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Abstracts
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POSTER PRESENTATIONS

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The Relationship Between Chronotype and Stress on Memory Accuracy in Adult Females

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Memory is a complex and imperfect system of the retention of information, and memory accuracy is susceptible to false memories. Learning and stress within the same context has been found to enhance memory accuracy, and this has also shown to reduce false memory production in females. However, there is limited research that has assessed the impact of morningness-eveningness preference, or chronotype, on memory accuracy when individuals are stressed. Chronotype has various implications for cognitive performance, with morning-type individuals performing better in the morning, and evening-type individuals performing better in the evening. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that evening-type females have greater negative affect and poorer sleep quality, which may heighten the perception of stress. The current research aims to explore the relationship of chronotype and brief, physiological stress on memory accuracy in adult women. Participants were separated into morning-type or evening-type as measured by the Morningness-Eveningness Questionnaire (Horne & Östberg, 1976). The Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) and Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21) were administered to measure sleep quality and negative affect, respectively. The study involved a morning and evening condition and stress was induced by the cold pressor test (CPT) prior to memory testing. A short audio story was implemented in each condition after the CPT and participants were asked to freely recall the story and answer recognition questions. Results will be discussed in the light of existing theory and research.

Keywords: memory, chronotype, physiological stress, sleep quality, adult females
The Effect of Pet Ownership on Social Skills and Empathy for People 
with Autism Spectrum Disorder EDDINGTON, V. (Honours, 2015) & 
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The aim of the present study was to investigate the effect pet ownership had on the 
social skills and empathy of adolescents and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Six 
participants with Autism Spectrum Disorder participated in the study, one of them 
female, with ages ranging from 12-79 years. This mixed methods within groups study 
combined scores from the Empathy Quotient, Social Responsiveness Scale, 2nd Edition 
and Interpersonal Reactivity Index subscales of empathic concern and perspective taking 
with observation and interview questions. Descriptive results were obtained in addition 
to correlations between variables and Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis was used 
to analyse the qualitative data. Pearson’s correlation coefficients showed that the 
participants’ score on the SRS-2 was significantly related to the age they were when they 
first owned a pet, \( r = .90, 95\% \text{ BCa CI [.28, .99]} \), \( p = .014 \). This correlation was still 
significant when age was accounted for, \( r = .93, 95\% \text{ BCa CI [.46, .99]} \), \( p = .024 \). In 
addition, participants’ \( T \) scores derived from normed data indicate that within the ASD 
population, the participants’ empathy scores were above average, whereas within the 
typically developed population, the participants’ empathy and social skills scores were 
mostly below average. Two superordinate themes emerged from the qualitative data. 
These were the experience of unconditional love and autonomy.

**Keywords:** Autism, pet ownership, social skills, empathy, socio-emotional 
functioning
Discrimination Against Persons who Inject Performance and Image Enhancing Drugs KASSIS, A. (Honours, 2014) & INNES, J. M. (Supervisor)
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This study used a newly created validated vignette to explore how causality attributions and essentialist thinking influence negative emotional reactions and discriminatory behaviour against persons who inject performance and image enhancing drugs (PIEDs). Australian participants completed pre-existing questionnaires regarding causality attributions, responsibility, anger, fear, pity, essentialist thinking, social distance, helping behaviour and support for coercive treatment. Internal causality attributions towards persons who inject PIEDs were associated with responsibility, anger, fear, less helping, strong support for coercive treatment and high social distance. External causality was related to low attributions of responsibility, high pity, high fear, high anger and support for coercive treatment. Females showed greater attributions of fear and anger and discrimination for the majority of discrimination measures. Essentialist thinking toward persons who inject PIEDs was found to influence helping behaviour and support for coercive treatment when controlling for causality and gender effects. Essentialist thinking also accounted for the variance of internal causality attributions on support for coercive treatment. These findings add to the literature base of discrimination and persons who inject drugs, PIEDs in particular.

