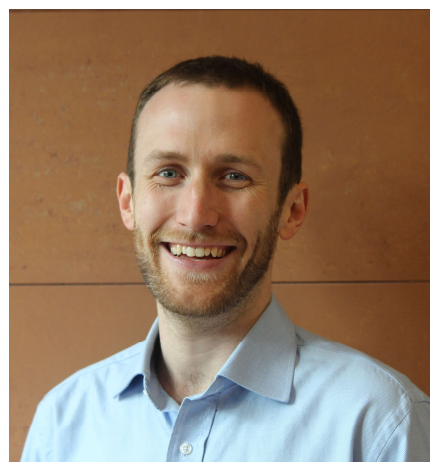**Department of Psychology**
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# Relationships on Twitter: a Mixed-Methods Approach

**11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** | **October 4, 2018 (Thursday)**
**Rm 813, 8/F, The Jockey Club Tower** | **Centennial Campus** | **The University of Hong Kong**

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## Abstract

People have a fundamental need to develop relationships with others, and a variety of technologies are available to help satisfy this need. These technologies provide new modes of interaction for the development of interpersonal relationships, which may have important differences from conventional face-to-face interactions. Twitter is a globally impactful social network site with over 300 million users that provides a unique mode of interaction. Though there is plenty of anecdotal evidence about negative interactions on Twitter, such as harassment and cyberbullying, there is a lack of robust empirical research into how Twitter shapes interpersonal relationships. In addition, previous studies on social network sites have tended to focus exclusively on Facebook, which may shape relationships in a very different way from Twitter.

In this presentation, I will discuss my investigation of how Twitter shapes interpersonal relationships. I employed a mixed-methods approach to data collection, combining survey data with user log data directly from Twitter. By relying on the complementary strengths of these two types of data, I provided a more robust picture of Twitter use.

Using a broad theoretical approach, I examined how relationships are developed on Twitter and how these relationships impact the lives of Twitter users. I found evidence that Twitter users can develop trusting, close relationships that benefit their subjective well-being, possibly through the provision of social support. However, Twitter users can also develop weaker relationships, which may paradoxically lead to greater loneliness. In addition to these substantive contributions, I made a number of methodological contributions to support the validity of future studies of Twitter and social network sites more broadly.

*~All are Welcome~*

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