

**4th Conference on Emerging Adulthood**  
Atlanta, GA – October 29-30, 2009  
**Paper Symposia**

**New Measures for Examining Emerging Adult Body Image, Sexuality, Romantic Relationships, and Gender Norms**

CHAIR: Jerel P. Calzo

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

**(1) CALZO, Jerel, & WARD, L. Monique**

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

**Developing a Measure of Self-Perceived Dating and Sexual Market Value**

Among the correlates of emerging adult dating and sexual behavior, one factor that is often referred to, but seldom assessed is *market value* (MV, i.e., how an individual compares to same-gender peers in the competition for desired mates). This study attempts to develop and validate a measure of self-perceived MV for use in survey research. Using data on college students' ratings of traits they possess and desire in dating partners, factor analyses reveal that MV may consist of three dimensions (physical attractiveness, personality, and sex appeal). Preliminary analyses reveal that high values on the different MV dimensions, particularly sex appeal, are associated with greater sexual behavior, dating experience, and hook up experience.

**(2) WALSH, Jennifer**

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

**Creating a Comprehensive Measure of Perceptions of Peer Sexual Norms**

A new, comprehensive measure of perceptions of peer norms including behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, and desires was tested on 250 college students (52% female, Mage = 18.8). The measure was analyzed using factor analysis, with five factors for male norms and three factors for female norms emerging. Categories of perceived norms for male peers included traditional masculinity, sensitivity and safety, extreme activity with consequences, hypersexuality, and condom negativity. Categories of perceived norms for female peers included sexual activity, traditional femininity, and safe sex. Future analyses will examine correlations of these perceptions with attitudes and behaviors.

**(3) EPSTEIN, Marina**

University of Michigan Substance Abuse Research Center

**“Do it Like a Man”: Young Men’s Experience with Pressure to Perform Masculinity**

Although endorsement of cultural expectations of masculinity - being tough, emotionally restricted, and sexually active - has been well researched among emerging adult men, little is known about the degree to which young men feel pressure to adopt and enact these expectations. This study uses data from 300 undergraduate men to develop and validate the Pressure to Perform Masculinity Scale (PPMS). Pressure from fathers, male peers, and dating partners was associated with their beliefs about masculinity. Additionally, PPMS predicted men's substance use and casual sex behavior and mediated the relation between masculine beliefs and mental health.

**(4) WARD, L. Monique<sup>1</sup>, & MERRIWETHER, Ann<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Human Development, SUNY Binghamton

**Assessing Women’s Comfort with their Bodies and Connections to Sexual Agency**

Because most body image measures focus on women’s concerns with their body’s size, little is known about women’s attitudes toward their body’s functions and sensations. Accordingly, we developed a new measure of women’s body comfort, and examined its connections to existing measures and to women’s sexual experiences. In study one, data from 1,077 undergraduate women revealed that the new measure correlated significantly with existing body measures and more consistently predicted women’s sexual experiences. In study two, data from 397 women revealed that greater body comfort was associated with greater sexual communication and safe-sex self-efficacy, and less negative sexual affect.

## **Close Relationships and Well-Being Among Emerging Adults in Different Cultural Contexts**

CHAIR: Meliksah Demir

Department of Psychology, Northern Arizona University

### **(1) DOGAN-ATES, Aysun<sup>1</sup>, & DEMIR, Meliksah<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, EGE University

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Northern Arizona University

## **Capitalization, Friendship Quality, and Happiness Among Emerging Adults in Turkey and the USA**

Previous literature suggests that individuals experience higher levels of relationship quality and happiness if they perceive their best friends respond actively and constructively to their capitalization attempts. This study examined the role of sharing positive events with a best friend in predicting friendship quality and happiness. The sample included 310 university students from Turkey and 296 students from the USA (mean age: 21.5). Findings indicated that if emerging adults in both cultures share a positive event with their best friends and receive positive responses in return, they experience higher levels of relationship quality, which in turn positively influence their happiness.