Keywords: performance and image enhancing drugs, injecting drug use, discrimination
Smartphone online sexual activities (SOSA) are a recently evolved form of online sexual activities (OSA). Research suggests problems online sexuality poses to individuals developing their sexual identity. There is also evidence indicates emerging adults as frequent users of SOSA, pointing to a need to investigate the effects of SOSA use on these sexually developing populations. There is evidence linking OSA use to lower sexual and psychological well-being, which suggests SOSA could negatively affect these vulnerable populations. Research pertaining to OSA suggests SOSA may expose users to greater levels of sexual racism, and through exposure to sexual racism, negatively impact well-being. The present research sought to investigate the demographic use of SOSA and the effects of SOSA on self-reported experiences of sexual racism, subjective well-being and sexual well-being for emerging adults. Eighty-two emerging adult males and females aged between 18 and 30 years ($M = 23.77$, $SD = 3.35$) completed an online survey concerning their SOSA use and experiences of sexual racism, satisfaction with life and sexual well-being. Results indicated that SOSAs were primarily used for seeking romantic relationships and seeking casual sex, supporting predictions from previous researchers. Furthermore, results demonstrated that SOSA use affects well-being, with those reporting use of SOSAs recording significantly lower satisfaction with life. SOSA use, however, was unrelated to experiences of sexual racism and sexual well-being in this sample. These discoveries and sample limitations suggest the importance of further research into the effects of SOSA on emerging adults.

*Keywords:* smartphone online sexual activities, online sexual activities, sexual well-being, psychological well-being, sexual racism
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This meta-analysis aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of early intervention (EI) programs for children with intellectual disabilities (ID). Given the broad array of literature on EI, the current study aimed to explore the nature and distribution of effect sizes for EI programs targeting cognition, communication, and social-adaptive behaviour within the ID population. Further, through exploratory analyses of methodological and clinically relevant moderator variables, the study aimed to identify which factors had a significant relationship with EI outcome. Effect size measures (g) were computed for 60 studies that satisfied inclusion criteria to determine the change from pre- to post-intervention. Results revealed large mean effect sizes across outcomes, indicating that EIs targeting cognition, social-adaptive behaviour, and communication were highly efficacious. Regression models showed that moderator variables did not have a significant relationship with effect size, suggesting that such factors do not influence EI outcome. These results challenge previous EI literature, suggesting that practicalities of successful administration of EI programs may be less critical than researchers have previously advocated. Progressive refinements in our understanding of the administration of EI within the ID population can further advance clinical application and contribute to the current understanding of how ID should be treated.

Keywords: early intervention, children, intellectual disabilities, meta-analysis
The problem of gambling in Australia has traditionally been conceived of sociologically through the term ‘problem gambling’; however, in recent decades this scope has shifted to the individual level, and as such the problem of gambling in Australia is now conceived of through psychiatric discourse. I will argue that the psychiatric discourse which associates Gambling Disorder with the Brain Disease Model of Addiction (BDMA) is problematic, as through this association, excessive gambling behaviour changes from naturally fluctuating to unnaturally static. In order to critique the association between Gambling Disorder and the BDMA, I conducted a critical examination of the BDMA through the Cross-Level Dynamic Biocultural Coconstructivism Framework. This enabled me to: (1) highlight the way in addiction is a culturally induced evolutionary construct, rather than a ‘brain disease’, and (2) position the BDMA within a broad culturally induced evolutionary narrative, and as such empirically critique the association of Gambling Disorder and the BDMA through evolutionary discourse. My empirical investigation adopted the Game of Chicken to measure Evolutionary Stable Strategy, and adopted the Reasons for Gambling Questionnaire to measure a tendency for being diagnosed with a Gambling Disorder. I hypothesised that there would be a significant correlation between a high Evolutionary Stable Strategy and a tendency to be diagnosed with a Gambling Disorder. My analysis revealed some support for this hypothesis; however, given the existence of confounding variables in the Game of Chicken, there were also some unexpected findings revealed. I argued that it is evolutionarily illogical to associate Gambling Disorder with BDMA, as the BDMA treats individuals within it as diseased.

Keywords: Gambling Disorder, Brain Disease Model of Addiction, Cross-Level Dynamic Biocultural Coconstructivism Framework, evolutionary stable strategy, game of chicken
The present study aimed to identify whether mindfulness has a relationship with resilience. Resilience was classified using the Resilience Classification Framework (Mutimer, Reece, & Matthews, 2007), a statistical method where individuals were grouped into one of four groups according to their level of stress (past and current) and their general wellness. The study investigated the differences in mindfulness levels across multiple mindfulness measures. The results indicated that mindfulness levels differ between resilient and non-resilient individuals. Furthermore, the results showed that mindfulness scores were also unexpectedly higher for individuals classified as At Risk (high stress and low wellness) when compared with the other resilience groups. The findings from this study contribute to the body of resilience research and help to fill the gap in the literature which explores the relationships between mindfulness and resilience. Furthermore, the findings suggest there are a number of implications for future research studies to consider such as using a broader population to allow for gender, sex and cultural differences to be examined, and measuring mindfulness as a predictor of resilience.

