**COMM 971: The Dark Side of Interpersonal and Family Communication**

Spring 2021

**Professor:** Dr. Jody Koenig Kellas

**Class meetings:** Thursdays, 4:00-6:50 PM, Louise Pound Hall 301

**Office:** LPH 365

**Office hours:** Zoom by appointment

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**Required texts:** Olson, L. N., & Fine, M. A. (2016). *The darker side of family communication: The*

*harmful, the morally suspect, and the socially inappropriate*. New York: Peter Lang.

*A* ***required*** *set of readings is available on our Canvas page.*

**Mission of Department of Communication Studies**

The mission of the faculty and students of the Department of Communication Studies is to examine human symbolic activity as it shapes and is shaped by relationships, institutions, technology, and culture.  This work concerns the creation, analysis, and critique of messages ranging from face-to-face to digital media contexts.  The department’s research and teaching devote particular attention to scholarly initiatives aimed at understanding and explaining the role of communication in (a) facilitating civic engagement, mediating public controversies, and organizing for social change, (b) constituting individual and family health, promoting healthy behaviors, and helping persons navigate relational challenges, and (c) creating, maintaining, and challenging personal, social, and community identity in a complex and diverse world.

**Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The Department of Communication Studies is committed to achieving inclusive excellence as outlined by the university’s [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](https://diversity.unl.edu/diversity-home). As communication scholars and teachers, we believe communities and relationships are enriched when we give voice and value to diverse perspectives based on  “group and social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, indigeneity, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, country of origin, and [(dis)ability](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.accessiblesociety.org_topics_demographics-2Didentity_dkaplanpaper.htm&d=DwMGaQ&c=Cu5g146wZdoqVuKpTNsYHeFX_rg6kWhlkLF8Eft-wwo&r=C8O4Zj_rOqmaDqBpqXvwbhWt61_NtA43YVQMKYS7QrZmR_-QMDQHEikZY5Uu_zRE&m=wUnnAFwvY0Ip4082Xofqx4ntq3-jdi7HwCcuFTE4be8&s=tgIA3LBQj5hxutLvzCXWRuukKA-SEgOTfV08MALe_zM&e=)), historically underrepresented populations, and cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations.” We are committed to continual reflection and refinement of curriculum, scholarly endeavors, and community engagement to achieve goals of inclusiveness and equal opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to discuss these with your instructors, the Chair of the department ([Dr. Jody Koenig Kellas](https://comm.unl.edu/jody-koenig-kellas)), members of the department’s [Committee on Diversity and Inclusion](https://comm.unl.edu/committees), or the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

**Course Description**

Communication Studies 971 is focused on “the dark side” of interpersonal and family communication. According to Brian Spitzberg, the “dark side” is a metaphor used to describe those areas of interpersonal communication that are (a) underexplored or “lying in the shadows,” awaiting scholarly attention, (b) presumed to be destructive, dysfunctional, evil, immoral, malicious, criminal, abusive, exploitatitve, lunatic, or otherwise really icky, naughty, or not at all very nice, (c) those aspects of communication that are viewed as dark, but should not be (e.g., things presumed to be bad that function to produce preferred outcomes), and (d) those aspects of communication that are presumed to be good that should not be (i.e., things presumed to be good that function to produce dispreferred outcomes). Although much communication (and related) research orients us to the value of open, effective, honest, and competent, etc. communication, this course acknowledges that an examination of the “brighter” sides of communication only provides part of the picture of the characteristics of communication that make up our everyday lives. Surely, each of us has experienced lying, equivocation, ambiguity, gossip, loneliness, irresolvable conflicts, rejection, oversharing (i.e., TMI), incompetence, etc. in our interpersonal interactions. This course sets out to explore research and theory that illuminates the dark side of interpersonal communication and provides an orientation for understanding the dark side as inseparable from the brighter side in understanding and researching human communication. In order to accommodate more recent research, we will also explore the contemporary response to the dark side movement by comparing and contrasting it with the movement in positive communication. In this way, we can use the metaphor of functional ambivalence to understand the greater spectrum of value-based approaches to communication and make attempts to critique and/or advance their applications in meaningful scholarship and application.

