Dissertation topics 2023/2024

doc. PhDr. Gabriel Bianchi, PhD.

- Extimacy within healthy intimacy development

Mgr. Barbara Lášticová, PhD.

- Solidarity during societal crises

Prof. PhDr. Ivan Lukšík, CSc.

- The role of partnerships in the transition to adulthood

doc. Mgr. Miroslav Popper, PhD.

- Interethnic families and well-being

Mgr. Kamila Urban, PhD.

- Using phenomenological interviews to understand self-regulated learning
- Role of metacognition in social judgments

Topic	**Extimacy within healthy intimacy development**
Supervisor	doc. PhDr. Gabriel Bianchi, PhD. (bianchi@savba.sk)

The research project aims to explore the place and processes of extimation in the development of the subject's intimacy, in the context of its transformation and transmutation, as well as the holistic sexualisation of public space.

Exposing intimacy and sexuality can be seen as a reflection of a rather strong attack on sexual norms in particular. The large number of media pieces devoted to the exposure of sexuality in its various forms is a sign that the transgression of norms is consensual, and thus a change or shift in social norms (determining sexual subjectivity), rather than a sporadic violation of sexual norms in the media. This statement resonates with both the thesis of intimate citizenship highlighted by Ken Plummer (2003) and the call to understand the transmutation of intimacy (cf. Bianchi, 2010, 2020). However, it also points to the need for a broader discussion of what it means for a subject to be both intimate and public, as Georges Teyssot has recently pointed out (cf. Teyssot, 2010) in the context of the media. Teyssot develops the intimacy-extimation dualism originally proposed and developed by Jacques Lacan (Lacan, 1969, p. 179). Teyssot offers insight into the historical development of the division and later the convergence and fusion of the private and the public, which has resulted in their current apparent fusion through the Internet, where all media are present, and especially through social networking sites.

Lacan's dialectic of intimacy and extimation has also been used in a modified way by Serge Tisseron (2002, 2011). Tisseron highlights two facts that are relevant to the discussion of media and intimacy: (1) the content of intimacy is not necessarily fully accessible even to the subject ("But intimacy also has another dimension: what people do not know about themselves", Tisseron, 2002). Thus, the media can "feed" us an intimate topic and replace the content we do not know [in our subjectivity] with banal phrases.

More importantly, Tisseron (2011) emphasizes (2) that there is a subject's "controlled" opening up and testing of his/her intimate contents through a process of extimation - opening up and offering to other eyes or to the public, that is, a kind of "confirmation/testing of the intimate through the 'other'". "For us, [extimation] is a process in which the subject offers fragments of the intimate self to the gaze of others in order to confirm them. It is thus not exhibitionism. An exhibitionist is a person who makes himself conspicuous by his

behavior, which revels in an established ritual. On the contrary, the desire for extimation is inseparable from the desire to meet the other and to take risks." (Tisseron, 2011)

Extimation, as defined above, certainly requires a subject to be in good emotional condition to dare to take the emerging risk, requires courage and social skills, and can bring satisfaction through the subject's authentication, but it can also harm the subject if intimacy is denied when confronted with the external environment (including all media spaces) or if the subject encounters obstacles. Tisseron took a more active approach and used the importance of extimation to capture the subject's active process. When we talk about an intimate partner with our friends or parents, we externalize our intimate relationship and take the risk that they will either accept or reject us. We can experiment with alternating extimation towards different addressees and social settings and observe a variety of feedback. Kissing on public transport is a similar test - couples test both their intimate relationship and the social norm. If our partner is of the same sex, in a homophobic environment the risk of rejection is higher than the likelihood of receiving extimation. Thus, extimation is a good indicator of the psychological maturity of the subject - the willingness to take risks and the ability to cope with risk while gaining the support/confirmation of our intimate "world". Performed extimation can therefore be considered a good indicator of the maturity of the human subject.

Topic	**Solidarity during societal crises**
Supervisor	Mgr. Barbara Lášticová, PhD. (barbara.lasticova@savba.sk)
Consultant	Mgr. Xenia Daniela Poslon

The aim of the thesis will be to examine what facilitates and what inhibits solidarity in favour of different social groups. While intergroup contact can increase solidarity of majority members in favor of disadvantaged groups and inspire advantaged groups to act as their "allies in favor of social change", intergroup harmony resulting from positive contact can inhibit collective action in disadvantaged groups. On the other hand, system justification can inhibit participation in system challenging collective action in both disadvantaged and advantaged groups. Societal crises may lead to a redefinition of intergroup relations and boundaries. The thesis will draw on the SIMCA model of collective action, the Intergroup Contact Theory and System Justification Theory. Using mixed method research design, it will examine antecedents, outcomes and discursive constructions of solidarity towards various disadvantaged groups in society, with a particular accent on solidarity in times of societal crises such as Covid-19 pandemic or the war in Ukraine.

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Topic	**The role of partnerships in the transition to adulthood**

Supervisor	Prof. PhDr. Ivan Lukšík, CSc. (ivan.luksik@savba.sk)

Partnerships and intimate relationships are described and conceptualized from several perspectives. Their conceptualization so far is captured by concepts such as "psychosocial moratorium" (Erikson), "pure relationships" (Giddens), "liquid love (Bauman), etc. However, the role of partnerships in the transition to adulthood is little explored. The aim of this work is to examine this process in the current socio-cultural context of young people's lives in the period of emerging adulthood and on the threshold of adulthood.

Topic	**Interethnic families and well-being**

Supervisor	doc. Mgr. Miroslav Popper, PhD. (miroslav.popper@savba.sk)

The aim of the work will be to map how inter-ethnic families (Slovak-Hungarian, Slovak-Czech, Slovak-Polish and others) function, what challenges they face and what increases their well-being. In addition to the problems faced by all families, in interethnic families there are increasing topics of language use, cultural specificities, traditions and norms to which it is necessary to adapt. It will primarily be a qualitative research, in which, through individual interviews and focus groups, it will be determined how interethnic families cope with the various challenges they are exposed to, how they negotiate and establish rules beneficial for optimal family coexistence.

Topic	**Using Phenomenological Interviews to Understand Self-Regulated Learning**
Supervisor	Mgr. Kamila Urban, PhD. (kamila.urban@savba.sk)

Self-regulated learning (SRL) is an umbrella term comprising four components: cognition, metacognition, motivation and affect. However, it is challenging to capture all components at once and therefore triangulation of different quantitative as well as qualitative methods is recommended. The use of questionnaires or experimental methods and observations or interviews can provide rich and contextualized descriptions of students' SRL. Valuable insights can be gained through semi-structured phenomenological interviews. In this way, accounts of lived experience relevant for students' efforts can be obtained, enlightening the SRL process. The proposed project should consider students' different learning motivations, different levels of use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and propose a methodology for collecting quantitative data as well as selecting participants for interviews.

Topic	**Role of metacognition in social judgments**

Supervisor	Mgr. Kamila Urban, PhD. (kamila.urban@savba.sk)

Metacognitive awareness has important consequences for social judgment and behavior. Research has shown that when people are aware that stereotypes could interfere with their judgments, they are more likely to gauge the appropriateness and validity of their judgments. Perceived ease of attitude access, perceived confidence and knowledge can influence social judgments. The project would propose an intervention based on insights from metacognition (particularly about certainty and metacognitive knowledge) and would aim to change attitudes in different areas of social cognition.