*Keywords*: mindfulness, resilience, wellness, stress, adults
The Effectiveness of Psychological Interventions in the Management of Pain in Adult Cancer Populations: A Meta-Analytic Review
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Objective: By 2020, the number of new cancer diagnoses in Australia will rise to 150,000 new cases per year, of whom many are likely to experience chronic pain during and/or after their disease. This paper will describe the effectiveness of psychological interventions for chronic pain for adult patients with cancer using a meta-analysis.

Methods: The electronic databases, MEDLINE, Embase, PsycINFO and CINAHL and reference list reviews yielded 845 controlled studies published between 2000 and 2015 evaluating psychological interventions for chronic cancer-related pain. Studies were assessed using The Cochrane Collaboration’s tool for assessing risk of bias. The analysis was conducted using Comprehensive Meta-Analysis software.

Results: 143 studies were found to be duplicates, 681 were excluded at title and abstract review and a final 11 were excluded after full paper review. 10 studies met the inclusion criteria and included 1,598 participants with 919 people in the intervention group and 679 in the control group. While in most cases the intervention was favoured in relation to the control, there were insufficient studies incorporating solely chronic pain as a criterion for them to be comparable in this respect. Therefore, with advancements in cancer research, more current findings in managing chronic pain are required.

Conclusions: The findings suggest that the different types of interventions are effective in stabilising or reducing pain intensity. This information can help clinicians manage pain in adult cancer populations. Future research could consider reporting whether patients have chronic pain as many studies using cognitive-behavioural therapy are missing from the analysis. This would ensure we could ascertain the most effective treatment amongst varying intervention types and chronic pain.

Keywords: cancer, pain management, adults, psychological interventions
Past research reveals internalization of the thin-ideal and subscription to gender-based discourses, indicated by the uptake of body surveillance and self-silencing, are significant variables effecting the disordered eating attitudes in fully-sighted women. It is uncertain as to how visual aspects of these variables predict the disordered eating attitudes of women who are legally blind. Past research has revealed internalization of the thin-ideal in women living with vision impairment is a significant predictor of disordered eating attitudes in these women. However, women with vision impairment also report significantly lower disordered eating attitudes compared with fully-sighted controls. The current study therefore explored how internalization of the thin-ideal and subscription to gender-based discourses, indicated by the uptake of body surveillance and self-silencing, predicted the disordered eating attitudes of 80 women who are legally blind. Participants completed an online survey comprising existing validated measures of all variables. Results revealed internalization of the thin-ideal was associated with greater levels of body surveillance and self-silencing as two separate gender related discourses, both of which independently predicted higher levels of body shame and subsequent disordered eating attitudes. Results support that women living with vision impairment are susceptible to internalizing harmful messages related to socio-cultural standards of beauty, and provide further support for including the subscription to gender-related discourses in understanding women’s body-image disturbances. The current study also emphasises the importance of body shame as a direct predictor in the mediation pathway which predicts disordered eating attitudes in women living with vision impairment.

**Keywords:** vision impairment, disordered eating attitudes, objectification, body surveillance, body shame, self-silencing, thin-ideal internalization
“It was just another bump on the head”: A phenomenological exploration into the experience of concussion
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Research has identified that concussions, especially in the case of multiple concussions, are not as innocent as once believed. The recent literature focuses on the physical symptomology of concussion and the potential long-term consequences associated with concussion. Currently, literature regarding psychosocial effects related to concussions is scarce.

Towards this end, the present qualitative research study used a semi-structured interview to investigate the lived experience of concussion from two viewpoints; that of those who have sustained a concussion, and from those who have cared for an individual that had sustained a concussion. The interviews provided an in-depth narrative of the participant’s personal experience of the effects of a concussion.