### **(2) KREYSZIG, Shelia**

Department of Psychology, University of Saskatchewan

## **Relational Connection, Acceptance, and Rejection as Factors Determining Level of Voice in Emerging Adulthood**

The researcher explored the beliefs and experiences concerning level of voice in relationships of nine Western Canadian emerging adults using qualitative methods. Participants indicated that quality of relationships, need for connection in relationships, and the potential for acceptance or rejection affected their beliefs and actions in communicating with others. In addition, they felt that closeness, familiarity, and comfort were essential to their level of voice (Kreyszig, 2006). Given that relationship building is of utmost importance for individuals during emerging adulthood, it is imperative for researchers to consider emerging adults' sense of voice so that we may further understand their experiences.

### **(3) DEMIR, Meliksah**

Department of Psychology, Northern Arizona University

## **Predictors of Friendship Quality among Emerging Adults in Different Cultures**

The present study investigated friendship motivation, capitalization and needs satisfaction as predictors of friendship quality among emerging adults in nine different cultures. A total of

2283 emerging adults (mean age: 20.40) reported about their friendship experiences. Analyses revealed that even though all variables were positively correlated with friendship quality, satisfaction of basic psychological needs in the friendship emerged as the strongest predictor of friendship experiences in all cultures.

**(4) KRINGS, Zachary, & DEMIR, Meliksah**

Department of Psychology, Northern Arizona University

**Romantic Relationships, Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction and Happiness**

The present study tested a model which proposed that satisfaction of basic psychological needs (e.g., autonomy) would mediate the association between romantic relationship quality and happiness. The sample consisted of 336 (243 women) emerging adults who were in an exclusive dating relationship (mean age: 19.25). The average duration of the romantic relationship was 22.85 months ( $SD=17.22$ ). Analyses revealed that needs satisfaction fully mediated the association between relationship quality and happiness. Findings suggest that part of the reason why the quality of romantic relationships is related to happiness is the satisfaction of basic psychological needs within the relationship.

## **Friendship Experiences and Happiness Among Emerging Adults in Different Cultural Contexts**

CHAIR: Meliksah Demir

Department of Psychology, Northern Arizona University

**(1) SWENSON, Lisa<sup>1</sup>, NORDSTROM, Alicia<sup>2</sup>, & HIESTER, Marnie<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, The Pennsylvania State University – Hazelton

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Misericordia University

### **The Effects of Peer Attachment and Social Anxiety on United States College Students' Friendships**

New friendships formed in college can affect adjustment, achievement, and retention, thus difficulties with friendships can have serious implications. Research shows that greater social anxiety and insecure attachment styles are associated with lower quality friendships. In our study, first-year college students completed measures of peer attachment, social anxiety, and friendship quality. Closer attachment relationships were associated with less social anxiety. Social anxiety at the beginning of the first semester related to the quality of new friendships. Females experienced greater friendship quality, but also greater social anxiety, although their social anxiety reduced from the beginning to the end of the semester. Our results suggest we should monitor insecure or socially anxious students to prevent possible problems with friendship formation and, consequently adjustment to college.

**(2) DOGAN-ATES<sup>1</sup>, Aysun, & DEMIR, Meliksah<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, EGE University

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Northern Arizona University

### **The Role of Friendship and Personality in Predicting Happiness Among Emerging Adults in Turkey and the USA**

Close friendships play an important role in the lives and happiness of an individual. This study examined whether the friendship experiences of emerging adults contribute to their overall happiness after controlling for personality. A total of 524 university students from Turkey (51%) and USA (49%) participated in this study (M age=21.5). Findings indicated that same-sex friendship quality in both cultures make an additional contribution to happiness of emerging adults. This finding suggests that positive friendship experiences still play an important role in one's happiness regardless of his/her personality in both cultures.

