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INTERPERSONAL REJECTION IN THE LABORATORY

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The need to belong is one of the most basic, influential, and universal human needs. Having this need thwarted by social rejection or exclusion is likely to produce a wide-ranging psychological impact. Over the past decade, my colleagues and I have investigated this need using mainly laboratory studies in which college students are exposed to experimentally controlled rejection experiences.

Our procedures are standard and straightforward. In one, a group of strangers first spends about 15 minutes talking, ostensibly to get acquainted, and then everyone is told to list the two group members he or she would most like to work with on the next task. They are put in separate rooms, their preferences are collected, and then we visit each person to say that we cannot proceed normally, either (by random assignment) because everyone has chosen you or because no one has chosen you. In another procedure, an individual fills out a personality test and receives some feedback on it that includes a prediction that he or she is likely to end up alone in life and as the years go by will be spending more and more time alone – as opposed to various other predicted future outcomes. In a third procedure, people make videos about themselves and exchange with an ostensible partner to prepare for an interaction. Then they are told that the other person abruptly departed, either because of suddenly remembering an appointment or because the other specifically did not want to meet you after seeing your video. Of course, after we measure reactions, we debrief everyone, explain the deception and the need for it, and ensure that no one leaves the laboratory feeling upset or rejected.

The immediate behavioral effects of these manipulations have been among the largest I have observed in my career. One might hope that rejected people would respond by becoming nicer and trying harder to win friends, but this has rarely happened. Instead, rejected people show increased aggressiveness (including toward new people who had nothing to do with the rejection). They also show a broad decrease in all sorts of helpful, cooperative behaviors. These include volunteering to help others, donating money to a good cause, complying with a request for a favor, and even bending over to help pick up spilled pencils.

Crucial sorts of behavior that contribute to mental and physical health diminish in the wake of rejection, apparently because rejected people do not bother to take care of themselves. They engage in self-defeating behaviors, such as taking foolish risks and choosing unhealthy options. Their self-control diminishes. Excluded people perform worse on many measures of self-control. They eat more fattening snack foods (even if they do not like them). We have repeatedly found that rejected people (like lonely people in other studies) perform poorly at attention control, such as a dichotic listening task in which one hears a different voice in each earphone and is supposed to screen out the one and follow the other. They do poorly on standard self-control tasks such as holding their hand in ice water. If we offer them money or other rewards for good performance, they can do well, which suggests the poor self-control stems from the loss of motivation to exert themselves. Their attitude seems to be, “What’s in it for me?” and “Why should I bother or make sacrifices?” although they do not express such views explicitly.

Intelligent performance suffers dramatically, as if being rejected makes you stupid. We have given short IQ tests to people right after these rejection experiences, and their scores drop by about 25%. It appears to be controlled processes and reasoning ability that suffer the most. Rote memory seems to work pretty well among rejected people. They can even take in new information and parrot it back quite effectively. This contradicts the view that rejected people are distracted because they are ruminating about the rejection or that they become unwilling to exert themselves on all tasks. Rather, they seem like people who have been stunned by a blow to the head. Simple mental functions continue as normal, while complex ones go badly.

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The centerpiece of our initial theory was that rejection would produce strong emotional reactions, and that these would mediate all the behavioral and mental performance outcomes. We were surprised that our initial studies found no effect on reported emotional states. If you go back and read the description of our rejection procedures, you probably assume that these would be very upsetting. They are not. We have confirmed that most people *imagine* they would be upset if such things happened to them, but people who actually experience them do not report emotional distress. We have measured this over and over, with many different measures and procedures, and there simply is not an immediate distress reaction.

Why not? At a conference, we heard Geoff MacDonald summarize findings that socially excluded animals become insensitive to pain – akin to the analgesia that comes right after the shock of serious physical injury. Some experts had begun to speculate that human social emotions were linked to the pain system. Intrigued, we purchased equipment to measure pain sensitivity and found that our manipulations of social exclusion made students less able to feel pain. Moreover, the loss of pain sensitivity went hand in hand with emotional numbness.

The whole emotional system seems to shut down (temporarily, at least) in the wake of rejection. Excluded students show less emotion than other students even when predicting how they will feel about their college winning or losing a big football game next month. Likewise, they seem to lose their capacity to empathize with other people. The loss of emotional empathy helps explain why rejected people cease to help others and why they may become more aggressive toward others. Empathy promotes treating others well, and without it, people become less kind and more cruel.