The objectives of this course include:

* Understanding the “dark side” metaphor and its relationship and importance to interpersonal communication research, theory, and practice.
* Critiquing current interpersonal and family communication theories and research, as well as applying them to a holistic understanding of the dark and bright sides of interaction.
* Understanding the complexities associated with dark side topics including the potentially collaborative, systemic, dialectic, and functionally ambivalent nature of the “dark side.”
* Exploring the ways in which a positive communication approach complements or contradicts a dark side perspective and enables or constrains a more holistic view of value-laden approaches to communication.
* Advancing original empirical research or propositions/ideas on the dark side of interpersonal communication.
* Thoughtfully reflecting on and making sense of “dark side” concepts by balancing between our roles and responses as critics and citizens (i.e., researchers and/or interpersonal communicators), through blogs and in-class discussion.
* Mindfully considering the ways in which the dark side can be extended, improved, and applied.
* Broadly engaging the dark side through critical reflection, engaged discussion, and applied learning.

**Course Requirements**

**Narrative Pedagogy Meetings (non-graded).** Together, as a class, we will engage in narrative pedagogy this semester. During one of the first classes, we will have the opportunity to meet with each other one on one and craft narratives for and about each other as we did last semester in our narrative leadership meetings. During these conversations, the prompt will simply be: “I am your colleague/professor and so I have great deal to learn about you, your education and your life. Please tell me what you think I should know about your situation” (based on Charon, 2006, p. 177). As in the practice of narrative medicine, we will all do our best not only to listen in a manner that recognizes, absorbs, and interprets each others’ stories, but also to be moved by them. Keep in mind these are not to therapy sessions, and so you shouldn’t feel pressure to tell or not tell more personal information. These meetings are designed to build course community and trust in a course where we will be talking about a lot of vulnerable topics.

**Class Participation (25%):** Although I will be offering my own insights in class to orient you to various theories and perspectives, as a graduate seminar, the class format will consist of significant student-run discussion. Therefore, class participation, including thoughtful preparation of the readings and quality engagement with each other during discussion is essential to this class. I will sometimes post reading guide/discussion questions for you to think about prior to coming to class and for your consideration as you do your readings and construct your weekly blog (see below). The blog assignment is also designed to help foster quality in-class discussion. You should be consistently and thoroughly prepared to lead and engage one another and me in discussion about the week’s topic and readings. Given the course objectives outlined above, it is acceptable to interrogate the topics we discuss from a student critic, researcher, or personal standpoint. It is important, however, that whichever lens guides our discussion it be grounded in or linked to the scholarly readings, theories, or topics relevant to the class and course readings. In addition to your in-class involvement, I will also assess the quantity and quality of your comments on other classmates’ blogs. Note: blogs are not discussion boards; thus, I do not expect you to read and comment on every person’s blog every single week! I do expect that you will read, reflect, and engage (through posted comments) on at least one other person’s blog on a regular (weekly) basis to demonstrate your class involvement and also to maximize the potential for the blogs to generate critical reflection, engaged discussion, and applied learning. According to Duck (2012), “The nature of research itself encourages researchers to focus on specific issues…and to isolate from the greater flow of life so that they be studied more effectively” (p. xv). Our goal in this class is to allow the flow of life – through media, blogs (see below), and the balance between critic and citizen – back in to promote rich, productive, and heuristic scholarly dialogue!

**Dark Side Blogs (25%):** One of the instructional objectives in this course is to balance between becoming critics and citizens, reflectors and practitioners, researchers and interpersonal communicators in the context of learning about and conducting research on the Dark Side of Interpersonal and Family Communication. In order to foster this over the course of a 16-week seminar, you will create a keep a weekly blog.

The purpose of your weekly blog will be to reflect on the week’s readings, as well as any other course material (i.e., theories, readings, models from previous weeks), and your own experiences with, or reactions to, the topic as an interpersonal communicator and/or researcher. The blogs should help you and your classmates achieve the learning objectives of *critical reflection*, *engaged discussion*, and *applied learning*. First, writing about course readings ensures engaged and *critical reflection* on those readings. Thinking and reflecting in writing thoughtfully about the week’s reading prior to coming to class should help you to engage more with the material and should also help with the second goal, *engaged classroom discussion*. Much of a seminar is about grappling with ideas in order that we might help each other become more prepared critics and citizens (Bryan Mcann, personal communication, December 2008). Thus, the blogs are also designed to foster engaged discussion during our seminar meeting. Finally, by giving you the opportunity to reflect not only on the readings but also on the ways in which they relate to, make you think about, connect with your own life as an interpersonal communicator, family or relationship member, and/or interpersonal and family communication researcher should enhance your learning. *Applied learning* gives you an opportunity to connect with and sink your teeth into material in a way that will make it more significant, interesting, helping to, as Doug Kelley (2008) would say, bring you from “No duh” to “Aha!” moments. A complete handout outlining the requirements of the semester-long blog project will be posted on Canvas. As detailed above, part of your involvement grade will include your active participation in reading and commenting on others’ blogs. I will not grade you on the “look” of your blogs, however, I hope you will personalize and have fun with a space that is designed to enhance your learning of the dark side of interpersonal and family communication. In order to be graded, blog entries must be submitted by 9:00 AM each Thursday. This should give others a chance to look at blogs prior to class, although commenting on others’ posts may happen after the Thursday they are posted. Finally, you must complete at least 8 of the 12 blogs over the course of the semester which means that you have four “free” weeks when you can opt out of a blog if you wish. You must complete the first (Week 2) and last (Week 15 blogs).