**(3) DEMIR, Meliksah<sup>1</sup>, OZEN, Ayca<sup>2</sup>, SUMER, Nebi<sup>2</sup>, & BOHOLST, Frederick<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, Northern Arizona University

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Middle East Technical University, Turkey

<sup>3</sup>Department of Psychology, University of San Carlos, The Philippines

### **Self-Determined Motivation, Friendship, and Happiness in the Philippines and Turkey**

The present study investigated the relationships between self-determined friendship motivation, friendship quality and happiness among emerging adults living in the Philippines (n=240) and Turkey (n=471). Results revealed that self-determined motivation was positively related to friendship quality and well-being. Analyses also showed that friendship quality mediated the relationship between self-determined friendship motivation and happiness. Overall, findings suggest that the theoretical arguments regarding the interplay between self-determined motivation, friendship quality and happiness might be applicable to other cultures as well.

**(4) GRAVER, Cleve<sup>1</sup>, DEMIR, Meliksah<sup>1</sup>, ACHOUI, Mustafa<sup>2</sup>, JAFFAR, Jas<sup>3</sup>, & CHENG, Cecilia<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, Northern Arizona University

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals

<sup>3</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Malaya

<sup>4</sup>Department of Psychology, The University of Hong Kong

### **Needs Satisfaction as the Mediator of the Relationship Between Friendship and Happiness in Algeria, Hong Kong, and Malaysia**

In a recent series of studies, Demir (in press) found that needs satisfaction mediated the association between friendship quality and happiness among American emerging adults. The present study tested the generalizability of this model to different cultures. Emerging adults from Algeria (n= 299), Hong Kong (n= 197) and Malaysia (n= 154) participated in the study. Analyses revealed that needs satisfaction fully mediated the association between friendship and happiness in every culture. The alternative model testing friendship quality as a mediator was not supported. Results suggest that the mediating role of needs satisfaction might be universal.

## **A Multi-Site Collaboration to Better Understand Development in College Students: The MUSIC Study**

CO-CHAIRS: M. Brent Donnellan<sup>1</sup> & Seth Schwartz<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, Michigan State University

<sup>2</sup>Department of Epidemiology & Public Health, University of Miami

DISCUSSANT: Kali Trzesniewski

Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario

### **(1) SCHWARTZ, Seth<sup>1</sup>, HUDSON, Monika<sup>2</sup>, & VERNON, Michael<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Epidemiology & Public Health, University of Miami

<sup>2</sup>School of Business & Management, University of San Francisco

<sup>3</sup>Department of Public Health, University of California – Berkeley

### **The Multi-Site University Study of Identity and Culture: Opportunities and Challenges**

This presentation is an overview of the Multi-Site University Study of Identity and Culture (MUSIC). We describe the origins, purposes, and advantages of this large, national collaboration in studying identity, adjustment, and health risk behaviors in emerging-adult college students. We also cover challenges involved in working with 27 sites and 35 collaborators, including the need to include a large number of constructs, requiring a formal memorandum of understanding, and the complexity involved in making decisions as a group. I discuss the ability to sample groups from different parts of the U.S. that would be difficult to obtain using a single geographic location.

### **(2) RAVERT, Russell**

Department of Human Development & Family Studies, University of Missouri

### **Sensation Seeking, Life Satisfaction, and Psychological Well-Being Among College Undergraduates**

In adolescent and emerging adult literature, discussion of sensation seeking almost without exception focuses on its utility as a predictor of risk behavior. Because exploration is a developmental task of emerging adulthood and plays a prominent role in college culture, seeking out novel experiences might also serve a functional role. The current study utilizes data from 5,067 U.S. college undergraduates in order to examine the relationship between sensation seeking and psychological well-being. Results from a series of regression analyses indicate that psychological and eudaimonic well-being are predicted by high novelty sensation seeking scores, but by low intensity sensation seeking scores.