We did eventually find some emotional effects of rejection, but these had a surprising twist. In a few studies we measured nonconscious emotional responses to rejection. Although conscious emotion is seemingly absent after rejection, the nonconscious part of the mind does become emotionally active. Ironically, though, the effect is an uptick in positive emotions rather than negative ones. That is, rejected people exhibit increased accessibility of affectively pleasant, positive ideas and feelings. This may be part of the coping process. Faced with social rejection, the conscious mind goes emotionally numb, while the unconscious mind starts to search for happy thoughts.

Another positive response to rejection has also emerged in recent work. We have found that rejected people do have an increased interest in making new friends. They seem quite wary of being rejected again, which helps explain their hair-trigger aggressiveness and unwillingness to be helpful or cooperative. But if the other person makes the first move, or if they have an opportunity to meet potential friends who seem welcoming and there is no obvious risk of being hurt or

spurned, rejected people are more interested than other people. Rejected people will also exert themselves and perform exceptionally well on tasks that are presented as tests of social skills.

These last findings are important because they bring us back to the idea of the need to belong as a basic and powerful motivation. The standard pattern for any motivation is that when it is thwarted, the person or animal may try harder to find satisfaction. Our findings about unhelpfulness, poor self-control, and aggression depicted the rejected person as someone who has become antisocial and even misanthropic, but that picture is not quite right. Instead, it appears that social rejection simply makes people skeptical of others, as well as being a bit selfish, impulsive, and emotionally insensitive. But the standard motivational pattern is still there. Social exclusion does indeed make people become more interested in finding acceptance elsewhere, even though this interest is tempered by distrust and a reluctance to risk any further rejections.

Although these are laboratory findings, there is ample reason to think that they are highly relevant to many everyday experiences. Indeed, sociologists observe that even at the macro level, groups who feel socially excluded by the broader population or culture often exhibit many of the same patterns – increased aggression, impulsivity, poor intellectual performance, low prosocial behavior, poor self-control – that our lab studies have found to be caused by rejection.

In view of the limited space I have provided only a cursory overview. I have had to neglect many methodological issues. Interested readers can find more details in the following publications:

- Baumeister, R. F. (1990). Suicide as escape from self. *Psychological Review*, 97, 90-113.
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- Finkenauer, C., Engels, R. C. M. E., & Baumeister, R. F. (2005). Parenting behavior and adolescent behavioral and emotional problems: The role of self-control. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 29, 58-69.
- Maner, J.K., DeWall, C. N., Baumeister, R. F. (2007). Does social exclusion motivate interpersonal reconnection? Resolving the 'Porcupine Problem'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92, 42-55.
- Twenge, J.M., Baumeister, R. F., DeWall, C. N. (2007). Social exclusion decreases prosocial behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92, 56-66.

NOMINATIONS AND FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS

Soon members of ISIPAR will be asked to vote for a new President-Elect, as well as for Regional Representatives from six areas of the world. These include Central & South Africa; Insular Pacific & Australia; Mexico, Central America & the Caribbean; North Africa & the Middle East; North America; and Southeast Asia. Following guidelines provided by the Society's Constitution & Bylaws, Past-President Azmi Varan (Chairperson of the Nomination Committee) has appointed Ronald P. Rohner (President of ISIPAR) and Karen Ripoll-Núñez (Regional Representative for South America) to serve with him on the Nomination Committee. The Committee is pleased to nominate the following members for office:

PRESIDENT-ELECT



Abdul Khaleque Ph.D., earned his B. A. Honors in Philosophy from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh; M. Sc. in Applied Psychology from University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan; M. A. in Family Studies from University of Connecticut, USA; and Doctorate in Psychology from Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium.

