The Experience and Expression of Uncertainty in Close Relationships

Close relationships are an important and desired aspect of the human experience; but as individuals pursue intimacy and connection with others, they will encounter a variety of questions about the nature, status, and future of their relationships. Consequently, uncertainty is an inevitable element of close relationships. It can arise in response to a variety of relational circumstances and can shape the ways in which partners think, feel, and act toward one another.

This book summarizes the expansive body of theoretical and empirical research regarding the nature of uncertainty, the conditions that promote uncertainty about relational involvement, and the emotional, cognitive, and communicative outcomes of uncertainty for individuals and their relationships. Based on the robust accumulation of data about uncertainty in close relationships, the book also offers recommendations for coping with ambiguous relational circumstances and proposes new directions for conceptualizing and studying uncertainty in close relationships.

JENNIFER A. THEISS (PhD, University of Wisconsin) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication at Rutgers University. Her research has contributed to the development of relational turbulence theory, which focuses on conditions during transitions in close relationships that give rise to cognitive, emotional, and communicative turmoil. She is a Rutgers University Chancellor's Scholar and her scholarship has received several awards, including the Early Career Award from the Interpersonal Communication Division of the National Communication Association, the Distinguished Article Award from the International Association for Relationship Research, and the John Garrison Award for Interpersonal Communication Research in Applied Contexts.

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For Kevin, without a doubt

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