

Fall 2001

Help in Writing a Journal Review

By David A. Kenny

New investigators often need help in writing a journal review. Below is a one of my recent reviews that I often use. Please feel free to use it!

I found this paper to be interesting and potentially an important contribution to the literature. However, I have a few minor issues that I would urge the authors to consider in their revision. I offer these comments in a spirit of collegiality.

The theory has some potential, but needs some reworking. While there is a seed of a good idea, there is a bushel of rather pedestrian, soporific, and vacuous musings that reminds me more of flatulence than brilliance.

There are several critical papers that were not cited. Most important of these are several insightful papers written by David A. Kenny (see especially Kenny (1995; 1996a; 1996b; 1996c; 2001)). I am especially troubled that the central idea of this paper is alluded to in footnote 3 of Appendix C of the classic book by Kenny (2001) that is, sadly, now out of print. The other key idea in this paper was extensively discussed by the aforementioned Kenny in a 1994

meeting of the Alaska Association of Behavioral Scientists and Bartenders.

There were several problems in the data analysis and design. While it is useful to know that there is minimal skewness and kurtosis in the outcome measures, we really need to know about the fifth moment of the mean. The author is urged to consult work published in, I believe, the *Archives of Trivial Statistical Issues*, sometime in the 1960s. I think this paper was written by David A. Kenny. I also noted that there are 58 males and 57 females in the study. The author needs to justify this imbalance.

I found the paper to be very sloppy. There is numerous misspellings and grammatical errors. It's a tragedy that the English language is so butchered by someone whose so nonliterate. I always carefully read my papers and reviews before sending them to an editor. Finally, there were several serious editorial problems that preclude publication. First, the right margin on page 12 is .13 centimeters too wide. Second, there is an extra space somewhere on page 15. Third, the abstract contains 153 words, 3 more than allowed.

I hope that the authors see these comments as friendly and helpful. However, I would advise the authors not to quit their night jobs.

Spring 2002

Relationship Advice

By David A. Kenny

I asked Arm Landers and Abigail Van Buren (Dear Abby) to forward to me some questions that they have received about relationships. I then farmed out these questions to experts in our field and they have written back with answers. Because they were so busy, I asked them to give very short answers. To give our relationship experts anonymity, I have only used initials. Here are the questions and answers'.

Question: There is a girl at school that I like a lot and I am kinda shy. I do not seem to be able to find a way to get her to like me. Can you give me some help?

Answer from DD & AA: Is there a shaky bridge near where you live?

Question: My boyfriend keeps wanting to know where I am going and who I am going to be with. He accuses me of having sex with every man I know. What kind of jealous guy am I dating?

Answer from BB: Perhaps preventive but very likely anxious.

Question: I have been married some 30 years. We no longer even touch each other and the only thing I seem to say to her and she to me is "Yep" and "Huh." I find this relationship to

be totally unsatisfying. Why do I continue to stay with her?

Answer from CR: Investment, investment, investment

Question: My girlfriend Jane and I seem to have a problem in our relationship and maybe you can help us. She keeps giving me gifts, and when she does, I buy her a gift in return. However, instead of being grateful when I buy Jane a gift, she gets pissed off at me when I do this and says I did not have to buy her a gift in return. What type of couple are we?

Answer from PC & JM: Jane communal, you exchange.

Question: I was involved for some 20 years in a relationship with a man I deeply loved. Unfortunately, six months ago he left me for someone else. I keep thinking about him and wonder what I could have done to have kept him. What should I be doing?

Answer from SD: Move onto stage 4 and try some grave dressing.

Question: We have been married for 10 years, and I thought we had a happy marriage. But lately my spouse has been very hostile and has been blaming me for all the problems in our marriage. What is the matter?

Answer from FF & TB: Looks like he has a bad case of negative attributions.

Question: I am married to what would seem to be the perfect woman. Everyone I know thinks I should be the happiest man in the world, but I am not. What can I do to be happy?

Answer from HK: You need to lower your CL(alt).

Question: I keep dating humanoids who are very dominating and unfriendly? Can you give me any advice on finding other types of partners?

Answer from JW: Sample some other part of the circumplex.

Question: I go on blind dates all the time and no one likes me. What is going on?

Answer from DK: Evidently you have an exceptionally low partner effect for affect. Maybe someday you might get lucky and find someone with a positive outlier relationship effect.

Fall 2002

Relationship Film Festival

By David A. Kenny

I think I have a really phat idea. At our next meeting, we have a "Relationship Film Festival." The synergies would be humongous. Here are my suggestions for films that we might want to include. For the first festival, I think we should limit ourselves to titles that include two people's names. (Isn't that such a kwel idea, dudes and dudettes?) I attach here a brief summary of possible films. (I want to thank Chris Farley who taught me everything I know about movie reviews.)

Jules and Jim: This movie was a real disappointment. Here you have a French movie about two guys in love with the same woman. How come there is no menage a trois? Francois Truffe (the director dude who has a cameo in Close Encounters of the Third Kind) should be sued for false advertising.

Romeo and Juliet: This 1997 movie with Leonardo DiCaprio sucks big time. It is a silly adaptation of the plot of West Side Story. What a lame idea! The screenplay is atrocious and pretentious (too many wherefores and thous for me), and they rip off a trite balcony scene that is used in so many other movies. But hey, what other movie steals its name after an effect

studied by us relationship researchers?

Thelma and Louise: I think this is the best dude-flick movie ever made. It carefully documents the unconscionable way that women treat men. These two chicks have seriously avoidant attachment styles and they are unable to connect with the men in their lives. No wonder in the end they go over the edge.

Harold and Maude: A great flick on causes of attraction. It conclusively shows that attraction is based more on interest similarity (they both love funerals and death) than demographic similarity (he's 19 and she's 79; thank God, Ruth Gordon used a stunt double!). It has a great Cat Stevens soundtrack before he became a Moslem called Yusuf Islam (or is it too soon for me to point this out?).

Hillary and Jackie: A great movie about sibling rivalry and caretaker stress. The soundtrack could benefit with a change of pace, like a lick from Eminem, JaRule, or the Spice Girls. Will there be a sequel in the future of Hillary and Bill?

Chuck and Buck: I was initially disappointed because I thought this was a prequel to John Candy's classic Uncle Buck, but it's not. (When is John Candy going to come out of retirement and make us laugh again?) Rather it tells the old tale of two people in love who just cannot connect because of attachment issues and societal taboos. This video made me think and that is not easy to do.

Oscar and Lucinda: All I can say about this is that people who live in glass churches should not throw dice.

Spring 2003

"The Causal Nexus between Relationship Dissolution and Psychopathological Symptomatology" or "I Just Can't Sleep after My Divorce" By David Kenny

One of the things that makes our field fascinating yet simultaneously challenging is that we study topics that everyone "knows." There was an article on the difficulty of doing research in education entitled "Everyone went to high school." The comparable article for us would be "Everyone has been in a relationship." One problem created by all of us being relationship experts is that the terminology that we use can be very confusing. There is a tension between using terms that lay people use versus inventing new terms (aka, jargon) so as to avoid the potential misunderstandings that arise in the use of lay terms.

I think that sometimes we are tempted to create jargon to prove, likely more to ourselves than to others, that we really know something. We equate being incomprehensible with saying something important. We forget the nominal fallacy: Giving something a

name does not in and of itself provide any real understanding.

You may be surprised to hear that I was once told that I was getting myself in trouble by using lay terms. Yes me, the person who wrote the following sentence "If the one-cue, differential weight model were correct, then the INSCAL analysis would yield a single dimension" was accused of writing too simply. I was advised many years ago by a senior researcher to avoid using lay terms as people will too easily think they know what the term means but not really know. While there is a risk in using lay terms, I think there is a benefit to building on lay notions. Yes, they eventually come to mean something very different, but by using lay concepts we make clear that we are studying something fundamentally important and human. Note that physicists still use terms like "energy," "mass," and "velocity," even though these terms now have very little to do with the lay use of those terms. I see it as a challenge to use lay terms but show how their meaning changes as relational science makes advances.