Currently he is a Senior Scientist in the Ronald and Nancy Rohner Center for the Study of Parental Acceptance and Rejection in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, University of Connecticut. He is also a Professor in Residence in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Connecticut. Formerly he was a Professor of Psychology at the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh. He was also a Visiting Fellow in the Department of Psychology at the University of Delhi, India; and a Visiting Faculty at the University of Otago in New Zealand. Finally, he is a past President of the Bangladesh Psychological Association, a former Vice President and General Secretary of the South Asian Association of Psychologists, and a life member of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society of the USA. His current research interests include interpersonal acceptance-rejection and lifespan human development, specifically parental acceptance-rejection, intimate partner acceptance-rejection, and teachers' acceptance-rejection. He has published nearly 100 research articles, approximately 25 book chapters, and 12 books in psychology and related areas.

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES



Insular Pacific & Australia Rapson Gomez, Ph.D., is Professor of Clinical Psychology, University of Tasmania, School of Psychology. His current research deals with the relevance of parental acceptance-rejection theory

(PARTheory) for helping to understand the relationship between Beck's cognitive theory and Gray's reinforcement theory within the context of mood induction studies. He is also interested in cross-cultural studies using item response theory and structural equation models to examine the psychometric properties of various measures developed in PARTheory research. Past research involved the role of attachment, and parental warmth and control in the development of social cognition and maladjustment of children and adolescents. As a clinical child psychologist in an academic setting, his clinical and academic work has included the applications and teaching of parental acceptance-rejection theory in the treatment of childhood and adolescent problems.



Mexico, Central America & the Caribbean Claudia Alvarez, Ph.D., is an Adjunct Professor currently teaching in the Department of Education in the Master's Program for Research and Evaluation in Education at the Universidad de Puerto Rico. Her research interests focus on interpersonal

Acceptance-rejection among partners as well as on instrument development and after-school programs. Her previous studies on human memory involved several conference presentations and lead to a publication entitled "What people believe about memory despite the research evidence" published in *The General Psychologist* in 2002. Dr. Alvarez earned her Master of Arts in Educational Psychology from the University of Connecticut in 2001 and her Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Psychology from the University of Connecticut in 2006.



North Africa & the Middle East Ramadan A. Ahmed, Ph.D., is Professor of Psychology, College of Social Sciences, Kuwait University, Kuwait, and current Regional Representative of ISIPAR for the North Africa and the Middle East. He has been interested in research on parental acceptance-rejection since 1986.



ISIPAR DUES ARE PAYABLE JANUARY 1, 2008



A gentle reminder that ISIPAR dues are payable on January 1, 2008 for 2008. There is a discount rate for paying two years at once. For specific rate information see the on-line membership application at <http://www.isiparweb.org/Membership%20application.doc>

SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS FOR INTERPERSONAL ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION

The Second ICIAR will be held July 3-6, 2008 in Rethymno, at the University of Crete, Crete. The theme of the Congress is "Acceptance, Rejection, and Resilience Within Family, School, and Social-Emotional Contexts". Registration and reservations for accommodations for the Congress can be made online using the Congress website <http://isipar08.org>. Fees are in Euros. Participants will save 50€ on registration fees by registering **before April 30, 2008**. For more information, please see visit <http://www.isipar08.org/registration.html>.

Deadline for receipt of Abstracts for the 2nd ICIAR has changed. The new deadline is Monday, March 3, 2008. Please visit <http://www.isipar08.org/papers.html> for more information.

PLEASE SUBMIT PAPERS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT ROHNER CENTER AWARDS FOR DISTINGUISHED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEORY, RESEARCH, AND PRACTICE ON INTERPERSONAL ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION

Members of the Society are urged to submit papers for either of the two Awards of \$1,000 each that will be given at the next and following biennial meetings of the *International Society for Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection* (ISIPAR). These cash awards are intended to both acknowledge outstanding contributions to the field of interpersonal acceptance-rejection and to help cover expenses associated with attending and giving an Awards Address at the international meeting. Awards will be given for the *Outstanding Paper of the Biennium* and for the *Outstanding Paper by an Early Career Professional*. Eligibility, evaluation criteria, submission process and deadline information, are available online at http://www.isiparweb.org/index_files/Page1034.htm

NOMINATIONS AND FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS ...CONTINUED

North Africa & the Middle East

Ramadan A. Ahmed, Ph.D., Continued

In collaboration with his coauthors, he has published two studies on the relationship between the development of moral reasoning and perceptions of parental acceptance-rejection in Sudan and Kuwait. He also investigated (with others) the relationship between perceptions of parental acceptance-rejection and aesthetic feelings in Egyptian students. Moreover, he has supervised MA theses on the relationship between perception of parental acceptance-rejection and phobias, identity disorders, and teachers' behavior and personality dispositions. Finally, he has published a review of "Arab research studies using the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ)." He is currently conducting a study on the reliability of the Short and Standard forms of the Arabic language versions of the PARQ. He and others are also doing a study of the relationship between the perception of parental acceptance-rejection, as well as the perception of best friend's, siblings', and teacher's behavior in relation to personality dispositions in Kuwaiti children and adolescents.