**In class article and theory discussion facilitation (10%):** At the beginning of the semester, you will sign up to lead discussion during a portion of one seminar on a topic that is of interest to you. This will give you a chance to be the “expert” for the week by diving especially deeply into the readings. It will also give you a professional development opportunity to lead a seminar for about half the class. As part of your discussion facilitation, you should select, read about, and introduce a (preferably communication) theory that you think sheds light on the dark side topic you chose to present about. This theory does not need to be presented in the readings for the week, although it could be and you could take us more in-depth on the theory. The idea is that because dark side research can be atheoretical, your task is to identify a theory that you think lends or can lend insight or texture into the dark side topic you chose to investigate. Introduce the theory and briefly explain how you think it is well-suited for the study of the dark side in your blog post for the week. Finally, you will have an hour of class to present on and lead discussion about the week’s topic, readings, the theory you chose, and how they connect with and/or diverges from any other previous theoretical or topical material you feel is relevant. Think of ways to engage your classmates in rich discussion, applied learning, critique, whatever inspires you and us to learn. You can think of this as both a discussion facilitation and low-key teaching demonstration. You may use your blog as an interactive presentation tool (i.e., link other relevant media, post a story you would like the class to read in advance, display comments relevant to your discussion, post a captioned video, etc.).

**Semester Project (40%):** This course is designed, in part, to foster the design and implementation of an original research on some aspect of the dark side of interpersonal and/or family communication. Thus, the major assignment in this class entails completing a research proposal, literature review, or other artifact (to be discussed with me). You have three options for this project, including:

1. **Option I: Empirical Study Proposal**. Research proposals will include a justification for your research, a review of the literature on your topic, a rationale for research question(s) and/or hypotheses, and a clearly outlined discussion of how you plan on studying these questions (methods section). It should be clear how this study emerged from a seminar on the dark side of interpersonal and family communication.
2. **Option III**: **In-depth Literature Review and Commentary on the Dark Side**. An in-depth literature review will be a comprehensive review of the literature on a dark side topic in interpersonal or family communication. This review is meant to allow you to dive deep into a topic. In-depth literature reviews might be used as a dissertation chapter or may be publishable in outlets like *Communication Yearbook*, as a book chapter, etc. The point is to know the interdisciplinary literature on a topic across time so that we avoid reinventing the research wheel. You may also include a commentary on the dark side metaphor, its strengths, weaknesses, directions for future research, etc. in relation to the topic you chose OR as an overall critique on the dark side approach.
3. **Creative/Research Artifact TBD**. If nothing else, COVID should provide us with flexibility and the opportunity to be creative and think outside the traditional box. If you have another idea for a project that will help move your scholarship and/or teaching forward, let’s discuss the parameters and agree on something early in the semester, if possible.

***A detailed assignment sheet will be given in class for each option.***

*Semester project presentations*: You will give a conference style presentation of your final project during Week 15 of the course.

**Course Policies**

**Required Use of Face Coverings for On-Campus Shared Learning Environments**: As of July 17, 2020 and until further notice, all University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) faculty, staff, students, and visitors (including contractors, service providers, and others) are required to use a facial covering at all times when indoors except under specific conditions outlined in the COVID 19 face covering policy found at: https://covid19.unl.edu/face-covering-policy.This statement is meant to clarify classroom policies for face coverings: To protect the health and well-being of the University and wider community, UNL has implemented a policy requiring all people, including students, faculty, and staff, to wear a face covering that covers the mouth and nose while on campus.The classroom is a community, and as a community, we seek to maintain the health and safety of all members by wearing face coverings when in the classroom. Failure to comply with this policy is interpreted as a disruption of the classroom and may be a violation of UNL’s Student Code of Conduct. Individualswho have health or medical reasons for not wearing facecoverings should work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities(for students) or the Office of Faculty/Staff Disability Services(for faculty and staff)to establish accommodations to address the health concern. Students who prefer not to wear a face covering should work with their advisor to arrange a fully online course schedule that does not require their presence on campus.

