

Curriculum Vitae
MELISSA ANN TAFOYA, Ph.D.

University of Connecticut
Department of Communication Sciences
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Research Interests

Interpersonal Communication, Family Communication, and Health Communication

- Influence of family structure and/or relationship type on communication (i.e., step-, half-, and full sibling relationships; nuclear, divorced, remarried families, etc.)
- Marital dissolution and post-dissolution inter-parental communication
- Dark side of interpersonal communication (infidelity, jealousy, road rage, aggression)
- Conflict management and negotiation (mediation, positive impact, detrimental outcomes, developmental)
- Physiology/Biology/Genetics (as it relates to interpersonal and family communication)
- Nonverbal communication (affectionate communication, attributions, romantic conflict)
- Advancing theoretically grounded research (various evolutionary theories, biology theory, social learning theories, social exchange theory, and systems theory).

EDUCATION

- 2007 *Doctor of Philosophy*, Arizona State University, Hugh Downs School of Human Communication.
- 2001, May *Bachelor of Arts*, Human Communication, Magna Cum Laude.
Arizona State University, Hugh Downs School of Human Communication.

Dissertation

Sibling types: The influence of genetic relatedness on adult sibling' interactions.

This dissertation work focused on the extent to which sibling relationship structure (i.e., step-, half-, full) influences reports of sibling' affectionate communication, conflict tactics, and relational quality in adulthood. Evolutionary-based approaches, derived from "Darwinian logic", provided the theoretical framework to predict and explain sibling-type differences. Consistent with evolutionary reasoning, this research highlights how sibling relationships have the potential to influence and contribute to an individual's survival and reproductive success. Guided by the major principles and assumptions underlying a number of evolutionary theories, it was hypothesized that full siblings would invest more (i.e., reflected in sibling' positive and negative experiences/interactions) than half siblings, who would invest more than step-siblings. Predictions drawn from the theory were largely supported, particularly for positive characteristics.

Chair: Kory Floyd. Committee members: Paul Mongeau, Scott Christopher.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2007-Present *Assistant Professor*
Department of Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.
- 2001-2007 *Graduate Teaching Assistant/Associate*
Hugh Downs School of Human Communication, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ.

RESEARCH

Publications (by date)

- Tafoya, M. A. (2008, May). Affectionate exchange: The salient nature of affectionate communication. *Interpersonal Acceptance*.
- Floyd, K., Mikkelsen, A. C., Tafoya, M. A., Farinelli, L., La Valley, A. G., Judd, J., Davis, K. L., Haynes, M. T., & Wilson, J. (2007). Human affection exchange: XIV. Relational affection predicts resting heart rate and free cortisol secretion during acute stress. *Behavioral Medicine, 32*(4), 151-156.
- Floyd, K., Mikkelsen, A. C., Tafoya, M. A., Farinelli, L., La Valley, A. G., Judd, J., Haynes, M. T., Davis, K. L., & Wilson, J. (2007). Human affection exchange: XIII. Affectionate communication accelerates neuroendocrine stress recovery. *Health Communication, 22*(2), 123-132.
- Tafoya, M. A. & Spitzberg, B. H. (2007). Communicative Infidelity. In B.H. Spitzberg & W. R. Cupach (Eds.). *The Dark Side of Interpersonal Communication* (2nd ed.), pp.199-242. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Sillars, A., Canary, D. J., & Tafoya, M. A. (2003). Communication conflict and the quality of family relationships. In A. L. Vangelisti (Ed.), *Handbook of Family Communication*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Manuscripts Under Review

- Tafoya, M. A. (Under review, Journal of Family Communication). *Sibling' relatedness and affectionate communication: An application of Affectionate Exchange Theory*.
- Tafoya, M. A. (Under review, Journal of Social and Personal Relationships). *A model of adult siblings' conflict dynamics: Sibling structure and closeness as antecedents to positive and negative outcomes*.
- Tafoya, M. A. & Hamilton, M. A. (Under review, Communication Monographs). *Strength of sibling bond and its impact on the expression of affection and hostility*.
- Hamilton, M. A. & Tafoya, M. A. (under review, Western Journal of Communication). *A meta-analytic estimate of the effect of depression on hostility and verbal aggression*.