North America Shaila Khan, Ph.D., is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychology in Tougaloo College, Jackson, Mississippi. Dr. Khan received her Doctorate in Social Psychology from the University of

Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada in 1997. Her academic career spans twenty years of university teaching in different parts of the world, including at Tougaloo College (United States), University of Manitoba, and University of Brandon, (Canada), and the University of Dhaka and North South University (Bangladesh). In the Spring of 2006 she received the Tougaloo College "National Alumni Association Teaching Award" and in the Spring of 2007 she received the Tougaloo College "Distinguished Professor Award." In the last three years she has conducted cross-cultural research with Bangladeshi college students as well as with African American college students on parental acceptance and rejection, intimate adult relationships, corporal punishment, and psychological well being. Additionally, she has done NIH funded evaluative research on "Student achievement and its relationship with perceived parental and teacher acceptance/rejection in the Mississippi Delta."

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REJECTION SENSITIVITY

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Most people experience some form of rejection and betrayal at some point in their lives. However, not everyone reacts to rejection with the same intensity and negativity. Whereas for some people, rejection triggers a cascade of negative reactions such as hostility and aggression, in others it may elicit calmer, more benign, and even relationship-enhancing reactions. The Rejection Sensitivity (RS) model was developed to explain such variability in people's reactions to rejection (Downey & Feldman, 1996).

The processing dynamics of RS

The RS model outlines several steps that together make up the dynamics of RS. First, when people experience rejection during their formative years, they develop anxious expectations that others will reject them. In subsequent relationships, situations where rejection is possible (e.g., a disagreement with a partner) bring these expectations to mind, increasing the likelihood that others' ambiguous or negative behavior will actually be perceived as rejection. The perceived rejection in turn prompts reactions such as hostility and depression. Ironically, such reactions can elicit the very rejection from others that people high in RS fear, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy.

How is RS measured? Given that anxious expectations of rejection are carried from prior experiences of rejection into new situations and relationships, the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire¹ (RSQ, Downey & Feldman, 1996) asks people to indicate how anxiously they would expect to be rejected across 18 interpersonal situations. People who score high in RS are those who not only expect rejection but *also* are highly concerned about its occurrence. For example, a telemarketer who expects rejection quite a bit but is not anxious anticipating it every time he/she dials a new number would not be considered high in RS. In contrast, low RS people mostly expect acceptance and feel less anxious about the possibility that rejection may occur.

Empirical evidence for the model

The RS model has received support in diverse populations, including college students, at-risk middle-school students, and incarcerated women. First, several studies have established that anxious expectations of rejection (i.e., RSQ scores) are associated with early rejection experiences. For example, in one study, caretakers' reports of harsh parenting practices predicted an increase in their children's RS over a 1-year period (Downey, Khouri, & Feldman, 1997). Consistently, in cross-sectional studies, anxious expectations of rejection were associated with childhood exposure to family violence in participants' retrospective reports (Feldman, & Downey, 1994).

Second, both experimental and field studies have also demonstrated that high RS people more readily perceive rejection in the ambiguously intentioned negative behavior of others (Downey & Feldman, 1996). In a laboratory experiment, high RS students felt more rejected than low RS students when told that a stranger with whom they had just finished a friendly conversation declined to continue with the study, which involved meeting with them a second time. Whereas high RS students in the experimental condition tended to attribute the stranger's ambiguously intentioned rejection to something they themselves had said or done, low RS students tended to explain the stranger's behavior in impersonal terms. No differences emerged when an explicitly situational explanation (constraints on experimenter's time) was given for the early termination. This is important because it shows that RS gets activated in situations relevant to rejection, rather than globally across all situations.