Using an Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA), the narratives revealed that the experience for carers was that caring for a person with a concussion could be a burden and emotionally draining, as the incident occurred outside of their control. The participants who sustained a concussion demonstrated a level of awareness and knowledge pre- and post- injury. Furthermore, when perceiving the risks associated with head injuries, participants who had sustained a concussion described it as “mild, compared to what it could have been,” and that all risks were ‘calculated’. A major theme developed from the participants’ experiences of concussion was a list of potential emotional symptoms. This suggests that there might be more of a psychological component to concussion than once realised.

The findings of this study could help to develop ways in which to recognise key behavioural and emotional changes that results from a concussion, subsequently assisting in better diagnostic criteria and potential management of the condition. Future research could differentiate between the different ways of sustaining a concussion and the impact this has on the presentation of symptoms.

Keywords: concussion, head injuries, interpretative phenomenology, psychosocial, emotions, care-giving, qualitative
Technology continues to change our work and home lives. Some of these changes have caused negative impacts on work-life balance and well-being. Such changes include the blurring of the lines between time spent “at work” and “at leisure”, and increasing demands for productivity. New uses for developing technologies could form part of the solution to the increasing negative stressors affecting workers and students. There is an increasing body of research looking at therapeutic applications for gaming consoles, smartphone apps, and virtual reality (VR) devices. This exploratory study sought to investigate one potential positive implementation of developing technologies by creating two 20 minute VR interventions focused on promoting relaxation: one used SoundSelf, a dedicatedly designed interactive meditation-aid VR program, while the other used the audio from a traditional breathing exercise combined with a VR visualiser. A 2x3 mixed methods behavioural study was designed to test the effects of these conditions on participant heart rate, arousal and subjective wellbeing using pre and post self-report questionnaires (including the DASS-21 and PANAS), short answer questions and biometric heart rate monitoring. Preliminary results suggested that participants undertaking a 20 minute VR intervention experienced reduced heart rate, and may experience reductions in arousal and improved subjective well-being.

Keywords: augmented therapy, subjective well-being, technology, arousal, depression, anxiety, DASS, PANAS
Smartphones are superior to previous generation mobile phones in power, functionality and connectivity. Over the last decade, Smartphone use has increased rapidly and the adverse effects of Smartphone use, such as Smartphone addiction and distractibility, have recently been recognized. The current study investigated the distracting effect of Smartphone use and presence of a Smartphone among a general community sample of Smartphone users. The study was conducted in two phases. In Phase 1, participants (N=682) completed an online questionnaire that assessed Smartphone use and distractibility using a cross-sectional, correlational design and the relationship between distractibility and Smartphone use was examined, controlling for age, purpose of Smartphone use, multitasking and Smartphone addiction. In Phase 2 participants (N=334) completed either a cognitively demanding attentional task, the Attentional Blink task, or a less demanding task, the Stroop task, with one of two distracting images present (Smartphone or notebook). In Phase 1, hierarchical logistic regression was used to examine the effect of Smartphone use on distractibility. Smartphone usage time and Smartphone checking frequency were significantly associated with distractibility. However, the relationship between Smartphone usage time and distractibility was not significant after using a Smartphone for recreational purposes was entered into the model. In the final step, the significant predictors of distractibility were Smartphone addiction, Smartphone multitasking, and Smartphone use for work purposes. In Phase 2, task performance was not influenced by presence of an image of a Smartphone. The findings have implications for understanding the protective and risk factors for maladaptive behavioural patterns associated with Smartphone addiction.

**Keywords:** smartphone use, smartphone addiction, distractibility, Stroop task, multitasking
Basketball is a fast-paced and intense sport with complex rules and regulations, making refereeing a game considerably challenging. It is estimated that 600-800 decisions are made by a referee in a typical game. Due to the speed of the game, these split-second decisions are often critical, with both in-game and external consequences affecting player experience and viewership. The main aim of this study was to identify if there is a performance difference between two different groups of referees; player referees and non-player referees. Participants were a specialized group of qualified ‘black and white’ basketball referees, over 18 years of age, from the lowest level of professional referee (grade 1C) to the international level 3. There were a total of 43 referees, of whom 14 were female and 29 male, with 11 participants reported as being non-players and 31 referees reported as playing competitive basketball. Participants were asked to complete a computer task, during which their performance was measured on speed, accuracy and gaze location. Participants were then interviewed on their decision-making process using the Components of Critical Decision Making Questionnaire. The results of the study showed no significant differences between the two groups in performance.

