship between partner-based anxiety and depressive symptoms. Figure 1 illustrates these relationships, and Table 3 displays mediation results.

The second mediation model in this study, which explored RQ2, considered network-based attachment measures as predictor variables, with the same mediating and outcome variables. This model displayed good fit, $\chi^2/df = 2.14$; CFI = .90; RMSEA = .067; SRMR = .074. Network-based avoidance ($\beta = -.15$), but not anxiety ($\beta = .12$), was significantly related to trust. Tests of mediation revealed a significant indirect relationship between anxiety and trust through network uncertainty ($\beta = .11$). Coupled with the

**Figure 1.** *Direct and indirect associations for partner-based attachment, network uncertainty, and trust/depressive symptoms*




*Note*. *$p$ < .05; **$p$ < .01; ***$p$ < .001. Dotted lines indicate indirect relationships. Relationship length, intimacy, and relationship satisfaction are controlled for, but not shown in this model.

**Table 3.** *Test for mediation using bootstrapping method. Unstandardized effects for total, direct, and indirect effects.*

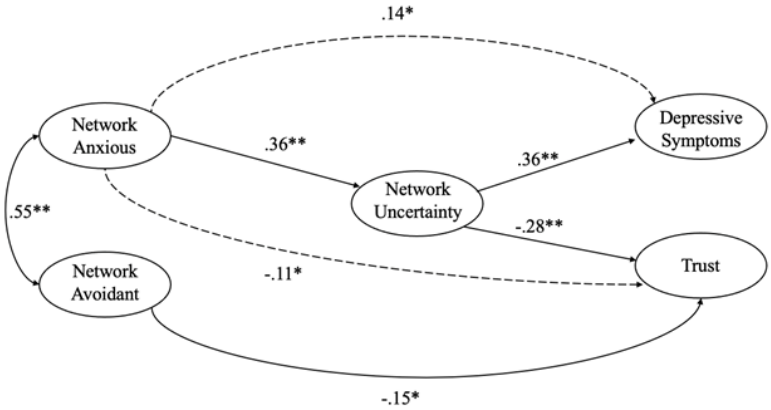
| | | | Total effect | | Direct effect | | Indirect effect | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| IV | DV | MV | Estimate | SE | Estimate | SE | Estimate | SE | 95% CI |
| PAX | TRU | NU | -.46** | .07 | -.50** | .12 | .04 | .07 | [-.14, -.78] |
| PAX | DEP | NU | .15* | .07 | < .01 | .09 | .15* | .07 | [.30 - .02] |
| PAV | TRU | NU | -.48** | .11 | -.49** | .05 | .02 | .02 | [-.03, -.81] |
| PAV | DEP | NU | .16 | .09 | .09 | .04 | .06 | .05 | [.36, -.05] |

*Note*. PAX = partner anxiety. PAV = partner avoidance. TRU = trust. DEP = depression. NU = network uncertainty *$p$ < .01, **$p$ < .001. Results are unstandardized and demonstrate that network uncertainty fully mediates the relationship between partner-based anxiety and depression.

nonsignificant direct effect, these results indicate that the relationship between network-based anxiety and trust is fully mediated by network uncertainty. For depressive symptoms only anxiety (β = .29) shared a significant and direct association (β = .06 for avoidance). Moreover, the indirect relationship between anxiety and depression was also significant (β = .14). As such, network uncertainty partially mediated this association. These results apt-

ly answered RQ2. Figure 2 displays these relationships in full and Table 4 illustrates the mediation results.

**Figure 2.** *Direct and indirect associations for network-based attachment, network uncertainty, and trust/depressive symptoms.*




*Note*. *$p$ < .05; **$p$ < .001. Dotted lines indicate indirect relationships. Relationship length, intimacy, and relationship satisfaction are controlled for, but not shown in this model.

**Table 4.** *Test for mediation using bootstrapping method. Unstandardized effects for total, direct, and indirect effects.*

| | | | Total effect | | Direct effect | | Indirect effect | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| IV | DV | MV | Estimate | SE | Estimate | SE | Estimate | SE | 95% CI |
| NAX | TRU | NU | -.30** | .09 | .19 | .10 | .11* | .05 | [-.13, -.50] |
| NAX | DEP | NU | .53** | .08 | .37** | .08 | .17** | .04 | [.83 - .21] |
| NAV | TRU | NU | -.15* | .07 | -.12* | .07 | -.03 | .03 | [-.03, -.81] |
| NAV | DEP | NU | .08 | .09 | .04 | .08 | .03 | .04 | [.24, -.09] |

*Note*. NAX = network anxiety. NAV = network avoidance. TRU = trust. DEP = depression. NU = network uncertainty *$p$ < .01, **$p$ < .001. Results are unstandardized and demonstrate that network uncertainty fully mediates the relationship between network-based anxiety and trust. Network uncertainty partially mediated the relationship between network anxiety and depressive symptoms.

## Discussion

This study explored the associations between network-based measures and measures salient to attachment theory (specifically, anxiety, avoidance, trust, and depressive symptoms). Broadly,

our results point to several ways, both directly and indirectly, through which a person's social network can modulate individual and dyadic perceptions within the vein of attachment theory. This is important given the role that network perceptions (Stein, 2021) and the mechanisms of attachment (Fraley, 2011) play in relational communication. We discuss the results in terms of theoretical, operational, and conceptual implications.

## Attachment Theory and the Network

The present study builds on existing research that highlights the importance of network-focused attachment patterns (Fox & Warber, 2014) in mental health and interpersonal settings. Specifically, we were able to identify a reliable and valid model of both anxiety and avoidance related to a person's network. Deriving network-based measures from existing dyadic measures has precedent (Stein, 2018), and it is worth noting that the measure crafted for this study withstood both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. There are countless measures of attachment (e.g., Guerrero, 1996; Johow & Voland, 2014). As such, it would be useful to explore the viability of modifying these measures of attachment and applying them to individuals' network members.

In addition, our results revealed several important connections between a person's attachment tendencies, their perceptions of the networks around them, and their levels of trust (within their close relationships) and depressive symptoms. Extant work has pegged the social network as an integral part of both crafting one's identity (Kennedy et al., 2015) and relationship development (Sprecher, 2011; Stein & Davidson, 2019). Our results further the call for a network-dyad approach to theory construction. Below, we further break down the specific findings of this investigation related to attachment theory.

**Direct relationships.** The first half of our substantive analyses (i.e., H1 – H3) focused on the associations between attachment variables (anxiety and avoidance) and network-based variables (network uncertainty, network interference/facilitation, and network overlap). Measures of partner-based anxiety correlated positively with network uncertainty and negatively with network facilitation. The relationship between anxiety and uncertainty is well documented (e.g., Chen et al., 2018), and there is thus precedent for our support of H1a. The negative relationship between partner-based anxiety and network facilitation (H2a) has conceptual backing as well. Knobloch and Donovan-Kicken (2006) ex-

plain that a partner's facilitation positively relates to perceptions that the network is helpful. As such, decreased anxiety concerning one's partner likely relates to perceptions that the network is helping one's everyday goals. As Stein and Davidson (2019) demonstrated, such perceptions alter emotional states which, in turn, affect communication episodes between partners.

Partner-based avoidance was positively associated with both network uncertainty (H1a) and network interference (H2a), but negatively associated with network overlap (H3a). Like anxiety, avoidant tendencies closely relate to levels of uncertainty (Duranto et al., 2005). Moreover, individuals with avoidant attachment tend to feel as though others are a more negative influence on their everyday lives (Welch & Houser, 2010), partially explaining the results for H2a. Lastly, the difficulty that avoidant individuals have in forging new relationships (Gillath et al., 2017) helps to explain the negative association between partner-based avoidance and network overlap (H3a). Folks who are more avoidant may struggle to mesh with their partners' family, friends, and associates, ultimately inhibiting the development of a duocentered network.

Similarly, network-based anxiety was positively related to both network uncertainty (H1b) and network interference (H2b), whereas avoidance was negatively associated with network facilitation (H3b). Interestingly, there were fewer significant relationships for network-based attachment measures than for partner-based attachment measures. Stein (2018b) illustrated that although network-based variables are important partial determinants of relational perceptions and behaviors, these significant associations are often less frequent and yield smaller effect sizes than dyad-based measurements. Our findings echo this trend and speak to the ways in which relational scholars must consider both the dyad and the network as influencing factors in the path of relationship development.

The fourth and fifth hypotheses in this study received partial, but meaningful, support. Specifically, only network uncertainty shared significant relationships with trust and depressive symptoms (negative and positive, respectively). Given that relational uncertainty and depressive symptoms are closely linked (Knobloch & Knobloch-Fedders, 2010), similar findings for network uncertainty are unsurprising. That said, one might expect network interdependence measures or network overlap to significantly relate to depressive symptoms, given precedent at the dy-

adic level (Maroufizadeh et al., 2018). It is possible that interactions with the network only affect self-perceptions if they are related to anxiety inducing cognitions (such as uncertainty). This may also help explain the lack of direct relationship(s) between network interdependence/overlap and dyadic trust. As such, uncertainty (from numerous sources) may be more important predictive force than previously thought.

This inference is meaningful because it reinforces the role that uncertainty plays in communication episodes. For example, relational turbulence theory (Solomon et al., 2016) and the theory of motivated information management (Afifi & Tikkanen, 2021) both categorize uncertainty as a factor that indirectly relates to communication, through cognitive biases. These findings suggest that such inferences are accurate, as both trust (Knobloch et al., 2020) and depressive symptoms (Knobloch & Knobloch-Fedders, 2010) are cognitions that can influence communication in close relationships.

**Indirect relationships.** Network uncertainty mediated three indirect relationships across two models. First, network uncertainty fully mediated the association between network-based anxiety and trust (RQ1). In other words, anxious attachment relates uncertainty about one's own, one's partner's, or one's network's influence, which in turn alters levels of trust in one's relationship. It has been noted that extra-dyadic relationships (and presumably, uncertainties surrounding them) influence trust in close relationships (Rusbult et al., 1999). Our results combine these branches of thought, reinforcing their relevance over 20 years later.

The second set of mediational analyses were equally compelling, in that network uncertainty: (1) fully mediated the relationship between partner-based anxiety and depressive symptoms; and (2) partially mediated the association between network-based anxiety and depressive symptoms. The link that both uncertainty (Knobloch & Knobloch-Fedders, 2010) and social network involvement (Rosenquist et al., 2011) share with depressive symptoms is noteworthy. Our findings point to one way in which network-based uncertainties mediate the well-documented relationship between attachment tendencies and mental health issues (Maroufizadeh et al., 2018). The ability to reduce network-uncertainty through specific communication episodes may increase trust and limit depressive symptoms for those who experience anxious attachment patterns.

**Advancing the study of Social Networks**

Broadly, the results of this study have advanced social network research in several ways. It is widely accepted that relationships with heightened interdependence are of particular interest to relationship researchers due to increased investments, rewards, and costs (Rusbult et al., 1999). Most relationship research considers interdependence as an interlinking interchain between two people (see Knobloch & Knobloch-Fedders, 2010). Our results, coupled with existing research (e.g., Murphy et al., 2020; Sprecher, 2011; Stein & Davidson, 2019), explain that interdependence may look more like an interchain helix, shared across multiple relationships with varying strengths. As such, the concept of interdependence may need refinement.

To that end, interdependence-based relational theories may benefit from including both dyad-based and network-based measures in tests of their suppositions. Existing interpersonal theories do consider social network members as an element of relational interaction (Fox & Warber, 2014; Rusbult et al., 1999; Solomon et al., 2016); however, few, if any, relational theories acknowledge the network as integral players in the development, maintenance, and termination of close relationships. Specifically, the accommodating communication behaviors (such as those described in communication accommodation theory; Dragojevic, Gasiorek, & Giles, 2015) that people engage in vis-a-vis their various social networks may influence both dyadic perceptions (Stein, et al., 2019) and relational behaviors (Sprecher, 2011).

## Limitations

This study has a few important limitations to note. First are methodological limitations. Our sample was relatively homogenous in terms of age, ethnicity, and geographic location. Moreover, the data used in this study are cross-sectional and self-report in nature and can thus only provide a snapshot of the relationships probed. Dyadic data, longitudinal analyses, and duocentric methods of data collection will be necessary to expand the preliminary findings that we uncovered in this study.

There are several theoretical and conceptual limitations to note as well. This study used a primarily dyadic theory (i.e., attachment theory) to explore multi-faceted relationships. Writ large, relationship research needs theories specifically designed to explore how dyads relate to their network(s). To that end, the concept of social networks may need refinement or redefinition. Our use of

HMT in this study is an initial, but ultimately insufficient step toward more specifically conceptualizing the social network. Future work must apply more advanced methodologies to (re) conceptualize the nature of the social network and explore the ways in which network(s) interact with dyads.

A final issue to consider is how best to address the methodological approach(es) to studying the network. Combining the existing network-based measures of duocentric approaches (Kennedy et al., 2015) with hierarchical mapping techniques (Rowe & Carnelley, 2005) may be useful for obtaining dyadic data, and for better understanding which network members are the most influential in peoples' lives. Moreover, diary studies (Subrahmanian et al., 2005) can help to provide a more granular approach to the study of networks that impact close relationships. Lastly, expansions of existing laboratory study methods (Driver et al., 2003) to include network members may be useful in the exploration of dyad-network accommodation patterns.

