

SPILLOVER EFFECTS OF A HUSBAND'S RETIREMENT ON A WOMAN'S HEALTH: EVIDENCE FROM URBAN CHINA

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This paper examines the effect that a man's retirement has on his wife's mental and physical health. I exploit the large increase in the probability of retirement at the legal retirement age for urban male wage earners in China as a natural experiment, using data from the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Survey (CHARLS). I have implemented a fuzzy regression discontinuity design to compare the health outcomes of women whose husbands recently retired with those whose husbands are close to retire. My findings indicate that the retirement of her spouse improves physical and mental well-being of the woman, most likely by increasing the frequency of her social interactions and exercising. Although income and marital quality are less likely to be the main channels through which this positive spillover effect operates, decreased marital satisfaction or severe income constraints can be binding.

SESSION 3150 (SYMPOSIUM)

BEREAVEMENT IN A FAMILY CONTEXT

Chair: Jeffrey E. Stokes, *University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, Massachusetts, United States*

Co-Chair: Kyungmin Kim, *University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, Massachusetts, United States*

Discussant: Deborah Carr, *Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts, United States*

Bereavement is an impactful, often difficult experience for individuals throughout the life course. Moreover, bereavement experiences inherently involve wider family networks: The death of a spouse is often also the death of a parent, grandparent, or sibling, as well. The present symposium investigates a variety of different family loss experiences that individuals are exposed to in adulthood and older age, and situates such bereavement in a larger family context. Stahl explores how daily routines and sleep patterns can be altered by spousal bereavement, and assesses an intervention designed to improve widowed older adults' behaviors and, in turn, reduce their depressive symptomology. Kim and colleagues analyze the death of a parent in adulthood, examining the extent to which pre-loss relationship quality and relationship importance may predict post-loss symptoms of grief. Stokes and colleagues extend this intergenerational perspective, examining the death of a grandparent in adulthood, and whether adult grandchildren's relationships with their middle-generation parents – bereaved adult children themselves – impact their experiences of grief after loss. Focus is also paid to the influence of gender across all three generations. Lastly, Donnelly explores the cumulative consequences of experiencing multiple family deaths throughout the life course for adults' health trajectories. Together, these papers expand the scope of bereavement research to incorporate spousal, multigenerational, and cumulative loss experiences and their repercussions for midlife and older adults. As discussant, Carr will assess the contributions of these papers to theory and the literature, and highlight potential

directions for future research concerning aging, families, and bereavement.

FAMILY-MEMBER LOSS AS A CUMULATIVE BURDEN FOR HEALTH AMONG BLACK AND WHITE OLDER ADULTS

Rachel Donnelly¹, *1. Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, United States*

The health consequences of multiple family member deaths across the life course has received less attention in the bereavement literature. Moreover, recent research shows that black Americans are more likely than white Americans to lose multiple family members. I analyze longitudinal data from the Health and Retirement Study (1992-2014) to assess how multiple family member losses across the life course are associated with declines in health among older adults. Findings suggest that multiple family losses prior to midlife are associated with a number of indicators of poor health (e.g., functional limitations, cardiometabolic health) and steeper declines in health as individuals age. Losses after midlife additionally undermine health declines for older adults. Thus, family member loss functions as a cumulative burden of stress across the life course that erodes health in mid- and later-life. Family loss disproportionately burdens black Americans and serves as a unique source of disadvantage for black families.

DIGITAL MONITORING OF SLEEP, MEALS, AND EXERCISE AS A PREVENTIVE INTERVENTION FOR DEPRESSION IN BEREAVED SPOUSES

Sarah Stahl¹, *1. University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, United States*

The death of a spouse brings profound change to bereaved survivors' lifestyle and daily routine. These changes disrupt circadian rhythms which, in turn, places individuals at high risk for depression. The purpose of this study is to examine the feasibility and acceptability of a 12-week behavioral intervention that targets the timing and regularity of sleep, meals, and physical activity via digital monitoring and motivational health coaching. Participants were 60+ years of age and assessed on intervention acceptability and adherence, depression symptoms (Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression) and the rest-activity rhythm, (a downstream indicator of the body's circadian rhythm (via actigraphic technology). The intervention was rated highly by participants (n=55); 88% were compliant in digital monitoring and 95% were retained. Depression symptoms declined from pre- to post-intervention; and the regularity of circadian rhythms increased. An intervention that targets the regularity of day- and nighttime activities may reduce depression in older spousally-bereaved adults.

MIDDLE-AGED ADULTS' BEREAVEMENT RESPONSE TO PARENT DEATH: THE ROLE OF PRE-LOSS RELATIONSHIP QUALITY

Kyungmin Kim,¹ Jeffrey E. Stokes,¹

Steven H. Zarit,² and Karen L. Fingerman³, *1. University of Massachusetts Boston, Boston, Massachusetts, United States, 2. Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, United States, 3. The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, United States*