Université de Montréal

Jealousy and Romantic Disengagement: A longitudinal investigation in long-term couples

Par
Alex Ramsay-Bilodeau

Département de psychologie
Faculté des Arts et des Sciences

Mémoire présenté en vue de l'obtention du grade de maîtrise ès sciences (M.Sc.)
en psychologie

Août, 2020

Université de Montréal

Département de psychologie, Faculté des Arts et des Sciences

Ce mémoire intitule

Jealousy and Romantic Disengagement: A longitudinal investigation in long-term couples

Présenté par

Alex Ramsay-Bilodeau

A été évalué par un jury composé des personnes suivantes

Sophie Bergeron
Président-rapporteur

Katherine Péloquin
Directeur de recherche

Serge Sultan
Membre du jury

Résumé

Problème. Les résultats de la recherche portant sur les impacts de la jalousie dans les relations de couple sont mixtes et ne nous permettent pas d'en connaître son impact sur le désengagement romantique, ou la perte de sentiments amoureux, qui est un problème fréquemment mentionné par les couples qui consultent en thérapie conjugale. **Objectif et hypothèses.** Par le biais d'un devis longitudinal et dyadique, cette étude a examiné l'association entre la jalousie et le désengagement romantique, en tenant compte de la satisfaction relationnelle à titre de facteur modérateur. Concernant les effets acteurs, vu l'état actuel de la recherche portant sur l'effet de la jalousie sur différentes variables relationnelles, aucune hypothèse n'a été émise concernant la direction de l'association entre les trois composantes de la jalousie et les changements dans le désengagement romantique chez l'individu 9 mois plus tard. Cependant, nous avons émis l'hypothèse que la satisfaction relationnelle modèrerait cette association à travers le temps. Concernant les effets partenaires, nous avons émis l'hypothèse que de hauts niveaux de jalousie chez l'individu seraient associés à une augmentation du désengagement romantique chez son partenaire à travers le temps. Nous avons également considéré les différences de genre dans ces effets acteurs et partenaires. **Méthode.** La jalousie, le désengagement romantique et la satisfaction relationnelle de 141 couples de sexes mixes ont été mesurés à deux temps de mesures sur une période de 9 mois. Des analyses acheminatoires basées sur le Modèle d'interdépendance acteur-partenaire ont ensuite été effectuées afin de vérifier les questions et hypothèses de recherche. **Résultats.** Les résultats ont montré que la jalousie émotionnelle chez la femme était associée à une diminution de leur propre désengagement romantique à travers le temps ($\beta = -.154$, $p = .029$). De plus, la satisfaction relationnelle modérait l'association entre la jalousie émotionnelle et le désengagement romantique, c'est-à-dire que les femmes rapportaient

une diminution de leur désengagement lorsqu'elles rapportaient être faiblement (B = -0.016, p = .004) ou moyennement satisfaites dans leur relation (B = -0.011, p = .032). L'interaction n'était pas significative pour les femmes qui étaient très satisfaites (B = -0.006, p = .257). La satisfaction relationnelle modérait aussi l'association entre la jalousie cognitive et le désengagement romantique chez la femme. La jalousie cognitive était associée à une augmentation du désengagement, mais seulement chez les femmes qui rapportaient être extrêmement satisfaites dans leur relation (4 *ÉT* au-dessus de la moyenne; B = 0.024, p = .048). Par ailleurs, la jalousie comportementale de la femme permettait de prédire une augmentation du désengagement chez son partenaire (β = .142, p = .039). **Conclusion.** Les résultats suggèrent que la jalousie serait un facteur à considérer pour comprendre le désengagement chez les couples de longue durée au fil du temps. De plus, cette association serait modérée par la satisfaction relationnelle, mais pour les femmes seulement. Des études supplémentaires seront nécessaires afin d'identifier d'autres facteurs relationnels et personnels pouvant contribuer au désengagement romantique chez l'homme.