**(3) DONNELLAN, M. Brent**

Department of Psychology, Michigan State University

**Using the MUSIC Database to Study the Nature of Self-Esteem and its Correlates Across Diverse Groups of College Students**

I will illustrate how data from the MUSIC collaboration can be used to address several important questions about self-esteem. For example, I will examine whether the Rosenberg self-esteem scale has similar psychometric properties across diverse groups of college students. Moreover, I will evaluate associations between self-esteem and antisocial behavior, anxiety, depression, locus of control, and risk taking behavior. Evidence that self-esteem is positively correlated with indices of psychological adjustment and negatively correlated with indices of risky behavior would lend further support to the claim that low self-esteem is a risk factor for adjustment problems in college students.

## **Content and Context: How Sexual Socialization Messages and Campus Environment Shape the Dating and Sexual Experiences of Emerging Adults**

CHAIR: Monica Foust

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

### **(1) LEVIN, Dana**

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

## **In Their Own Words: Emerging Adult Perspectives on Sex Education**

Focus groups were conducted with emerging adults to better understand how they had experienced their school-based sex education, including timing, content, and gender-specific differences. Broadly, participants reported receiving either biology-based messages, abstinence-based messages, or nothing. Participants expressed that they wished they had received more diverse content that included both health and emotional messages. Women and men reported receiving different messages. Participants also identified learning about a gendered victim-perpetrator rape dynamic. Findings suggest a need for more research in this area to better understand emerging adult perspectives on sex education, and implications of these programs on later attitudes and behaviors.

### **(2) ALDANA, Adriana, & FOUST, Monica**

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

## **Sex is Good, But is it Good For You? Sexual Socialization and Sexual Sentiments Among Virgins and Non-Virgins**

Participants completed surveys in which they reported their virginity status, perceived sexual freedom messages from parents, peers, and media, and their sentiments about their level of sexual experience. Peer sexual freedom messages significantly predicted feeling less content but more angst and shame. Media sexual freedom messages were associated with feeling more content and less shame, but were not associated with angst. Parent sexual freedom messages were not significantly related to sexual sentiment.

### **(3) DAY, Kyla**

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan – Ann Arbor

## **Sexual Messages, Sexual Assertiveness, and Sexual Behavior in African American Female Emerging Adults**

While prior findings have suggested that maternal sexual communication is a correlate of sexual assertiveness in emerging adults, peers have yet to be considered in the same manner. Findings from the current study suggest that communicating with parents and peers more

about multiple sexual topics was linked to more sexual assertiveness experiences. However, it appears as though for some sexual topics, parents and peers seem to play differential roles in emerging adults' sexual outcomes. Receiving more communication from peers (but not mothers or fathers) about partner sexual communication in particular was associated with greater sexual assertiveness.

**(4) THOMAS, Khia**

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

**Coming Into Her Own: The Context of African-American Women's Sexual Experiences Within the Collegiate Environment**

As a developmental task, young women are employing sexual decision-making, agency and assertiveness, and negotiating with partners. However, little is known about Black women's sexual development during emerging adulthood. How does the social context of a predominantly White collegiate environment shape Black women's experiences within the dating environment and sexual behaviors? Participants outline stereotypes which portray Black women as undesirable romantic partners, as well as gender disparities which manifest in such as way as to constrain opportunities for romantic relationships. In contrast, casual sexual exploration seems plentiful. How might contextual factors relate to the sexual development of Black women?

## **Reciprocal Development in Emerging Adult Relationships**

CHAIR: Paul A. Nelson

Department of Psychology, University of California – Santa Cruz

DISCUSSANT: Avril Thorne

Department of Psychology, University of California – Santa Cruz

### **(1) KOROBOV, Neill**

Department of Psychology, University of West Georgia

### **Subverting Heroic Masculinity: Young Men’s Use of Self-Deprecation in Stories About Failed Romantic Experiences**

This study examined how 12 small groups of emerging adult male friends (N = 36 participants; ages 18-23) told stories about romantic and sexual experiences. Contrary to the expectation that men will boast about their romantic endeavors, the young men’s stories were often self-deprecating accounts about sexual mishaps and gaffes. Self-deprecating stories generally touched on one of three themes—1) being usurped by ‘crazy bitches’, 2) botched ‘hook-ups’, and 3) the use of alcohol as ‘liquid courage’. Analyses focus on how reciprocally-told narratives of failed gamesmanship function in the creation of masculine identities during emerging adult development.