Students in the classroom:1.If a student is not properly wearing a face covering, the instructor will remind the student of the policy and ask them to comply with it.2.If the student will not comply with the face covering policy, the instructor will ask the student to leave the classroom and the student may only return when they are properly wearing a face covering.3.If the student refuses to properly wear a face covering or leave the classroom, the instructor will dismiss the class and will report the student to Student Conduct & Community Standards for misconduct, where the student will be subject to disciplinary action. Instructors in the classroom:1.If an instructor is not properly wearing a face covering, students will remind the instructor of the policy and ask them to comply with it.2.If an instructor will not properly wear a face covering, students may leave the classroom and should report the misconduct to the department chair or via the TIPS system for disciplinary action through faculty governance processes.\*Courses that have been granted an exception to the Face Covering Policy for pedagogical reasons are excluded. Exceptions to the Face Covering Policy are only granted after an approved health safety plan is developed.

**Attendance:** As with any graduate seminar, attendance at each class is expected. Should you have an emergency that prevents you from attending class, please get in touch with me as soon as you can prior to your absence. You are required, by university policy, to get a COVID test and provide evidence that it is negative before coming to campus the first week and 10 days later. For most people, you will be able to use the Safer Community app to schedule your tests and demonstrate your building access to wellness checkers. If you are sick with COVID, stay home, of course! I will work with you to figure out how we can keep you caught up on the course and whether you are well enough to attend. If you are quarantining for any reason, and are well enough to participate in class, I will work with you to Zoom you in. Please let me know as soon as possible so I can plan accordingly. If you fear for your health, please talk to me as soon as possible.

**Classroom Cleaning Policies and Procedures**: In order to ensure the health and safety of all students and instructors, in this class we will adhere to the following cleaning procedures before class begins:

* When students enter the classroom, they should take disinfecting wipes to the chair/desk they plan to sit for that class period. They should disinfect the surfaces including the desk and chair.
* Students should then throw the disinfecting wipe away and use a pump of hand sanitizer to sanitize their hands before sitting down.
* Instructors will create a one-way traffic pattern in their respective classrooms so that students do not cluster at the entry point (e.g., around the outskirts of the room).
* Instructors should follow the same procedures for disinfecting the instructional spaces (e.g., control panel, keyboards, light switches, desk, chair) prior to starting class.

**Recording of Class-Related Activity**: I invite all of you to join me in actively creating and contributing to a positive, productive, and respectful classroom culture. Each student contributes to an environment that shapes the learning process. Any work and/or communication that you are privy to as a member of this course should be treated as the intellectual property of the speaker/creator, and is not to be shared outside the context of this course.

Students may not make or distribute screen captures, audio/video recordings of, or livestream, any class-related activity, including lectures and presentations, without express prior written consent from me or an approved accommodation from Services for Students with Disabilities. If you have (or think you may have) a disability such that you need to record or tape class-related activities, you should contact Services for Students with Disabilities. If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Failure to follow this policy on recording or distributing class-related activities may subject you to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct.

**Accommodations**. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and grounds for university action. According to the University’s Bulletin (2013-2014), plagiarism is considered an act of Academic Dishonesty and is defined as, but not limited to “Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting examinations, theses, reports, speeches, drawings, laboratory notes or other academic work in whole or in part as one's own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person.” Any assignment found to be plagiarized will be given an “F” grade and may be grounds for failing the course. It is the policy of the Department of Communication Studies to file a report with the Dean of Students for any infraction (no matter how minor it may seem). It is your responsibility as a student to familiarize yourself with and adhere to these guidelines (see <http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code> for the university policies and descriptions of all academic dishonesty and <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/integrity#plagiarism> for helpful tips on avoiding plagiarism). It is my responsibility to report any cases of cheating or plagiarism to the administration. All assignments must be your own original work and must be prepared specifically for this course.

**Student concerns and feedback**: Your experience with remote learning in this course is important to me. If you have questions, concerns, or positive feedback, please contact me at jkellas2@unl.edu. If I am unable to respond, or you feel I've not adequately addressed your concerns, you can contact Associate Dean June Griffin in the College of Arts and Sciences*:**june.griffin@unl.edu**.*

**Tentative Course Schedule, Readings, and Assignments**

\*Indicates readings available on Canvas

**Week 1**, 1/28/21: ***Introduction to the Course and Wholeness: Where the Dark Side Fits in the Landscape of Interpersonal Communication***

\*Koenig Kellas, J., & Manusov, V. (In progress). Chapter 1: A beautiful mess: Interpersonal

communication is complex and consequential. In J. Koenig Kellas & V. Manusov *Interpersonal communication: Cornerstones, complexities, and consequences*. Cognella.