Let us consider a specific example. What if Hazan and Shaver had not used the terms "secure, avoidant, and anxious-ambivalent" (of course, I know they borrowed these terms) for attachment styles, but instead to avoid "confusion" they invented their own terms. So for instance, they might have come up with "equilibrant, fugalant, and petalant" in terms of intimacy seeking. Are not we lucky that they did not invent such jargon! As another

example, I cannot understand why social network researchers continue to call people "nodes" and "vertices." I realize that not all networks refer to people, but when they are used to study relationships they always do.

One can make the argument that the use of jargon reinforces a "western bias." How so? Because most jargon has Latin or Greek roots (e.g., Psychopathological Symptomatology), it reinforces the Western-centrism. In the spirit of reducing jargon in our field, I list the titles of papers published in either the two journals or cited by a paper in one of those journals and my proposed less "jargony," yet hopeless silly translation. With apologies to the authors, here we go:

Original: "The benefits of positive illusions: Idealization and construction of satisfaction in close relationships." Revised: "You will be a lot happier not knowing what the jerk is really like."

Original: "Associations of maternal and paternal direct differential behavior with siblings relationships: Contemporaneous and longitudinal analyses." Revised: "I used to and still hate my brother thanks to mom and dad."

Original: "Memory structures for relational decay: A cognitive test of sequencing de-escalating actions and stages." Revised: "Breaking up is not hard to do."

Original: "Heterogeneity of peer rejected boys: Aggressive and non-

aggressive subtypes." Revised: "Boys everyone hates are either bullies or dweebs."

Original: "Intimacy and the magnitude of experience of episodic relational uncertainty within romantic relationships." Revised: "Crap happens."

Original: "The influence of relational context on support processes: Points and difference and similarity between young adult sons and daughters in problem talk with mother." Revised: "When you need help, ask mom."

Original: "Sexual strategies theory: An evolutionary theory on human mating." Revised: "Darwin made me be a male chauvinist pig."

Original: "Mothering in context: Ecological determinants of parent behavior." Revised: "Your mom may be nice to you in public, but she is gonna whip your ass at home."

Fall 2003

Reading between the Lines

By David A. Kenny

When those of us that are asked to write a letter of recommendation, we sometimes do not quite say exactly what we really mean to say. We often try to avoid saying something negative about the person and we want to put the most positive spin on things. Below I provide the uninitiated some clues about what it is that is really being said in letters of recommendation. You might want to save these for future letters that you will be asked to write:

“I was most impressed by Silva’s help in the early stages in the statistical analysis, especially his knowledge of SPSS” really means “The only thing that statistical-novice Silva could do was to enter the raw data.”

“Because Abercrombie worked with Professor Smith, I do not feel that I know her as well as my own students” really means

“Abercrombie must have a full time job or something, because she only comes in to the department to pick up her paycheck.”

“Quigley is full of energy and enthusiasm and the life of the party” really means “Quigley is out of control and is likely visiting the methamphetamine lab too often.”

“Bigelow is an enthusiastic teacher and works diligently at perfecting his teaching” really means “Bigelow has no idea about research and will likely never publish a study.”

“I am most impressed about the ability of Lee to exploit the full potential of the web” really means “Lee seems to be at the computer all the time downloading MP3s and porn.”

“I often found myself totally amazed at the creative responses that Hutchins gave when we discussed his extensive research project ” really means “I was truly amazed at the incredibly bizarre excuses that Hutchins gave for why his projects never got completed.”

“Garmin is rather reserved at laboratory meetings and class, but the few times that he does say something it is worthwhile” really means “Garmin is painfully shy, and he would not even speak even if his ass were on fire.”

“There have been several times while in my office that I have sought out Merckle for assistance and he has been resourceful in departmental projects ” really means “Thank goodness Merckle is so tall that he can reach books on my top shelf and play center on the department's intramural basketball team.”

“Oglethorp's real strength shines through in his ability to work with others” really means “Oglethorp is incapable of ever doing anything on

his own and so he must freeload to get anything accomplished.”

Prozac that Fiori started taking has begun to kick in.”

“When Smorch enters the room he always get noticed” really means “Smorch seems to never take a shower or a bath.”

“In finishing a recent paper with Farnsworth, she was very resourceful in writing the last part of the paper” really means “Farnsworth cannot compose a meaningful sentence, but we finally found something for Fransworth to do and that was to prepare the bibliography.”

“Upson decided to take off two years from graduate school to work in an intensive men’s group project” really means “Upson had to spend two years in jail on a drunk driving charge.”

“Students come early to class when Kraft is giving a lecture” really means “People get there early so they can find a comfortable enough chair far in the back for a nap.”

“Ladupa is quick to volunteer and he has often picked up speakers at the airport” really means “Ladupa has a part time job driving a taxi.”

“I see McGuillicudy as someone who would network well at conferences” really means “McGuillicudy will be in a different bed every night of the conference.”

“Of late, I have noticed that Fiori seems enthusiastic and full of the joy of life” really means “Finally, the

Spring 2004

The Love Meter

By David A. Kenny

The day before Valentine's Day this year, there was considerable press coverage of the work of one of the premier relationship researchers John Mordechai Gottman of the University of Washington. You might want to check out his website at <http://www.gottman.com> where he quite accurately describes himself in the following way: "His style of presentation is clear, informative and chocked with humor. He beloved by his audiences everywhere." With James D. Murray and Kristin Swanson, and the mathematics of differential equations, they developed the "Dow-Jones Industrial Average for Marital Conversation" or "Love Meter" that analyzed 15 minutes of interaction between a dating couple. They claimed to be able to predict with 94 percent accuracy whether couples would be divorced.

I was, as we used to say in the 60s, "blown away" by this number. Consider that some couples who are struggling should get a divorce, but they never do. For example, one member is killed by the other; both members belong to a religion that forbids divorce, or the couple listens to Dr. Laura and they stick it out for the kids to teach them the lifelong lesson that marriage is misery. So a 94 percent accuracy is virtually 100 percent or maybe even 150 percent.

We might wonder whether, if besides a blood test, should a couple be required to take a videotape test? Prospective couples would be videotaped, it would be sent to Seattle, and after careful analysis and probably a few double lattes, the researchers would allow some of the couples to marry. Would it not be a good idea to end divorce as we know it and send all the divorce lawyers to the unemployment lines?

Well maybe not. If no one got divorced, how could we get through the doldrums of our everyday life without stories of Brittany Spears' one-night wonder marriage, the fairy-tale divorce of Charles and Diana, the on-again-off-again marriages of Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, and the verbal combat between Frazier and Lilith (ok, they are not real but they seem very real to most of us)? If we knew that our favorite movie stars would stay married "til death do they part," how could we cope in our everyday life bereft of the delusional fantasy that some day that star would knock on our door and run off with us? For instance, my wife insisted on a provision in our prenuptial agreement, that she be free to leave me if ever Anthony Hopkins proposes to her. I agreed to this condition when she said I could do the same, i.e., marry him if he ever proposed to me. So maybe celebrities should be exempt from the videotape test.

Much more problematic than unrealistic celebrity fantasies, no divorces and only happy couples would be a disaster not only for

country music lyricists but also for us relationship researchers. Take a look at our journals. What do we study? Our favorite things to study are arguments, conflict, jealousy, and that ultimate gold standard of poor outcomes in relationships: divorce. What a disaster it would be! Think of health researchers without disease, epidemiological research without death, clinical psychologists without psychopathology. These pale next to the prospect of relationship research without divorce.