### **(2) NELSON, Paul**

Department of Psychology, University of California – Santa Cruz

### **She’s Outgoing I’m Reserved: The Mix and Match of Extraversion in Friendships Afford Development**

Personality differences or similarities between emerging adult friends might provide rich opportunities for development. We interviewed 16 matched extravert pairs, 16 matched introvert pairs, and 25 mixed introvert-extravert pairs of close, same-sex, college-age friends. Each friend was interviewed separately about what the friends do together and what they appreciate in each other. Transcript analysis produced 7 complementary affordance dimensions present in the friendships. Results strongly suggest that introverted and extraverted emerging adults practice friendship in significantly distinctive ways that are linked to personality. The findings advance a model that proposes how the trait of extraversion-introversion affords development in close relationships.

**(3) BAYNE, Melissa**

Department of Psychology, University of California – Santa Cruz

**The Effects of Transformational Peer Leadership on Students' Academic Beliefs**

Relationships between transformational peer leadership, academic self-efficacy, and class performance were analyzed for 76 emerging adults enrolled in an introductory psychology course. Transformational leadership ratings provided by undergraduate course assistants (“peer leaders”) and the undergraduate students enrolled in their discussion sections (“followers”) were compared. Strong relationships were detected between followers’ academic self-efficacy and their perceptions of their peer leaders’ transformational behaviors. Peer leader and follower ratings of transformational leadership were not significantly correlated; however, students’ academic self-efficacy was strongly related to their overall course performance. Findings are discussed in terms of the reciprocity of peer leadership relationships.

**(4) SHAPIRO, Lauren<sup>1</sup>, & HOICKA, Elena<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, University of California – Santa Cruz

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Sterling

**Comic Relief: Identity Exploration in Conversations Between Friends in Emerging Adulthood**

The present study explores the possibility that persons’ humor might reflect themes relating to the psychosocial task with which they currently struggle. Specifically, the study examines whether identity exploration is the most prevalent theme in humor in conversations between friends in emerging adulthood. Participants were 78 pairs of same-sex undergraduate students who had been friends for at least 6 months. Each dyad engaged in a 10-minute audio-recorded catch-up conversation. Dyads were found to most frequently produce humorous episodes regarding identity exploration, followed by industry and initiative. Implications for reciprocal identity development in emerging adulthood are discussed.

## **Substance use during the transition to adulthood**

CHAIR: Sabrina Oesterle

School of Social Work, University of Washington

**(1) OESTERLE, Sabrina, HILL, Karl, HAWKINS, J. David, BAILEY, Jennifer, & CATALANO, Richard**  
School of Social Work: Social Development Research Group, University of Washington

### **Pathways to Adulthood and their Associations with Alcohol, Tobacco, and Marijuana Abuse and Dependence**

This presentation examines whether pathways to adulthood differ for contemporary young men and women and are differently associated with alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana abuse and dependence. Using two-stage latent class analysis to analyze configurations of statuses and adult roles (student status, employment, marriage, and parenthood) from ages 18 to 30 in a panel of contemporary young adults, this study finds that men and women follow different pathways to adulthood. Pathways involving limited investment in post-secondary education without attachment to family roles (for men) and very early parenting (for women) pose a risk for adult substance abuse and dependence.

**(2) WAITHAKA, Eric, SHAPIRO, Valeria, DERR, Amelia Seraphia, HILL, Karl, & HAWKINS, J. David**

School of Social Work, University of Washington

### **Substance Use and Crime Involvement During the Transition to Adulthood: Using Short-Answer Survey Questions to Explore Mechanisms for Change**

This study uses content analysis to examine short-answer survey responses from a longitudinal study of crime and drug involved youth as they transition into adulthood (ages 21-30). Results reveal that while traditional milestones are still present in themes that emerged, there were striking differences between subgroups of young adults who continued versus discontinued drug and crime involvement. For example, differences arose in how each group referenced social support and religion, how they experienced change, and in the ways they described themselves. Findings uncover potential change mechanisms and provide a richer understanding of how these youth experience their transition to adulthood.