Manuscripts In Progress

- M.A. Tafoya & Hamilton, M. A. (in preparation). *Spousal closeness and verbal expression as antecedent to negative outcomes in marital dyads*.
- Tafoya, M. A. & Mongeau, P. A. (in preparation). *How a wheelchair influences initial interaction*. Study is complete and in the final editing stage.
- Canary, D. J., Stermetz, C., Tafoya, M. A. & Mikkelsen, A. C. (in preparation). *Road rage as a communicative event: Creating a measure of road rage*. Conducting final analysis of a four-part study examining road rage for journal submission.
- Mongeau, P. A & Tafoya, M. A. (in preparation). *How a disability influences perceptions of first date goals: Wheelchairs, activity levels, and sex differences*.

Conference Papers

- Tafoya, M. A. & MacNeil, T. C. (2009, November). *Measuring Adult Siblings' Negative Conflict Management Strategies: A Test of Two Scales*. Accepted to present at National Communication Association, Chicago, IL. (Panel submission).
- Hamilton, M. A. & Tafoya, M. A. (2009, November). *Development of a Scale to Measure Relational Negativism and Optimism*. Accepted to present at National Communication Association, Chicago, IL. (Panel submission).
- Canary, D. J., Stermetz, C., Tafoya, M. A. & Mikkelson, A. C. (2009, November). *Road rage as a communicative event: Identifying road rage communicative behaviors, their factor structure, validation analyses, and variation among types of aggressive people*. Accepted to present at National Communication Association, Chicago, IL. (Panel submission).
- Tafoya, M. A. (2008, July). *Sibling types: The influence of genetic relatedness on affectionate communication*. Presented to International Association for Relationship Research, Providence, RI. (Competitively selected).
- Tafoya, M. A. & Mongeau, P. A. (2008, July). *How a disability influences perceptions of first date goals: Wheelchairs, activity levels, and sex differences*. Presented to International Association for Relationship Research, Providence, RI. (Competitively selected).
- Tafoya, M. A. (2008, July). *Human affectionate exchange theory: Evidence of the benefits of communicating affection*. Presented to International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection, Crete, Greece. (Competitively selected).
- Tafoya, M. A. (2008, July). *The influential role of genetic relatedness on siblings' mutuality, criticism, and apathy*. Presented to International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection, Crete, Greece. (Competitively selected).
- Tafoya, M. A. & Mongeau, P. A. (2007, November). *How a wheelchair influences initial interaction*. Presented to National Communication Association, Chicago, IL. (Panel submission).
- Tafoya, M. A. (2007, November). *Methods for Studying Emotion in Interpersonal Communication*. Presented to National Communication Association, Chicago, IL. (Panel submission).
- Tafoya, M. A. (2007, February). *The dark side of sibling interactions: Aggression and conflict*. Presented to Western States Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, Seattle, WA. (Competitively selected).
- Tafoya, M. A. (2006, November). *Children's sibling relationships: Further considerations of positive and negative displays*. Presented to National Communication Association, San Antonio, TX. (Scholar to Scholar session).
- Floyd, K., Mikkelson, A. C., Tafoya, M. A., Farinelli, L., La Valley, A. G., Judd, J., Davis, K. L., Haynes, M. T., & Wilson, J. (2006, February). *Human affection exchange: XIV. Relational affection predicts resting heart rate and free cortisol secretion during acute*

- stress. Presented to Western States Communication Association, Palm Springs, CA. (Competitively selected).
- Mongeau, P. A., Williams, J., & Tafoya, M. A. (2006, February). *Challenges facing people with disabilities in initiating romantic relationships: Establishing an agenda*. Presented to Western States Communication Association, Palm Springs, CA. (Panel submission).
- Canary, D. J. & Tafoya, M. A. (2005, November). *Road rage as an interpersonal communicative event*. Presented to National Communication Association, Boston, MA. (Panel submission).
- Floyd, K., Mikkelson, A. C., Tafoya, M. A., Farinelli, L., La Valley, A. G., Judd, J., Haynes, M. T., Davis, K. L., & Wilson, J. A. (2005, November). *Human affection exchange: XIII: Affectionate communication accelerates neuroendocrine stress recovery*. Top Paper to be presented at National Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, Boston, MA. (Competitively selected).
- Spitzberg, B. H. & Tafoya, M. A. (2005, November). *Communicative infidelity: Exploring extradyadic sexual activity as a message strategy*. Presented to National Communication Association Interpersonal Division, Chicago, IL. (Competitively selected).
- Spitzberg, B. H. & Tafoya, M. A. (2005, May). *Further explorations in communicative infidelity: Jealousy, sociosexuality, and vengefulness*. Presented to International Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, NY. (Competitively selected).
- Bates, C., Tafoya, M. A., & Wilson, E. (2005, February). *Interactive management as an adaptive strategy in facilitation workshops*. Presented to Western States Communication Association, San Francisco, CA. (Panel submission).
- Bates, C., Tafoya, M. A., & Wilson, E. (2004, November). *Reflections: An interactive approach to identifying and understanding the challenges in fostering a learning community that values and promotes diversity*. Presented to National Communication Association, Chicago, IL. (Competitively selected).
- Tafoya, M. (2004, February). *Aggression, jealousy and integrative behaviors with sibling relationships*. Presented to Western States Communication Association, Albuquerque, NM. (Competitively selected).
- Roundtable discussion. Floyd, K., & Tafoya, M. (2003, November). *Stepfamily dyads in evolutionary perspective*. Presented to Western States Communication Association, Miami, FL
- Tafoya, M. (2003, February). *Relationships are about giving and giving is about relationships: A demonstration of relational giving in Mexico through three relationships*. Presented to Western States Communication Association, Salt Lake City, UT. (Competitively selected).
- Erickson, E. L., Canary, D. J., Tafoya, M. A., & Bachman, G. F. (2002, November). *An observational analysis of attachment styles, partner behavior, and conflict interaction*.