**Keywords:** basketball, human performance, decision making, referees, components of critical decision-making
Students’ dropout intent and academic performance are the two main areas of interest in higher education. This study critically reviewed the theoretical frameworks and past research in both areas, and adapted Herzberg’s two-factor model (1959) to form a single framework that addresses both outcome variables: dropout intent and academic performance. Participants aged 18 and above were recruited from two private colleges, Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP) and Navitas College of Public Safety (NCPS) to complete an online survey designed to collect information on four categories of predictors: background, intrinsic, extrinsic and change of engagement over time. The study aimed to identify they key predictors through developing a parsimonious statistical model using purposeful selection process for each outcome variable. It also compared the predictors between the two models, to establish that intrinsic variables would feature more prominently for academic performance and extrinsic for dropout intent, and the change of engagement level would predict both outcome variables. The results were found to be consistent with the hypotheses, with the exception that the change of engagement level was only present in the dropout model. These findings have significant clinical value, and also provide guidance to future studies in the areas of student retention and academic performance.

**Keywords:** student dropout intent, student retention, higher education, academic performance, private colleges, student engagement
Overcoming the Distance in Statistical Teaching: The Effect of Instructional Control Mode on Learning, Perceived Cognitive Load, and Confidence

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With the online learning industry expanding rapidly, quality research into how to design this form of education is a requirement in order to maximise the learning potential of students studying online. The current study explored the effect of instructional control mode on learning (immediate and delayed), perceived cognitive load, and confidence in an online multimedia environment. Two conditions (learner-controlled and system-controlled) were exposed to varying degrees of interactivity with the multimedia presentation in order to determine what effect the inclusion of a pause/play button had on the three variables of interest. The current study differed from previous research by incorporating the component of motivation in its design by teaching statistics to first and second-year psychology students (N=69), a topic that is taught in the undergraduate psychology degree. It was found that the presentation was successful in teaching statistics overall; however, there was no significant difference in learning between the two conditions of control mode. Further, despite an overall increase in accuracy for questions containing low to high element interactivity material, there was no main effect or interaction with control mode. There was no significant difference on perceived extraneous cognitive load, overall confidence judgments, and overconfidence between conditions. Finally, only a minority of participants within the learner-controlled condition used the control feature, and no significant differences on learning, perceived cognitive load, and overall confidence accuracy were found between participants who did and did not use the control feature. The findings are considered in terms of implications and future directions for the area of educational and cognitive psychology are discussed.

Keywords: instructional control mode, online learning, cognitive load, confidence, multimedia, educational psychology, cognitive psychology
Procrastination and difficulty sustaining attention are two issues that prevent tasks from being completed. This study takes these two constructs and investigates factors that may influence these commonly complained about behaviours. Metacognition and, in particular, metacognitive regulation, have been linked to areas such as executive function and self regulated learning. Conceptually, the cognitive processes used in these areas are related to the processes used in procrastination and focused attention. In this study, eye tracking was used to record focused attention as time spent on task during a computer based reading comprehension task with game distractions present. Measures of metacognitive awareness and regulation were made using the 52-item Metacognitive Awareness Inventory and Procrastination using the 20-item Lay’s Procrastination Scale. The variable of a timer being visually present or absent was added to the experiment to measure its effect on focused attention. In an experiment with 58 participants from a general population, including students and non-students, metacognitive awareness, regulation and timer presence did not significantly predict percentage of time spent on task. Metacognitive regulation, however, did predict self-reported ratings of procrastination in which those who score highly in metacognitive regulation also report higher levels of procrastination. The results, strengths and limitations are discussed and suggestions for future studies are recommended. This study serves as preliminary research into an under researched, yet important area.

Keywords: metacognition, metacognitive regulation, metacognitive awareness, focused attention, procrastination, experimental
This research aimed to determine the importance and impact of perceived warmth and morality when making a social judgment, in addition to exploring the relationship between empathy and moral judgment when warmth of character is a defining factor. It was predicted that warmth of character would inflate perceptions of morality, and that sub-components of empathy – cognitive empathy and affective empathy – would differentially predict judgments of morality, as warmth of character would be determined a modifying variable. The research was conducted online using a quantitative, within subjects quasi-experimental design, employing both standardised scales as well as vignettes developed for this study. One hundred and sixty-six participants completed this study, including 131 females and 35 males. Results indicated that when empathy is not considered as a predictor of moral judgment, warmth of character does not significantly affect perceptions of morality. However, when affective and cognitive empathy are individually explored as predictors, warmth becomes a modifying variable, and warmth is seen both to inflate and decrease perceptions of morality. The limitations of this study, suggestions for future research, and contributions to the field are discussed.