\*Olson, L., et al. (2012). Chapter 1 from *The dark side of family communication*. New York:

Peter Lang.

\*Socha, T. J., & Beck, G. A. (2015). Positive communication and human needs: A review and

proposed organizing conceptual framework. *Review of Communication, 15*, 173-199.

**Conceptualizing the Dark (and Light) Side**

**Week 2**, 2/4/21: ***Historical Perspectives and the Birth of the Dark Side***

**Assignment(s):**

* **Create blogs. 1st blog must be posted by 9:00 AM on Thursday 2/4; you MUST complete this blog (i.e., it cannot be used for one of your free weeks). See assignment sheet for instructions/details on this post.**

**Readings (in order)**

\*Parks, M. R. (1995). Ideology in interpersonal communication: Beyond the couches,

talk shows, and bunkers. *Communication Yearbook, 18*, 480-497.

\*Duck, S. (1994). Strategems, spoils, and a serpent’s tooth: On the delights and dilemmas

of personal relationships. In W. R. Cupach, & B. H. Spitzberg (Eds.) *The dark side of interpersonal communication* (pp. 3-24). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

\*Rawlins, W. K. (1997). Book review: The dark side of interpersonal communication.

*Communication Theory, 7*, 89-93.

\*Spitzberg, B. H., & Cupach, W. R. (1998). Introduction. In B. H. Spitzberg, & W. R.

Cupach (Eds.) *The dark side of close relationships* (pp. xi-xxii). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

\*Spitzberg, B. H., & Cupach, W. R. (2007). Disentangling the dark side of interpersonal

communication. In B. H. Spitzberg, & W. R. Cupach (Eds.) *The dark side of interpersonal communication, 2nd ed.* (pp. 3-28). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

**Also recommended:**

\*Parks, M. R. (1982). Ideology in interpersonal communication: Off the couch and into

the world. *Communication Yearbook, 5*, 79-108).

**Week 3**, 2/11/21: ***Modernizing the Dark Side: Contemporary Perspectives and Agendas***

**Assignment(s):**

* **Blog must be posted by 9:00 AM**

**Readings**

**(short chapter):** \*Duck , S. (2012). So let it be with Caesar…? In T. J. Socha, & M. J. Pitts (Eds).

*The positive side of interpersonal communication* (pp. xi-xix). New York: Peter Lang.

**(short chapter):** \*Spitzberg, B., & Cupach, W. (2012). Epilogue. The power of the dark side. In T.

J. Socha, & M. J. Pitts (Eds). *The positive side of interpersonal communication* (pp. 313-321). New York: Peter Lang.

\*Davis, S., & Afifi, T. D. (2016). Complicating the dark side of family communication through

postpositivist, interpretivist, and critical perspectives. In L. N. Olson & M. A. Fine (Eds). *The darker side of family communication* (pp. 263-284). New York: Peter Lang.

\*Harter, L. M., Thompson, C. M., & McKerrow, R. E. (2016). Foucault, poststrucutural feminism,

and the family. In L. N. Olson & M. A. Fine (Eds). *The darker side of family communication* (pp. 285-304). New York: Peter Lang.

\*Afifi, W., & Cornejo, M. (2020). #CommSoWeird: The question of sample representativeness in

interpersonal communication research. In M. L. Doerfel, & J. L. Gibbs (Eds.). Organizing Inclusion: Moving Diversity from Demographics to Communication Processes (1st ed.). Routledge.

**Also recommended:**

\*Waldron, V., & Kelley, D. (2015). In search of the good relationship. In V. Waldron, & D. Kelley

(Eds). *Moral talk across the lifespan: Creating good relationships* (pp. 1-11). New York:

Peter Lang.

**Week 4**: 2/18/21: ***Stigma and Taboo Topics: The Case of Suicid(e)(ality)***

**Assignment(s):**

* **Blog must be posted by 9:00 AM**
* **Please bring a paragraph or two in writing on your ideas for your semester project**

**\*In-class SEMESTER PROJECT CHECK-POINT** (be prepared to discuss your topics/progress to this point)

**Readings**

Smith, R. A., & Applegate, A. (2018). Mental health stigma and communication and their

intersections with education. *Communication Education*, *67*(3), 382–393.