Presented to National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA. (Competitively selected).

Research Grants Submitted

- 2008 Grela, B (PI), Bruder, M. B. (Co-PI), Tafoya, M. A. (Co-PI), Hodgson, S. (Co-PI), Davidson, K. (Co-PI), Farrell, A (Co-PI), & Cusson, R. (Co-PI), Proposal for an “*Interdisciplinary Family Centered Intervention Model for Children with ASD*”, UCHC/Storrs and Regional Campus Incentive Grants (UCIG) Competitive Program, University of Connecticut.
- 2007 Tafoya, M. A. (PI), Buck, R. W. (Co-PI), & VanLear, C. I. (Co-PI). Proposal for major research equipment, “Provost's Research Equipment Competition Grant”, University of Connecticut. (Total costs requested: \$108,000, unfunded submission).
- 2005 Williams, J. (PI), Tafoya, M. A. (Co-PI), & Mongeau, P.A. (Co-PI). Proposal for a study to examine *Disability and dating: Women in wheelchairs*, The Feminist Review Trust. (Total costs requested: \$1,800, unfunded submission).

SERVICE

Administrative Service

- 2009/2010 Undergraduate Director, Department of Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut

University/Departmental Service

- 2009 Summer Internship Coordinator, Department of Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut
- 2008-present Faculty Advisor, Communication Graduate Student Association, Department of Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut
- 2008-present Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut
- 2007-present Outreach committee, Department of Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut
- 2008/2009
2009/2010 Chair, Graduate Student Orientation Committee, Department of Communication Sciences, University of Connecticut

Editorial Service

- 2002-2005 Editorial Assistant, Western Journal of Communication, Daniel J. Canary, Editor.
- 2008 Book Reviewer, Polity Press, San Francisco, CA.
- 2006-present Journal reviewer, Western Journal of Communication, Southern Journal of Communication, Personal Relationships, Journal of Family Communication.

- 2008 Reviewer (paper reader), National Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, San Diego, CA. (elected).
- 2008 Reviewer (paper reader), Western States Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, Boulder, CO. (elected).
- 2007 Reviewer (paper reader), Western States Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, Seattle, WA. (elected).
- 2005 Reviewer (paper reader), Western States Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, San Francisco, CA. (appointed).

Professional Service

- 2009-2011 Legislative Assembly Representative, National Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, Chicago, IL. (elected – 2 year appointment)
- 2009-2010 Secretary, Western States Communication Association, Interpersonal Division. (elected).
- 2009 Respondent, *Conflict, Aggression, and Abuse*, International Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, Chicago, IL.
- 2008 Legislative Assembly Representative, National Communication Association, San Diego, CA.
- 2008 Respondent, *Momma Drama: Mothers, Daughters, and Conflict*, National Communication Association, Interpersonal and Ethnography Division, San Diego, CA.
- 2008 Respondent, *Relational Transgressions and Challenges*, Western States Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, Boulder, CO.
- 2007 Panel Chair, *Evaluating perceptions of interpersonal communication effectiveness*, Western States Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, Seattle, WA.
- 2006 Panel Chair, *Sexual interaction and interpersonal communication*, National Communication Association, Interpersonal Communication Division, San Antonio, TX.
- 2006 Panel Chair, *The sibling relationship: Emotion, maintenance, and outcomes*, National Communication Association, Family Communication Division, San Antonio, TX.
- 2006 Panel Chair, *Communication, illness, disability, and relationships*, Western States Communication Association, Health and Interpersonal Communication Divisions, Palm Springs, CA.
- 2005 Panel Chair, *Creating and maintaining diverse relationship types: Online, offline, and long distance*, Western States Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, San Francisco, CA.