Mots-clés : jalousie, désengagement romantique, satisfaction relationnelle, devis dyadique, devis longitudinal

Abstract

Problem. Research examining jealousy among couples provides mixed findings regarding its association with relationship outcomes and does allow an understanding of its role in romantic disengagement. Also referred to the process of falling out of love, disengagement is frequently reported by couples who seek relationship therapy. **Goal and hypotheses.** Using a dyadic and prospective design, the purpose of this study was to examine the association between jealousy and romantic disengagement while considering relationship satisfaction as a potential moderating factor. Since the current literature provides mixed findings about the effect of jealousy on relationship outcomes, no a priori hypotheses were proposed about the directionality of the associations between the three components of jealousy assessed at baseline, and changes in romantic disengagement for the individual 9 months later (actor effects). However, we expected that relationship satisfaction would moderate this association. At the dyadic level, we expected that high levels of jealousy in the individual would be associated with an increase in their partner's level of disengagement at follow-up (partner effects). Finally, we also considered gender differences in actor and partner effects. **Method.** Jealousy, romantic disengagement, and relationship satisfaction were assessed twice among 141 mixed-sex couples over a nine-month period. Path analyses using the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model were conducted to verify the hypotheses and research questions. **Results.** Emotional jealousy was related to a decrease in one's romantic disengagement over time for women (β = -.154, p = .029). Moreover, relationship satisfaction moderated the association between emotional jealousy and disengagement— women who reported low (B = -0.016, p = .004) to moderate (B= -0.011, p = .032) levels of relationship satisfaction experienced a decrease in their disengagement, but not when they reported being highly satisfied (B = -0.006, p = .257). Relationship satisfaction also moderated the association

between cognitive jealousy and romantic disengagement for women—jealous thoughts were associated with an increase in romantic disengagement when women reported extremely high levels of satisfaction (4 standard deviations above the mean: $B = 0.024$, $p = .048$). Additionally, women's behavioral jealousy predicted an increase in their partner's disengagement ($\beta = .142$, $p = .039$). **Conclusion.** The findings suggest that considering jealousy increases our understanding of disengagement and how it unfolds over time among long-term couples. Moreover, relationship satisfaction would moderate the association between jealousy and disengagement, but only for women. Further research is required to identify other relational or personal factors that could contribute to romantic disengagement in men.

Keywords: long-term couples, romantic disengagement, jealousy, relationship satisfaction, dyadic, prospective design

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

APIM: Actor-Partner Interdependence Model

CÉRAS: Comité Éthique de la Recherche en Arts et en Sciences

MJS: Multidimensional Jealousy Scale

RDS: Romantic Disengagement Scale

À tous ceux qui ont l'impression que les cycles supérieurs

c'est comme mettre un drap contour dans un lit mezzanine :

si ton drap est de la bonne grosseur,

c'est faisable.

Acknowledgment

Merci à Dre Péloquin, ma professeure à la patience sans fin. Merci d'avoir non seulement partagé votre expérience et votre amour pour l'étude du couple avec moi, mais surtout de m'avoir soutenue dans la poursuite de mon objectif complètement déconnecté de compléter ma maîtrise en un an. Je persiste à croire que mon parcours dans votre labo m'a permis de découvrir un grand amour pour la perte de sentiment amoureux, aussi paradoxal que cela puisse sembler.

Merci à ma douce, précieuse âme sœur, Rachèle, d'être ma fidèle supportrice through thick and thin, puis de croire en moi quand je ne le fais plus.

Thank you to Professor Lauren, my unconditional loving best friend. Your kindness is like a never-ending hug, I will forever be grateful for you.

Thank you Willow. You introduced me to science, you shared your love of research with me and without even knowing, you showed me how to have a great work ethic. I was able to do a master in only one year because you prepared me for it.

Merci à Olive. Merci de ce que tu es, d'essayer de comprendre, pis de me rappeler que je ne suis pas juste une étudiante entêtée. Merci d'être mon petit nid, mon chez-moi, pis de nous aimer Beau et moi.

En finissant, je veux remercier mes deux malcommodes de sœurs. Vous êtes comme mes bébés, je suis immensément fière de vous et je vous remercie pour me challenger quotidiennement. Thank you for the countless hours of signing while driving, for all the fries and melted ice cream, I love you my booboos.

