

## I READ FOR YOU: RECENT FINDINGS IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCHES

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### Dear Editor-in-Chief

When it comes to happiness, what's love got to do with it?

The study – published in the *Journal of Positive Psychology* – examined the relationship histories of 7,532 people followed from ages 18 to 60 to determine who reported to be happiest at the end of their lives. Chopik and Mariah Purol, MSU psychology master's student and co-author, found that participants fell into one of three groups: 79% were consistently married, spending the majority of their lives in one marriage; 8% were consistently single, or, people who spent most of their lives unmarried; and 13% had varied histories, or, a history of moving in and out of relationships, divorce, remarrying or becoming widowed. The researchers then asked participants to rate overall happiness when they were older adults and compared it with the group into which they fell. "We were surprised to find that lifelong singles and those who had varied relationship histories didn't differ in how happy they were," said Purol. "This suggests that those who have 'loved and lost' are just as happy towards the end of life as those who 'never loved at all.'" "It seems like it may be less about the marriage and more about the mindset," Purol said. "If you can find happiness and fulfillment as a single person, you'll likely hold onto that happiness – whether there's a ring on your finger or not.

Is not helping a bad person good or bad?

People can engage in cooperative behavior even among strangers with no direct expectation of personal benefit. For such cooperative behavior to be sustained, a mechanism needs to be in place to ensure that benefits are returned to the individuals who cooperate. Indirect reciprocity relies on social norms that distinguish the good from the bad. Many game theoretical researches have searched for norms that discourage cooperation directed toward the bad. Previous theoretical studies have predicted that the evaluation rule that "not cooperating with bad people is a good thing. The research team conducted several online experiments to answer whether "justified defection" is justified and analyzed the norms that people adopt in their daily lives. The results show that, contrary to previous theoretical predictions, people have a neutral attitude toward justified defection, avoiding judging it as good or bad. On the other hand, they judged "cooperation with a bad person (unjustified cooperation)" to be good. Yamamoto says, "Our results indicate the necessity to reconsider the justification of 'justified defection' in the evolution of cooperation."

### REFERENCES

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