Given the high divorce rate, it would seem likely that many would fail the test and so many more of us would remain single. While it might be a financial boon for owners of bars, makers of inflatable dolls, and laundromats, the lowered marriage rate would spell disaster for makers of disposable diapers, the Disney Corporation, McDonalds, and life insurance salespersons.

If the videotape test were instituted, (perhaps mandated by constitutional amendment) we would find ways to circumvent it. Those of us who failed it would just cohabit and be miserable "till death do we part." Alternatively, we could hire a surrogate to take the test for us.

But do not worry, and be happy. The videotape test will likely never be required for marriage. Why? Marriage today is considered to be a person's right, at least a straight person's right, and people have a right to marry whomever they want, even if they want to marry someone

who will cause them daily misery and agony. Liberals would be against the videotape test because they strongly believe in the civil right to make fools of ourselves in whatever way we choose, and conservatives would also be against it, because they want to defend the right of marriage, at least for some (e.g., 14 year-old cousins in Mississippi). Not sure whether it is a sad or a glorious commentary about the human spirit, but we do not want to know beforehand that we are about to fail at something; rather, we want the chance to put our own stamp on that failure.

Fall 2004

RelNet

By David A. Kenny

Our Association has been in secret talks with Barry Diller to assist in the development of a new cable network channel, the Relationship Network or RelNet. I have received access to an IARR secret memo from the special advisory board for RelNet programs for RelNet. (I want to thank my confidential source. His identity will remain anonymous to my death; I will only say that his last name rhymes with a four-letter word.) Here is a sneak preview at their sensational fall line-up:

Safe Sex in the City:

Four glamorous 30 somethings (sorry, none related to a famous relationship researcher) find themselves, every week, in strange situations with a banana.

Mathematically Correct Survivor:

Castaways provide round-robin peer ratings on a 7-point, 35-item, scale. Scores are corrected for the bias in judgment due to missing data; should partner variance not exceed 30% of the total variance the contestants must eat food leftover from a Paul Popiel infomercial.

Dr. Phil and Dr. Cindy:

After being interviewed by a dynamic duo of experts, the audience guesses the attachment styles of cohabitating couples who

live in homes pulled by large vehicles.

The Altos:

Tony Alto, chairman of a New Jersey Studies Department at Hoboken State College, conspires to give tenure to his teenage son, his therapist, and an aging stripper, and avoids being censured by the Dean, who is his mother.

Art Aron 360:

Bridge crossing, circles moving toward each other, and bodies undergoing an fMRI -- you never know what to expect from this wacky Californian gallivanting throughout New York City.

Not Everybody Loves an Editor:

The editors of relationship journals explain why they rejected your paper.

Wait, Wait, Tell Me:

Couples receive results from pregnancy tests that are based on a random number table.

Antique Roadie Show:

Rebecca Adams interviews washed-up members of touring rock bands who are waiting for liver transplants.

The Singing A-mae Chef:

Inept chefs sing karaoke to get people to feel sorry for them and then the people pretend to like their disgusting food and horrible voices.

CSI UCLA:

Dissecting just a single response to an item on a scale, the degree of loneliness is determined.

threatened to arrest anyone cast in the lead of “Touched by a Mullah.”

The Simpsons:

Hosted by O. J. and Jessica Simpson, famous politicians are DNA-tested to determine if they are bastards.

The King as a Queen:

Elvis impersonators, in drag, give accounts of their most recent relationship breakup.

American Idle:

Procrastinating reviewers make up their feeble excuses to authors for why they are late with their reviews, as they are suspended over a tank of unfed alligators.

Sadly it looks as if the following two shows will never be aired:

Domestic Mole:

A reality show in which a normal family is turned into a dysfunctional one by introducing a mole family member, who enables self-destructive behaviors, escalates negative behaviors, and makes faulty attributions. The producers seem to be unable to find any normal families.

Touched by a ____:

Children recount how their lives were dramatically changed after encounters with religious teachers. Producers are having difficulty with the show’s name; they cannot use “Touched by a Priest” for obvious reasons, “Touched by a Rabbi” would have to be changed to “Touched by a Zionist Rabbi” because of UN pressure, and US Attorney General Ashcroft

Spring 2005

Faculty Only

By David A. Kenny

This column is written for faculty and I ask all students to stop reading. Believe me, what follows is pretty boring as it deals with issues of percent contribution to TSA plans and the formatting of PTR forms.

Now that I have gotten rid of the students (students never read anything they do not have to), we get to what the column is really about. It has been brought to my attention by my crack staff (Is crack an adjective or a noun?) that some faculty members are telling students honestly and clearly what they think of their papers. They write marginal comments on papers such as: "This sucks," "You should consider a career change to writing graphic novels," "You do not create a 10 page paper by changing margins and fonts," and "At least, you did not waste any good ideas in this paper." While being direct may be the most honest strategy, you are going to face whining students who are going to complain about you to your department or area head. Also, you need students to come up with studies, run those studies, enter your data, analyze the data, write up the study, have them be second authors, and go to Starbucks to get you a low fat mocha frappuccino with no whip cream. The smart and successful faculty member is never direct, and this column is going to

show you how to indirectly communicate to students.

We all know about metacommunication: the communication underlying the actual communication. In making comments on student papers use some of the phrases that indirectly communicate our real feelings:

Say "Citation" when you mean to say "Do not recycle your harebrained ideas as scientific."

Say "Transition" when you mean to say "This idea can only have come out of your posterior."

Say "Statistical assumptions satisfied?" when you mean to say "Your undergraduate assistant must have clicked on the wrong box in SPSS."

Say "Great results!" when you mean to say "You must have made up the data."

Say "You need to write the abstract" when you mean to say "There is no way in the world I could ever write a summary of this."

Say "You have a creative way of expressing yourself" when you mean to say "I have no idea what you are saying."

Say "Tightly argued" when you mean to say "At least I did not have read 20 pages of your turgid prose."

Say "Take a broader perspective" when you mean to say "Not every reader is a 25-year old yuppie from

the east or west coasts of the United States.”

Say “Did you run spell check?” when you mean to say “My name is Kenny not Kenney.”

Say “Good point” when you mean to say “Everything before this sentence was nonsense.”

Say “Too bad, low power” when you mean to say “How did you ever expect to get statistically significant results, when due of your laziness you ran only 15 participants?”

Say “You have done so much work on this, I should not be coauthor” when you mean to say “I do not want my reputation to be flushed down the toilet.”

Junior faculty also need to learn how to read a paper quickly. Many a time I have had a pressing obligation (e.g., a 5-hour golf game or a three-martini lunch with my dean), and I need “to read” a 20 page paper in 5 minutes. Here are some ideas: Just look at the formatting of the paper and comment on that; e.g., suggest changing the format of the headings and the references, and then say “I will read this paper when you change it to the appropriate style.” If it is in the right style, just say “I plan to submit this paper to a journal in another discipline and this paper needs to be changed to the appropriate format for that journal.” Also write a few question marks next to the Method section and then say, “I cannot read further

because the method is not clearly stated.”

But what do you do if you only have a minute? Here are some tips. Send an email and say that you misplaced the paper. Another quickie is to write at the top of the paper: “We need to talk about the paper.” Also put random check marks or periods throughout the paper. Finally, there is the never-fail strategy: Write on the first page the following: “Excellent and insightful treatment of the topic!”

