

Media Release

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18th Steven Karger Prize of the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Basel

The Faculty of Psychology at the University of Basel awarded the Steven Karger Prize for the 18th time this year. The award went to Jenna Wünsche, MSc, for her publication on the development of life satisfaction in couples preceding the death of one partner.

Today, the 18th Steven Karger Prize has been awarded by the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Basel. Jenna Wünsche, MSc, received the award for her publication in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*: **"Until Death Do Us Part: Co-Developments of Life Satisfaction in Couples Preceding the Death of One Partner"**.

Jenna Wünsche's work is about the change in life satisfaction of people in long-term relationships and how both individuals influence each other. She is the first to examine the development of life satisfaction in couples in which one of the partners dies during the examined time frame.

Her research shows that life satisfaction in the examined couples decreases over time. The rate of decrease accelerates nearer to the death of one partner, with the to-be-deceased person being less satisfied than the survivor. These results suggest that the common development before the death of one partner is associated with characteristic patterns of change. Although both companions are coping with individually different challenges, they influence each other's wellbeing as strongly as the couples in the control group.

Wünsche makes a first-time contribution to the research of common development in close relationships towards the end of the life of one partner. She combines theoretical assumptions with results from studies with individuals and couples. Her innovative methodological approach is impressive and has far-reaching relevance for developmental, personal, and clinical psychology.

“Being a doctoral candidate – and thus still an apprentice in the world of science – this award is immensely valuable. It gives me the courage and wings to dedicate myself in the future to a very personal scientific issue that is close to my heart. An incredible number of questions still remains unanswered,” says the winner of the Steven Karger Prize. Jörg Rieskamp, a member of the jury and the Dean of Research at the Department of Psychology also emphasizes the importance of the prize: “For young academics, scientific awards like the Steven Karger Prize are an important acknowledgement of their research efforts. The Steven Karger Prize can represent the next step towards a successful academic career.”

For Karger Publishers, the promotion and support of young scientists – especially those located in Basel – is an important mission. Karger Publishers has been donating the prize that has been awarded by the Faculty of Psychology since 2003. Since 2008, this award has been dedicated to the memory of the late CEO Steven Karger. “This prize is an expression of our gratitude for the trust placed in us as well as an investment in the future of science and society,” states Gabriella Karger, Chairwoman of the Board of Directors at Karger Publishers and sister of Steven Karger. Karger Publishers publishes several scientific journals and book series in the fields of **psychology and psychiatry**.

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Media Contact:
Cora Wirtz-Spycher · Corporate Communications Lead · Karger Publishers
+41 61 306 1271 · c.wirtz@karger.com · [karger.com/Media-Relations](https://www.karger.com/Media-Relations)