## Concluding Thoughts

Overall, our study is an important step in the theoretical, methodological, and conceptual study of how social networks interact with dyadic partnerships. The finding that network uncertainty mediates the associations that attachment tendencies shares with both depressive symptoms and trust carries theoretical and practical implications. We hope that these results are used to inspire more advanced data collections and, over time, forge the path to a theory of dyad-network accommodation. Moreover, we believe that knowledge of the role network uncertainty, and by extension network-dyad communication, plays in relationship development can be used in clinical and practical settings alike to help forge healthier close relationships.

## Endnotes

1. A supplementary appendix illustrating the visual aid used for this technique is available upon request
2. The bivariate correlation between these two measures was $r = .89$.
3. A 50-30 decision rule was mae for these loadings (i.e., primary factor loadings must be at least .50 and no other loading can be greater than .30)
4. Variables tested as covariates were ethnicity, relationship length, intimacy, relationship satisfaction, age, relationship type, and biological sex.

5. Full figures and results are available upon request. Inclusion of these figures and reports was deemed unnecessary, as only network uncertainty shared significant relationships with trust and depressive symptoms.

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# Societal Attitudes Towards the Single Woman
# A Metaphor Analysis

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*The purpose of this article is to explore the rhetoric surrounding single women. In popular culture, single women are often described as lonely (Budgeon, 2008; Haddock, 2010), unhappy (Koeing et al., 2010; Zajicek & Koski, 2003), unfulfilled, and lacking interpersonal ties and strong social bonds (Budgeon, 2008). We offer a metaphor analysis of a Facebook self-help group called The Single Woman, along with a short book of affirmations entitled The Single Woman's Manifesto, to analyze how women frame their singlehood and work to fight back against the cultural stigma surrounding their status. While the Facebook pages contained discussions, the affirmations were particularly powerful and contained specific metaphor patterns which indicate the authors' perspective on single life. We scrolled through the site dating back to 2014 and pulled what appeared during that time period. The Single Woman's Manifesto is entirely affirmations. In all, we analyzed 82 affirmations among the two artifacts. We then sorted the metaphors by frequency and intensity to reveal the following metaphor structures – "being single is a journey," "being single is a battle," and "being single is a gift." These metaphors indeed support the struggle between those who feel empowered by singlehood and those who feel it is a daily struggle based on social narratives.*

*Keywords*: Metaphor, discrimination, women, single

## Introduction

This study offers a rhetorical approach to analyzing stigmas of singlehood and social pressure surrounding marriage to reveal how discursive strategies are employed to resist or reproduce the dominant ideology of single women. Here, "women" is used as a gender category defined by self-identification. A number of studies have documented the negative cultural representations of single women. However, more research is needed to uncover the ways single women respond to, resist, or internalize such stigmatization and pathologization (Budgeon, 2008; Haddock, 2010;

Reynolds & Wetherell, 2003). Zajicek and Koski (2003) point out that few studies explore how single women resist stigma and marginality in their everyday life and how such resistance is influenced by discursive strategies among marginalized groups. The lack of studies of women's resistance, they further argue, is a result of passive views of social actors around certain stigma.

In this study, rather than viewing women as passive victims of dominant ideologies and social structures, we see women as active social actors who both reproduce and redefine the cultural discourse of singlehood. For instance, Byrne (2003)'s study suggests that some women were able to construct an affirmative identity despite the social stigma of singleness was still prevalent in Irish culture. Therefore, we see singlehood as a contested site where meanings are produced through the rhetorical enactment of social actors. More specifically, we are interested in how single women negotiate an affirmative identity in self-help settings. Dales (2014) argues that "experiences of singlehood vary significantly with levels of family support, financial capacity and an individual's health, and that single women's agency is, therefore, subject to broad socioeconomic factors, as well as cultural factors" (p. 225). In other words, social support and available resources (including communication resources) play a crucial role in women's experiences of singlehood. In today's society where social interactions are heavily mediated, self-support groups and literature have become an increasingly popular and influential format of social support. Studies suggest that the self-help genre is one of the most popular genres in today's literary culture, and women are the primary targeted audience (Ebben, 1995; Koeing et al. 2010; Schilling & Fuehrer, 1993; Simonds, 1996). As one of the most prevalent modalities of self-help among women today, online self-help groups and literature provide valuable access to communities of invested single women whose vernacular commentary evidenced individual and collective efforts (see also Brouwer & Hess, 2007) to redefine the cultural meanings of single women.

It is in this vein that we offer a metaphor analysis of a Facebook self-help group for single women, along with a short book of self-help affirmations entitled *The Single Woman's Manifesto,* to analyze how women frame their singlehood and work to fight back against the cultural stigma surrounding their status. While there are many discussions of the stigma of remaining single for women in various fields of study, there are few discussions from the standpoint of rhetorical criticism. We hope to fill that void

with our analysis. In what follows, we offer a review of some of the studies discussing the issue.

## Literature Review

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2017 there were 110.6 million single people age 18 or older – or 45.2% of the overall adult population. Of that number, 53.2% were female and 46.8 were male. In addition, 55% of Americans expressed a belief that marriage is not an important part of leading a happy adulthood. "Whether they're waiting longer to settle down, choosing to enjoy monogamy outside the legal constraints of a marriage, or choosing to forgo the institution altogether, the numbers are startling, record-breaking, and for many, empowering" (Friday, 2018). By all accounts, according to DePaulo (2018), it is becoming more accepted, and more people are choosing lifestyles outside of marriage. Marriage is also not considered to be the cultural permission for sex. Single people are having more sex than married people, and the number of people identifying as asexual has grown and is becoming more acceptable, DePaulo found. "In unprecedented numbers, they are going ahead and living their single lives, which are often healthier and more fulfilling than those of their coupled counterparts" (DePaulo, 2018).

But while research may be increasingly on singles' side, cultural attitudes perhaps have not quite caught up. At least a decade of research from DePaulo and other scholars discuss in great detail the social stigma associated with single life (Budgeon, 2008, 2016; DePaulo & Morris, 2005, 2006; Sharp & Ganong, 2007, 2011; Simpson, 2015). Single women are often described as lonely (Budgeon, 2008; Haddock, 2010; Zajicek & Koski, 2003), unhappy (Koeing et al., 2010; Zajicek & Koski, 2003), unfulfilled, and lacking interpersonal ties and strong social bonds (Budgeon, 2008). For example, Lahad (2014) conducted an analysis of online advice columns for single women, which reveals a contradiction between those who said they find singlehood to be empowering, and those readers who consider it a "fake" condition. Those readers conclude that women who are single cannot possibly be content with their "condition." "Their argument ran as follows: the single woman is faking it; her choice is an unconvincing and dubious façade for her true desire to be married with children. Therefore, her choice of singlehood is not only temporary, it is nonexistent, a forgery" (p. 257). So, even though many women may indeed be content with their single status, there are outside social pressures telling them that it is not okay to remain sin-

gle. This pressure may be one of the reasons so many women feel that marriage *should* be their ultimate goal.

Even worse, singleness is constructed as a moral issue where single women are portrayed as selfish, deviant, immature, and irresponsible (Budgeon, 2008). The pathologizing of single women is evident in how they are defined (DePaulo & Morris, 2005; Koeing et al., 2010). DePaulo & Morris (2005) point out that single women are more likely identified by what they are *not*: not married, not a parent, not partnered, etc.

In addition to these issues, the negative representation of single women is centered around ideologies of marriage, heterosexual family, and parenthood (DePaulo and Morris, 2005; Dales, 2014; Koeing et al., 2010). It tells the story that everyone desires a sexual partnership, [and] that a sexual relationship is the only truly important personal relationship (Budgeon, 2008, p. 302). Even though women are these days often referred to as autonomous, sexual beings, remaining single continues to be addressed as problematic for women. This is particularly true for women who remain single later in life. "The state of being unpartnered may be granted the status of a legitimate and empowering choice, but it is ultimately time contingent. When women maintain independence beyond a specific period of the life course, they are often subject to social stigma" (Budgeon, 2016, p. 402). Lahad (2012)'s analysis of the sociology of time related to marriage concludes that the idea of "waiting to be married" is still more associated with women than men. This is true for two reasons, she argues. First, there is a widespread cultural image of "women as passively waiting and men as vigorously acting," and second, "the pressure of biological clocks and the threat of becoming 'an old maid' formulate different modes of temporal discourse" (p. 166). Perhaps some of the more revealing studies are ones that rely on personal accounts from women who are single, and the attitudes others have expressed towards them. For example, Simpson (2015) conducted in-depth interviews of British women between the ages of 36 and 83 who have never been married. She found that even though social attitudes may have changed significantly for women over the past few decades, there is still a stigma attached to those who remain single. "For example, Mandy, 39, listed 'she must be gay, or she must be a manhater generally, or, you know, 'she's frigid'" and recounted 'warnings' from friends about being 'too independent.'" (p. 390).

Within the heteronormative framework, single women represent a disruption to dominant sexual and gender orders (Budgeon, 2008; Lahad, 2012). In this rendering, the stigmatization and pathologizing of single women serve as powerful vehicles (Zajicek & Koski, 2003, p. 378) to the discipline and control of women. Therefore, public discourse of singlehood was, and continues to be a site where heteronormativity is (re)produced and contested.

## Self-help Groups as Sites for Destigmatization

Given the constitutive power of discourse, positive representations of single women could be seen as a critical intervention to the stigmatization and pathologization of singlehood. People draw upon cultural discourse to make sense of their everyday life. Positive representation of single women is an important discursive resource to fight against the dominance of heteronormativity in our cultural life (Budgeon, 2008). Affirmative construction of singlehood, Dales (2014) points out, can help women resist negative representations of singlehood, allowing for a stronger sense of independence and agency. The cultural construction of singlehood prescribes a set of subject positions (Reynolds & Taylor, 2004) where women imagine and organize their everyday life. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate how single women resist the stigmatization of singlehood and how they negotiate affirmative identities that allow agency and empowerment (Budgeon, 2008; Reynolds & Taylor, 2004). This is where we believe rhetorical criticism can help tease out and explain how discourse is used as a tool for resistance. In the next section, we discuss the methodology of our study. As we will demonstrate, a metaphor analysis of self-help rhetoric helps demonstrate some of the struggles and strategies of resistance from single women as they navigate the pressures of marriage.

## Methodology

In *Permanence and Change* (1966), Kenneth Burke wrote: "A way of seeing is also way of not seeing – a focus upon object A involves a neglect of object B" (p. 70). This quote is the linchpin of his notion of "Terministic Screens," in which any language use is "a *reflection* of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a *selection* of reality and to this extent it must function as a *deflection* of reality (emphasis in original, 1966, p. 45). Burke later discusses metaphor as a perfect example of seeing one perspective over another. In his discussion of metaphor as one of

four master tropes in *A Grammar of Motives*, he says, "… to consider A from the point of view of B is, of course, to use B as a perspective upon A" (1945, p. 504). It makes metaphor particularly powerful in that the use of one metaphor would direct attention *to* one ideology while direct attention *away* from another.

Similarly, in their groundbreaking book *Metaphors We Live B*y, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) expand on Burke's previous discussions, arguing that metaphors not only direct our attention to one perspective, they govern our very thought process - "our everyday functioning, down to the most mundane detail" (1980, p. 3). They control our perceptions, our behavior and how we experience the world around us. To put it simply, Smith and Eisenberg (1987) argue that metaphors "are not neutral representations of reality; they are manifestations of particular ideologies and world -views, and have implications for what counts as information, and what is thinkable" (p. 369). So, by analyzing a rhetor's use of metaphor, one can begin to understand what ideologies motivate a rhetor. To illustrate this point, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) discuss the common metaphor, "argument is war," which is instantiated in such phrases like "He *shot down* my argument," or "Your claims are *indefensible*." This metaphor structure indicates that the person using it considers an argument to be a win-lose proposition. Their motive would be to *win* the argument at all costs. But Lakoff and Johnson point out that there are many other metaphors that may be used to describe an argument that would bring about different points of view and motives. They use the example of "argument as a dance," rather than a war, where "no one wins or loses, where there is no sense of attacking or defending, gaining or losing ground…the participants are seen as performers, and the goal is to perform in a balanced and aesthetically pleasing way" (pp. 4-5). A person taking this perspective would be more motivated towards cooperation and compromise than winning. The different perspectives can depend in large part, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), on cultural ideological discourses which structure our experiences. The metaphor "argument is war," for example, is a perspective on argument specific to Western cultures.

Using metaphor analysis, we argue in this paper that meta-level discourses about single women help create the mindset of those who are single and therefore help guide the metaphors used to describe their social status. As Cox (2012) noted, "… while this connection between values and metaphorical concepts occurs on an emotional level, the internalization of a metaphor can lead one

to *act* out its implications" (p. 4, emphasis in original). In what follows, we will describe the artifacts analyzed for this paper – a self-help book called *The Single Woman's Manifesto* and the Facebook self-help group "The Single Woman." We then explain how the dominant use of the metaphor structures "being single is a journey," and "being single is a battle" indicates an *acting out* of overall societal stigma of being a single woman rather than a wife/partner, or mother. The use of these metaphor structures may serve to heighten anxiety over being single, rather than it being a desirable social status. We then argue that the limited use of metaphor structures in these support group sites "being single is freedom" and "being single is a gift" indicate a more empowering way to think of being single, perhaps helping to soften feelings of inadequacy and a need for immediate partnership.

