

Decision Processes Colloquia

Monday, February 24th

Where: JMHH G 50

When: 12:00 – 1:20 pm

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The Persistence of Homophobia in Men's Friendship Norms

ABSTRACT:

Across five studies and one supplementary study (five pre-registered; N = 3,215), we find that men, more than women, avoid shared experiences (e.g., going to the movies, sharing food) with individuals of the same gender. Furthermore, persisting societal expectations that men should be unambiguously heterosexual underlies this pattern—men feel more apprehensive about signaling same-gender romance in platonic relationships than women. In turn, romantic prototypicality drove the pattern of men (more than women) avoiding shared activities, above and beyond differences in how hedonic, enjoyable, and feminine the activities were; furthermore, findings suggest that men's reluctance to share these experiences is due to pressure to conform to societal expectations rather than solely a personal preference. This research offers insight into how, despite evolving societal attitudes, heterosexual norms can lead men to make suboptimal consumption decisions and to forgo opportunities to connect with other men, ultimately perpetuating stigma against intimacy between men.