**(3) FLEMING, Charles, HAGGERTY, Kevin, & CATALANO, Richard**

School of Social Work: Social Development Research Group, University of Washington

**The Effects of Stability and Change in Romantic Relationship Status and Substance Use During Early Adulthood: Results from the Raising Healthy Children Project**

Longitudinal data on emerging adults was used to examine the effects of stability and change in romantic relationship status on substance use. Using data from 909 participants in a community sample, binge drinking, marijuana use, and cigarette smoking were assessed at four time points 6 months apart between ages 18-20. Romantic relationship status was also assessed at these time points. Preliminary results show protective effects of transitioning from being single into a romantic relationship and also of maintaining a stable relationship status. Also, participants who went from being in a romantic relationship to being single reported increases in binge drinking.

## **“She’s Leaving Home...”: Parents’ and Emerging Adults’ Perceptions of Autonomy Related to Developmental Tasks and Links to Adaptation**

CHAIR: Inge Seiffge-Krenke

Department of Psychology, University of Mainz

DISCUSSANT: Nancy Galambos

Department of Psychology, University of Alberta

### **(1) FACIO, Alicia, & RESETT, Santiago**

Department of Education Sciences, Universidad de Entre Rios

#### **Staying at Home in Emerging Adulthood: The Argentinian Case**

Some correlates and antecedents of leaving home were examined in the fourth wave of a longitudinal sample of Argentinian emerging adults aged 21-26. Regarding psychological health, no differences in self-esteem, depression, anxiety, antisocial behavior, aggressiveness or substance use were found among those residing with parents (62%) or with a romantic partner (25%) or by themselves –except males’ binge drinking. Living at home in emerging adulthood did not jeopardize the quality of relationship with parents: No differences in conflict or support were found among the groups. Additionally, type of residence was not related to previous quality of the relationship or with parents’ divorce.

### **(2) KINS, Evia, & BEYERS, Wim**

Department of Psychology, Ghent University

#### **Impact of Parental Separation Anxiety on Emerging Adults in the Process of Home Leaving**

Although separation-individuation is a central developmental task in adolescence (Blos, 1979), this intrapsychic process remains active during all stages of life. Disturbances in this separation-individuation process can have serious implications for the adult personality and social relationships (Pine, 1979). This study examined if parental separation anxiety can affect the separation-individuation process of emerging adults. Results revealed that parental separation anxiety plays a crucial role in emerging adults’ separation-individuation process. Parents who show high anxiety about the distancing of their emerging adults use dependency-oriented psychological control, which in turn predicts higher levels of pathological separation in emerging adults.

**(3) SEIFFGE-KRENKE, Inge**

Department of Psychology, University of Mainz

**Predicting the Timing of Leaving Home and Related Developmental Tasks: Individual and Family Factors**

Moving out of the parental home is an important transition for children and their parents, as it is often the first step towards a child's independence and related to several other tasks in emerging adulthood. This longitudinal study on 93 emerging adults and their parents analyzed individual- and family-related factors which have a bearing on the timing of leaving home and related tasks. More specifically, the study set out to analyze how the quality of the parents' marital relationship and their support given to the child impacted the transition process towards residential independence, establishing romantic partnerships and transition to work. Further, the different perspectives of parents and emerging adults on the timing of these transitions was analyzed and linked to adaptation.