For each of these artifacts, we conducted a metaphor analysis of the specific affirmations present in each. As mentioned earlier, we are interested in how women resist the stigmas of singlehood and negotiate an affirmative identity. Therefore, we intentionally seek affirmations in our study. While the Facebook pages contained discussions, the affirmations were particularly powerful and contained specific metaphor patterns which indicate the authors' perspective on single life. The affirmations did not appear each day on these sites, so we scrolled through each site dating back to 2014 and pulled what appeared during that time period. The *Single Woman's Manifesto* is entirely affirmations. In all, we analyzed 82 affirmations among the two artifacts. We then sorted the metaphors by frequency and intensity to analyze two dominant metaphor structures – "being single is a journey" and "being single is a battle."

## Artifacts for Analysis

The artifacts examined for this paper are two examples of the self-help genre discussed earlier. We specifically examined the affirmations present in these artifacts and the metaphors found within them. The first artifact is the Facebook site "The Single Woman," which is specifically meant to provide social support for single women. It is an open page created by blogger and author Mandy Hale, who has written numerous books about being a single woman, including – *Don't Believe the Swipe*, *You Are Enough: Heartbreak, Healing, & Becoming Whole*, and *Beautiful Uncertainty: Singleness, Surrender and Stepping Out on Faith, I've Never Been to Vegas, But My Luggage Has, and The Single Woman: Life, Love and a Dash of Sass*. The Facebook site dates back to 2013 and had 1,684,352 followers as of May 28, 2021.

The description of the site states:

> The Single Woman's mission is to empower people - in particular, single women - to live their best lives. To serve as a reminder that a happy life is more important than a happy ending…that we don't need a significant other to lead a significant life, and if one day, our Prince does find us, we won't expect him to complete us, but to compliment us. Because we are strong. We are invincible. We are all…The Single Woman. (https://www.facebook.com/TheSingleWoman/).

On her website, Hales is described as encouraging and empowering single women to live their best lives while single without feeling the pressure to "settle." Women should not feel rushed to get married, or to get married at all.

In addition to Hale's Facebook page, we also examined the self-help book entitled *The Single Woman's Manifesto* by author Kiini Ibura Salaam published in 2010. The 5.5 x 4-inch book contains 59 pages of affirmations to help women navigate the single life. The back cover of the book describes it as "… a spiritual approach to the single life. It offers a series of fun and potent affirmations designed to free you to love yourself and your life, no matter what relationship state you happen to be in."

## Analysis

**Journeys and battles: Metaphors of surviving singlehood.** Of the affirmations examined, many of them contained metaphors comparing being single to a journey – hence the metaphor structure "being single is a journey." We labeled these in terms of a journey because they each discuss singlehood in terms of time, travels, starting a path towards an ending. Journeys have beginnings and endings, and in these affirmations, the end of the journey is coupledom and even perhaps marriage. The metaphors in these affirmations are temporal in nature, relying on a sense of time until one has completed their journey to coupledom. One of the more prevalent in this set of metaphors was discussion of a journey in terms of "waiting," as indicated in these statements:

- "*Trust the wait*. Embrace the uncertainty. Enjoy the beauty of becoming. When nothing is certain… anything is possible."
- "I'd rather *wait long* than to marry wrong…"
- "There is *no timeline* you must follow. You're not too

late. You're not too early … You are just where you should be at this moment in your life, so relax. *There's plenty of time* to find love, there's plenty of time to get married. There's plenty of time to live happily ever after."

- "I will not force a relationship to happen *on my own schedule*."
- "Just because you *took longer than* others, doesn't mean you failed. Remember that."
- "I hope with all my heart that someday someone will *come along and join me in my journey*, but I'm *not going to hit the Pause button on my life* until that happens…"

Waiting in these statements is couched in terms of the journey toward being a part of a couple as in "trust the wait," indicating that the wait is a part of the journey that will one day end in coupledom. In others, it couches it in terms that love and coupledom can't be rushed, as in not forcing it to happen on their schedule. And even more so in "there's no timeline" and "there's plenty of time" to find love, get married and live happily ever after, and in "Just because you *took longer than* others, doesn't mean you failed," and the hope that someday someone will join them in their journey. As Lahad (2012) discussed in her study of the sociology of time in terms of single women:

> As has been argued, singlehood is still, to a large extent, discursively framed as a liminal, temporary state; a transitory stage on the way to coupledom and family life. In similar fashion, lifelong singlehood marks an unexpected disruption and a normatively liminal state that has unexpectedly become permanent. (p. 182)

The idea that marriage cannot be rushed and that one should not force or suppose a length of time on it, is obviously meant to encourage women not to stress about it taking longer than it's supposed to take, since, as was discussed earlier, marriage is always as Budgeon (2016) said, "time contingent."

The final set of metaphors in the "being single is a journey" structure relates to bravery and empowerment to hang on while the wait happens. The statements here discuss not letting the wait keep them from being healthy and active. In many of the statements, there is a transformation of self being discussed as a benefit to the wait. Examples of these include:

- "Never let someone or something with the significance

of *a speed bump become a roadblock in your life*."

- "It's okay to *take your time*. It's okay to *bravely chart your own path*. It's okay to do things your way. It's OKAY."
- "I am no longer *where I've been*. I am not *yet where I'm going*. I am *somewhere* in between; not still the caterpillar but not yet the butterfly. I am becoming… and I'm starting to see that in some ways, the becoming is even better than the being. It's where the change happens. It's where the bravery happens. It's where the magic happens. And suddenly you just know it's time to start something new & trust the *magic of beginnings*."
- "We are tough. We are bold. We are fierce. We are a force to be reckoned with. The *journey of a single woman is not an easy one*, but we welcome the unknown. We embrace our freedom as the gift that it is… *we pave our own way* … we march to the beat of our own drum and we ask permission from no one to do so…"

The affirmations here using the journey metaphors are meant to encourage single women to embrace being single *while* that is their status. One, in fact, compares singlehood to the journey a caterpillar takes on its way to a full life as a butterfly. The implication, though, is still a sense that their status is temporary, but they control when and how coupledom happens. This is exactly what Sandfield and Percy (2003) found that single women will do to help combat the stigma of being single later in life. They will construct a narrative that their status is only temporary or else they are failures. The idea of being brave, paving their own way, charting their course, taking their time, embracing new beginnings and not letting speed bumps become road blocks, work to empower single women to take charge of their own destiny. The last affirmation in that list also contains other metaphors that are relevant to this discussion, in particular the first sentence: "We are tough. We are bold. We are fierce. We are a force to be reckoned with." That sentence leads into the next most common metaphor structure – "being single is a battle." In fact, the cover of the *Single Woman's Manifesto* is military camouflage, indicative of being single is a battle. Affirmations with this metaphor structure include:

- "*Rise up and attack the day* with happiness, enthusiasm and live."
- "Sometimes *survival* is about whatever gets you through the day. Whatever helps you put one foot in front of the

other. Whatever holds you together when everything else falls apart…"

- "One day it just clicks … You realize how far you've come and you remember when you thought things were such a mess that you would *never recover*. And you smile. You smile because you are truly proud of yourself for the person *you've fought to become*."

These phrases indicate that every day as a single woman is a battle that requires fighting, surviving and recovering. As the first one suggests – to get through the day requires attacking it. The tone in these is more negative and is perhaps more indicative of the social stigma surrounding singlehood. Similar to the "being single is a battle" metaphor is "being single is injurious" where discussions of pain and injury are associated with navigating single life:

- "Because a *strong* woman doesn't use relationships as *bandaids*… she tends to her business, *heals from the hurt* and moves on, *stronger than ever*..."
- "Love does *not hurt*. *Loneliness hurts*. Betrayal *hurts*. Love does not hurt and if it looks like love and hurts, it's not love…
- "It was a time when I *felt broken*… "
- If life has *hurt you so badly* you feel like you might *never be whole again*… you will. If the end of the relationship or job or opportunity feels like the end of everything that matters… It isn't. It's actually the beginning.

These phrases discuss being single in terms of pain that requires a level of strength to defeat. In discussing singlehood as a battle in which they must be strong even when wounded. The implication in these two metaphor structures in general depict a hard life of waiting, biding their time and struggling to be strong through the pain. The last one, in fact, also contains an orientational metaphor in discussing oneself as not being a "whole" person. They will not be "whole" until there is another person in their life.

**The unapologetic freedom, worth and gift of being single.**
There were, however, other metaphor structures that we argue are more positively associated with being single – that actually offer an "unapologetic," "contentedly single" perspective. Those were "being single is freedom," "being single is a gift," and monetary metaphors comparing singlehood to personal worth. Examples of the affirmations that fell under the "being single is freedom"

structure are:

- "Learn to be alone and like it. There's nothing *more freeing* and empowering than learning to like your own company."
- "And maybe a happy ending doesn't include a guy, maybe it's you, on your own, picking up the pieces and starting over, *freeing yourself* up for something better in the future. Maybe a happy ending is just moving on."

Examples of "being single is a gift" are:

- "I will do anything that it occurs to me to do without checking with someone else. Because *that is the gift of being single*."
- "We embrace our *freedom as the gift that it is… we pave our own way* … we march to the beat of our own drum and we ask permission from no one to do so…"

Examples of monetary metaphors associated with being single are:

- "Remember a good woman *knows her worth*."
- If you feel like they took *your self-worth* with them when they left… They didn't.
- "I think some *losses are really gains in that we gain back time we were investing* in the wrong people and *energy spent* worrying about why they never seemed to quite reciprocate our efforts and even parts of ourselves that we lost in the frantic efforts to stay in someone's life who wasn't doing anything to keep us in theirs..."

In these affirmations, singlehood is discussed in terms of freedom and being a gift. Even more, it is discussed as valuable in terms of the monetary metaphors. It is also interesting to note that there are journey metaphors sprinkled in these such as "gain back time we were investing," which is a time is money metaphor, and "happy ending is just moving on," which suggests the journey ends with happy singlehood. The others suggest that the women are *worth more* when they are single. The use of these metaphors was more affirming of their "single condition" and perhaps offer more encouragement than the dominant metaphors of journeys and battles.

## Discussion

In her study of the social pressures facing single women, Budgeon (2016) discusses how the stigma becomes worse for those women who are still single by age 35 because they have somehow "missed" a kind of unspoken cultural deadline. "By 'missing' the culturally expected transition to partnering, and thereby not orienting their identity to gendered life course norms, unpartnered women regularly face gender accountability, which requires them to develop strategies for explaining their status" (p. 405). And as Simpson (2015) noted, "In Goffman's (1963/1990b) account of stigma, he argues, stigmatized persons respond to the identity beliefs of normal society through a process of stigma management to ease tensional transactions" (p. 390). We suggest in this paper that many of these "strategies" for stigma management are present in the artifacts analyzed here. Most of the metaphors discussed being single as a "journey" that will eventually end in coupledom. The women in these affirmations justify their singlehood as just lagging behind the cultural milestone. They're having to wait longer, but eventually the day will come when they are a part of a couple. The battle metaphors indicate that each day as a single woman is a struggle where they must exhibit strength to recover from wounds and "attack the day." The wounded feeling can be read as a sense of critical awareness: these women are aware of the stigmatization on single women. The hurt feeling communicates a sense of injustice—"This is not fair, not right!" Their "attack" demonstrates an exercise of agency by to fight against the struggles and wounds that a culture of heteronormative imposes on them. Therefore, these metaphors thus reveal the complexity of single women's "battles" – these women simultaneously resist the stigma of singlehood and reinforce the hegemony of coupledom as *the* destination for women.

However, other less used metaphors of being single is freedom, being single is a gift, and the use of monetary metaphors suggesting a person's worth as a single person, are more indicative of potential societal shifts as more accepting of single people, as DePaulo (2018) argued when referring to 2017 Census data. These metaphor structures truly depict an "unapologetic" tone to being single. They are free to be who they want to be, without answering to other people. This they consider to be a "gift." In turn, they know their own "worth" and refuse to waste valuable time worrying about their status. These metaphors indicate a womanhood that is not defined or even bothered by the cultural expectation of coupledom. They are thus more empowering for

single women as opposed to the others, which come across as a more desperate attempt to explain their single status. That is not to say that many of the single women out there really DO want to be partnered. That isn't really the issue as much as it is the stigma makes many of them feel they *have to* overly explain or attempt to justify their singleness as a temporary "condition." However, if the latter metaphors were used more, perhaps social attitudes would be forced to change to a more accepting stance of women's status as single, since those women are less likely to feel there is a need to explain or apologize for their status.

## Conclusion

We have demonstrated in this study how rhetorical criticism can be used to analyze the self-help affirmations specific to single women and their struggles with the social stigma surrounding singlehood. The metaphor analysis offered here illuminates how women work to navigate their status and empower themselves to embrace the single life – perhaps forever or perhaps until they find the right person to marry. This artifacts in this study presumably focused mainly on heterosexual women. Further study on this issue should consider other cultural variables for single women. "Single women are not a homogenous category, and there are various categories of which could be considered, including age, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation" (Simpson, 2015, 388). This particular analysis relied on the discourse of these particular self-help artifacts. In these, the women are American, straight, perhaps never married or perhaps previously married. Now that same-sex marriage is legal, it would be interesting to explore whether the cultural attitude toward single women has changed in response to shifting gender and sexual landscape in the United States. It would be interesting to study the discourse surrounding single men, and whether or not they also face any particular social pressures for being single later in life. Perhaps more importantly, more research is needed to unravel the experiences of diverse bodies of single women, such as trans women, lesbian women, and other gender non-conforming individuals who may or not embrace the label of "woman."