- 2004-2005 Secretary, Western States Communication Association, Interpersonal Division. (elected).
- 2003 Panel Chair, *Current Family Research*, National Communication Association, Family Division, Miami, FL.
- 2003 Panel Chair, *Difficult situations and difficult relationships in family communication*, Western States Communication Association, Interpersonal Division, Salt Lake City, UT.

Community Service

- 2008 Keynote Speaker, *Exploring Body Image*, University of Connecticut, CLAS Odyssey Day Event, Storrs, CT.
- 2006 Sole Facilitator, *Teen forum for girls: Exploring self-esteem and body image*, Fiesta Mall and Westcor, Mesa, AZ.
- 2003-2005 Co-Facilitator and Sole Facilitator, *Exploring Women's Identity*, Intergroup Relations Department, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ.
- 2004 Communication Director, Cultural Diversity Conference, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ.
- 2003 Public Relations Chair, *Identity, identity conflict and hate crime: Implications for research, publication, training, and public policy*, Hate Crime Conference, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ.

TEACHING AND INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Undergraduate Advisor

Serve as an undergraduate advisor for the Department of Communication Science, University of Connecticut (approximate 45 undergraduate students, annually)

Graduate Students Supervised (University of Connecticut)

Theresa MacNeil (Ph.D. advisor). Currently in coursework.
 Ashley Scobey (M.A. advisor). Currently in coursework.
 Mike Miller (Ph.D. committee). Currently in coursework.
 Shu Li (Ph.D. committee). Currently in coursework.
 Jennifer Hickman (M.A. committee). Currently in coursework
 Nicholas Koberstein (M.A. committee). "Interparental Conflict, Triangulation and Cooperation and their Effect on Young Adolescent's Emotional Quality of Life". Thesis defended December 2008.

Courses Directed

Interpersonal Communication (University of Connecticut)

Course supervisor for multi-section interpersonal communication course, which includes graduate teaching evaluations, providing course materials, and dealing with student grievances.

Courses Taught

Instructor

Family Communication Graduate Seminar (University of Connecticut)

Course provides graduate students with an overview of the major topics, trends, and challenges surrounding family communication research. Drawing on a diverse range of theoretical and methodological approaches, emphasis is placed on critical analysis and evaluation of family communication research and theories through discussions and writing assignments. Requires students to construct a family communication research study, including a fully explicated literature review and testable hypotheses and/or research questions.

Interpersonal Communication Graduate Seminar: Theory and Research (University of Connecticut)

Introduces graduate students to the major theories, trends, and points of controversy in the social scientific study of interpersonal communication. Course is designed to facilitate understanding of the nature and function of theories in communication research, such as theory construction and evaluation, theory testing, and theoretical/metatheoretical issues. Course concentrates on critically analyzing and evaluating seminal and contemporary theories and research in interpersonal communication. Requires students to demonstrate the ability to analyze, synthesize, compare, and evaluate relevant theoretical literature and ideas through discussions and written assignments. Students propose a theoretically-driven research study that includes a fully explicated literature review and testable hypotheses and/or research questions.

Advanced Interpersonal Communication (undergraduate senior-level, Arizona State University)

Advanced course that examines the predominant theories and topics in interpersonal communication scholarship. Theories covered include social exchange, social penetration, uncertainty reduction, and dialectics (among others). Provides students the opportunity to review and critique theories and research from original source materials. Students write a research proposal based upon an interpersonal theory.

Relational/Interpersonal Communication (junior-level, University of Connecticut; Arizona State University – taught as large lecture and small class)

Course content is multidisciplinary, with an emphasis on communication. Course covers four general sections (1) the nature of relational communication, (2) processes related to relationship initiation and development, (3) relational maintenance and satisfaction, and (4) coping with relational challenges. Students write a paper reviewing literature on a topic related to interpersonal communication.

Conflict Management and Negotiation (upper-division course, University of Connecticut; Arizona State University)

Course emphasizes how people use communication to manage their interpersonal conflicts. Explores the complexities of the nature of conflict and forces that make conflict challenging. Students learn strategies for managing conflict more effectively in a variety of interpersonal relationships and contexts.