Keywords: moral judgment, warmth, empathy, affective empathy
Integration research is commonly concerned with evaluations of immigrants’ efforts of integrating or their integration styles. However the topic of host society responsibility in the integration of immigrants is often neglected. The current study looked at the perceived responsibility of host society members in integration and how this is influenced by the media. It was hypothesized that through mere exposure the valence and focus of newspaper articles and the participants’ own immigrant background would have an effect on perceived host member responsibility in the integration process. Due to the multicultural composition of Australia, host members were defined as individuals acculturated in Australia, and thus encompassed non-immigrants, second generation immigrants, and first generation immigrants who had moved to Australia as children. Participants in the experimental conditions were presented with newspaper articles that were either positive or negative, with an immigrant or host society focus, before filling out the Majority Integration Efforts Scale (Phelps, Eilertsen, Türken, & Ommundsen, 2011). Contrary to expectations there was no difference between the experimental conditions on perceived host member responsibility for non-immigrants. However, after reading positive immigrant focused articles, second generation immigrants scored significantly lower than both non-immigrants and first generation immigrants; this, however, was reversed for negative immigrant focused articles, where second generation immigrants scored higher than first generation immigrants. The results are discussed in relation to previous findings and implications for integration policies and future research.

*Keywords*: immigrants, integration, immigration policy, media influence

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A discourse of female sexual desire is often missing from young women’s discussions of sexuality and their experiences of sex. If the discourse of desire does emerge, it is managed through more pervasive discourses, such as the understanding that sex is a form of stress relief, beneficial to the relationship, part of a fitness or self-care regime, or a negotiation which allows women potential leverage to achieve interpersonal goals outside of sexual situations. Because existing literature privileges experiences of heterosexual women, the present qualitative research focuses on the marginalised group of self-identified bisexual emerging adult women. Analysis of verbatim transcripts of interviews with seven women revealed four overarching themes: exploration, intimacy, situational factors and the impact of social norms. In the theme of exploration, a discourse of female desire was privileged but this desire was then “managed” through intimacy, situational factors and social norms. Overall, the research demonstrates that through pushing the boundaries and resisting the hegemonic discourses and institutions that govern Western society, of which heteronormativity is one, these bisexual women were able to create a space to further explore their own sexual desires and discover their potential as independent, autonomous sexual agents. However, evident in the women’s navigation of their sexuality, was the clash of neoliberal discourses with more traditional, historical gendered expectations, revealing the extent to which the female sexual experience is still ultimately shaped and dictated by the power of the social and cultural contexts from which it emerges.

Keywords: bisexuality, women, discourse of desire, female sexuality, intimacy, exploration, Hollway, qualitative, neoliberalism
“We Don’t Have Those Things”: Re-evaluating the Investment Model through the Lens of Gay Relationships MICKLE, J. (Honours, 2015) & PAPPS, F. A. (Supervisor)  
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Previous research has suggested that investments are a reliable predictor of stability and commitment in straight romantic relationships. Investments have traditionally been measured using Rusbult’s (1980, 1983) Investment Model; however, the model has been inconsistent in predicting stability and commitment in socially marginalised groups; in particular gay male relationships. Indeed, the research has indicated that gay males make less investments in their relationships, in contrast to straight males. The implication here is that gay males are less committed in their relationships. The present research was qualitative in design and involved conducting semi-structured interviews with six self-identified gay males to investigate their experiences of being in a committed relationship, as well as their understandings of satisfaction, investments, and alternatives to their relationship. A thematic analysis revealed that the Investment Model was insufficient in accounting for commitment in gay male relationships because of the unique manner that gay men conceptualised commitment. Furthermore, it was found that the physical investments (tangible) were unrelated to commitment in gay male relationships, although they were related to stay/leave behaviours. In contrast, the affective investments (intangible) were related to both commitment and stay/leave behaviours. In terms of investigating the alternatives to gay men’s relationships, the social networking application Grindr was discussed due to the pervasive use of the application and its facilitation of the availability of men in close proximity. It was found however, that it had no influence on alternatives to gay men’s relationships. Limitations and directions for future research are discussed.