**(4) SYED, Moin, & AZMITIA, Margarita**

Department of Psychology, University of California – Santa Cruz

**Identity, Social Support, and Mental Health: How Emerging Adults in the U.S. Adjust to College**

Adjusting to college can pose challenges for emerging adults because for most, it is the first significant move away from family and friends. This longitudinal mixed-methods study assesses the association among emerging adults' (N = 168) developing identities, social support, and mental health across the first year of college. Quantitative analyses highlighted the importance of perceived support, academic self-efficacy, and identity achievement for mental health trajectories. Qualitative analyses converged with the quantitative, but added to them by providing insights into the various forms and content of support and identity that emerging adults draw upon during this time of heightened stress.

## **Emerging Adults in the US and in Germany: Coming of Age on Both Sides of the Atlantic**

CHAIR: Christian Skaletz

Department of Developmental Psychology, Johannes Gutenberg-University

**(1) RUSSELL, Stephen<sup>1</sup>, SKALETZ, Christian<sup>2</sup>, & TOOMEY, Russell<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Family Studies & Human Development, University of Arizona

<sup>2</sup>Department of Developmental Psychology, Johannes Gutenberg-University

### **Being Gay on Both Sides of the Atlantic Ocean: A U.S.-German Comparison of Non-Heterosexual Emerging Adults**

By matching a German sample consisting of 300 18-29 year olds with participants of the Add Health Study (>10,000 participants from the third wave, ages 18-24), the inter-country variance with respect to psychosocial adjustment in emerging adulthood is analyzed. Preliminary results show that the US subsample of non-heterosexual emerging adults reports less psychological well-being than German non-heterosexual emerging adults. Overall, non-heterosexual participants reported higher rates of stress than heterosexual individuals did. U.S. non-heterosexuals report more internalizing (e.g. depression) as well as externalizing (e.g. substance use) symptoms than do German non-heterosexuals. Inter-country moderator and mediator variables are discussed.

**(2) SKALETZ, Christian<sup>1</sup>, & RUSSELL, Stephen<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Developmental Psychology, Johannes Gutenberg-University

<sup>2</sup>Department of Family Studies & Human Development, University of Arizona

### **Being Gay Across the Atlantic Ocean: A U.S.-German Comparison of Non-Heterosexual Emerging Adults**

By matching a German sample consisting of 300 18-29 year olds with participants of the Add Health Study the inter-country variance with respect to emerging adulthood is analyzed. The presentation compares US-American and German emerging adults with respect to work-life-balance, stress, and psychological well-being. The U.S. subsample of non-heterosexual emerging adults reports less psychological well-being than German non-heterosexual emerging adults. Inter-country moderator and mediator variables are discussed.

**(3) GIERSE, Ania, & SKALETZ, Christian**

Department of Developmental Psychology, Johannes Gutenberg-University

**The Way to Adulthood for Minorities in Germany: Within-Country Variance in Emerging Adulthood**

Arnett (2002) proposes that emerging adulthood is becoming more pervasive throughout the world. However, he recognizes that it is not a universal period of human development and that it comes into being under certain conditions. Arnett points out, emerging adulthood is more characteristic of cultures rather than countries. Therefore, a sample of 400 German 18-29 year olds, half of them belonging to mainly two minorities, such as young people with migration background and/or young people with a non-heterosexual sexual orientation, is analyzed to determine the within-country variance of emerging adulthood. The interdependence between developmental tasks, stress, coping, and psychological well-being is presented.

## **Public Perceptions versus the Real Qualities of Emerging Adults: Results from Community Samples**

CHAIR: Kali H. Trzesniewski

Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario

DISCUSSANT: Jeffrey J. Arnett

Department of Psychology, Clark University

### **(1) TRZESNIEWSKI, Kali<sup>1</sup>, & DONNELAN, M. Brent<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Michigan State University

### **How are Emerging Adults Viewed? An Examination of Stereotypes in a Community Sample**

Commentators suggest that socio-cultural changes in recent decades have coalesced to create a unique generation of young people. Many of these accounts portray today's youth in a negative light. The goal of the proposed talk is to examine the extent to which these widely-publicized beliefs have permeated thinking about today's youth. We found that people of all ages do view emerging adults in a more negative light than they view older adults, and they like emerging adults less than they like older adults. Discussion focuses on the potential impact these negative stereotypes can have on the lives of emerging adults.