Introduction

Romantic disengagement is a process often referred to as falling out of love or growing apart (Barry, Lawrence, & Langer, 2008). Although disengagement is one of the most common reasons why couples seek relationship therapy (Boisvert, Wright, Tremblay, & McDuff 2011), the factors that play a role in this process are mostly unexplored. As romantic disengagement is often thought to precede the termination of a relationship, understanding its precursors is crucial to reduce the distress associated with disengagement, and provide insight to therapists who encounter this relationship difficulty while working with couples. Recent research has identified that certain relationship factors such as attachment, relationship satisfaction and commitment for instance, could play a role in disengagement (Callaci, Péloquin, Barry, & Tremblay 2020). Although romantic disengagement and relationship satisfaction are associated, it is important to mention that they remain two distinctive constructs (Barry et al., 2008; Callaci et al., 2020). More precisely, relationship dissatisfaction may or may not lead to a decrease of love feelings towards the other partner, whereas disengagement is characterized by an emotional indifference that results from a loss of love. Couples may experience disagreements and conflicts or undergo periods of dissatisfaction without necessarily being romantically disengaged (i.e., deadening of affect and distancing). Consequently, more research is necessary to gain further understanding on the relationship factors and on the circumstances that are more likely to foster disengagement.

A potential factor that could explain disengagement in couples is the experience of jealousy in both partners. Research on jealousy shows that it can increase relationship commitment (Rydell, McConnell, & Bringle, 2004) and be used as a means to express feelings of love and affection (Buss, 2003). However, other studies have found that jealousy is associated with relational dissatisfaction (Bevan, 2008) and relationship dissolution (Barelds & Barelds-

Dijkstra, 2007), which suggests that jealousy could play a role in mechanisms involved in relationship deterioration such as disengagement. In attempt to further understand the factors that contribute to romantic disengagement in couples, this study examined the association between jealousy and romantic disengagement using a dyadic and prospective design, while also considering relationship satisfaction in both partners as a potential moderating factor.

Romantic Disengagement

Characterized by an emotional indifference that involves neither positive nor negative feelings towards one's partner, romantic disengagement is a distancing process that also includes cognitive and behavioral distancing strategies (Barry et al., 2008). Individuals who experience romantic disengagement tend to interact and speak less frequently with their partner (Kayser, 1993), and also have lower interest for the relationship (Gottman, 1999). While romantic disengagement has been associated with conflict, relationship dissatisfaction, and lower commitment (Barry et al., 2008; Callaci et al., 2020), previous studies focused mainly on examining disengagement as a predictor of other relationship outcomes such as relationship distress and dissolution (Amato & Previti, 2003; Barry, Barden, & Dubac, 2019). Consequently, the mechanisms that underlie romantic disengagement remain largely unknown. This lack of research could be explained by the absence of a clear conceptualization of romantic disengagement. Based on a thorough review of the literature and factor analyses, Barry et al. (2008) addressed this limitation by delineating the concept using three core elements: emotional indifference, cognitive distancing strategies, and behavioral distancing strategies. These researchers also developed a well-validated measure, the Romantic Disengagement Scale (RDS), which facilitated the study of romantic disengagement in a more systematic way.

The few available studies on disengagement present important limitations that restrict our understanding of how this dyadic process occurs in couples. First, most previous studies on disengagement used retrospective or cross-sectional designs, which limits our understanding of the factors that precede disengagement or contribute to its development over time. Most of the research has also been qualitative in nature or has been conducted with separated individuals (Barry & Lawrence, 2013; Kersten, 1990; Khalifan & Barry, 2016; Kersten, 1990). Consequently, the current literature on romantic disengagement is limited to factors that do not provide an understanding of the process in its earlier stages. Moreover, although disengagement is likely to develop out of specific relational dynamics in couples, only one study examined how factors in each partner could contribute to its development. In their dyadic investigation, Callaci et al. (2020) found that women reported higher disengagement when their male partner reported higher attachment-related anxiety. This finding suggests that we might gain a better understanding of disengagement by taking into account the contribution of both partners in the relationship. Therefore, using prospective and dyadic designs to study the predictors of disengagement is crucial to address these limitations, and to further our understanding of the systemic context that might foster the development of disengagement in both partners over time.