**Keywords**: investment model, gay men, satisfaction, investments, alternatives, Grindr
Attributing Blame in Child Sexual Assault (CSA) Cases: The Role of Offender Age, Offender Disability, Responder Gender and CSA Myth Acceptance MACHAN, C. (Honours, 2015) & MORRISON, B. (Supervisor) 221376@my.acap.edu.au

Academic interest in child sexual abuse (CSA) has increased in recent years due to the negative practical repercussions prejudiced blame attributions can have on judicial processes and victim treatment strategies. This research examines the effects responder gender (male vs. female), responder CSA myth acceptance (low vs. high), offender age (14 years vs. 30 years), and offender disability (intellectually disabled vs. not disabled), have on attributions of blame in a hypothetical child sexual assault scenario. A total of 321 respondents read one of four fictional diary vignettes that recounted a 12 year-old girl’s experience of sexual assault, before completing 21 blame attribution items. Principal axis factoring confirmed four reliable blame factors. Subsequent analysis of covariance – controlling for respondents’ general attitude towards disability – revealed that males deemed the victim more to blame for her own abuse than did females, and those with higher levels of myth acceptance attributed more blame to victim than those with lower myth acceptance. Further, when the offender was disabled, responders rated the victim as more blameworthy compared to when the offender was not disabled. Finally, a significant two-way interaction suggested that offender age influenced attributions of blame when the offender was described as intellectually disabled. Proposals for future research directions and implications are discussed.

Keywords: child sexual assault, blame attribution, responsibility, credibility, disability, offender, juvenile, gender, myth acceptance
The present study tested the hypothesis of whether increased social capital helped decrease death anxiety through the variables of faith affiliation, perceived health, self-esteem, and life satisfaction. Using the framework provided by Terror Management Theory (TMT), the study assessed how death anxiety is mitigated through the structuring of cultural worldviews, self-esteem, life satisfaction, faith affiliation, and in particular, social capital. TMT explains that the awareness of our own inevitable death drives us to have a meaningful existence by ensuring that we can impose as much meaning and value into life as possible; meaning which is derived from the structuring of cultural worldviews and the formation and preservation of self-esteem. When we find meaning in our life and construct a sturdy self-esteem through it, such meaning acts as a psychological defence mechanism against death anxiety. Feeling as though we are an invaluable part of society can assist in regulating the terror of eventual certain death. Consequently, the ways in which relationships and general involvement within groups and organisations may regulate death anxiety was a question of interest. The present research asked how such relationships and involvements, conceptualised as 'social capital', affected the experience of death anxiety. The results found significant differences in women’s and men’s experience of death anxiety, with men’s death anxiety being mediated by self-esteem, and women’s death anxiety mediated by life satisfaction. Interestingly, however, results also indicated that women who had an affiliation with a faith indicated greater death anxiety. Path analyses were presented in order to visually represent the complex relationships found in the data.

*Keywords*: death anxiety; social capital; Terror Management Theory, faith, satisfaction with life, self-esteem
The aim of this study was to investigate the mediating role of experiential avoidance in the relationship between Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD) symptoms and anger and the mediating role of anger in the relationship between GAD symptoms and interpersonal problems. This study used a cross-sectional, correlational design. A total of 205 participants who reported at least mild GAD symptoms were included in the study. Mediation analyses were conducted using bootstrapping to estimate the indirect effects of anxiety on anger through experiential avoidance and the indirect effects of anxiety on interpersonal problems through anger. Comorbid depression was controlled. The results revealed that experiential avoidance fully mediated the relationship between anxiety and anger and that there was a significant indirect effect of anxiety on anger through experiential avoidance. Moreover, anger fully mediated the relationship between anxiety and interpersonal problems and there was a significant indirect effect of anxiety on interpersonal problems through anger. The novel findings contribute to elucidating why and by which mechanisms anxious individuals tend to experience elevated anger and interpersonal problems.