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# Hovering over Graduate Students? The Relationship between Helicopter Parenting and Graduate Students' Depression

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*This study extends research on graduate student mental health and helicopter parenting by surveying graduate students (N = 367) to determine if maternal and paternal helicopter parenting predict graduate student depression. Age is proposed as a moderator and parental financial support is proposed as a mediator of the relationship between helicopter parenting and depression. Results indicated maternal and paternal helicopter parenting were significantly, positively associated with graduate student depression. Age moderated and parental financial support partially mediated the relationship between maternal (but not paternal) helicopter parenting and graduate student depression. Implications for communication scholars and higher education institutions are discussed.*

*Keywords*: Helicopter parenting, graduate students, depression, family communication

Graduate students are an important population to study due to large numbers of graduate students and the specific challenges graduate students face. In Fall 2020, there were approximately 3.1 million graduate students enrolled at U.S. colleges and universities (U.S. Department of Education & National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). Despite declining enrollments for undergraduate students, in Spring 2021, graduate student enrollments were up across all institutional types with four-year public institutions seeing a 5.6% (i.e., 74,000 student) enrollment increase (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2021). Beyond an increased number of graduate students, studies on graduate student populations are essential because graduate students report higher levels of depression and anxiety than the general population (Evans et al., 2018) and face common stressors in pursuit of degree completion such as role conflict, time constraints, financial pressure, and lack of family or program support (Hudd et al., 2000). Research on graduate students across disciplines has examined the role of the support of advisors (Hyun et al., 2006) and graduate student peers (Boren, 2013) as well as the importance of campus support services (Oswalt & Riddock, 2007), however, less is known about how parenting practices im-

pact graduate students' lives. Given the intergenerational transmission of both family communication climates and depression (Curran et al., 2017), more research is needed exploring connections between parenting and graduate student mental health.

One parenting practice that has significantly impacted emerging adult undergraduate students and captured the attention of communication scholars is helicopter parenting. The current study extends communication research on helicopter parenting to consider if helicopter parenting may be one factor impacting graduate students' mental health. Helicopter parenting occurs when parents are overly involved in their child's life, provide developmentally inappropriate levels of control, remove obstacles in an attempt to set their child up for success, and display excessive problem-solving assistance (Odenweller et al., 2014; Rousseau & Scharf, 2018; Schiffrin et al., 2019; Segrin et al., 2012). Not only have communication scholars developed instruments to measure helicopter parenting (e.g., Odenweller et al., 2014), communication scholars Segrin and colleagues (2013) identified parenting and young adult traits associated with overparenting.

With few exceptions, research suggests helicopter parenting is harmful for emerging adults as it is positively associated with depression and anxiety (Darlow et al., 2017), stress (Segrin et al., 2013), and interpersonal dependency (Odenweller et al., 2014), and it is inversely associated with self-confidence (Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012), self-esteem (Rutherford, 2011), and life satisfaction (Schiffrin et al., 2014). The current study contributes to a growing body of communication scholarship focused on highlighting the potential importance of helicopter parenting and the behaviors that accompany this parenting practice.

There is some evidence from higher education administrators to suggest that the reach of helicopter parenting extends into the lives of graduate students. According to Somers and Settle (2010b) "many parents continue to 'helicopter' even after their students have received bachelor's degrees and either have entered the labor market or have enrolled in graduate or professional school" (p. 4). If, as Somers and Settle (2010b) suggest, parents are engaging in helicopter parenting practices with their graduate student children, then it is important for communication scholars to consider how helicopter parenting impacts graduate students.

The broader question being explored in this study is: How do parenting practices in the family of origin impact graduate stu-

dent mental health? One goal of the current investigation is to examine the roles of maternal and paternal helicopter parenting as predictors of graduate student depression. Two additional goals involve considering graduate student age as a possible moderator and amount of parental financial support as a possible mediator of the relationship between maternal and paternal helicopter parenting and graduate student depression. Key concepts from Family Systems Theory help explain why age and parental financial support may serve as moderating or mediating variables.

## Literature Review

### Graduate Student Stress and Depression

Graduate students experience unique and abundant stressors including high workloads, role conflicts, financial insecurity, advisor-advisee relationship challenges, and uncertain career trajectories (Mackie & Bates, 2019). Perhaps not surprisingly given the stressors graduate students face, Evans and colleagues (2018) found high rates of depression among graduate students when compared with the general population. In fact, estimates suggest graduate students are an astounding six times more likely to be depressed than the general population (Evans, 2018). Despite agreement in academia about challenges graduate students face with mental health and well-being, more empirical research is needed to understand factors that may contribute toward or mitigate these challenges (Sverdlik & Hall, 2020). The current investigation answers Sverdlik and Hall's (2020) call for empirical research by considering the family of origin, or more specifically graduate students' perceptions of helicopter parenting behaviors, as a variable that may impact graduate students' current, self-reported depression.

### Types of Helicopter Parents and the Impact of Helicopter Parenting on Emerging Adults

Somers and Settle (2010a) interviewed undergraduate admissions personnel and used the interview data to produce a typology of helicopter parents. The five types of helicopter parents include fairness advocates (i.e., parents who say they are concerned their child gets fair treatment but in practice want assurances their child will receive sufficient individualized attention from the institution or program), consumer advocates (i.e., parents who want a return on their investment and view higher education in transactional terms), safety patrol (i.e., parents who want to know exactly what steps institutions are doing to prevent their child from

harm), vicarious college student (i.e., parents who missed out on many college experiences and want to experience them with and through their child), and toxic parent (i.e., parents with psychological issues who are controlling and negative and often attempt to live their child's lives while simultaneously one-upping them). While the typology and examples of parent behaviors associated with each type of helicopter parent were designed for parents of undergraduate students, the typology will likely prove useful in extending helicopter parenting research into the lives of graduate students.

Helicopter parenting has been linked to several deleterious child outcomes and one of the most consistent findings is a positive association between helicopter parenting and emerging adults' depression. At least five studies in just over a decade have confirmed this relationship between helicopter parenting and depression for emerging adults (Darlow et al., 2017; LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Moilanen & Manual, 2019; Reilly & Semkovska, 2018; Schiffrin et al., 2014). To demonstrate the complexity of the impact of helicopter parenting, Nelson and colleagues (2015) found associations between helicopter parenting and lower self-worth and higher frequency of risk behaviors only when emerging adults reported low levels of maternal warmth. This finding from Nelson and colleagues (2015) suggests that students' perceptions and interpretations of their parents' helicopter parenting practices may help determine when parents have pushed past the boundaries between parenting and overparenting and students' perceptions may help predict the impact of those parenting behaviors. Each of these studies contains important contributions to scholars' understanding of helicopter parenting but these studies fail to answer the call from Schiffrin and Liss (2017) to consider differences in outcomes of helicopter parenting based on the gender of the parent.

Scholarship on helicopter increasingly separates findings for maternal versus paternal helicopter parenting. In one study looking at helicopter parenting and cell phone use expectations set by parents of undergraduate students, Kelly and colleagues (2017) found differences in parent-child relationship outcomes between mother and fathers. While both maternal and paternal helicopter parenting was associated with higher cell phone conflict (i.e., arguments about cell phone use), mothers were rated higher on helicopter parenting and added additional expectations for cell phone use including rules pertaining to acceptable call times and rules regarding which content may or may not be discussed via

cell phone. In another study examining overparenting, a variable closely related to helicopter parenting, Rosseau and Scharf (2015) found mothers scored higher on overparenting than fathers and father overparenting had a direct effect on less adjustment for young adults. Differential outcomes for maternal and paternal helicopter parenting and overparenting practices in previous research encourages scholars to measure both maternal and paternal helicopter parenting. Given the positive association between helicopter parenting and depression for an emerging adult population (Darlow et al., 2017; LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Moilanen & Manual, 2019; Reilly & Semkovska, 2018) and given the challenges that graduate students face with depression (Evans et al., 2018) combined with a recognition of possible unique contributions from mothers and fathers, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Maternal helicopter parenting is positively associated with graduate student depression.

H2: Paternal helicopter parenting is positively associated with graduate student depression.

## Age and Financial Support as Moderating and Mediating Variables with Morphogensis and Requisite Variety as Explanatory Family Systems Theory Concepts

Understanding the relationship between helicopter parenting and child outcomes necessitates considering possible moderating and mediating variables. In research with undergraduate students, Hesse and colleagues (2018) found parent-child affection moderated the relationships between helicopter parenting and relational closeness. In the current investigation with a graduate student sample, graduate student age is proposed as one variable that may moderate the relationship between helicopter parenting and graduate student depression. In other words, any significant association between helicopter parenting and graduate student depression may differ depending on the age of the graduate student. Younger graduate students may report a stronger association between helicopter parenting and depression as a carryover from the impact of helicopter parenting on depression as an undergraduate student. Conversely, older graduate students who continue to report high levels of helicopter parenting and its association with depression may report a stronger association between those variables than younger graduate students due to a possible cumulative impact of having experienced helicopter parenting practices over a longer period of time within their family system.

The Family Systems Theory concept of morphogenesis offers some insight about why age might moderate the relationship between helicopter parenting and graduate student depression. Morphogenesis explains how families change, evolve, and reorganize themselves over time (Broderick, 1993). Families change from both natural process (e.g., family members aging over time) and significant events in the life of a member of the family (e.g., a member of the family pursuing a graduate education). Age is one meaningful way to indicate morphogenesis within families and the possible moderating impact of age leads to the following questions:

RQ1: Does graduate student age moderate the relationship between maternal helicopter parenting and graduate student depression?

RQ2: Does graduate student age moderate the relationship between paternal helicopter parenting and graduate student depression?

Funding a graduate education requires adequate resources and the financial stress resulting from paying for graduate school is one of the main sources of stress for graduate students (Mackie & Bates, 2019). Hyun and colleagues (2006) demonstrated how confidence in graduate students' ability to fund graduate school on their own is a significant contributor to graduate students' well-being. If the ability to fund graduate school on their own contributes toward graduate students' well-being, then it may follow that reliance on funding from parents may adversely impact graduate students' well-being.

As reliance on parents for financial support increases, that financial support may mediate the relationships between helicopter parenting and graduate student depression. In other words, some of the relationship between helicopter parenting and graduate student depression may be the result of the effect of parental financial support on graduate student depression. The role of parental financial support in possibly mediating the relationship between helicopter parenting and graduate student depression may be explained, in part, by the Family Systems Theory concept requisite variety. Requisite variety is having the necessary range of resources and responses to adequately address demands encountered in the environment (Broderick, 1993). Graduate students who continue to be dependent on their parents financially while simultaneously differentiating themselves in pursuit of an

advanced degree may experience adverse mental health effects. For their part, helicopter parents with sufficient means may be inclined to financially support their graduate student's education and living expenses as they attempt to remove any obstacles that the parents perceive will impede their child's success. Helicopter parents like the consumer advocate described in Somers and Settle's (2010a) typology view paying for or loaning money toward graduate education as a transaction and expect a high return on that investment which could put additional pressure on graduate students. Given financial insecurity is one of the main sources of stress for graduate students and how requisite variety and reliance on parents for financial support may impact graduate student depression, the following questions are posed:

RQ3: Does percentage of parental financial support mediate the relationship between maternal helicopter parenting and graduate student depression?

RQ4: Does percentage of parental financial support mediate the relationship between paternal helicopter parenting and graduate student depression?

## Methods

### Participants

Participants were 367 graduate students recruited using a Qualtrics pool of participants. To participate in the study, graduate students needed to be currently enrolled in a graduate program of study and over 18 years of age. Out of the total participants, two hundred seventeen (59 %) were male, one hundred forty-eight (40 %) were female, and 2 (1 %) were transgender. The average age of participants was 34 years old (*SD* = 8.17) with 72% of the sample falling between the ages of 25 and 40. In terms of ethnic breakdown two hundred sixty-seven (73%) were White, thirty-five (10%) were Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, twenty-nine (8%) were Asian, twenty-seven (7%) were Black or African American, three (1%) were American Indian or Alaska Native, two (less than 1%) were Middle Eastern or North African, and four (1%) selected Other (e.g., biracial or multi-racial). While 80% of the sample (*N* = 297) reported being a committed relationship, for marital status 60% were married, 36% had never been married, 2% were divorced, 1% were separated, and 1% were widowed. Participants were asked to describe the family structure in their household before pursuing their undergraduate degree and 64% reported coming from a two-parent household, 34% reported coming from a single-parent household, and 3%

reported "other" to indicate a different household structure (e.g., a multigenerational household). One-third of the sample reported being an only child. Over half (53%) of the sample was the first person in their family to attend graduate school. Over half (56%) of the sample said their parents were financially supporting their graduate education. Nearly two-thirds of the sample were pursuing master's degrees and the other one-third were pursuing doctoral degrees. For area of study the participants represented 38% S.T.E.M., 24% Business and Management, 17% Health and Medicine, 12% Arts and Humanities, and 9% Social and Behavioral Sciences.

## Procedure and Measures

The study was approved by the relevant Institutional Review Board for the use of Human Subjects. After consenting to participate, students completed the survey measures through Qualtrics. Participants responded to two separate questions asking "Do you have a mother/maternal figure or father/paternal figure in your life that you have an ongoing relationship with?" before completing the helicopter parenting measures for maternal or paternal helicopter parenting. Participants who responded "No" to either question skipped to the next scale on the survey. After demographic questions, the order of the remaining measures was randomized.