Third, it has been established that perceived rejection elicits negative overreactions in high RS individuals. A recent study that used the human startle probe paradigm, for example, has shown that rejection cues automatically elicit defensive motivational states in high RS people (Downey, Mougios, Ayduk, London, & Shoda, 2004). The intensity of a person's startle reflex increases systematically with negative arousal, therefore, the magnitude of the eye-blink response is considered a reliable measure of defensive physiological states. Study participants were shown either non-representational artwork by Rothko, or artwork that contained themes of rejection, isolation, and alienation by Hopper while they heard a loud burst of noise at various points during the session to elicit their startle reflex. People low in RS showed a similar startle response when viewing the Hopper and Rothko artwork; however, people high in RS were startled much more when viewing Hopper artwork than when viewing Rothko artwork. This suggests that when viewing themes of rejection, high RS people experience defensive physiological states more than low RS people. In another study using the priming-pronunciation paradigm (Ayduk, Downey, Testa, Yen, & Shoda, 1999), high RS people were found to start pronouncing hostility-related words (e.g., hit) preceded by rejection-related words (e.g., abandon) much faster than low RS people, but only when these words were *preceded* by rejection-related words. This indicates a stronger mental association between rejection and hostility for people high in RS.

Other studies show that these physiological and cognitive reactions also translate into hostile and aggressive behavior (Ayduk et al., 1999; Ayduk, Gyurak, & Leurssen, 2007). In laboratory studies that experimentally induce feelings of rejection (e.g., an online interaction partner not wanting to engage in further interaction after having read the participant's biosketch), high RS people

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were found to retaliate in kind by denigrating the partner or by allocating more hot sauce to them knowing the partner does not like spicy food. Because conflicts are particularly potent situations in eliciting high RS people's hostility and aggression, studies of people's ongoing relationships have used occurrence of conflicts as an index of hostile behavior. In daily diary studies of couples in relationships, high RS women were more likely to get into conflicts if they had reported feeling rejected the previous day, indicating that they get aggressive when they feel rejected. In contrast, low RS people's likelihood of getting into conflicts were not a function of how rejected they felt. Other studies also show that high RS men who are invested in relationships are vulnerable to being physically violent toward romantic partners (Downey, Feldman, & Ayduk, 2000).

Aggression is not the only form of reactivity high RS (HRS) people show in response to rejection. A 6-month longitudinal study of college women revealed that high compared to low RS women, got more depressed if they experienced a partner-initiated breakup, but not if they experienced a self-initiated or mutually-initiated breakup (Ayduk, Downey, & Kim, 2001). By contrast, RS did not predict increased depression following failure to achieve an academic goal. These results support the view that depression in HRS women is a reaction to rejection in an important relationship, rather than to any negative event.

The negative reactions of high RS people ultimately undermine their relationships, bringing about further rejection. In young adulthood, the relationships of individuals high in RS are twice as likely to end within a year compared with those of people low in RS (Downey, Freitas, Michaelis, & Khouri, 1998). However, gender differences also seem to exist in the self-fulfilling prophecy function of high RS. Findings from a daily diary study (Downey et al., 1998) revealed that on days preceded by conflict, high RS women's partners were more likely than low RS women's partners to experience relationship dissatisfaction and to think of ending the relationship. However, conflicts did not precipitate changes in relationship satisfaction or commitment for high or low RS men's partners. These observed gender differences may be due to how their partners react to them. Specifically, while men tolerate high RS women's hostility very little, women may be making more relationship-enhancing attributions to high RS men's hostility (e.g., "he felt ignored and got angry, which means he ultimately cares about me"). More research is needed however, to elucidate if, where, and why in the high RS dynamics gender differences emerge.

Self-regulation as a protective factor against high RS

New evidence is beginning to show that not every high RS person is equally vulnerable to negative outcomes. A number of studies show that self-regulatory capacity can break the association between RS and maladjustment (Ayduk et al., 2000, 2007). For example, across several studies, the number of seconds preschoolers were able to wait to get a preferred but delayed reward (a classic measure of self-regulatory ability) protected high RS individuals from negative life outcomes (e.g., low self-esteem, drug use, academic underachievement, aggression, and the development of borderline personality features) approximately 30 years later

In adulthood. Other studies have also shown that other components of self-regulation, such as the ability to shift and focus attention, or the ability to resist cognitive interference also serve as buffers against high RS dynamics.