FALL 2005

Foreign Affairs

By David A. Kenny

Given the above title, readers of this column might expect something pretty juicy. I am afraid that I will disappoint those readers. This column has a very serious purpose. We have heard of globalization and some of us are for it and others of us are against it, but globalization is something that we must accept for relational science. We are the International Association for Relationship Research and not the United States Association for Relationship Research. It then follows that our two flagship journals, *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* and *Personal Relationships*, are international journals. I duly note that the first editors of both journals were not born in the United States. Why is it then that many of us who are from the United States write articles as if all of the readers are from the United States? As social scientists we all know about egocentrism, failure to take another's perspective, and ethnocentrism, but many of us forget these important lessons when we write a scientific paper. All too often we say things in our paper that are virtually incomprehensible to readers not from the United States. I say this as someone who is expert at writing papers that are incomprehensible.

Perhaps the problem might be better understood by reading an excerpt of a paper by an Italian colleague. It is from the method section:

Participants were run as couples and were from Umbria. They were placed in a room of 16 m² and a temperature of 18 degrees. All couples were run between 14:00 and 18:00. To create a relaxing atmosphere, music by Uzeda, Afterhours, Marlene Kuntz, and Massimo Volume was played. In the control condition, participants viewed an RAI video of Deputy Prime Minister Gianfranco Fini delivering a speech concerning a recent editorial in *Avvenire* about the EU regulations on Gazprom. Participants were paid €5,00.

To have an issue on which there were gender differences, we chose football and fashion. For football, possible topics were Roberto Baggio's penalty kick in FIFA's 1978 World Cup and the relative merits of Lazio versus Inter. For fashion, the debate was between Roccobarocco and Coin.

You think this is far fetched? Read now a rough translation into "United States-ese" and it may seem less incomprehensible:

Participants were run as couples and were from the Northeast. They were placed in a room of 50 ft² and a temperature of 75 degrees. All couples were run between 2 and 6 PM. To create a relaxing atmosphere, music by Carrie Underwood, Bo Bice, and William Hung was played. In the control

condition, participants viewed a CSPAN video of Vice-president Cheney delivering a speech concerning a recent editorial in the Daily News about the FDA regulations on Merck. Participants were paid \$6.

To have an issue on which there were gender differences, we chose baseball and fashion. For baseball, possible topics were the Mike Piazza and Roger Clemens confrontation during the 2000 MLB World Series and the relative merits of the Royals versus Cardinals. For fashion, the merits of Nordstrom versus Target were debated.

Let me try, as best I can (and it is difficult), to re-write the paragraph in way that would make it relatively comprehensible to all:

Participants were run as couples and were residents of a city with a population of half a million. They were placed in a small room and comfortable temperature. All couples were run in the afternoon. To create a relaxing atmosphere, popular music was played. In the control condition, participants viewed a video of a boring speech by a public official. Participants were paid a small fee for participation.

To have an issue on which there were gender differences, we chose sports and women's clothing. For sports, we chose a famous incident in a popular sport and the relative merits of two teams. For fashion, the debate was between an upscale and a downscale retail establishment.

You may note that, in making the description more comprehensible, some of the detail in the description is lost. Our communication colleagues know that "broadcasting" usually results in a loss of information. However, we could post on the web details from our studies. I, for one, would pay for the loss of information to avoid the becoming an ethnocentric discipline.

How can those of us from the United States avoid such writing? Find a colleague from outside the United States and offer to read one of their papers and help with English and journal formatting. Ask them to read your paper to remove material aimed for residents of the United States.

Spring 2006

Angelina and Brad

By David A. Kenny

You may have learned, in an earlier column, about RelNet, the television channel devoted to relationships. I have been able to obtain a transcript from the RelNet interview of the stars Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt. You may notice from the interview that the couple has hired a relationship coach. What is a relationship coach? It is someone who uses their knowledge of relationships to help people understand what is happening in their lives. Here is that interview:

RelNet: Angelina, let me begin by asking about your estranged father, Jon Voight.

Angelina: First, he is not my “estranged” father, but rather my father is just strange. The problem with him is his dismissing attachment style. He is highly avoidant and low anxiety. According to our relationship coach Rowland, he is a total narcissist, he has tremendous difficulty showing normal emotions. The only time I have ever seen him emotional was with Rizzo, Dustin Hoffman, on a Greyhound bus in *Midnight Cowboy*.

RelNet: While your relationship with your dad is strange, is not your relationship to your brother Haven even stranger? Is not one of your

numerous tattoos an “H” for him, and did you not plant a big wet kiss on him during the Academy Awards?

Angelina: A woman needs a father figure in her life and Haven was that for me.

Brad: Actually the “H” is for Timothy Hutton. Angelina likes to show her commitment to her partner. I will not tell you where she has my last name tattooed and it is not in her armpits.

RelNet: Angelina, you were married to Billy Bob Thornton. I have to ask about the vials of each other’s blood that you wore around your necks.

Angelina: You have to understand that his mother was the town psychic in the small town where he grew up. I guess being psychic has low heritability, or maybe he inherited just the psycho part of psychic. As for the vial of blood, it was a symbolic expression of our mutual commitment. I also pretended to lose my vial so I could get Billy Bob’s blood periodically tested, for reasons I will not reveal.

RelNet: You are now pregnant with Brad’s baby. Are you worried that a child from the two of you is going to be too beautiful?

Angelina: It was indeed a worry. However, you have to factor in regression toward the mean. The expectation using Galton’s formula is that the child will be about half as beautiful as we are. The expectation

for any kid of Billy Bob's is for regression up toward the mean.

RelNet: I guess that is why you adopted children with Billy Bob, Maddox from Cambodia and Zahara from Ethiopia.

Angelina: Although our children are living in the United States, we give Maddox a chance for a strong Cambodian identity by trying to feed him rice and Zahara an Ethiopian identity by trying to feeding her nothing.

Relnet: Let me now turn to Brad Pitt, who attended the Missouri School of Journalism and was two credits shy of graduating. Brad, you were married for many years to America's sweetheart, Jennifer Aniston.

Brad: Yeah, I was a bit of a zombie during the Bradafer years, but eventually I did an Exit thing and she did the Loyalty thing. I still think Rachel is a great person, and when we broke up I asked her if we could stay friends.

RelNet: What did she say?

Brad: She engaged in an act of physical assault on the Conflict Tactics Scale scale.

RelNet: What does that mean?

Brad: She slapped me in the face. You know I played Achilles but I am no heel. Hey, I have moved beyond the grave dressing state of relationship dissolution.

RelNet: When did you first get interested in Angelina?

Brad: It started years ago when I got PlayStation and I beat Tomb Raider.

RelNet: Since Angelina had repeatedly fallen in love with her costars, are you worried she may dump you for someone else?

Brad: Abandonment issues are not part of the person called Brad Pitt. However, I have been urging her to sign up for a remake of Cocoon with Wilfred Brimley. No way she does Oceans 13.

RelNet: Can you comment on the tattoo on Angelina's belly that says "Quod me nutrit me destruit" ("What nourishes me also destroys me").

Brad: At first I thought it was a Nike ad, but then she told me that milk makes her puke (oh, I mean vomit). Rowland says it is really an unconscious reference to her father.

RelNet: So what is it like being an adoptive father?

Brad: I do find it difficult to accept, you know from an evolutionary point of view, that I share none of my genes with Maddox and Zahara. But then I learned that people share 98 percent of their genes with a Drosophila or fruit fly and I felt better.

RelNet: One last question: When you two check into a hotel and you want to remain anonymous, what name do you give?

Brad: Laura and I sign in as Mr. and Mrs. Smith.

Fall 2006

The Social Psychology Tribe of Relationship Researchers

By David A. Kenny

As I see it, there are three major tribes in our association. They are communication, human development and family studies, and social psychology. Certainly there are smaller groups such as sociologists and clinical psychologists. However, the largest, and some might argue the most dominant tribe of our discipline is social psychology. Chris Agnew has told me that he believes that about fifty percent of the members of our association are members of that tribe. As an elder member of the tribe social psychologists, I would like to help members of other tribes better understand the beliefs, rituals and practices of our tribe.