Keywords: Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD), anxiety, anger, interpersonal problems, experiential avoidance
An Exploration of Social Support and Family Acceptance Underlying Resilient Adaption in the LGBTQIA+ Community CAMPBELL, E. (Honours, 2015) & REECE, J. (Supervisor)

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The present study investigated the specific aspects of social support and family acceptance within the LGBTQIA+ community that facilitated adaptive outcomes in the face of significant stress and adversity. Participants were aged 18 and over and recruited via online advertising. Using the Resilience Classification Framework (Mutimer, Reece, & Matthews, 2007), participants were categorised across four levels of functioning within which resilience was located. Results suggested that resilient LGBTQIA+ individuals scored significantly higher across perceived social support and social connectedness. However, family acceptance did not appear to be a predictor of resilience for resilient individuals within this sample. Similar to previous research, social support appeared to buffer the effects of stress and adversity. These findings provide an empirical basis for developing social support and resilient building interventions for the LGBTQIA+ community.

Keywords: LGBTQIA, resilience, adaptation, social support, family, acceptance, interventions
This thesis utilises a Foucauldian lens to contribute to the small but growing body of research dedicated to gender diverse and trans-spectrum related topics. Retransition comprises the process of terminating Sex Reassignment Therapy (SRT) for individuals who have previously transitioned to an alternate sex and gender, and now seek to return to their birth-assigned sex and gender, or to a non-binary identity. The construct of retransition is mostly absent from the peer-reviewed literature, and as such some Internet sites dominated by popular culture have provided an unendorsed estimate of retransition, suggesting one per cent of the transitioned population will retransition. The current study sought to generate research into the field of retransition by analysing the discursive management of gendered subjectivities through the online talk of retransition. Fourteen video blogs featuring individual accounts of personal retransition published independently of this study were sourced from the Public Domain, and analysed using Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. Analysis found that informants drew mostly on transnormative, medical, neoliberal individualism, queer, and risk discourses to construct retransition in various ways, and largely as a trans-spectrum practice on par with transition in its capacity to confirm authentic subjectivities. Many of the accounts utilised in this study highlight discursive methods for resisting the subjugation of the retransition discourse, while also offering ways of seeing the retransitioned subject as empowered and purposeful. It is of particular note in the context of the emerging evidence in this area, that all informants utilised this retransition talk to (re)claim trans-spectrum category identification.

Keywords: retransition, detransition, transition, SRT, trans-spectrum, Foucault, discourse analysis
The Influence of Brief Mindfulness on the Acute Stress Response
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Extensive research supports the efficacy of mindfulness based interventions for the reduction of stress, anxiety, and depression; however, limited research has been conducted to determine if a shortened and self-directed mindfulness intervention can be achieved the same benefits. The purpose of this experimental research is to test whether a brief mindfulness intervention buffers self-reported psychological and cardiovascular responses to the Mannheim Multicomponent Stress Test (MMST).

Twenty-three participants (13 females, 10 males) were randomly assigned to either a brief 7-day (10-minutes per day) mindfulness meditation exercise (N= 12) or an active-control program (N= 11). All participants completed a standardised acute stress task (the MMST) before and after the 7 day intervention. Measures of psychological (affect) and biological (heart rate) stress reactivity were collected during the acute stress task sessions. Examination of results revealed no change in pre to post intervention heart rate variability or affect. However, results indicate that, compared with the control group, brief mindfulness training increased performance during the stress task. These results highlight the influence that brief mindfulness exercises have on the acute stress response.

Keywords: mindfulness, acute stress response, experimental, psychological stress reactivity, biological stress reactivity
Exploring the Shared Concept of Mindfulness and Rumination: A Factor Analysis
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Research suggests that mindfulness and rumination are cognitive styles that could be explained as opposing cognitive processes. This is supported by evidence from neuroimaging studies that found differences in activation in the same areas of the brain when people are mindful or ruminating. This study aimed to explore how mindfulness and rumination could be conceptually equivalent and bi-directionally related under a shared conceptual framework. A sample of 179 participants completed an online survey that asked questions regarding mindfulness and rumination behaviours from the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) and the Rumination Response Scale (RRS). The author found four distinct factors of non-judgment (F1), observe and describe (F2), non-distractibility (F3) and non-reactivity (F4) from the sample. Factor loadings of items from the FFMQ and the RRS were distributed into three of the four factors excluding observe and describe (F2). Interaction of correlations between factors suggested each factor was related with each other with the exception of the pair non-judgment (F1) and non-reactivity (F4). Findings suggest mindfulness and rumination could be understood within a single shared concept, and the implications of this finding are further discussed.

Keywords: mindfulness, rumination, exploratory factor analysis