**Helicopter Parenting.** Helicopter parenting was measured using Odenweller and colleagues' (2014) 15-item helicopter parenting instrument (HPI) and participants answered the scale for maternal helicopter parenting and paternal helicopter parenting separately (when applicable for a given participant). Sample items include "My father considers himself a good parent when he solves my problems for me," "My mother tries to make all of my major decisions," and "When I am going through a difficult situation, my father always tries to fix it." Participants rated their responses on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 7 (*very strongly agree*) with higher scores indicating more perceived helicopter parenting. When created, the HPI had a Cronbach's alpha of .78 (Odenweller et al., 2014). In our sample, the Cronbach's alpha was .89 for maternal helicopter parenting and .91 for paternal helicopter parenting.

**Depression.** Depression was measured using the PAQ-9 scale (Kroenke et al., 2001) which asks graduate students to self-report their current level of depression. Participants were asked "Over

the last two weeks, roughly what percentage of time have you been bothered by any of the following problems?" Participants selected 0%, 25%, 50%, 75%, or 100%. A sample item from the 9-item scale is "Feeling down, depressed or hopeless." Previous research reported Cronbach's alphas of .89 and .86 for the two samples used in the original validation study (Kroenke et al., 2001) and in the current study, Cronbach's alpha was .94.

**Financial Support.** The amount of support a graduate student received was measured as a percentage. Participants indicated which percentage of their graduate education were being paid by their parents on a scale from 0% to 100%. Given the variability of the cost of graduate education across institutions and degree programs, financial support was measured as a percentage of overall funding rather than a dollar amount.

## Results

### Descriptive Statistics and Preliminary Analyses

Descriptive statistics for study variables including *M* (*SD*) and range appear in Table 1. Correlations between study variables can be found in Table 2. Preliminary analyses were conducted to check the skewness and kurtosis of study variables. Raw scores are used in subsequent analyses for all variables since all variable's skewness < ±1 and all variable's kurtosis < ±2.

**Table 1**. *Descriptive Statistics and Reliabilities for Maternal Helicopter Parenting, Paternal Helicopter Parenting, Depression, and Parental Financial Support*

| Variable | Items | *N* | *M* (*SD*) | Range | Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maternal HP | 15 | 301 | 4.19 (1.17) | 1.33 – 6.53 | .89 |
| Paternal HP | 15 | 245 | 4.04 (1.29) | 1.33 – 6.80 | .91 |
| Depression | 9 | 367 | 2.36 (1.09) | 1.00 – 5.00 | .94 |
| Parental financial support | 1 | 367 | 41.02 (35.09) | 0 – 100 | |

### Hypotheses and Research Questions

Hypotheses 1 and 2 predicted maternal and paternal helicopter parenting would each be positively associated with graduate student depression. Pearson correlations between these study variables revealed statistically significant, positive correlations did exist between these two variables for maternal helicopter parenting, $r(299) = .50$, $p < .001$ and paternal helicopter parenting,

*r*243) = .59, *p* < .001. Consistent with H1 and H2, maternal and paternal helicopter parenting each shared a statistically significant, moderate-sized positive association with graduate student depression.

**Table 2.** *Correlations of Maternal Helicopter Parenting, Paternal Helicopter Parenting, Age, Financial Support, and Depression*

| Variable | Maternal HP | Paternal HP | Age | Financial Support | Depression |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maternal HP | - | | | | |
| Paternal HP | .86** | - | | | |
| Age | .16** | .19** | - | | |
| Financial support | .57** | .64** | -.10 | - | |
| Depression | .50** | .59** | -.03 | .37** | - |

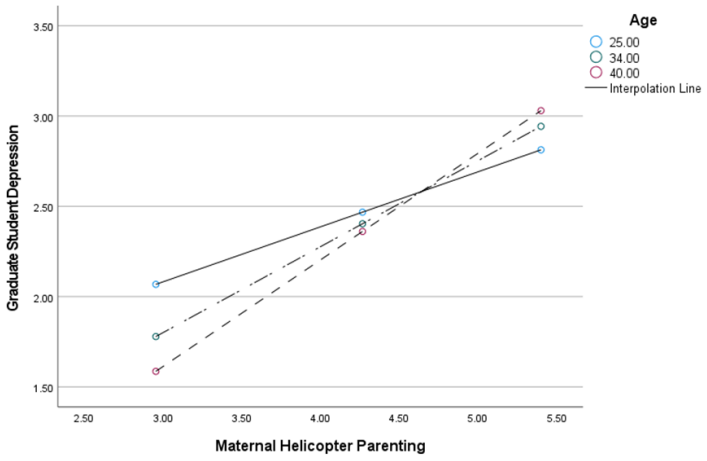
** *p* < .01, 2-tailed.

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to compare males and females on maternal and paternal helicopter parenting. Several options were given for respondents to select their gender identity but with only 2 participants reporting transgender, statistical comparisons are only possible between male and female participants. Results revealed significant differences on maternal and paternal helicopter parenting for male and female participants. For maternal helicopter parenting, $t(297) = 7.57$, $p < .001$, $d = .89$. An examination of the means shows higher scores on maternal helicopter parenting for males ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 1.04$) than females ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.10$). For paternal helicopter parenting, $t(241) = 6.82$, $p < .001$, $d = .90$. An examination of the means shows higher scores on paternal helicopter parenting for males ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 1.21$) than females ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.15$). Given the significant differences between males and females on maternal and paternal helicopter parenting, a follow-up linear regression analysis of maternal and paternal helicopter parenting on depression indicated the overall model was statistically significant, $R^2 = .35$, $F(3,227) = 41.30$, $p < .001$ when maternal and paternal helicopter parenting were entered in Block 1 and participant gender was entered in Block 2. Maternal and paternal helicopter parenting explained 35% of the variance in graduate student depression scores.

To investigate RQ1 and RQ2 simple moderator analyses were performed using Hayes' PROCESS Model (Hayes, 2013). The outcome variable for the analysis was graduate student depression. The predictor variables for the separate analyses were maternal or paternal helicopter parenting. The moderator variable evaluated for the analyses was graduate student age. The interac-

tion between maternal helicopter parenting and graduate student age was found to be statistically significant, $\beta = .02$, 95% C.I. (.01, .03), $p = .005$. The conditional effect of maternal helicopter parenting on graduate student depression showed corresponding results. When age was low, graduate student age = 25 (16th percentile), the conditional effect = .30, 95% C.I. (.14, .47), $p < .001$. At moderate levels of age, graduate student age = 34 (50th percentile), the conditional effect = .48, 95% C.I. (.38, .57), $p < .0001$. When age was high, graduate student age = 40 (84th percentile), the conditional effect = .59, 95% C.I. (.47, .71), $p < .0001$. A visual representation of the moderating effect of graduate student age on the relationship between maternal helicopter parenting and graduate student depression can be found in Figure 1. The interaction between paternal helicopter parenting and graduate student age was not statistically significant, $B = .01$, 95% C.I. (-.004, .02), $p = .21$. These results identify graduate student age as a positive moderator of the relationship between helicopter parenting and graduate student depression for maternal helicopter parenting only.

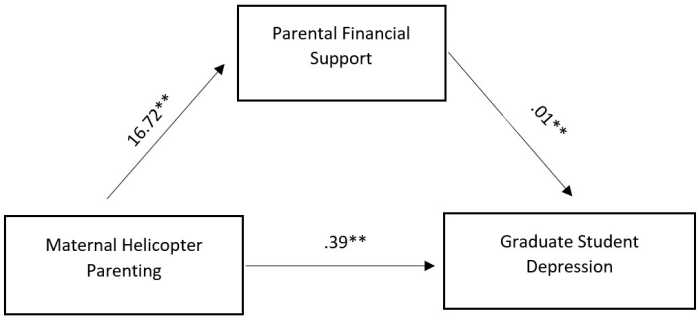
**Figure 1.** *Age as a Moderator of the Relationship Between Maternal Helicopter Parenting and Graduate Student Depression*




To investigate RQ3 and RQ4 simple mediation analyses were performed using PROCESS (Hayes, 2013). The outcome variable for analysis was graduate student depression. The predictor variables for the separate analyses were maternal or paternal helicopter parenting. The mediator variable for the analyses was percentage of parental financial support. Graduate student gender was

included as a covariate. The indirect effect of maternal helicopter parenting on graduate student depression was found to be statistically significant, Effect = .09, 95% C.I. (.02, .17). Figure 2 shows the mediation model with parental financial support as a partial mediator of the relationship between maternal helicopter parenting and graduate student depression with graduate student gender as a covariate. The proportion of the total effect of maternal helicopter parenting on graduate student depression that operates indirectly through percentage of parental financial support is 18.75%. The indirect effect of paternal helicopter parenting on graduate student depression was not statistically significant, Effect = .06, 95% C.I. (-.04, .15).

**Figure 2.** *Parental Financial support as a Partial Mediator of Maternal Helicopter Parenting on Graduate Student Depression with Graduate Student Gender as a Covariate*




** p < .01

## Discussion

Depression is a major concern for graduate student populations who are managing multiple stressors while working toward degree completion. Evans and colleagues (2018) reported 39% of graduate student participants fell within the moderate to severe range for depression. Graduate student mental health needs were well-documented before the Covid-19 pandemic but the pandemic has necessarily brought conversations about how to support students' mental health to the forefront of discussions in higher education. Communication scholars are well-situated to participate in this conversation by considering some of the family communication practices that may contribute toward graduate student depression. In response to H1 and H2, both maternal and paternal helicopter parenting were significantly, positively associated with graduate student depression. When combined in a regression

model, maternal and paternal helicopter parenting explained 34% of the variance in graduate student depression while accounting for graduate student gender.

Given the cross-sectional nature of this study, the findings suggest associations but do not imply helicopter parenting causes depression in graduate students. In fact, it makes sense that if a graduate student is suffering from depression, their parents may be particularly inclined to intervene on their behalf and remove obstacles to success whenever possible. While future studies with a longitudinal design may help determine causality, the positive associations between maternal and helicopter parenting and graduate student depression in this study suggest that the reach of helicopter parenting extends into the lives of graduate students and the relationship between helicopter parenting and depression matches previous research in undergraduate populations (e.g., Reilly & Semkovska, 2018).

Age served as a moderator for maternal but not paternal helicopter parenting's relationship with graduate student depression. Figure 1 demonstrates how graduate student age strengthened the positive relationship between maternal helicopter parenting and graduate student depression suggesting a possible cumulative effect for graduate students who had been experiencing helicopter parenting practices over a longer period of time. This cumulative effect makes sense given morphogenesis in family systems and how families evolve and re-organize themselves over time. The possible cumulative effect of maternal helicopter parenting on child depression must be confirmed by future research and the current investigation's findings suggest the parent-child subsystem should be tracked well into adulthood.

Parental financial support partially mediated the relationship between maternal (but not paternal) helicopter parenting and graduate student depression. The partial mediation effect of parental financial support for maternal helicopter parenting may be explained, in part, by the Family Systems Theory concept of requisite variety (i.e., family systems' needs for sufficient resources and responses to meet environmental demands). Helicopter parents with means may view financially supporting graduate tuition and expenses as a way to remove a barrier to their graduate student's success. Many helicopter parenting behaviors are well-intentioned but contribute toward problematic outcomes. Regarding parental financial support, since graduate students' ability to fund graduate school on their own is a significant contributor to

graduate students' well-being (Hyun et al., 2006), it follows that relying on their parents' financial support would contribute toward graduate student depression.

Schiffrin and Liss (2017) advocate examining the effects of helicopter parenting separately for mothers and fathers. Differential effects for the possible moderating or mediating variable for maternal versus paternal helicopter parenting in the current investigation highlights the importance of considering maternal and paternal helicopter parenting practices separately from one another. The partial mediation effect of parental financial support on maternal helicopter parenting's association with graduate student depression only accounted for about 20% of the total effect suggesting other variables warrant exploration to understand the complete picture of how helicopter parenting impacts graduate student depression.

## Theoretical and Practical Implications

Communication scholars continue to recognize the usefulness of applying a systems framework when trying to understand the complexity of family interaction patterns and dynamics (Yoshimura & Galvin, 2018). Morphogenesis and requisite variety are two Family Systems Theory concepts that helped explain why age and parental financial support moderated or mediated the relationship between maternal helicopter parenting and graduate student depression. The current study built on communication research by Segrin and colleagues (2012, 2013) and considered how the reach of helicopter parenting extends beyond the lives of emerging adults and into the lives of graduate students. Future research on helicopter parenting and graduate students should continue to utilize Family Systems Theory concepts given the many graduate students who have more than one family system they are navigating (i.e., the system from their family of origin and the system from a possible relationship partner or children of their own). Family systems are also impacted by external factors and future research should consider the unique contributions of other graduate student stressors such as the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic or other global health crises, the political climate, the job market, or family violence on graduate student depression.

At the undergraduate level, many institutions intentionally incorporate students' families of origin into aspects of students' college experiences. These parent-family programs stem from a

recognition that families are interdependent systems and that what happens to one member of the family also impacts other members of the family. According to Petree and Savage (2019), there has been a steady increase in college and university's parent -family programs since the 1970's. These programs include parent/family orientation and parent/family weekend as well as special events, websites, newsletters, handbooks, and other resources for undergraduate students' families.