Frey, L. M., Fulginti, A., Lezine, D., & Cerel, J. (2018). The decision-making process for disclosing

suicidal ideation and behavior to family and friends. *Family Relations, 67*: 414–427. DOI:10.1111/fare.12315

Buus, N. et al. (2013). Experiences of parents whose sons or daughters have (had) attempted

suicide. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 70*, 823–832. doi: 10.1111/jan.12243

Leonard, L. G., & Toller, P. (2012). Speaking ill of the dead: Anonymity and communication about

suicide on Mydeathspace.com. *Communication Studies, 63*, 387–404

**Also Recommended:**

Suicide is a boab tree: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4500489/>

Tingey L, Cwik MF, Goklish N, et al. (2014). Risk Pathways for Suicide Among Native American Adolescents. *Qualitative Health Research*. 24:1518-1526. doi:[10.1177/1049732314548688](https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732314548688)

PBS Well-Beings: You are Not Alone <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81UDJTpBiHY&t=578s>

**The Functional Ambivalence of the Within**

**Week 5**: 2/25/21: ***Isolation and Loneliness***

**Assignment(s):**

* **Blog must be posted by 9:00 AM**

**Readings (pick 4 of the 5 if you need to):**

Gao, Grace, & Sai, Linna. (2020). Towards a ‘virtual’ world: Social isolation and struggles during

the COVID‐19 pandemic as single women living alone. *Gender, Work, and Organization*, *27(5)*, 754-762.

Gilligan, M. et al. (2020). Multigenerational social support in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Journal of Family Theory & Review, 12*: 431–447

Floyd, K. (2015). Chapter 5: Living in an affection famine. In K. *Floyd’s The loneliness cure: Six*

*strategies for finding real connections in your life* (pp. 123-150). Adams Media.

Manusov, V. (2020). In praise of voluntary solitude: the “fertile void” and its role in communication

and relationships. *Atlantic Journal of Communication, 28:1*, 68-83, DOI: 10.1080/15456870.2020.1684158

Striley, K. M. (2016). Unlimited: Ostracism’s potential to awaken us to possibility and mystery. In

E. G. Gilchrist-Petty, & S. D. Long (Eds). Contexts of the dark side of communication (pp. 1-12). Peter Lang.

**Also Recommended:**

Kato, Takahiro A, Sartorius, Norman, & Shinfuku, Naotaka. (2020). Forced social isolation due to

COVID‐19 and consequent mental health problems: Lessons from hikikomori. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences,* *74*(9), 506-507. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7404367/>

Floyd, K., & Pauley, P. M. (2011). Affectionate communication is good, except when it isn’t: On

the dark side of expressing affection. In W. R. Cupach, & B. H. Spitzberg (Eds.) *The dark side of close relationships II* (pp. 145-173). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

**Week 6**: 3/4/21: ***Resilience, Strength, Hope, and Making Sense***

Student presenter:

**Assignment(s):**

* **Blog must be posted by 9:00 AM**

**Readings**

\*Davis, S. M., & Afifi, T. D. (2019). The Strong Black Woman Collective Theory: Determining the

Prosocial Functions of Strength Regulation in Groups of Black Women Friends. *Journal of Communication*, *69*(1), 1–25. https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1093/joc/jqy065

\* Flinchbaugh, C., Luth, M. T., & Pingshu Li. (2015). A Challenge or a Hindrance? Understanding

the Effects of Stressors and Thriving on Life Satisfaction. *International Journal of Stress Management*, *22*(4), 323–345. <https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1037/a0039136>

\*Lyubomirsky, S., Sousa, L., & Dickerhoof, R. (2006). The costs and benefits of writing, talking,

and thinking about life’s triumphs and defeats. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90*, 629-708.

\*Koenig Kellas, J., Castle, K. M., Johnson, A., & Cohen, M. Z. (2017). Communicatively

constructing the bright and dark sides of hope: Family caregivers’ experiences during end of life cancer care. *Behavioral Sciences, 7*, 1-12.

**Week 7**: 3/11/21: ***Reprieve Week*** *(for more information: see* <https://www.unl.edu/facultysenate/senate/Resolutions/Spring%202021%20Curriculum%20resolution.pdf>.)

NO CLASS MEETING

**The Functional Ambivalence of the Between**

**Week 8**: 3/18/21: ***“Dark” Relational Patterns***

Student presenter:

**Assignment(s):**

* **Blog must be posted by 9:00 AM**

Duggan, A. P. & Kilmartin, B. (2016). Parental and sibling behaviors that encourage daughters’

continued eating disorders: An Inconsistent Nurturing as Control Perspective. In

L. N. Olson & M. A. Fine (Eds). *The darker side of family communication* (pp. 49-68). New York: Peter Lang.

Morgan, W., & Wilson, S. R. (2007). Explaining child abuse as a lack of safe ground. In B. H.