We worship at the altar of the experiment. The truth can only be known by manipulation and control. We are taught to discount the pagan sirens of participant observation and surveys. Not all experiments are equal and the supreme experiment is one with two independent variables, analyzed by a 2 x 2 analysis of variance, and showing a cross-over interaction. The X shape of a cross-over, given to us by Festinger and Carlsmith, is our most sacred icon and brings tears to our eyes and pitter-patter to

our hearts. We splatter images of the X throughout our textbooks and articles.

On a related note, for social psychologists, the only results worth looking at from a research study are means. We love means and we graph them, table them, and report them in the text. If we display the means in a table we use all sorts of lower case letter superscripts to tell us what means are different from each other. Maybe you might report adjusted means, but that would create some nervousness. Correlations are curiosities and besides they are “merely correlational.” Means and *p* values, that is where it is at!

When we do experiments, we must design them in such a way that there is deception. The participant can never be told what the purpose of the study really is, that the other participant is a collaborator of the experimenter, that the phone is not really ringing by accident, and that the shocks that the learner is receiving are fake. The most important part of a social psychology study is the procedure: It must be an elaborately staged interaction with several plot twists (i.e., “ops”) worthy of a Broadway or Hollywood production. A clever procedure counts even more than a good idea or good results. After all, we refer to a study that is realistic as having mundane (i.e., pedestrian) realism and studies with an involving, gut-wrenching procedure as having *experimental realism*. The reality of the study is more important than actual reality!

When we cite people we must have a few obligatory citations to the founding fathers of Lewin and Heider. All other citations must be recent citations from the past five years. We are allowed to cite an older paper only if it is a self-citation. We should cite only other members of our own tribe and ideally only the elders of the tribe. So for instance, we can cite Duck but only for his papers written before 1986 or so, but then again we would never cite an 80s paper.

The bible for social psychology is the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* or as it is usually just called *JPSP*. Any self-respecting social psychologist will tell you that it is only the first two sections of the journal that matter. Publishing in the third section, *Personality and Individual Differences*, is considered a black mark.

The organizational structure of our tribe is hierarchical. For years, it was ruled by the person memory boys (some of whom were not boys), but today we are lorded over by the social cognition group. They have caused quite a stir by encouraging us to abandon deception research and have people sit in front of computers and have them respond to images that they do not even see. These senior elders have even convinced us that this is *social* psychology. It is said that elders receive a crossover X tattoo on some private part of their bodies. Given the hierarchical nature of discipline, it is totally permissible at meetings to stop talking with someone of

lower status, even mid-sentence, to be able to speak to a higher-status elder.

Finally, in social psychology it is entirely acceptable to take an old idea and repackage it as a new idea. It helps that no one ever reads anything that is not more than five years old. So we can change self-fulfilling prophecy to behavioral confirmation and assumed similarity to false consensus bias. Alternatively, we have two names for the same thing: correspondence bias and fundamental error of attribution.

The major organization of social psychology is Society of Experimental Psychology (note the word “experimental” psychology). You cannot join this group but rather you have to voted in. Most people are especially proud to be members, despite the fact that most of them were not voted in during their first year of eligibility. Non-members can only attend the meeting as a guest and you are told to leave the room when the organization is having its business meeting.

Despite all of this I am proud to call myself a social psychologist. I am reminded of a character in Boccaccio’s Decameron who was asked given the corruption and hypocrisy that he observed in the medieval Roman Catholic Church, how could he remain a Catholic? The person replied that if such a corrupt organization could survive this long, it must be divine.

Spring 2008

Understudied Relationships

By David A. Kenny

Most of the early studies in the emerging field of close relationships examined dating couples. What comes to mind are the pioneering studies of Berscheid and Walster. As our field began to develop, researchers began to study other types of relationships and researchers soon realized that they could establish a reputation by studying new types of relationships. For instance, Carol Masheter studied divorced couples, Gregory Guldner studied long-distance relationships, Glenn Adams studied enemies, Karen Allen studied relationships with pets, Rebecca Adams studied friendships between people who wore tied-dyed shirts, Miles Patterson examined gynecologist and patient relationships, and Tracy Gleason studied relationships with imaginary friends. Researchers also learned that you could study romantic relationships in strange places like standing on a bridge (Art Aron) or saying goodbye at an airport (Chris Fraley), obviously a pre-September 11th study.

The young investigator might despair that all possible relationships and situations have been taken. However, this is just not the case. There is a gold mine of possible relationships that could be

studied. As an assist to the young investigator seeking to create a new niche or to the senior (i.e., over-the-hill and picking up speed) researcher seeking a new topic, I present here is a list of some relationships and possible research questions.

Humans and extra-terrestrials:

In these relationships we could extend our understanding of physical attractiveness. Would extra-terrestrials find humans attractive who had a low waste-to-hip ratio and high facial symmetry? Of course, we might have some difficulty finding enough extra-terrestrials to have a sufficient sample size. We should be comforted by the fact that one survey has shown that 5 million Americans, including erstwhile presidential US candidate Dennis Kucinich, have seen extra-terrestrials. At a very small cost we could send questionnaires with stimulus materials to people with instructions "To be opened only when you meet an extraterrestrial." Alternatively, just post the study on the web and limit it only to extra-terrestrials.

Pregnant woman and fetus:

While it might be difficult to have a fetus fill out a questionnaire, I think we could easily investigate synchrony and motor mimicry. We could ask the woman to kick and see if the fetus kicks. We could also, of course with proper safeguards, ask the pregnant woman to stand on her head and see if the baby also turns upside down. The results of such research might well end up in

a United States Supreme Court decision but I do not want to wade into that issue.

Executioner and victim:

One difficulty in the study of forgiveness is finding dyads in which one member has clearly committed a transgression against another person. With executioner and victim we have a nearly ideal situation. There is the difficulty that most civilized countries have banned capital punishment. We can take comfort that the United States, The People's Republic of China, and Iran seem eager to provide us with data of this type. An alternative would be use archival data and examine the executions of Thomas More, Marie Antoinette, and Joan of Arc.

Within-person person perception:

We could find seek out people with dissociative identity disorder (what lay people commonly call people with "split personalities") and have them make ratings of their other personalities. As a fictional example, we could ask Jekyll to rate Hyde and Hyde to rate Jekyll. In such a way, we can examine complementarity in perceptions of dissociative individuals. This study would be the ultimate in "using the person as their own control."

Editor and author:

I would think this might be a productive area of study, especially if we are interested in studying negative perceptions. We could ask authors to rate editors on laziness, imperceptivity, pettiness, procrastination, haughtiness, anal attention to detail, and insensitivity.

We could ask editors to rate authors on persistence, sloppiness, failure to follow procedures, self-absorption, and impatience.

Customer and lap dancer:

I promise the reader that I am primarily relying on accounts here from movies, but it would seem to fertile ground to test theories hypotheses about exchange relationships. Likely a critical outcome in the analysis would be "bills stuffed per minute." I wish to note that the technical name for the research design is the "one with many" design.

Hospital patient and staff worker:

This is a wonderful opportunity where it is typically the case that the person who normally has more power and status is placed in a situation where they wear a robe that exposes most of their posterior, is bathed by total strangers, and other things that even I dare not mention.

Conjoined twins: The politically incorrect term for such twins is Siamese twins. They present a marvelous opportunity to study face-to-face interaction. What other relationship do you know of where one person observes the other person every waking hour of every day of existence? Also if one of the participants shows up, you know the other one is sure to come. Also there are no worries about dreaded relationship dissolution. The behavioral geneticist must feel depressed that it is so difficult to enroll any conjoined twins reared apart.