Family Communication (senior-level course, Arizona State University)

Course provides a survey of major research topics, paradigms, and theories in family communication. Content focuses on several elements of family communication, including definitions of the family, family theories, legal and religious messages about the family, family rules, stories, and secrets, and communication in various family subsystems. Requires students to conduct, and present, an original research study related to family communication.

Empirical Research Methods in Communication (upper-division course, Arizona State University)
Focuses on empirical research methods used to study human communication, including experimental research design, observational methods, and questionnaire construction. Provides students with a working knowledge of inquiry methods and develop preliminary research skills. Introduces students to basic statistics.

Gender and Communication (upper-division course, Arizona State University)
This course examines how communication influences, and is influenced by, one's sex, gender, and sexuality. Topics include sex/gender as it relates to communication processes, development, identity, self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, organizational contexts, and society. The course combines readings, discussion, lecture, video and film, research, and critical analysis.

Nonverbal Communication (upper-division course, Arizona State University)
Designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of nonverbal communication. Course focuses on the codes (e.g., kinesics, proxemics, haptics) and functions (e.g., forming and managing impressions, expressing emotion) of nonverbal communication. Course emphasizes both empirical research on nonverbal behavior and its practical application in such areas as deception, job interviewing, family communication, and doctor-patient interaction.

Communication in the Electronic Age (upper-division online course, Arizona State University)
Course examines how internet and information technology systems impact and influence one's daily life. The course focuses on how the new communication media influences our communication processes and interactions with other.

Public Speaking (sophomore-level, Arizona State University)
General education course that focuses on the practice *and* theory of public speaking. Course is designed to improve students' ability to construct and deliver speeches effectively, as well as critically evaluate speeches of others.

Introduction to Interpersonal Communication (freshman-level, Chandler-Gilbert Community College)
Introduces students to basic communication concepts and processes that occur within the context of interpersonal relationships, such as those with friends, coworkers, family members, and romantic partners. Course includes activities to help students build their skills as competent communicators.

Teaching Assistant

Advanced Topics in Family Communication (graduate seminar, Arizona State University, with Kory Floyd).

Responsible for assisting the professor, facilitating and leading course discussions, creating course projects and materials, and being available to meet with graduate students to discuss course materials and/or projects.

Introduction to Human Communication (freshman-level, Arizona State University, with Jennifer Linde).*

Interpersonal Communication (junior-level, Arizona State University, with Laura Guerrero).*

Conflict Management and Negotiation (upper-division, Arizona State University, with Daniel Canary).*

*Large-lecture course. Responsible for some lectures, grading papers, inputting grades, and assisting students.

Guest Lecture/Speaker

Family Communication Research. Presented to Introduction to Human Communication students, Arizona State University, Summer, 2002.

Family Communication Research. Presented to Interpersonal Communication students, Arizona State University, Fall, 2002; Spring, 2003.

Interpersonal Communication Research. Presented to students enrolled in Introduction to Human Communication, Phoenix College, Fall, 2002.

Quantitative Research Methods in the Social Sciences, Presented to English students, Arizona State University, Spring, 2005.

AWARDS

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| 2005-2007 | Graduate Student Chancellors List |
| 2005 | Top Paper Award, National Communication Association, Interpersonal Division for <i>Human affection exchange: XIII: Affectionate communication accelerates neuroendocrine stress recovery</i> . (with Floyd, K., Mikkelson, A. C., Tafoya, M. A., Farinelli, L., La Valley, A. G., Judd, J., Haynes, M. T., Davis, K. L., & Wilson, J. A.). |
| 2004-2005 | Kelly Maxwell Outstanding Graduate Student Award |
| 2004-2005 | Preparing Future Faculty Award |
| 2004 | National International Student Association Award |

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- International Association of Relationship Research, 2007-present
International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection, 2007-present
National Communication Association, 2002-present
Western Communication Association, 2003-present
International Communication Association, 2005-present
Preparing Future Faculty (PFF), 2004-2005

REFERENCES

- Kory Floyd, Arizona State University, kory.floyd@asu.edu
Carl Coelho, University of Connecticut, Carl.Coelho@uconn.edu
Brian Spitzberg, San Diego State University, spitz@mail.sdsu.edu
Paul Mongeau, Arizona State University, Paul.Mongeau@asu.edu
Laura Guerrero, Arizona State University, Laura.Guerrero@asu.edu
Vince Waldron, Arizona State University West, Vincent.Waldron@asu.edu
Additional references available upon request