Based on the current investigation's findings, communication scholars should collaborate with higher education administrators so that colleges and universities consider adding events or resources specifically designed to meet the needs of graduate students and graduate students' parents and families. Communication scholars can help craft messages, grounded in theory and research, to support graduate students and their families of origin. In fact, events geared toward the parents and families of graduate students may help address the tendencies of all but one of Somers and Settle's (2010a) types of helicopter parents. Through strategic messaging included in published materials and events, fairness advocates would see what services are available to support their graduate student, consumer advocates would understand the cost of a graduate education, safety patrol parents would see how universities consider the safety of graduate students who may be attending night classes, and vicarious college students would experience the college setting through programs that include families such as a graduate program orientation that includes parents and families. Of course, with the toxic parent type of helicopter parent, graduate students' access to mental health resources are of paramount importance. Colleges and universities need to make sure parents are aware of mental health services available on campus for their graduate students because previous research suggests friends and family members sharing information regarding the treatment process can help reduce uncertainty for individuals needing help (Castonguay et al., 2016).

## Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Two important limitations of this study are the cross-sectional design and the reliance on graduate students' perspectives. Future research utilizing a longitudinal design could unpack how parenting practices may change and produce differential results over the morphogenesis within family systems. This study relied on graduate students' self-reports of perceived maternal and paternal helicopter parenting and while it is often beneficial to capture multi-

ple family member's perspectives, previous research by Schiffrin and colleagues (2014) indicated that experiences of helicopter parenting is an important predictor of undergraduate students' mental health outcomes whether or not those perceptions match parental perceptions of helicopter parenting. Still, given the complexity of family systems, as research on helicopter parenting extends to include graduate students, scholars should extend the research of Segrin and colleagues (2015) and examine reports by both graduate students and their parent(s). Future research should seek to recognize the diversity of family structures and when recruiting from participant pools, researchers can intentionally sample specific types of graduate students to explore possible differential effects.

## Conclusion

Graduate students have higher rates of depression and anxiety when compared with the general population (Evans et al., 2018) and while graduate students may have several potential sources of support, this study considered one feature of the contribution of parents (i.e., helicopter parenting) on graduate students' depression. While age was found to be a moderator and parental financial support was found to be a mediator for the effect of maternal helicopter parenting on graduate student depression, future research should consider other potential moderating and mediating variables. As communication scholars and higher education practitioners continue to find ways to support graduate student mental health, findings from this study suggest looking to the parent-child subsystems and helicopter parenting practices as ongoing influences on graduate students' depression. Making sure parents of graduate students are aware of mental health resources may promote the conveyance of essential information. In other words, perhaps strategic programming from higher education institutions could equip some parents of graduate students to help while they hover.

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***Special Feature:***
***Celebrating Ronald C. Arnett's Contribution to the Discipline***

## Dorothy Day: The Sanctity of a Stumbling Saint

Ronald C. Arnett

*"Dorothy Day has been called many things: an activist, a journalist, a radical, a bohemian, a mother, a convert, a mystic, a prophet, a faithful daughter of the Church. After her death in 1980, historian David O'Brien famously called her 'the most important, interesting, and influential figure in the history of American Catholicism.'"*[1]

*"The saints are living exemplars of Catholic faith and practice throughout history. 'It's better to know the lives of saints,' Peter Maurin would insist, 'than the lives of kings and generals.' He schooled Dorothy in the radical ways that saints had responded to the social ills around them. The crucial point: their engagement in the world was a result of their sanctity, not in spite of it."*[2]

Dorothy Day converted to Catholicism in 1927, founded the Catholic Worker Movement in 1933 with Peter Maurin, and inspired the genesis of 187 Catholic Worker communities in thirty-two states and twelve countries. She promoted nonviolence and accepted absolutely no governmental funds. Her life announces the power of conversion and concern for the outsider. The day after her death on November 29, 1980, the *New York Times* ran the following account of Day's faith-committed life. The essay, written by Alden Whitman and titled "Dorothy Day, Outspoken Catholic Activist, Dies at 83,"[3] provides a wonderful reminder of the importance of Day's contribution to the Church and to the poor. She died in a Catholic settlement house, Maryhouse, which she helped establish in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. She helped found over thirty homes for the homeless and the poor in her lifetime. She and Peter Maurin founded the newsletter *The Catholic Worker*. Whitman states that Day had been sick for a number of years before her death, confined to her room at the end. Day gave her last speech before the Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia on August 6, 1976, shortly before suffering a heart attack. From that point on, she wrote letters and met with people in accordance with her strength in a given moment. When she died, "[s]o many people came to her funeral at Nativity Church in New York City that many had to stand outside on the sidewalk."[4] Whitman concludes with a succinct statement on Day's life, de-

scribing her as a "pious Roman Catholic" who "played a seminal role in developing the social and economic thinking of a generation of American priests and laymen."[5] Day is an exemplar of flaws, turning, and commitment that yield an extraordinary faith and sense of responsibility for God's people. This essay outlines efforts to canonize Day as a saint; her case is in the beginning stages. Day's textured life is that of an everyday saint, continually stumbling toward a communal call to care for God's world.

## Hospitality for the Poor

The Catholic Worker Movement, which Day helped found, began in 1933 and now has 187 Catholic Worker communities "committed to nonviolence, voluntary poverty, prayer, and hospitality for the homeless, exiled, hungry, and forsaken. Catholic Workers continue to protest injustice, war, racism, and violence of all forms."[6] *The Catholic Worker* newspaper is still published in print in New York, with archives available online.[7] Catholic Worker shops ("cottage industries") continue on their mission, including four with online presences: the Appalachian Catholic Worker in Spenser, West Virginia; the Nativity House and farm of Lockport, Illinois; the Holy Family House in midtown Kansas City, Missouri; and the Dorothy Day House in Memphis, Tennessee. In total, there are 160 Catholic Worker communities in the United States and 27 international communities. According to the Catholic Worker Movement's website, all Catholic Workers adopt a simple lifestyle, live in community, assist the poor, and oppose war and injustice. Most of the members embrace the Gospel, incorporate daily prayer, and accept a Catholic faith, with a few houses being interfaith. All the houses are independent, with no unifying headquarters.[8]

Dorothy Day lived a life of synergy and, in the minds of some, contradictions. When it came to labor, politics, and the poor, she clearly leaned far left. When it came to the Catholic Church, she embraced a conservative religious tradition. She was radical in social justice efforts through her commitments to race issues, pacifism, and conscientious objection, while simultaneously supporting traditional liturgy. In her own words, she wanted "to work so as to bring about the kind of society where it is easier for people to be good."[9] Her life within the Catholic Worker Movement embraced the precepts of the Gospel, particularly the Second Commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."[10] Day's commitment, termed by some as "anarchopacifism," involved her pacifism and critical response to bureaucratic struc-

tures.[11] She was a Christian revolutionary situated in the heart of the faith and the Church. Her task was to open the minds of the Church to the trials and the tribulations of the poor, the forgotten, and those who labor with little thanks for their social impact.

The contributions of Day gave rise to priests voicing concern about labor, even affecting the thought of the controversial educator Ivan Illich.[12] Day was a person of faith who supported secular radicalism and the healing power of the faith. Her religious mission opposed class, politics, and communist ideologies while consistently supporting ecclesiastical authority. She both challenged the Church and supported its ongoing mission and importance. Day was a committed Catholic and a cunning Catholic. When asked if she would cease writing if asked to do so by the cardinal, she said of course she would obey, but then she continued, indicating that there are many ways to address and "handle a cardinal."[13] Indeed, she was shrewd and faithful.

**Stumbling into an Extended Family**

Day's family consisted of five children, with Dorothy being the third. Finances were, at times, challenging, affection difficult to acquire, and the environment often agnostic. Her first encounter at a university in 1914 led her to join the Socialist Party at the University of Illinois Urbana. Then, in 1916, she quit school and went to New York, working for *The Call*, a Socialist daily, for seven months. She started an activist education related to labor as she reported on the Industrial Workers of the World (the Wobblies) and, in her spare time, reflected on Tolstoy's nonviolent anarchism. She met numerous people in her career as a journalist and as a player in socialist politics, including Leon Trotsky (1879 –1940). In 1917, she met Mike Gold, a leading communist who wrote the semi-autobiographical novel *Jews Without Money* (1930). Gold and Day "became lovers for several years."[14] In addition to *The Call*, Day worked for *The Masses* for a few months in 1916 and briefly for *The Liberator*, a successor of *The Masses*, in 1917. In addition to her relationship with Gold, Day had a common-law marriage with Forster Batterham, leading to the birth of a daughter, Tamar Teresa, in 1927. Tamar's birth further nourished Day's desire to join the Church, an urge that first sprouted when she was quite young.

Day expressed her critical love for the Church in her *Commonweal* writings on behalf of the poor. Through the editor of that Catholic periodical, she met Peter Maurin in December of 1932.

They started the newspaper *The Catholic Worker* in 1933. They were known for a commitment to the poor, an understanding of social order that was not only cooperative but decentralized, and agitation against war, all while being forever embedded within the heart of the Catholic Church. In March of 1972, Day became the recipient of Notre Dame's Lastare Medal, the University's highest honor. "[T]he citation praised her for 'comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable'" throughout her whole life.[15] At the time of Day's death at the age of eighty-three, reaction to her work continued in dialectical fashion, recognizing her contribution and continuing to question her common-law relationship and the birth of her daughter outside of marriage. Day represents, perhaps, the expected controversy of an everyday saint.

It is the stumbling nature of Day's committed life that moves her into the realm of an everyday saint with exceptional character. Day's life gives testimony to a human saint moving and, at times, running through an existential fog that limited her vision without ever dampening her conviction and faith. She found meaning in communal life with and for the poor, situated within faith and a life driven by "tenacious hope."[16] Day had, in the judgment of many, the makings of a saint. She was an exemplar of stumbling acts of faith toward grace.

**Discernment toward Canonization**

Before discussing the campaign for the canonization of Day, I turn to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) statement on saints, which announces the process for making decisions about sainthood. The USCCB begins its statement with the assertion that "[a]ll Christians are called to be saints."[17] Saints include all persons in heaven, whether or not officially canonized by the Church. The history of canonization is one of increased collective scrutiny and engagement related to an individual candidate. In the first five centuries of the Church, the primary criterion was *vox populi, vox Dei* ("voice of the people, voice of God"), and there were no formal processes or standards.[18] By the sixth century through the twelfth century, a first step in formalization occurred with the involvement of a local bishop. In the twelfth century, in addition to the engagement of the local bishop, the person's reputation needed to expand within the region. Now, in this historical moment, the bishop collects eyewitness testimonies about the person and reports of witnessed miracles and provides a summary case for the approval of the

pope.[19] The involvement of the pope is not new, but the participation of the pope has become increasingly central to the formalized process. Interestingly, the Church has no "precise count . . . of those who have been proclaimed saints."[20]

The official process of canonization, often initiated by the bishop of the candidate's diocese, cannot occur until at least five years after the candidate's death, unless permitted by the pope. The process includes four potentially sequential titles of "Servant of God," "Venerable," "Blessed," and "Saint." The Congregation for the Causes of Saints,[21] a department created by Pope Sixtus V[22] in 1588 and most recently renamed by Pope John Paul II[23] in 1983, assists in official investigation. First, when the initial request to open a cause for sainthood meets with approval, the Congregation grants the name "Servant of God." Second, a candidate judged to have led a heroic and virtuous life gains formal recognition by the pope as "Venerable." Third, unless bypassed by the pope in the case of a martyr, the acknowledgement of a miracle through intercessory prayers of the candidate makes for beatification of the candidate as "Blessed." The Congregation must determine whether a miracle represents the grace of God or is better explained scientifically. Finally, an additional miracle is necessary after beatification, which cannot be waived by the pope, before canonization. Upon canonization, a person is a "Saint" and receives universal veneration—recognition by the whole Catholic Church, not just local parishes or groups who seek to uphold the holiness of a given person.

In summary and specific to Day, whose cause for sainthood officially opened in 2000, she is currently a Servant of God. Her candidacy includes evaluation of "the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, and the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude, and others specific to . . . her state in life."[24] Moving to beatification will require verification of a miracle. Canonization will involve verification of a second miracle and the blessing of the pope. Then, Day would officially become a saint. According to Barro, McCleary, and McQuoid, the average length of time between death and canonization since 1588 has been 181 years![25]

## The Campaign for Day

The first mention of canonizing Day came in a 1983 essay entitled "Let's Canonize Dorothy Day," written by Father Henry Fehren, a former columnist for *U.S. Catholic* magazine and au-

thor of many Catholic books.[26] Fehren begins with his reminiscing that in 1939, as a college sophomore, he spent a week at the Catholic Worker House of Hospitality in Minneapolis. He first formally met Day in 1949 after arriving in New York for the funeral of Peter Maurin. He reminisces, "The sight of her sitting in prayer in the dim light before Peter's coffin late at night is a picture I can never forget."[27] He visited her frequently after that, including shortly before her death in November of 1980. Once she had even been a guest at his parish. He simply viewed her as a contemporary saint.

Fehren states that what impressed him about Day was her ongoing commitments to justice and faith and her unwillingness to embrace cynicism. Those who worked with her considered her a saint. Augustine stated that funerals are for the living, not the dead,[28] and canonization is also more for the living than the dead. Day was a saint for the twentieth century. She did not ask to perform works of mercy, and, as she published *The Catholic Worker*, she "never submitted the text to the chancery office for censorship."[29] She did not found a religious order. However, her work was consistently based on the teachings of the Church and the Gospels. Her positions did not generate universal support; for example, her opposition to military conscription during World War II dramatically decreased interest in the Catholic Worker Movement and her popularity. She functioned as a patron for those in opposition to the Vietnam War.