Suicide-bomber and spouse:

There is obviously a catch 22 here. If you study these couples after the event, you have missing data, and if you study them before the event you will be labeled as a terrorist. For the male bombers, I would be very curious about how his wife feels about her partner being with 72 virgins in the afterlife. No wonder there are no American suicide bombers. We would be too afraid that one of our 72 virgins would be Mother Teresa or John Paul II.

Talk-show host and sidekick:

With the plethora of talk shows on television, we can content analyze the interactions between these two. One possible area of study is the ingratiating comments made by the sidekick. The other might be a discourse analysis on how so much talk has so little content. Another idea is to look for Duchene smiles and laughs in these interactions.

I look forward to reading research on these relationship in *Personal Relations* and *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. Make sure you thank me in the acknowledgements. Upon further reflection, maybe it would be better if you did not thank me.

Spring 2010

Eldrick & Elin (with apologies to Anni-Frid, Björn, Benny, and Agnetha)

By David A. Kenny

We are especially fortunate to have been able to interview Eldrick (aka Tiger) Tont Woods and Elin Woods. Elin is a psychology major at Rollins College in Winter Park Florida USA, and this interview was done to complete her course assignment on personal growth. As we shall see, Tiger too has been learning about relationship science to help him better understand his situation. The interviewer asked to remain anonymous, but it can be disclosed that he has a high golf handicap and is one- eighth Swedish.

Interviewer: Let me get right to it. Tiger, why is that you were unfaithful?

Tiger: Evolutionary psychologists say that all men are addicted to sex. However, I have recently learned about priming from cognitive psychology and I think it was all but inevitable that being a golf pro would lead to sexual adventures. With all the references to “stiff shafts,” “washing of balls,” “playing in threesomes and foursomes,” and “playing a round,” unconscious messages were being given to me to cheat. I am the victim of unconscious priming.

Interviewer: Elin, I ask you the same question. Why do you think Tiger was unfaithful to you?

Elin: I think it is all due to Buddhism, which he has learned from his mother, Lula. People think of Buddhism in terms of reincarnation, “life as a journey,” and other such things. But what Buddhism really teaches is to be free of attachments. They do not believe that attachments can or should ever be “secure.” Tiger learned that lesson all too well.

Interviewer: I think the one question that we all want to ask you, Tiger, is how can you manage to simultaneously maintain relationships with as many as 12 different women, one being Elin? Most of us men struggle to find the time or energy to deal with just one woman.

Tiger: I think I am even better at women management than I am at golf course management. I worked as hard on learning how to surreptitiously send text messages as I did on how to make a 50 foot putt. It is also not easy keeping all their names straight. There was Rachel, Kalika, Theresa, Jamie, Holly, Jamie, Mindy, Joslyn, Cori, Julie, and Loredana. Fortunately, from my introductory psychology class at Stanford, I learned about mnemonics and I memorized their names by using one: Robert Kennedy, T. J. Hooker, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Jimmy Clift, and Ludicris. I am also negotiating with Apple for a new “app” for the iPhone which manages text messaging from

multiple partners. It is called “Sexting.”

Interviewer: Elin, your mother was married twice, your parents were divorced, Tiger’s father was twice married, and his parents lived apart for several years. How do you think that each of your experiences with parental marital difficulties have influenced you?

Elin: Yeah I know that the research of Mavis Hetherington on children of divorce is pretty depressing, but I also know that a meta-analysis by Amato and Keith does show relatively small effect sizes. For me, my parents’ divorce made me want to work even harder on my marriage. I think Tiger was more affected by his green-beret father’s infidelity than the separation. He kept saying he did not want to end up like Michael Jackson who was bothered by his father Joe Jackson’s numerous affairs. I guess he did accomplish that goal.

Interviewer: Tiger, you are incredibly ethnically diverse. You are, I believe, one-quarter African-American, one-quarter Chinese, one-quarter Thai, one-eighth American Indian, and one-eighth Dutch. Does your ethnic diversity help you better understand your difficult situation?

Tiger: Yeah, I am more Asian than Black and I joke around with K. J. Choi of Korea that I am the best Asian golfer ever. I really should be described as Tiger Woods, Chinese golfer, as both my parents are part Chinese. Of course, being one-

quarter Chinese did not help me much when I tried to back my Cadillac Escalade out my driveway that November night.

Interviewer: Elin, do you think Tiger’s ethnic diversity is an asset?

Elin: Maybe, but I worry more about the issue of generational incompatibility. Although we are both Capricorns, I am an 80s person, born on January 1, 1980. Tiger is a 70s guy. The one thing we did have in common during our courtship was our love of the Swedish singing group Abba. My pet name for him was Fernando and he called me his Dancing Queen. Now I keep thinking of the Abba lyric from Just Like That: “He made a temporary home in my flat, telling innocent lies, blowing dust in my eyes.”

Tiger: And I keep thinking of S.O.S. and “When you’re gone, though I try how can I carry on?”

Elin: And I think of “Knowing me and knowing you” and “Silence ever after, walking through an empty house, tears in my eyes. Here is where the story ends, this is goodbye.”

Interviewer: I can only say “Mamma mia!” I guess Maybe it is fitting that we ended with Abba, the group with two married couples, who divorced and tried to continue working together, but could not. I want to thank you both for taking the time to share with us your personal reactions during this most difficult time. Both the readers of

this newsletter and I sincerely wish
you and your two children, Sam and
Charlie our best.

Fall 2010

Honey, what did you do at work today?

By David A. Kenny

When I got home yesterday, my wife asked me this question and I thought I would share with you my answer.

I got to work at 8:30 in the morning and I had plans to finish the paper I was working on with Tessa West. It should only take about one hour to finish it and I thought I would be able to get that paper done and sneak away at 3PM and play nine holes of golf before dinner. Walking into my building, I ran into one of my students, Randi Garcia, who reminded me that I had a deadline that day to finish a letter of recommendation for an undergraduate who had worked in my lab. I said, "Sure, I can do that." When I got into my office, I finished that letter. I noticed I had a voicemail and it was from the IRB office (the ethics office) and they told me that my authorization for a study that I was conducting would expire in the next week and I had not asked for a renewal. They told me I had gotten emails, and I did indeed find those emails buried in my spam folder. I revised the IRB form and it was now 9:30AM. I then remembered I had galley proofs from a European publisher that was overdue. I realized that it was 4PM

now in Europe and I proofed the paper and sent it off at 10:00AM. I went to the bathroom and there I met with my department head Skip Lowe and we talked about how Terry Francona, the manager of the baseball team the Red Sox, should have put Papelbon into last night's game in the bottom of the eighth. I returned to my office and I noticed that I had 5 unread emails, one interesting one from a Nigerian banker, but I did not have time to read that one. I did notice that there was one email from my dean asking faculty to provide him, as soon as possible, a list of our most important publications in the last five years and a 100 word description of each. This was needed for a website that was being designed and the deadline was right way. So I did that. I also noticed that there was an email from a student saying that he was having his dissertation defense later today. He said he met Steps 2 and 3 of Baron & Kenny, but not 1 and 4 and did he have mediation? If he did not have mediation he would fail his defense. I wrote and told him he had mediation and he would get his PhD. I then saw that Linda Acitelli had told me on Facebook about a YouTube video I had to watch. I checked it out, and for five minutes watched a spider on drugs.

I noticed now it was 10:45 and I had class in 15 minutes and I had yet to print out the homework assignment. I got that done and literally ran to my class. I lectured until 11:50, and then a student in my class said that he absolutely had to talk to me and could I spare 5 minutes. I said

“Sure.” Forty-five minutes later, after hearing about trips to the vet with his pet dog and problems with his car’s transmission, he finally came to the point and asked for a two-week extension on a paper that was due next week. I said, “Sure you can have the extension.”