Jealousy and Disengagement

Jealousy is a complex reaction that usually occurs when a valued romantic relationship is threatened by a real, or an imagined, rival (Pines, 1992). The jealousy that stems from this concern can be experienced and expressed through different channels including affective reactions (emotional jealousy), thoughts and suspicions (cognitive jealousy), or behaviors such as checking or snooping (behavioral jealousy; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989). In romantic relationships, jealousy is mostly thought as hosting negative consequences. For instance, jealousy has been

associated with several negative relational outcomes such as relationship dissatisfaction (Bevan, 2004; Dandurand & Lafontaine, 2014), negative communications (Guerrero, Hannawa, & Babin, 2011), destructive responses (Guerrero, 2014), as well as partner abuse and intimate partner homicide (Bernhard, 1986; Kaufman-Parks, Longmore, Giordano, & Manning, 2019; Puente & Cohen, 2003). However, other studies found associations between jealousy and positive relational outcomes. For instance, increased commitment in jealous individuals (Rydell et al., 2004). A longitudinal study also found that couples who reported higher levels of jealousy were more likely to be married or to still be together after 5 years (Mathes, 1985). These distinct findings suggest that moderating variables could potentially explain the differential effects of jealousy in relationships.

Given the contradictory results regarding the role of jealousy in relationship outcomes, it is unclear whether jealousy would be associated with more or less disengagement towards the relationship over time. It may be that jealousy signifies one's involvement and commitment in the relationship, translating into lower levels of disengagement towards the partner. Alternatively, jealousy might reflect unhappiness and a sense that one's needs are not met within the relationship, which could possibly lead to an increase in disengagement. Consequently, it is possible that relationship satisfaction might moderate the association between jealousy and disengagement. Specifically, jealousy might be associated with lower levels of disengagement when one reports high relationship satisfaction and associated with higher levels of disengagement when one reports low relationship satisfaction. More research is necessary to define the association between an individual's level of jealousy and degree of disengagement, as well as to clarify what role relationship satisfaction plays in this association.

Even though the process of jealousy is experienced both by the jealous individual and their partner, the majority of previous studies examined the relational impact of jealousy using an individual design that focuses only on the jealous individual (e.g., Bevan, 2008; Dandurand & Lafontaine, 2014; De Silva & Marks, 1994; Elphinston, Feeney, Noller, Connor, & Fitzgerald, 2013; Rydell et al., 2004). Neglecting to consider the experience of jealousy from a systemic point of view limits our ability to grasp the relational implications of this reaction on both the jealous individual and their partner. Specifically, jealousy is probably experienced differently by the jealous individual and the partner who is at the receiving end of the jealousy—the association between jealousy and relationship outcomes such as disengagement may differ for both partners because they experience jealousy from different perspectives. The studies that examined jealousy from a dyadic perspective associated this complex response to relational factors such as relationship quality and relationship satisfaction (Barelds & Barelds-Dijkstra, 2007; Guerrero, 2014). Precisely, higher levels of anxious jealousy (i.e., rumination or thoughts about a partner's infidelity and experiencing anxiety or distrust as a result) were associated with lower relationship quality in both the jealous individual and their partner (Barelds & Barelds-Dijkstra, 2007). Another study showed that men and women reported lower levels of relationship satisfaction when their partner reported being jealous (Guerrero, 2014). These findings support the possible dyadic association between jealousy and negative relationship outcomes in both partners.

Goal and Hypotheses

Complementing past research on romantic disengagement and jealousy, this study examined the association between jealousy and disengagement in couples using a prospective and dyadic design. Precisely, it investigated the associations between behavioral, emotional, and

cognitive jealousy, and romantic disengagement in both partners over a nine-month period. The participants' level of relationship satisfaction was also considered as a potential moderating factor.

Given that jealousy has been associated with both positive and negative relationship outcomes at the individual level, no a priori hypothesis was proposed about the directionality of the association between the three components of jealousy assessed at baseline and romantic disengagement 9 months later (actor effects). To gain a better understanding of the relationship factors that could modulate the association between jealousy and disengagement over time, we considered relationship satisfaction as a moderator; that is whether one's level of satisfaction with the relationship would moderate the association between one's jealousy and disengagement over time (actor effects).

At the dyadic level, we investigated whether jealousy, as reported by the individual, would be associated with their partner's level of disengagement over time (partner effects). We expected that higher levels of jealousy in the individual at baseline would be associated with their partner's higher level of disengagement at follow-up. We also tested for gender differences in actor and partner effects because previous studies found that relationship variables were associated differentially with jealousy, romantic disengagement or observed disengagement behaviors in men and women (Barry et al., 2019; Callaci et al., 2020; Guerrero, 2014).