Spitzberg, & W. R. Cupach (Eds.) *The dark side of interpersonal communication, 2nd ed.* (pp. 327-362). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

\*Bradley, R. P. C., & Gottman, J. M. (2012). Reducing situational violence in low-income couples

by fostering healthy relationships. *Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy, 38*, 187-198.

\*Schrodt, P., Witt, P. L., & Shimakowski, J. R. (2014). A meta-analytic review of the demand-

withdraw pattern of interaction and its associations with individual, relational, and communicative outcomes. *Communication Monographs, 81*, 28-58.

**Also Recommended:**

\*Manusov, V. (2015). Mindfulness as morality: Awareness, nonjudgment, and nonreactivity in

couples communication. In V. Waldron, & D. Kelley (Eds). *Moral talk across the lifespan: Creating good relationships* (pp. 183-201). New York: Peter Lang.

**Week 9:** 3/25/21: ***The Functional Ambivalence of Dialogue***

Student presenter:

**Assignment(s):**

* **Blog must be posted by 9:00 AM**

**Readings**

Stewart, J., & Koenig Kellas, J. (2019). Co-Constructing Uniqueness: An interpersonal process

promoting dialogue. Special issue of the *Atlantic Journal of Communication* on Enhancing Interpersonal Engagement: Concepts for Optimal Communication. Doi: 10.1080/15456870.2020.1684289

Ramasubramanian, S., Sousa, A. N., & Gonlin, V. (2017). Facilitated difficult dialogues on racism:

a goal-based approach. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *45*(5), 537–556. <https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1080/00909882.2017.1382706>

\*Kellett, P. M. (2012). The bright side of conflict: Dialogic communication, telesmatic moments,

and deep narrative learning. In T. J. Socha, & M. J. Pitts (Eds). *The positive side of*

*interpersonal communication* (pp. xi-xix). New York: Peter Lang.

Lozano-Reich, N., & Cloud, D. (2009). The Uncivil Tongue: Invitational Rhetoric and the Problem

of Inequality. *Western Journal of Communication*, *73*(2), 220–226. <https://doi->org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1080/10570310902856105

**Week 10**: 4/1/21: ***Illness, Social Support, and Coping***

Student presenter:

**Assignment(s):**

* **Blog must be posted by 9:00 AM**

**Readings**

\*Thompson, J., Brown-Burton, R., & Jackson, J. (2016). Exploring the dark side of social support

among African Americans with prostate cancer. In E. G. Gilchrist-Petty, & S. D. Long (Eds). *Contexts of the dark side of communication* (pp. 1-12). Peter Lang.

\*Voorhees, H. L., Koenig Kellas, J., Palmer-Wackerly, A., Gunning, J., Marsh, J., & Baker, J.

(under review). Memorable messages across the experience of infertility. To be presented at the International Communication Association annual (online) convention.

\*MacGeorge, E., Feng, B., Wilkum, K., & Doherty, E. (2012). Supportive communication: A

positive response to negative life events. In T. J. Socha, & M. J. Pitts (Eds.) *The positive side of interpersonal communication* (pp. 211-228). Peter Lang.

\*Thompson, C. M., Parsloe, S., & Acevedo Callejas, M. (2020) Dilemmas Managing Doubt about

Family Members’ Health Complaints: A Normative Approach, *Journal of Family Communication, 20:3*, 236-249, DOI: 10.1080/15267431.2020.1773468

**Week 11**: 4/8/21: ***Challenge, Rejection, Estrangement, and Hurt***

**Assignment(s):**

* **Blog must be posted by 9:00 AM**

Vangelisti, A. M. (2016). Hurt feelings in family relationships: Social pain and social interaction. In

L. N. Olson, & M. A. Fine (Eds). *The darker side of family communication*: *The harmful, the morally suspect, and the socially inappropriate* (pp. 137-154). Peter Lang.

\*Scharp, K. M. (2019). “You’re Not Welcome Here”: A Grounded Theory of Family

Distancing. *Communication Research*, *46*(4), 427–455. <https://doi->org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1177/0093650217715542

\*Etengoff, C. (2016). “You say you love me, but you don’t support me”: Coming-out

communication within religious family contexts. In L. N. Olson & M. A. Fine (Eds). *The darker side of family communication* (pp. 201-224). New York: Peter Lang.

\*Morgan, T., & Koenig Kellas, J. (in progress). Perceived parental communicated acceptance

during parent-child religious difference. Manuscript being prepared for submission.