Feeling the onset of a headache I went to the front office to get a cup of coffee and saw my secretary Steve Arnold, who took 10 minutes to explain the latest change in foreign travel rules. After that, my department secretary Judy had me sign some “time and effort reports” and I heard about what her children were doing. I then had to tell her about my children and show her a picture of my granddaughter. In the hallway, I ran into another of my undergraduate advisees, and she asked me if I could sign a form, and I said “Sure.” On my way to my office I ran into Garvin Boudle our IT specialist. He told me something about the latest news about Macs. I hate Macs but I know Garvin loves them and I pretend to be interested and keep saying “Sure.”

It was 1:00PM when I returned to my office. I heard my cell phone beep and I noticed I had a text message. It was from my cell phone (mobile) provider who told me that they were offering me a great deal. I erased the message. Just then a publisher’s representative knocked on my door and asked me if I had any book projects. She pretended to be interested as I described in great detail a masterpiece summary of my life’s work that I planned to write. Then she asked me if I had seen the

marvelous new social psychology textbook that her company had provided. I realized that I had gotten the book last week but I had sold it already to a book dealer. I said, “Sure, I got the book and I am considering adopting it.”

Realizing now that it was 2PM and I had not had lunch, I hit the vending machine for a Diet Coke and package of Cheetos. I go back to my office ready to work on Tessa’s paper and I see that Windows is in the middle of installing 14 updates. I wait 10 minutes and then have to reboot my computer. Just then, my next door colleague, Crystal Park, came in and asked if I had time to answer a quick question about mediation. She assured me it would take only 5 minutes. I said “Sure, I can,” and 45 minutes later, she left fully informed about the bootstrapping of indirect effects using the Hayes and Preacher macro.

My work phone then rang and it was the Police Benevolent Society asking me if I wanted to donate to their charity. I told them to send me something in the mail. Needing a sugar boost I went and bought a Snickers candy bar. It was now 3PM and I realized that I would not be able to play golf today, but I would have plenty of time to finish Tessa’s paper. Just then Jim Green knocked on my door and told me there was a crisis in the Quantitative Certificate program. Someone had taken several quantitative classes but not at the University of Connecticut. He wanted to know if they were still eligible for the certificate. I said,

“Sure,” but somehow it took me a half hour to say “Sure,” as we had to discuss the implications of the serious precedent that we were establishing. Just as Jim was leaving, my phone rang and it was my son who lives in Hawaii. He told me he had a friend who had just written an MA thesis on the teaching of martial arts in the schools and my son asked, as a favor to him, could I read it and give his friend feedback. I said, “Sure.”

It was now 4PM and I remembered that I had promised my wife I would get her a birthday card for her sister’s birthday. I ran over to the bookstore and got what I thought was a funny card. I realized I had no cash, so I ran over to the ATM of the bank next door and got some money to pay for the card. I spent about 5 minutes trying to remember my PIN.

I got back to my office, and at my door is my ex-student Kathy LaFontana, who was on campus today to visit a friend of hers. I invited Kathy into my office and we caught up on each other’s lives. Kathy left at 4:45, and I finally went to open Tessa’s paper to work on it. However, I realized that I had three different versions of her paper, TessaLatest.doc, TessaFinal.doc, and TessaCurrent.doc. I saw that TessaLatest was the newest version and I started to edit that paper. However, after doing this for five minutes, I saw that I had the wrong version. The right version was TessaFinal. I closed TessaCurrent and started to edit TessaFinal.

At 5:30, I was just finishing up my editing, somehow getting an hour’s work done in one-half an hour, and I got a phone call from my wife reminding me that we were expected for dinner that night with the Smiths’ at 6:30. As I was talking to her, I absentmindedly closed TessaFinal, and when I was prompted if I wanted to save the changes, I mistakenly checked “no.” I lost all of my changes. I packed up my things to go home, only to see email from Tessa West with the heading: WHERE THE BLEEP IS THE PAPER YOU PROMISED ME TODAY?!?!?

So what did I tell my wife about what I did at work today? I told her the honest truth: “Honey, I SURE got nothing done today.”

Spring 2011

May I “Zuckerberg” You?

By David A. Kenny

I realize that most of the older readers (i.e., those over 30) have little idea what Facebook is all about, and many of us think that it is just a way to self-aggrandize and show cute pictures of children and pets. However, we need to realize that Facebook is making relationship research more difficult. Here is why: Many of us in this organization study friendship. However, it is now almost impossible for us to study friendship because Facebook has changed its meaning. Let me explain.

As relationship researchers, we know quite a bit about friendship, and a brief summary is as follows: Unless you are four years old, you do not ask someone to become your friend. Friendship just happens, and need not necessarily be reciprocal. In fact, some studies estimate the probability of reciprocation as less than 50 percent. So, perhaps about half of your friends consider you to be their friend. Ordinarily, there is no breakup in friendship. Think about your adolescent friends. You are no longer friends with many of them, but you never broke up. Also, you do not have that many friends. There is the “Dunbar number” which is the total size of your network, and that number is 150. However, about only 12 or less

people in this network are real friends. If you do not believe me, take a look at Michael Argyle’s rules of friendship and you will see that not very many members of your network would qualify as friends. For instance, how many people would help you move the books in your office to another office? Not that many. Besides, friends are real people. Of course, some of us have imaginary friends, like Bogus (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0115725/>), but by and large, for almost everyone, a friend is a real person. Lastly, “friend” is a noun.

Facebook has changed friendship. First, “friend” is now a verb: You “friend” someone. (Changing nouns to verbs or denominalization is an ugly trend in language: Stewardesses now say that they have “beveraged” the passengers.) Second, becoming a friend now requires a conscious choice. Thus, you know exactly who your friends are. Third, friendship is reciprocal. If someone “friends” you on Facebook, you have to accept or reject them. The norm is that if someone “friends” you, you have to accept them. It would be very rude to reject their request, and you would need to come up with all sorts of excuses for not accepting the invitation. Fourth, you have a lot of friends. A friend (both real and Facebook) of mine’s daughter has 576 friends and I know a graduate student who has 434 friends. Solange Sfeir from Beirut Lebanon, who owns Smile Dental Journal (no I am not making this up), has 4,986 friends! She seems to collect friends the way Kardashians collect boyfriends.

Fifth, if you are friends with someone, it is difficult to no longer be their friend. Defriending someone is just not done. In fact, Facebook etiquette dictates that it is only acceptable to defriend an ex-boyfriend or girlfriend. But normally, you would not even do that, because you want to know what they are up to. In fact, one recent survey found that 81 percent of all respondents would not defriend an ex on Facebook, and 75 percent admitted to constantly checking an ex's Facebook page.

Sadly, we can no longer study friendship because Facebook has distorted the meaning of the term. As a case in point, I looked at the 63 friends that I have on Facebook and a good number are family members, some of which I would consider friends and some not, and others are coworkers, not all of whom are my friends. Several of my best friends are not on Facebook and so they are not included. So my Facebook "friends" are not really my friends.