Method

The current study used data from a 3-year longitudinal project examining the relationship and sexual well-being of long-term couples. It is financed by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and was approved by the Ethical Committee of the CÉRAS (# CERAS-2016-17-092-D). For the purpose of this study, only the data collected at the 3- and 12-month follow-ups was used since jealousy was not assessed at other time points. For

simplicity purposes, these time points will hereafter be referred to as the baseline and nine-month follow-up.

Participants

The sample initially included 148 mixed-sex couples at baseline. However, seven of these couples were excluded because they separated between the two assessment points and did not provide a disengagement score at follow-up. The final sample included 141 couples that were mostly Caucasian (94.33%), French speaking (87.83% of men and 89.29% of women), and residing in the province of Québec, Canada (98.13% of couples). Participants' age ranged between 20 and 61 years old with an average of 30.65 years for women (*SD* = 7.37) and 32.02 years for men (*SD* = 7.84). On average, couples had been cohabitating for 7.23 years (range: 6 months to 28 years, *SD* = 6.01), and reported being in their relationship for 9.55 years (range: 5 years to 28 years, *SD* = 5.09). The majority of couples were not married (69.50%) and less than half had children (40.43% for women and 39.01% for men). Most participants (63.83% of women and 41.14% of men) completed a university degree and were working full-time (46.10% of women and 68.79% of men). With respect to income, 82.99% of women and 73.58% of men earned less than CA$60,000 annually.

Procedures

Participants were recruited through social media (i.e., Facebook), listservs, and word of mouth. To participate in the study, couples had to: 1) be in an intimate relationship for at least five years, 2) live together for at least six months, and 3) engage in sexual activity together at least once per month over the last six months prior to their participation (which was a criterion for the research goal of the overall study). Furthermore, a good knowledge of French or English and an internet connection were required to complete the questionnaires. Since one of the overall

goals of the study focused on sexuality, pregnant women and couples who had a baby or had adopted over the last 12 months were excluded from the study. Similarly, we excluded retired couples from the study because the time spent together as a couple and the work/family balance is different from couples who are currently working full time. We also excluded couples who had a temporary separation over the last six months in order to eliminate couples who could potentially be in unstable relationships. Finally, even though same-sex couples were invited to participate in the larger study, they were excluded from the current work because they did not complete the measure pertaining to jealousy. The scale used to measure jealousy (i.e., Multidimensional Jealousy Scale) was developed for mixed-sex couples and assumed a heteronormative context. Since the scale was not adapted nor validated for same-sex couples, a total of four same-sex couples were excluded from this study.

A research assistant planned a phone interview with interested couples to explain the procedures of the study, to verify their interest and eligibility, and to obtain informed consent. When considered as eligible, each partner received an email with a link that instructed them to complete the online questionnaire individually. The link directed them towards an online consent form and the baseline questionnaire, which were completed via the secured web platform *Qualtrics*. Participants received an email to participate in a follow-up questionnaire 9 months later. To reduce participant attrition at each follow-up, we planned up to four weekly email reminders and a final phone call when the participants had not completed their questionnaire after five weeks. As a compensation for their participation, participants who completed their questionnaire received a $15 amazon gift card for each questionnaire.

Measures

Demographic Questionnaire

Information about the participants' sociodemographic background and relationship was gathered, including age, ethnic background, annual income, relationship duration, marriage and cohabitation, and children.

Jealousy

At baseline, participants completed the brief version of the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale (MJS; Brassard, Brault-Labbé, Gasparetto, Claing, & Lussier 2019; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989). This 15-item scale includes three 5-item subscales, each measuring one of the three components of jealousy (i.e., cognitive, emotional, and behavioral). Items of the cognitive (e.g., "I am worried that someone of the opposite sex is trying to seduce my partner") and behavioral subscales (e.g., "I look through my partner's drawers, handbag, or pockets") are rated on a 7-point scale ranging from *never* (1) to *all the time* (7), whereas items of the emotional subscale (e.g., "My partner is flirting with someone of the opposite sex") are rated on a 7-point scale ranging from (1) *very pleased* to (7) *very upset*. The total score of each subscale is obtained by computing an average, with higher scores indicating greater jealousy. The French version, translated and validated by Brassard et al. (2019), yielded alpha coefficients of .82 for the cognitive component, .82 for the emotional component, and .72 for the behavioral component. The internal consistency in this study was high for both men ($\alpha = .90$) and women ($\alpha = .88$).