**Also Recommended:**

Lin, M. Giles, H., & Soliz, J. (2016). Problematic intergenerational communication and caregiving

the family: Elder abuse and neglect. In L. N. Olson & M. A. Fine (Eds). *The darker side of family communication* (pp. 155-174). New York: Peter Lang.

**Week 12**: 4/15/21: ***The “Dark” Side of Parenting Practices***

Student presenter:

**Assignment(s):**

* **Blog must be posted by 9:00 AM**

**\*In-class SEMESTER PROJECT CHECK-POINT** (be prepared to discuss your topics/progress to this point)

**Readings**

\*Guntzviller, L. M., & Wang, N. (2019). Mother-Adolescent Communication in Low-Income,

Latino Families during Language Brokering: Examining the Theory of Resilience and Relational Load, Journal of Family Communication, 19:3, 228-242, DOI: [10.1080/15267431.2019.1628764](https://doi.org/10.1080/15267431.2019.1628764)

Miller-Day, M., Dorros, S, M., & Day, E. (2016). The impact of maternal and paternal

communication dominance on offspring’s negative self-talk, depression, and suicidality. In L. N. Olson & M. A. Fine (Eds). *The darker side of family communication* (pp. 27-48). New York: Peter Lang.

Segrin, C. & Arroyo, A. (2016). Mental health problems in family contexts. In

L. N. Olson & M. A. Fine (Eds). *The darker side of family communication* (pp. 3-26). New York: Peter Lang.

Kelly, L., Duran, R. L., & Miller-Ott, A. E. (2017). Helicopter Parenting and Cell-Phone Contact

between Parents and Children in College. *Southern Communication Journal*, *82*(2), 102–114. <https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1080/1041794X.2017.1310286>

**Also Recommended:**

\*Flood-Grady, E., & Koenig Kellas, J. (2018). Sense-making, socialization, and stigma: Exploring

narratives told in families about mental illness. *Health Communication*. Advanced online publication. Doi: [10.1080/10410236.2018.1431016](https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2018.1431016).

**Week 13**: 4/22/21: ***Revenge, Forgiveness, and Loss***

Student presenter:

**Assignment(s):**

* **Blog must be posted by 9:00 AM**

**Readings**

\* Yoshimura, S. (2007). The communication of revenge: On the viciousness, virtues, and

vitality of vengeful behaviors in interpersonal relationships. In B. H. Spitzberg, & W. R. Cupach (Eds.) *The dark side of interpersonal communication, 2nd ed.* (pp. 201-242). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

\*Knight, K. (2018). Transgressor communication after committing a hurtful relational event:

Associations with attributed intent, blame, guilt, responsibility, and perceived forgiveness. *Western Journal of Communication*, *82*(4), 475–492. https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1080/10570314.2017.1325925

\*Cohen, H., & Samp, J. A. (2018). Grief Communication: Exploring Disclosure and Avoidance

Across the Developmental Spectrum. *Western Journal of Communication*, *82*(2), 238–257. https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1080/10570314.2017.1326622

\*Keeley, M. P., & Generous, M. A. (2015). The challenge of final conversations: Dialectical

tensions during end-of-life family communication. *Southern Communication Journal, 80*, 377-387.

**Violence, Abuse, and Incivility**

**Week 14**: 4/29/21: ***Abuse, Violence, and Violence Prevention and Wrapping Up***

**In class:** *Paper presentation*

**CLASS AT JODY’S HOUSE??**

**Readings**

\*Dailey, R. M., Lee, C. M., & Spitzberg, B. H. (2007). Communicative aggression:

Toward a more interactional view of psychological abuse. In B. H. Spitzberg, & W. R. Cupach (Eds.) *The dark side of interpersonal communication, 2nd ed.* (pp. 297-326). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Eckstein, J. J. (2016). Is love blind to abuse? Factors affecting victims’ preferences for love

communication from abusive romantic partners. In L. N. Olson & M. A. Fine (Eds). *The darker side of family communication* (pp. 175-197). New York: Peter Lang.

Anderson, K. L. (2016). Violence as gendered communication in families. In L. N. Olson & M. A.

Fine (Eds). *The darker side of family communication* (pp. 225-244). New York: Peter Lang.

\*Greene, G. J., Fisher, K. A., Kuper, L., Andrews, R., & Mustanski, B. (2015). “Is this normal? Is

this not normal? There is no set example”: Sexual health intervention preferences of LGBT youth in romantic relationships. *Sexuality Research & Social Policy: A Journal of the NSRC*, *12*(1), 1–14. https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1007/s13178-014-0169-2

**Week 15**: 5/6/21: NO CLASS MEETING

**Assignment(s):**

* **Final paper due by Friday, 5/7/21**