Something needs to be done and I have sent the following email to Mark Zuckerberg, son of a Psychiatrist and a dentist and the founder (I guess co-founder with those blond Harvard Winklevoss twins and that Brazilian dude, Eduardo Saverin) of Facebook:

Mark: You do not know me (unless you have seen my 1000 acre farm on Farmville for which I paid over \$2000), but I think it is really cool that you get to party with people like Justin Timberlake, are worth

(according to Forbes) \$13.5 billion, and Obama comes to you for advice. We owe so much to that BU coed who dumped you, which led to you inventing Facebook. By the way, even though I am a dude too, I think it still ok for me to say that you are much sexier than Jesse Eisenberg. That dude has not memorized passages of Homer's Iliad and does not know the difference between an epée and a foil, like you do. I have a cool suggestion for you, dude: Because you are so awesome (over 3.7 million people like your Facebook page!), why not change the word on Facebook from "friend" to "Zuckerberg"? So you would Zuckerberg someone and deZuckerberg someone else. Think if you branded your name, you could then sell it for all sorts of things, and you would then be worth more than Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, and that Mexican oil guy Carlos Slim combined! Also, if you change "friend" to "Zuckerberg" maybe Syria, China, Vietnam, and Iran would no longer realize that Facebook is a social networking site and no longer ban it. By the way, when you use this idea I promise that I will not sue you for stealing my idea. I would however ask you to Zuckerberg me.

Fall 2011

The Story of Co

by David A. Kenny

As relationship researchers, we study all sorts of relationships. Sophia Jowett and Ben Jackson have each studied coach-athlete dyads, Glenn Adams has studied enemies in Ghana, Sam Gosling has studied human-canine relationships, and Jonathan Cohen has studied para-social relationships a person has with a fictional character. In a *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* paper, I even investigated the fictional relationship between Norm and Cliff from the television show *Cheers*. However, the relationship between coauthors has not been given much study. This is very surprising as this type of relationship is critical for our own success, as well as for scientific progress.

The most common type of co-authorship is dyadic, about 40 percent according to Nemeth and Goncalo (2005), which is greater than the 32 percent for solo authored papers. Also, there is evidence that the trend is toward work becoming increasingly collaborative. If we think of some of the most important work in our field, co-authored papers and books come to mind: Hazan and Shaver, Spitzberg and Cupach, Berscheid and Walster, Baxter and Wilmot, and Thibault and Kelley, to name

just a few. Of the most cited papers in the *Journal of Personal and Social Relationships*, 5 of the top 10 are two- authored papers, the most highly cited being Rusbult and Buunk (1993). I bet if you check your vitae, you will see that most of your co-authored papers are with just one other person. For me, about half of my papers have one co-author.

One thing inherent in co-authorship is that unlike the other “co’s” such as: cohabitation, co-conspirator, copilot, and coworker, being a coauthor is not a relationship between equals, no matter what might say be said. Authors are always listed in an order, and despite what any footnote says, one person is the first author and the other is the second. Being first author is a big deal and do not let anyone, especially your major advisor, tell you anything different. Second authors, despite good intentions, often get the short end of the stick. The first author almost always gets more credit and more of the goodies gained from publication. In fact, this has been quantified, and in some systems the first author is given three times more credit than the second author.

Sometimes it can even happen that a second author works harder than the first author. On a paper I wrote with Bella DePaulo, she was second author, but she largely wrote the paper, she gathered the new data for that paper, and she battled the editor, Bob Sternberg, to get the paper into *Psychological Bulletin*, after it had been rejected by

Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin. How did Bella end up being the second author? We had agreed to co-author two papers and take turns being first author and she was first author on the first paper and second on the second. Although it is important to agree on order of authorship early in the process, sometimes circumstances change and prior commitments make it difficult to change the order of authorship. In retrospect I feel guilty about what happened, but at the time it never crossed my mind that we should reverse the order of authorship. Things do have a way of equaling out. I have many second-authored papers, where I have done the bulk of the work (or at least I feel that way).

Like any relationship, coauthors can have a breakup. I have twice “dumped” a coauthor, and both times it has been most unpleasant for me, and I imagine even worse for my dumped ex-coauthor. Other times, I have bitten the bullet and not ditched a lazy co-author, when perhaps I should have. I remember a few other times, while editing a manuscript I have added a minor thanks to someone in the acknowledgement section of the paper or in a footnote, only to realize later that the person already was a coauthor. They had contributed so little that I had forgotten they were my co-author. Then, there was a case of someone who was my secret coauthor without my knowing. The nameless person, who was up for tenure, sent off a paper to a major journal listing me as a co-author, and I had no knowledge of the

paper. Fortunately, my “co-author” sent me a copy of the paper, and when I requested it, took my name off. Perhaps even stranger, is that I once met a fellow who insisted we had written a paper together and we never had.

There are clear benefits to having a coauthor. Best is to find coauthors who actually like to do the stuff you hate to do. One of the reasons I love to write papers with Charles Judd or Deborah Kashy is that they are both very detail oriented and work very hard to get things right. Of course, it does not hurt that they are also both very smart and write a lot better than I do. Also, because I am a lousy data gather, I need to find people who gather their own data (more on this later). For me, one of the key functions of a coauthor is supplying the other desk to get the damn paper off my desk and onto someone else’s. Perhaps the most annoying thing a coauthor can do is to return the paper, with his or her changes, in less than a week. You want conscientious coauthors but not too conscientious ones.

There are several things I hate that some co-authors do: 1) Add or delete references in the text, but not update the bibliography, 2) Cite themselves needlessly. 3) Edit the wrong version of the paper, or edit the paper when they should know that I have not finish editing, 4) Says “Rewrite” or “I do not like this part” without making changes or specific suggestions, 5) Adds a proposed citation that reads “xxxx”, 6) Keeping the paper for months, saying they are working on it, but

clearly they have not, and 7) They are responsible for an entire section of the paper but write only a few short sentences. I have to admit, I have been guilty of doing all of these things, especially the very last one.

To see an example of authors who were exasperated by a coauthor not finishing an assignment, check out Chapters 8 and 9 of the book *Unobtrusive Measures* by Webb et al (1966). They gave up waiting for Donald Campbell to write those chapters, and they decided to include only the chapter title and an opening quote, but no text!

How do you find a coauthor? It is a little like finding a date. One of my colleagues found a coauthor at a bar during a conference. Of course, people find most collaborators who work with them as students, postdocs, supervisors, or colleagues. People sometimes write papers with a sibling (e.g., the Fiskes) and I have written one with my daughter. People often write papers with their spouse, e.g., the Sarasons and the Arons, a thought that does not appeal much to me. If I wrote a paper with my spouse, then who would I complain to about my indolent, apathetic and obtuse coauthor? Earlier I mentioned that I need others to collect data. Of course, my students have been my major source, but I have often sent "cold" letters to people requesting data. The first dataset that I obtained was from Timothy Curry at Ohio State when I was a graduate student and Timothy was coauthor, actually first author, on the paper. I milked that dataset nicely, using it

three more times, once some 25 years later. I once found a coauthor after giving a talk at a conference. Zipora Shechtman heard me speak, after the talk we planned a study, and she did all of the data gathering work in Israel.

You might be tempted to seek out a coauthor to take advantage of the halo effect. If you can coauthor a paper with someone famous, perhaps some of the fame of that person will shine on you. No doubt such a phenomenon occurs. One problem with coauthoring papers with famous people is very often they are too busy and they do little or no to work on your paper. So, you end up doing almost everything. I remember once writing a paper with someone eminent who contributed almost nothing except to suggest adding a few sentences here and there. When the paper came back after review, the reviewers mainly wanted us to take out those sentences. Also the fame of a famous coauthor may shine so brightly, that no one will even notice you. All too often in two-authored papers, the less senior or renowned person gets little or no credit even if the celebrity is the second author.

However, contrast effects can sometimes occur. If you write a good paper with someone who had a less than stellar reputation, you might get even more of the credit. I will never forget a comment made by Tom Pettigrew. After we heard a social psychologist, who had written a well-known coauthored textbook, give a boring and virtually incomprehensible talk, Tom told me

he now had an increased respect for the speaker's coauthor. No doubt after reading this column, your opinion of Reuben Baron will have been greatly enhanced.