Romantic Disengagement

At baseline and follow-up, participants completed the Romantic Disengagement Scale (RDS; Barry et al., 2008; translated in French by Callaci et al., 2020), which includes 18 items rated on a 7-point scale ranging from *never* (1) to *always* (7) (e.g., "I didn't feel like dealing with my partner"). By summing all items to produce a total score, this scale measures the three components of romantic disengagement: 1) emotional indifference, 2) cognitive distancing, and

3) behavioral distancing. Total scores range from 18 to 126, with higher scores indicating higher romantic disengagement. The RDS has been validated across several samples including dating individuals, newlyweds, and women victims of partner abuse (Barry et al., 2008). It yielded alpha coefficients ranging from .95 to .97 in English (Barry et al., 2008), and .94 to .95 in French (Callaci et al., 2020). In this study, the alpha coefficient was .94 for men and .93 for women at baseline, and .96 for men and .91 for women at follow-up.

Relationship Satisfaction

At baseline, participants completed a brief version of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), a 4-item questionnaire assessing relationship satisfaction (DAS-4; Sabourin, Valois, & Lussier, 2005) using items scored on 6- and 7-point scales (e.g., "How often do you discuss, or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?"). Total scores, obtained by summing all four items, range from 0 to 23, with higher scores representing higher relationship satisfaction. This brief version of the DAS was found to be more effective in predicting couple dissolution and less impacted by social desirability (Sabourin et al., 2005) than the original 32-item scale. Results of this study showed adequate internal consistency for both men and women (α = .70 for men and α = .76 for women).

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Study variables were inspected for normality and single imputation (expectation-maximization algorithm in SPSS 26) was used to handle missing values. Preliminary analyses were performed to identify potential covariates among the demographic variables. No significant associations between women's romantic disengagement and any of the demographic variables were observed. For men, their romantic disengagement at follow-up was negatively correlated

with their age (r = -.206, p = .020), the length of the relationship (r = -.225, p = .010), the length of cohabitation (r = -.258, p = .003), and their annual income (r = -.182, p = .040). However, these associations were too small to justify the inclusion of these covariates in the main analyses (Cohen, 1988).

Bivariate correlations and descriptive statistics for jealousy and disengagement are shown in Table 1. The preliminary correlations showed several associations between the variables of interest. Men and women's romantic disengagement at baseline were positively associated with women's disengagement at follow-up. Men and women's relationship satisfaction were also negatively associated with women's romantic disengagement at follow-up. Women's jealous behaviors, as well as both men's and women's jealous thoughts, were positively associated with women's romantic disengagement at follow-up. For men, both their own and their partner's romantic disengagement at baseline was positively associated with men's disengagement at follow-up. Men and women's relationship satisfaction at baseline were negatively associated with men's romantic disengagement at follow-up. Finally, women's jealous behaviors, as well as both men's and women's jealous thoughts, were positively associated with men's romantic disengagement at follow-up.

Main Analyses

Path analyses were conducted based on the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM; Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006) with the maximum likelihood robust (MLR) estimator in Mplus 8.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2017). This statistical approach addresses the interdependence of each partner's data by treating the couple as a single unit of analysis. It allowed us to examine the effect of an individual's jealousy on their own romantic disengagement (actor effect), on their partner's romantic disengagement (partner effect), while