Conclusions

In conclusion, although interpersonal rejection seems to be clearly linked to negative life outcomes, not everybody responds to such rejection in the same way. Research on RS indicates that early experiences of rejection are critical to the development of high RS, which involves anxiously expecting, readily perceiving, and overreacting to rejection. RS is situationally specific. Moreover, even if high in RS, one is not necessarily destined to maladaptive outcomes. Personal strengths such as self-regulation can buffer people who are high in RS. Overall, the research suggests that battling the negative consequences of rejection involves both contextual interventions (ensuring loving childhood environments) and the practice and development of personal strengths.

Footnotes

1. The RSQ and scoring instructions can be downloaded from www.columbia.edu/cu/psychology/socialrelations.

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NOMINATIONS AND FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS ...CONTINUED



Southeast Asia Shamsul Haque, Ph.D., is a Senior Lecturer at Monash University, Sunway Campus, and Academic Coordinator of psychology at the School of Medicine and Health Sciences at Monash University in Malaysia. He is the recipient of two post-

doctoral fellowships, one from Ford ASIA Fellows Program and another from Asian Scholarship Foundation, which enabled him to conduct research at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing, Malaysian National University in Kuala Lumpur, and the University of Durham in England. He has published 22 research articles in different local and international peer-reviewed journals. Dr. Haque was the recipient of the 2005 KS Yang Young Scholar Award in recognition of his scholarly excellence as exemplified in his paper entitled "Gender variation in reminiscence phenomenon: A cross-cultural investigation" that was presented at the Asian Association of Social Psychology Conference held in Wellington, New Zealand that same year. His research in cognitive psychology includes the recollection process of autobiographical memory, memory and culture, and neuropsychology of autobiographical memory. His current research interests consist of parent-child relationships and children's memory.

Deadline for submission of material for publication in the May 2008 issue of *Interpersonal Acceptance* is April 1, 2008. Please direct correspondence to Ron Rohner, Editor rohner@uconn.edu

NOMINATIONS ARE SOUGHT FOR A REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR CENTRAL AND SOUTH AFRICA

(Please see below for information about procedures for nominating a candidate)

As specified by the Society's Bylaws, any five paid-up members of the Society may nominate an additional candidate for the office of President-Elect or Regional Representative, provided that their nomination is submitted to the Chairperson of the Nominations Committee (Dr. Azmi Varan, azmi.varan@ege.edu.tr) at least 30 days prior to the scheduled date of elections on Monday, April 21, 2008. Additional information about the elections process, duties of Officers and Regional Representatives, and other such matters may be found in the Society's Constitution and Bylaws at www.isiparweb.org.

ROHNER ASSUMES EDITORSHIP OF INTERPERSONAL ACCEPTANCE

Effective this issue Ronald P. Rohner assumes the role as Editor of *Interpersonal Acceptance*. Lori Kalinowski has agreed to work with him as Editorial Assistant. Regrettably Zafar Afaq Ansari had to step down as inaugural Editor. We thank him for his outstanding contributions to the Newsletter, and for setting an unusually high standard that will be a challenge to maintain!

The Newsletter will be published on a new schedule, beginning with this issue. Henceforth it will be published in **January, May, and September**. Readers who wish to contribute to the Newsletter must provide their material by December 1 in order to appear in the January issue, April 1 to appear in the May issue, and August 1 to appear in the September issue.

RONALD AND NANCY ROHNER CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF INTERPERSONAL ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION

Previously known as the Ronald and Nancy Rohner Center for the Study of Parental Acceptance and Rejection, the word *parental* has now been replaced with "*Interpersonal*" in the title. This change was approved in December 2007 to better reflect the work being done in the Center. For the first twenty five years of the Center's existence the focus was on parental acceptance and rejection, behavioral control, corporal punishment and other styles of parenting. In the past decade, however, parental acceptance-rejection theory, measures, and evidence has expanded to include issues of intimate adult relationships, peer relationships, sibling relationships, and other forms of interpersonal relationship throughout the lifespan. Please visit the website to read about the Center and its mission at www.cspar.uconn.edu.