### **(2) DONNELAN, M. Brent<sup>1</sup>, & TRZESNIEWSKI, Kali<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, Michigan State University

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario

### **Are Today's Emerging Adults Really That Self-Centered, Narcissistic, and Miserable? A Skeptical Perspective on Twenge's "Generation Me"**

Americans born in the 1970s to 1990s have been labeled "Generation Me" because they seem to have a heightened sense of egotism, increased self-esteem, and unrealistically high expectations for their future (Twenge, 2006). This generation is also alleged to exhibit elevated levels of misery and other symptoms of psychological distress (Twenge, 2006). However, we have been critical of the evidentiary basis for many of these claims (e.g., Donnellan & Trzesniewski, in press; Trzesniewski & Donnellan, in press). In this talk we summarize our concerns and describe evidence that runs counter to this depiction of today's emerging adults.

**(3) TANNER, Jennifer**

Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research, Rutgers University

**Identifying and Defining Emerging Adults At-Risk for Psychopathology**

This paper examines the question: Do youth with persistent mental health problems account for all emerging adults at-risk for psychopathology in emerging adulthood? This study utilizes a community sample to address this question from three perspectives. Results reveal five distinct trajectory groups based on self-reported mental health problems from ages 15 to 30: high-stable, high-decrease, mid-stable, low decrease and very low decrease. Groups differed with respect to their functioning at age 30 in expected ways. Both the “high” and “mid-stable” groups had compromised functioning at age 30 compared to the “low” groups. Assessment of emerging adults should focus on both developmental history and current psychiatric problems.

## **Sex and Substance Use in Emerging Adulthood: Diverse Perspectives**

CHAIR: Jennifer Walsh

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

### **(1) EPSTEIN, Marina**

Substance Abuse Research Center, University of Michigan

### **The Effect of Traditional and Modern Gender Norms on Emerging Adults' Use of Alcohol, Illegal Drugs, and Prescription Medication**

Substance use among emerging adult men enrolled in four-year colleges has been consistently high. Recent reports suggest that binge drinking has been increasing among undergraduate women - a trend attributed to relaxing of feminine norms that historically sanctioned women's drinking. The current research extends existing knowledge linking endorsement of traditional and modern gender norms and alcohol to the use of illegal drugs and non-medical use of prescription drugs. Data from 623 undergraduates indicates that endorsing modern gender norms was associated with greater drinking alcohol and use of illegal and prescription drugs for women. The opposite pattern was observed for men.

### **(2) WALSH, Jennifer, CALZO, Jerel, & SCHULENBERG, John**

Department of Psychology, University of Michigan

### **Joint Trajectories of Binge Drinking and Sexual Behavior in Adolescence: Outcomes in Emerging Adulthood**

Meaningful joint trajectories of binge drinking and sexual behavior exist across adolescence into emerging adulthood. Substance use and sexual behavior "travel together" for some adolescents but are discrepant for others. Using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (N=1488) and previously-determined trajectory groups, we examined outcomes in emerging adulthood of different joint trajectories. Trajectories began in 9th or 10th grade and extended into the early 20s. Emerging adults with distinct histories of binge drinking and sexual behavior were indeed found to differ in terms of marriage, health, well-being, victimization, and substance use.

### **(3) KAESTLE, Christine, & GOODWIN, Annabelle**

Department of Human Development, Virginia Tech

### **Protective Factors Against Trading Sex for Drugs or Money Among High Risk Adolescents**

Adolescents who engage in sex-trade face many negative outcomes and co-occurring problems. Although research has identified several risk factors for involvement in sex trading, protective factors must be identified for effective intervention. This study aims to determine if school

attachment, parental attachment, and mentor relationships are protective against participation in sex exchange among adolescents and if they modify the effect of risk factors. We are analyzing data from Waves I and III of Add Health. We are examining transition into sex trading by Wave III using multiple logistic regression models with interaction terms.