also considering potential gender differences in actor and partner effects (Kenny et al., 2006). To investigate whether jealousy assessed at baseline was associated with both partners' romantic disengagement at follow-up, the model included each partner's jealousy scores (i.e., emotions, thoughts, and behaviors) at baseline, as well as their romantic disengagement at baseline and follow-up. To explore the moderating effect of relationship satisfaction on these associations, six interactions terms were created between the three components of jealousy and relationship satisfaction for both men and women (e.g., Women's Jealous thoughts x Women's Relationship Satisfaction; Women's Jealous Emotions x Women's Relationship Satisfaction; Men's Jealous thoughts x Men's Relationship Satisfaction). Interaction terms were tested in separate models to avoid multicollinearity. According to Kline (2015), a model that fits the data well should have a non-significant chi-square, a comparative fit index (CFI) larger than .90, and a root mean square error of approximation (RSMEA) value of .08 or lower. To test gender differences, we used a within-dyad test of distinguishability (Kenny et al., 2006). To investigate potential gender differences, we used a chi-square difference test to compare a first model in which all actor and partner effects between men and women were constrained to equality, to a second model in which all the parameters were free to vary. The inspection of the modification indices suggested the specification of an additional partner effect—the association between men and women's disengagement at baseline and their partner's level of disengagement at follow-up was excluded. Since the additional partner effects improved the model fit significantly, it was included in the final models.

Two models were retained: (1) the model including a significant interaction between women's jealous thoughts and their relationship satisfaction ($\chi^2(34) = 36.889$, $p = .337$, CFI = .980, RMSEA = .025, 90% CI [.000, .067]), and (2) the model including a significant interaction

between women's jealous emotions and their relationship satisfaction ($\chi^2(36) = 28.611$, $p = .805$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .000, 90% CI [000, .040]). In both models, the fully constrained model differed significantly from the unconstrained model (Model 1: $\Delta\chi^2(23) = 169.956$, $p < .001$; Model 2: $\Delta\chi^2(23) = 152.725$, $p < .001$), suggesting gender differences in actor and partner effects. Consequently, we retained semi-constrained models in which only the effects that differed significantly between men and women were left free to vary. The remaining actor and partner effects were constrained to equality. Results pertaining to actor and partner effects of jealousy on disengagement at follow-up differed slightly in the two models. The beta coefficients and effect sizes are shown in Figure 1 for the first model, and in Figure 2 for the second model.

With respect to actor effects, results showed that only women's jealous emotions at baseline, not their jealous thoughts or behaviors, predicted their own lower romantic disengagement at follow-up. For men, no actor effect of jealousy on disengagement was observed. Regarding partner effects, women's jealous behaviors at baseline predicted their partner's higher romantic disengagement at follow-up, but no other partner effects were found. The analyses also showed two moderating effects of relationship satisfaction in women involving jealous thoughts and jealous emotions. Simple slopes analyses revealed that women's jealous emotions predicted their own lower romantic disengagement at follow-up when they reported low ($B = -.016$, $p = .004$) or moderate ($B = -.011$, $p = -.011$) levels of relationship satisfaction, but not when women reported high levels of relationship satisfaction (1 *SD* above the mean: $B = -.006$, $p = .257$). Women's jealous thoughts also predicted their own higher romantic disengagement at follow-up, but only when they reported extremely high relationship satisfaction (4 *SD* above the mean: $B = .024$, $p = .048$). There were no moderation effects of relationship satisfaction in men. Relationship satisfaction also predicted lower romantic disengagement over

time for both men and women. Finally, the first model accounted for 35.2% of the variance in women's romantic disengagement at follow-up, and 51.9% of the variance in men's romantic disengagement at follow-up. The second model accounted for 37% of the variance in women's romantic disengagement at follow-up, whereas explained 50.70% of the variance in men's romantic disengagement at follow-up.

Discussion

Using a dyadic and prospective design, the goal of the present study was to examine the association between different forms of jealousy and romantic disengagement, while considering the moderating effect of relationship satisfaction in a sample of long-term couples. Altogether, the results exposed a complex and nuanced association between jealousy and romantic disengagement. Specifically, findings indicated that only women's jealousy was associated with both partners' level of disengagement over time. Moreover, whereas women's jealous emotions predicted their own lower disengagement, women's jealous behaviors predicted their partner's higher disengagement over time. Relationship satisfaction also played a role in explaining women's disengagement at follow-up as two moderation effects were observed: (1) women who reported higher levels of emotional jealousy experienced lower levels of disengagement over time when they also reported low or average levels of relationship satisfaction, and (2) women who reported higher levels of cognitive jealousy experienced higher levels of disengagement over time, but only when they reported extremely high levels of relationship satisfaction.