Rightly or not, saints often generate a vision of an entity that is far from human. What makes Day so special is that she was a saint who was clearly human. Sometimes it has taken over 100 years for Rome to declare someone a saint. Other times it occurs quite quickly. The difficulty for Day is that there is no religious order to promote her canonization. The suggestion has come from her organization and her followers within the Catholic Worker Movement, a group with limited money to propel such a campaign. Fehren states that on "January 25[, 1983,] Pope John Paul II issued an apostolic constitution, followed by two documents on February 7, which allows laypeople to promote canonizations."[30] The decision of the pope made consideration of lay leaders, such as Day, more likely.

Four years later, in 1997, Cardinal John O'Connor (1920–2000), while serving as archbishop in New York (1984–2000), stated in a homily that the Basilica of St. John Lateran went through a series of challenges in the fifth century, being attacked by vandals,

an earthquake, and a fire. However, after repairs, rebuilding, and renovations, it is now called the "Mother Church of the world in Christendom."[32] He stated that Day represents a "living basilica." The struggles of her life simply illuminated her faith with greater clarity and sacredness, for the temple of God and the Spirit of God dwell in people, particularly in those such as Day:

> Are you not aware that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple [she would say to us who are unjust, who are vile toward others, who are corrupt who rob, steal, cheat the poor, most particularly] God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, and you are that temple. [1 Cor. 3:16–17][33]

Cardinal O'Connor contended that Day engaged in loving criticism of a world increasingly becoming a large, commercial marketplace. She fought for the poor and the dispossessed.

Cardinal O'Connor provided insights into Day via letters that he received supporting her case for canonization. He reiterated that Day was often seen working in soup kitchens and known as a woman who "dressed funny."[34] Additionally, one person who had grown up on Mott Street, where Day established a House of Hospitality in 1936, called her the "Mother Teresa of Mott Street."[35] Robert Coles, one of Day's biographers, wrote a letter to Cardinal O'Connor referencing a time when Day sent him daily postcards with a powerful message for his wife, who was diagnosed with a terminal brain tumor; Coles said Day was the only person who "didn't tell [him his] wife was going to die in six months." His wife continued to live for years, with a doctor referring to the case as a "miraculous recovery." Cardinal O'Connor argued:

> I wish every woman who has ever suffered an abortion [including perhaps someone or several in this church] would come to know Dorothy Day. Her story was so typical. Made pregnant by a man who insisted she have an abortion, who then abandoned her anyway, she suffered terribly for what she had done, and later pleaded with others not to do the same. But later, too, after becoming a Catholic, she learned the love and mercy of the Lord, and knew she never had to worry about His forgiveness. [This is why I have never condemned a woman who has had an abortion; I weep with her and ask her to remember Dorothy Day's sorrow but to know always God's

loving mercy and forgiveness.][36]

Day was an everyday saint who represented not only the poor, but also those of which others took advantage. Cardinal O'Connor reviewed Mother Teresa of Calcutta's letter to Day in support of her work that offered sanctuary for the needy. Cardinal O'Connor concluded with acknowledgement that he never met Day personally and wished he had. He stated that Day lived with the love of God and her neighbors. He then prayed for her canonization, emphasizing her actions as a worthy example for all.

The *New York Times* carried a commentary on Cardinal O'Connor's homily, restating the gathering of people at the centennial of her birth and his call for her sainthood.[37] Only four Americans had canonization at that time in the twentieth century,[38] and the only saint actually born in the United States was Elizabeth Ann Seton.[39] Cardinal O'Connor had submitted a name for canonization only one other time, that of his predecessor, Cardinal Terence Cooke.[40] The article in the *New York Times* reminds readers that the process of canonization is often slow, moving from bishop to Rome, finding the necessary virtues in the person to be considered "Venerable," finding a provable miracle after the person's death to be deemed "Blessed," and recognizing a second miracle that achieves "Sainthood." Cardinal O'Connor's reference to Day as the "Mother Teresa of Mott Street" was a featured phrase in the *New York Times* essay.[41]

The article discusses Day's circle of friends, including Eugene O'Neill, the fact that she drank and caroused at Greenwich Village, and that she had an abortion demanded by a lover.[42] She also had a child out of wedlock, Tamar. Yet, after meeting Peter Maurin in her thirties, she co-founded the Catholic Worker Movement. The uniqueness of Day was her conservative theology and radical politics that supported antiwar protests, poverty campaigns, and refusals to pay federal income taxes. She set up Houses of Hospitality, opposed the draft, and resisted both a popular war—World War II—and an unpopular one—the Vietnam War. She even supported a strike by Catholic cemetery workers.

The *New York Times* essay states that Robert Ellsberg, the managing editor of *The Catholic Worker* during the last five years of Day's life, was cheered by the cardinal's message. Kenneth L. Woodward, the religion editor at *Newsweek* and the author of *Making Saints: How the Catholic Church Determines Who Becomes A Saint, Who Doesn't, And Why* (1996), questioned why it

took a cardinal so long to go public about support of Day. Others called Woodward's comments foolish, arguing that the cardinal appropriately attended to rising awareness of Day's remarkable life coming from the people. The potential canonization of Day continues to be controversial, with some viewing her as a living saint and others opposing due to her radical politics and protests. In contrast to skeptics, Cardinal O'Connor supported Day: she represents footsteps worthy of following.

Cardinal O'Connor publicly took up the mantle of Day's case once more in *Catholic New York*.[43] His piece, "Dorothy Day's Sainthood Cause Begins," was published March 16, 2000, with his death occurring a month and a half later on May 3. Cardinal O'Connor announced to the world that the Cause for the Beatification and Canonization of Dorothy Day had been officially opened. On February 7, 2000, he sent a letter to the Holy See, with John Paul II as pope, asking for the initiation of this process. As a result of the pope's approval of that letter, Day became a "Servant of God."

The article presents Cardinal O'Connor's letter, which the following summarizes. With his appointment as Archbishop of New York, he took on the task of initiating consideration of Day's canonization. He recognized the difficult task before those in favor of such a decision, with even Day famously stating, "Don't trivialize me by trying to make me a saint."[44] Cardinal O'Connor understood the "damning" nature of such words from Day on the process of canonization. He took a different position, indicating her incredible humility about her own faith and living of the Gospel and her opposition to violence. Clearly, Day was not a "gingerbread" or "holy card" saint; she was a worker and a laborer on behalf of God and the poor. Cardinal O'Connor alluded to Day's early life, her pre-converted life, as akin to that of Augustine; both Day and Augustine reflected the extraordinary power of conversion. Cardinal O'Connor contended that, after her conversion, Day walked away from anarchists, socialists, and communists and, in her imitation of Christ, never violated others, even when she was in stern opposition.

Cardinal O'Connor suggested that Day was an idealist in a non-ideal world. Her writing and life actually anticipated the teaching of Pope John Paul II.[45] Cardinal O'Connor acknowledged that Day's influence continues to inspire, exemplified by the collection of her papers and works at Marquette University.[46] He stated that Day's holiness emerged in action, recognized by both Catho-

lics and non-Catholics alike. He reported his examination of all her post-conversion works, announcing her fidelity to the Church. Finally, Cardinal O'Connor confirmed that as archbishop he had made the case for Day's canonization to the Holy See with full recognition that the official gesture had considerable grassroots energy and support. He concluded his article with admission that there was much work to do in advancing the cause of Day's canonization, including the establishment of "a Dorothy Day Guild to propagate her life and works."[47] The Dorothy Day Guild was created in 2005.[48]

Five months after Day's case opened in 2000, Rose Marie Berger wrote an essay in a July/August issue of *Sojourners* entitled "'Don't Call Me a Saint!'"[49] The subtitle is interesting: "Can we canonize Dorothy Day and serve the poor too?" The article begins with the fact that the Vatican had already declared Day a "Servant of God" in March of that year, marking the beginning of her cause for canonization. At that time, traditionalists had argued against Day. They refused to affirm a woman who had an abortion and a common-law husband and someone known for working with communists. Those opposed to Day asserted that she makes a "poor model for a righteous Christian life."[50] The irony of the phrase "poor model" is interesting if one reverses the emphasis on the words to "model for the poor"; indeed, Day was and is a model of advocacy for the poor. The second half of Berger's essay centers on Day's famous quote, "Don't call me a saint." Day understood that a halo was not part of her job description.

Berger underscores the high cost of proving miracles and making cases for a saint. For example, the canonization of Elizabeth Ann Seton in 1975, according to Kenneth Woodward's *Making Saints*, cost $250,000.[51] Additionally, "[t]he canonization of Father Jean Martin Moye, a founder of five religious orders beatified in 1954, was stopped by his petitioners because they felt the cost was not in accord with their mission to educate poor children."[52] Berger continued to underscore that the cost of canonization was problematic for the advancement of Day's case. Berger wonders whether serving the poor and canonization of Day might actually be in opposition. Berger's article challenges the large sums of money spent on advocating Day's case.

Day is not a typical candidate for sainthood. She was not "a virgin, martyr, or nun," but someone involved in radical politics as a Catholic.[53] Berger specifies, "I would like to live long enough to

be in Rome the day she's formally added to the roll call of saints." Other passages in the essay reflect cynicism, wondering if a flawed process and person could ever result in canonization. However, the flawed nature of the candidate herself and the fact that the world desperately needs public recognition of grace found outside the realm of perfection energize her candidacy. Day is the performative saint of the flawed, exemplifying the presence of God in a world dwelling in moral fallibility.

In 2000, Pope John Paul II officially opened Day's cause in response to Cardinal O'Connor's request, but twelve years later, in November of 2012, the case needed renewed support. The Archbishop of New York at the time, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, met with the United States Bishops, who then urged the pope to continue the process. The Dorothy Day Guild noted, "Unanimously, [the bishops] upheld sainthood for Day, who related the Sermon on the Mount to everything she undertook and did."[54]

Progress made in Day's cause was related in an article featured in *America: The Jesuit Review* in 2016, "Next Step in Dorothy Day Canonization Process Initiated in New York."[55] Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York since 2009, continued the work of Cardinal O'Connor after his death.[56] Cardinal Dolan stressed the heroic virtues and life of Day. He stated that Pope Francis and the Congregation for the Causes of Saints would determine whether Day could be elevated from "Servant of God" to "Venerable." The Congregation began interviewing eyewitnesses, fifty in all. Memories reached back to the 1940s. Cardinal Dolan appointed an historical commission to examine all of Day's published works as well as to interview multiple people on the matter of her contributions. The Archdiocese of New York went to the homes of those too frail to travel and assisted with airfare and lodging where needed.

Sharon Otterman reflected on Cardinal Dolan's advocacy of Day in a piece in the *New York Times* titled, "In Hero of the Catholic Left, a Conservative Cardinal Sees a Saint."[57] Cardinal Dolan reenergized Day's candidacy by recommending Day to the United States bishops for continuing her cause for canonization. Otterman notes that Cardinal Dolan represents a visible symbol of the movement of the Catholic Church to the right through his expressed concern about Barack Obama's presidential policies that intruded into the life of the Church. In Otterman's portrayal, Day acts as a bridge between the left and the right with her radical politics and her deep commitment to the Church. Day had sup-

port in religious circles from both groups, at least at the level of United States bishops. Yet, at Day's funeral, there were no Catholic bishops present except Cardinal Cooke, the predecessor to Cardinal O'Connor, who blessed Day's body upon its arrival for the funeral Mass. According to *The Nation*, "There were more than 800 old friends of Day and many from the Catholic Worker Movement who attended. As the procession rounded the corner from Maryhouse and went on to the sidewalk leading to the church, the scarlet vestments of the Cardinal [Cooke] came into view."[58] The final paragraph of Otterman's essay refers to volunteers discussing the importance of Day at St. Joseph's House in New York. On the wall of the simple dining hall were pictures hand-drawn by Day, a portrait of Rev. Dr. Martin King, Jr., and a crucifix. One of the workers, who had lived there for years, a quarter century, put the feelings of many quite succinctly: "None of us really have any doubt that she was a saint."[59] This assessment is held by many but not affirmed by all.

## Controversy

The controversy surrounding the process of Day's canonization continues between detractors of Day and her radical politics and those who supported her ongoing commitment to the poor. An essay from *Catholic San Francisco* indicates that some of the cynicism came from followers of Day.[60] After the United States Bishops supported the process of her canonization on November 13, 2012, skepticism within the Catholic Worker Movement itself emerged, with one person stating that Day would not seek canonization. One of the major concerns was that canonization would "sanitize" her life rather than permit her textured struggles to be increasingly visible and instructive for others. Day's opposition to war continues to fuel controversy.[61] The Catholic Worker Movement's anti-war stance coming shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor met with challenge, and the organization's position on nonviolence heightened its visibility during the Vietnam War. Day's position on war was and is problematic for numerous conservative voices within the Church. Yet the conservative Cardinal Dolan has continued the Catholic Church's commitment to Day's cause for sainthood, stressing her commitment to dignity and justice for all people. Cardinal Dolan has stated that her life was one of conversion akin to Saul becoming Paul on the road to Damascus.

