

*Congratulations to PhD student **Stéphanie Gauvin** on receiving a Love Consortium Graduate Student Research Grant. The Love Consortium Grant is a competition for funding of student-initiated research proposals regarding the science of love, in collaboration with a researcher(s) at other institutions.*

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## **Stéphanie Gauvin Receives Love Consortium Graduate Student Research Grant**

May 12, 2020  
by Queen's Psychology

Congratulations to Queen's Psychology PhD student **Stéphanie Gauvin** on receiving a Love Consortium Graduate Student Research Grant that partners her with Dr. Jessica Maxwell (Queen's Artsci'11 Honours Psychology/Concurrent Education) of the University of Auckland, New Zealand.

The Love Consortium grant is a competition for funding of student-initiated research proposals aimed to advance the science of love, in collaboration with a researcher(s) at other institutions.

Stéphanie's research application was chosen from a field of applications, involving a total of 60 unique researchers from 31 universities and 6 countries.

"I am very excited to have this opportunity through the Love Consortium as I will be working with Dr. Jessica Maxwell at the University of Auckland", Stéphanie says. "It will allow me to deepen my understanding of avoidant attachment style, nuanced aspects of communication, and love."

Stéphanie has also been invited to present her work and meet like-minded scholars - peers and senior researchers - in the field at a major research meeting on The Science of Love being planned by The Love Consortium for spring of 2021 in Chapel Hill, NC.

## About Stéphanie's Project

Communicating one's feelings of love, closeness, and support is crucial to the development and maintenance of romantic relationships. But what if these messages of love become lost in translation? Individuals who are high in attachment avoidance tend to avoid emotional closeness and may be particularly resistant to recognizing and decoding signals of love.

Stéphanie's proposed research will utilize three existing databases to look at who may be impaired in decoding and detecting their partner's love and how accuracy in detecting love is associated with relational outcomes. The research will also further understanding of the mechanisms related to love detection, by examining how partner demonstrations of non-verbal affection may allow avoidant individuals to better tune into their partner's love.

“As research often focuses on deficits associated with avoidant attachment, we hope that this research will help inform a strengths-based approach by highlighting how avoidant individuals may be able to cue into non-verbal cues to improve their detection of their partner's love,” Stéphanie explains.

Stéphanie and Dr. Maxwell will start to remotely work together on this project in the late summer and Stéphanie will travel to work with Dr. Maxwell in Auckland, New Zealand in the winter of 2021.

## The Future

Beyond her work with Dr. Maxwell, Stéphanie is focusing on a career in academia. “My research investigates sexual relationships, with a particular focus on interpersonal factors that help promote successful negotiation of sexual challenges - for example, changes after treatments for breast cancer, and aging,” Stéphanie says. “My training has focused largely on sexuality, but given the high correlation between sexual and relationship satisfaction, understanding broader relational processes is critical for me to develop a comprehensive understanding of sexual relationships and strengthen my program of research.”

## The Love Consortium

[More information on The Love Consortium](#)