The article in *Catholic San Francisco* provides a succinct summary of Day's contribution and what continues to generate con-

troversy for some related to her canonization consideration: an abortion, a common-law marriage, a child outside of marriage, close ties to communist anarchists, and frequent imprisonments in acts of civil disobedience. Reminders of these societal "flaws" obscure Day's founding of *The Catholic Worker* newspaper, her commitments to peace, her efforts to address poverty, her care for both the work and the worker, and, of course, her building of real places of hope, which "took concrete form with Catholic Worker hospitality houses and farming communes."[62] Day's convictions were extraordinary. The last time she went to prison, she was demonstrating with farmworkers at the age of seventy-five. She protested, attended daily Mass, fasted for peace, and was one of two Americans chosen to receive the Eucharist from Pope Paul VI during an International Congress of the Laity in 1967. She was controversial during her life and now in the process of canonization consideration.

An editor of Orbis Books, Robert Ellsberg,[63] supported Cardinal O'Connor's initial proposal for Day's sainthood. He argued that Day exemplifies the radical message of Jesus. Yet some Catholic Workers have claimed that canonization would "hijack" her life and her project for the poor.[64] Ellsberg's case for Day's canonization emphasized both a public need for such recognition and the fact that her entire project was life-affirming for the poor and the marginalized. Day was an icon for the Church; Day's flaws make her story even more powerful. Anything that ignores the complexity and texture of her life obscures her commitment to God's world.

A 2020 essay in the *New York Times* under the title "Was Dorothy Day a Saint or a Subversive?" recapitulates, perhaps, the debate on her canonization.[65] The Vatican examination of the question of whether or not heroic virtue of Day qualifies her for sainthood is underway. Day's radicalism challenged the Enlightenment focus on individualism while announcing a different way of being a loyal citizen and a Christian with devout commitments. Day embraced the radicalism of both St. Francis and Jesus. She called into question American ideals that seem ignorant and/or unreflective of the importance of ongoing concern for the poor.

Day's life witnessed multiple wars, a Great Depression, and increasing disparity between the rich and the poor. One might wonder whether her era was one in which the West was losing its direction, which contrasts with assertions that the twentieth century was the American century.[66] Losing direction does not indicate

that all is lost; for Day, it announced the necessity of reclamation. Day's consideration for canonization reminds onlookers of G. K. Chesterton's wisdom: "The point is not that this world is too sad to love or too glad not to love; the point is that when you do love a thing, its gladness is a reason for loving it, and its sadness a reason for loving it more."[67] Indeed, there are few who exemplify the act of reclamation with greater clarity than Day. She is a symbol of hope for a course of action that remains obscured and eclipsed, but never lost. The determination of an everyday saint makes directions that go unseen and unimagined possible, offering pathways of hope for others to follow.

## Endnotes

1. "Home," *The Dorothy Day Guild*, 2021, http://dorothydayguild.org/.
2. "Saints in the Catholic Tradition," *The Dorothy Day Guild*, 2021, http://dorothydayguild.org/the-cause/saints-in-the-catholic-tradition/. Accessed July 2, 2021.
3. Alden Whitman, "Dorothy Day, Outspoken Catholic Activist, Dies at 83," *The New York Times*, November 30, 1980, 45.
4. James Allaire and Rosemary Broughton, "An Introduction to the Life and Spirituality of Dorothy Day," *The Catholic Worker Movement,* 2021, https://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday/life-and-spirituality.html. Accessed July 2, 2021.
5. Whitman, "Dorothy Day," 45.
6. "The Catholic Worker Movement," https://www.catholicworker.org/. Accessed July 13, 2021.
7. See "Links to Catholic Worker Archive Websites," https://www.catholicworker.org/about/archives.html. Accessed July 14, 2021.
8. "Directory of Catholic Worker Communities," https://www.catholicworker.org/communities/directory-picker.html. Accessed July 13, 2021.
9. Whitman, "Dorothy Day," 45.
10. See Fr. Clarence Duffy, "Schools for Heroes," *The Catholic Worker* 12, no. 9 (November 1945): 3.
11. Whitman, "Dorothy Day," 45.
12. Ivan Illich (1926–2002) was an "Austrian philosopher and Roman Catholic priest known for his radical polemics arguing that the benefits of many modern technologies and social arrangements were illusory and that, still further, such developments undermined humans' self-sufficiency, freedom, and dignity." See Aaron Cooley, "Ivan Illich," *Encyclopedia Bri-*

*tannica*, November 28, 2020, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ivan-Illich. Accessed June 24, 2021.

13. Whitman, "Dorothy Day," 45.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. For discussion of tenacious hope, see Ronald C. Arnett, *Communication Ethics and Tenacious Hope: Contemporary Implications of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2022).
17. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), "Saints," February 25, 2020, https://www.usccb.org/offices/public-affairs/saints. Accessed July 2, 2021.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid. The first documented case of papal intervention came from Pope John XV on January 31, 993. This involved canonization of Saint Ulric.
20. Ibid.
21. The USCCB describes several stages and roles involved in the process of canonization. The *positio* is a comprehensive summary of the documentation of the candidate's life and the canonization process. The *postulator* assumes appointment of responsibility of overseeing the case and its process. The *prefect*, usually a cardinal, serves as the head of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, presenting the results of the case to the pope, who authorizes the Congregation to draft a decree moving the candidate to the next phase. The *relator* compiles documentation on the person with the designation of "Servant of God," meaning that canonization is under consideration.
22. Pope Sixtus V (1520–1590) was born Felice Peretti di Montalto and served as pope from 1585 to 1590. See Michael Ott, "Pope Sixtus V," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912), https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14033a.htm. Accessed June 29, 2021.
23. Pope John Paul II (1920–2005) was born Karol J. Wojtyła and served as pope between 1978 and 2005. He was canonized as a saint on April 27, 2014, by Pope Francis, and his feast day is celebrated on October 22. He is the co-patron saint of World Youth Day. Pope John Paul II transformed Christianity in the West in the twentieth century. See "St. Pope John Paul II," *Catholic Online*, https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=6996. Accessed June 29, 2021.
24. USCCB, "Saints."

25. Robert J. Barro, Rachel M. McCleary, and Alexander McQuoid, "The Economics of Sainthood (A Preliminary Investigation)," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Economics of Religion*, ed. Rachel M. McCleary (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 194.
26. Henry Fehren, "Let's Canonize Dorothy Day," *U.S. Catholic*, September 1, 1983, https://uscatholic.org/articles/198309/lets-canonize-dorothy-day/. Accessed July 2, 2021.
27. Ibid.
28. See Saint Augustine, "The Care to Be Taken for the Dead," trans. John A. Lacy, in *Treatises on Marriage and Other Subjects (The Fathers of the Church, Volume 27)*, ed. Roy J. Deferrari (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1999), 349–384.
29. Fehren, "Let's Canonize Dorothy Day."
30. Ibid. The documents referenced by Fehren include: John Paul II, "*Divinus Perfectionis Magister*," The Holy See, January 25, 1983, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_25011983_divinus-perfectionis-magister.html; The Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints, "Norms: To Be Observed in Inquiries Made by Bishops in the Causes of Saints," The Holy See, February 7, 1983, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/csaints/documents/rc_con_csaints_doc_07021983_norme_en.html. Accessed July 15, 2021; The Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints, "On the Causes of the Servants of God Whose Judgment Is Presently Pending at the Sacred Congregation," The Holy See, February 7, 1983, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/csaints/documents/rc_con_csaints_doc_07021983_norme_en.html. Accessed July 15, 2021.
31. Cardinal John O'Connor, "On the Idea of Sainthood and Dorothy Day," *The Catholic Worker Movement*, https://www.catholicworker.org/pages/o'connor-sainthood-homily.html. Accessed July 2, 2021. This is "Text of Cardinal O'Connor's homily at Sunday Mass in St. Patrick's Cathedral November 9, 1997. Reprinted with permission from *Catholic New York*, November 13, pp. 13–14."
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid. The bracketed insertion is made by Cardinal O'Connor himself.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid. See Dorothy Day, "House of Hospitality," *The Catholic Worker* (May 1939): 1, 3, 4.

36. Ibid.
37. David M. Halbfinger, "O'Connor Says He'll Work to Propose Sainthood for Dorothy Day, Servant of the Poor," *The New York Times*, November 10, 1997, https://www.nytimes.com/1997/11/10/nyregion/o-connor-says-he-ll-work-propose-sainthood-for-dorothy-day-servant-poor.html. Accessed July 2, 2021.
38. The *New York Times* notes that there were only three American saints at the time, but Catholic records indicate that there were four. The list of American saints (with years of canonization) includes Frances Xavier Cabrini (1946, first U.S. citizen), Elizabeth Ann Seton (1975, first *born* U.S. citizen), John Neumann (1977), Rose Philippine Duchesne (1988), Katharine Drexel (2000), Théodore Guérin (2015), Damien de Veuster (2009), Marianne Cope (2012), Kateri Tekakwitha (2012), and Junípero Serra (2015). As of 2021, those beatified include Michael J. McGivney, Francis Xavier Seelos, Teresa Demjanovich, Stanley Rother, Solanus Casey, and James Miller. There are also 18 Venerables and 27 Servants of God.
39. Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton (1774–1821) was a wife and mother, widowed at the age of 29. She later become a nun, founding the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph's, the first community for religious women in the United States. She also began St. Joseph's Academy and Free School, supporting Catholic education in the U.S. She was canonized in 1975 by Pope Paul VI, and her feast day is celebrated January 4. See "Mother Seton," *Seton Shrine*, 2021, https://setonshrine.org/elizabeth-ann-seton/. Accessed June 29, 2021.
40. Cardinal Terence Cooke (1921–1983), now Servant of God, was Archbishop of New York from 1968 until 1982. He also affirmed the life of Dorothy Day. As noted in *The Catholic Worker*, Cardinal Cooke celebrated a memorial Mass for Dorothy Day on January 26, 1981, leading the congregation in one of Day's favorite hymns, *Salve Regina*. See Eileen Egan, "Cardinal Cooke," *The Catholic Worker* 50, no. 7 (October 1983): 3.
41. Halbfinger, "O'Connor Says."
42. Ibid.
43. Cardinal John O'Connor, "Dorothy Day's Sainthood Cause Begins," *Catholic New York*, March 16, 2000, https://www.cny.org/stories/dorothy-days-sainthood-cause-begins,1784?content_source=&category_id=&search_filter=&event_mode=&

event_ts_from=&list_type=&order_by=&order_sort=&content_class=&sub_type=stories&town_id=. Accessed July 2, 2021.

44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. "The Marquette University Archives began to acquire the records of the Catholic Worker movement in 1962. The collection now comprises more than 200 cubic feet, including the personal papers of Dorothy Day, Peter Maurin, and others involved in the movement; records of past and present Catholic Worker communities; photographs; audio and video recordings of interviews, talks, television programs, and peace demonstrations; and a wide variety of publications. Although access to materials of a confidential nature has been restricted at the donors' request, most records are open to research use." See "Dorothy Day–Catholic Worker Collection," https://www.marquette.edu/library/archives/day.php. Accessed June 29, 2021.
47. O'Connor, "Day's Sainthood Cause."
48. See "The Dorothy Day Guild," http://dorothydayguild.org/the-cause/process-of-canonization/. Accessed June 29, 2021.
49. Rose Marie Berger, "'Don't Call Me a Saint!'" *Sojourners* 29, no. 4 (July/August 2000): 13.
50. Ibid.
51. Kenneth Woodward, *Making Saints: How the Catholic Church Determines Who Becomes a Saint, Who Doesn't, and Why* (1990; repr., New York: Touchstone, 1996), 111.
52. Berger, "'Don't Call Me a Saint!'"
53. Ibid.
54. "Home." See n. 1.
55. "Next Step in Dorothy Day Canonization Process Initiated in New York," *America: The Jesuit Review*, April 20, 2016, https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/next-steps-begin-dorothy-day-canonization. Accessed July 14, 2021.
56. For clarification of history: Cardinal O'Connor initiated Day's case before his death in 2000. Cardinal Edward Egan was then Archbishop of New York between 2000 and 2009 and does not seem to have participated in Day's cause. Cardinal Timothy Dolan became Archbishop in 2009, picking up the threads of Day's cause.
57. Sharon Otterman, "In Hero of the Catholic Left, a Conservative Cardinal Sees a Saint," *The New York Times*, November 26, 2012, https://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/27/nyregion/sainthood-for-dorothy-day-has-unexpected-champion-in-cardinal-timothy-dolan.html. Accessed July 2, 2021.

58. Colman McCarthy, "The Outsider," *The Nation*, December 10, 2005, https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/outsider-0/. Accessed July 14, 2021.
59. Otterman, "In Hero of the Catholic Left."
60. Valerie Schmalz, "Some Followers Question Day," *Catholic San Francisco* 14, no. 32 (December 5, 2012): 1, 13.
61. Ibid., 1.
62. Ibid., 13. According to Schmalz, "Today Catholic Worker houses number about 200 and the Catholic Worker newspaper still sells for a penny."
63. Books edited by Robert Ellsberg include Dorothy Day, *On Pilgrimage: The Sixties*, ed. Robert Ellsberg (1948; repr., Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2021); *Dorothy Day: Selected Writings: By Little and by Little*, ed. Robert Ellsberg (1983; repr., Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2001); and *All the Way to Heaven: The Selected Letters of Dorothy Day*, ed. Robert Ellsberg (New York: Image Books, 2010).
64. Schmalz, "Some Followers," 13.
65. Karen Armstrong, "Was Dorothy Day a Saint or a Subversive?" *The New York Times*, March 3, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/books/review/dorothy-day-john-loughery-blythe-randolph.html. Accessed July 2, 2021.
66. See Henry R. Luce, "The American Century," *Diplomatic History* 23, no. 2 (1999): 159–71.
67. G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (1908; repr., Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2004), 59.

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