Jealousy Predicting one's own Romantic Disengagement

Previous studies on jealousy found mixed results regarding its association with relationship outcomes as jealousy has been associated with both positive and negative relationship outcomes (Andersen, Eloy, Guerrero, & Spitzberg, 1995; Barelds & Dijkstra, 2006;

Bevan, 2008; Buss, 2003; Dandurand & Lafontaine, 2014; Rydell et al., 2004). Consistent with previous research, our findings also suggest that jealousy may have both positive and negative effects on relationships. Nevertheless, these effects were only significant for women and they also depended on both the components of jealousy being assessed and the level of relationship satisfaction.

First, we found that the more women reported having jealous emotions at baseline (i.e., emotions that erupts when exposed to a perceived threat; Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989), the less disengaged they were at follow-up. This result seems to be consistent with previous findings pertaining to other relationship outcomes. For instance, in their cross-sectional study, Dandurand and Lafontaine (2014) found a positive association between emotional jealousy and relationship satisfaction. In their dyadic study, Barelds and Barelds-Dijkstra (2007) found similar results as anticipated reactions (i.e., reactive jealousy, or the experience of negative emotions in response to a threat) were associated with better relationship quality. However, results of this study go beyond past research on the association between jealousy and romantic disengagement because of its consideration of relationship satisfaction as a moderating factor. Precisely, we found that higher levels of emotional jealousy predicted lower disengagement at follow-up when women reported low or average levels of relationship satisfaction, but not when they reported high levels of relationship satisfaction. It might be that for women who report being less satisfied with their relationship, their jealousy suggests an involvement and commitment towards the relationship. Rydell et al. (2004) did find an increase in commitment of individuals who reported high levels of jealousy. This supports the idea that emotional jealousy might act as a signal to let the jealous individual know that they care about their partner, which translates into lower levels of disengagement over time.

A complementary explanation for this result might be that romantic disengagement implies an emotional indifference towards the partner (Barry et al., 2008), whereas emotional jealousy involves an affective reaction (Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989). Therefore, it is possible that for women who report low to moderate levels of relationship satisfaction, experiencing jealousy-related emotions may indicate that the possibility of losing their partner is upsetting to them and may generate distress, which implies that their partner is important to them. Thus, while these signs of attachment towards their partner occurs, women are not emotionally indifferent to the potential threats to their relationship, or to the potential loss of their partner. Instead, they might experience an emotional involvement through their jealous emotions, which might explain why they are less likely to disengage over time. Furthermore, in contrast to women who report low to moderate relationship satisfaction, women who report higher levels of relationship satisfaction might be less likely to interpret their own jealous emotions as a sign that their relationship is threatened. A study on undergraduate students revealed that the more committed, satisfied, and invested participants were in their relationship, the less likely they were to experience jealousy (Bevan, 2008), which is congruent with the current findings. It might also be that compared to less satisfied women, highly satisfied women are not as distressed when they experience these kinds of emotions. Considering that jealousy is a reaction that occurs when one experiences a relational threat (whether real or imagined) to their relationship (Pines, 1992), highly satisfied women might not feel as threatened compared to less satisfied women. This could explain why emotional jealousy was not related to disengagement at follow-up for highly satisfied women.

Second, we found that cognitive jealousy was associated with higher levels of disengagement over time, but only for women who reported extremely high levels of relationship satisfaction. This finding suggests that having doubts or suspicions about one's partner may be

detrimental for women who are extremely satisfied with their relationship. This observation in highly satisfied women emphasizes the importance of considering other relational factors when examining the role of jealousy in relationship outcomes such as disengagement. Our finding seems to be coherent with the results of previous studies on jealousy and other relationship factors. Specifically, Bevan (2008) found similar results among young, mostly female undergraduates as cognitive jealousy was associated with a decrease in both commitment and relationship satisfaction. Similarly, in their sample of young individuals who were married or in a serious relationship, Andersen et al. (1995) found a negative association between cognitive jealousy and relationship satisfaction. These results not only support our findings, but also suggest that cognitive jealousy may bear more negative consequences for individuals involved in long-term couples.

It is relevant to consider that this study was part of a larger project on long-term couples which in average, included relatively happy couples who were cohabiting and had been in their relationship for at least five years. The sample did not include newly formed couples who might not be as committed to their relationship, or as invested emotionally. Thus, it may be that if one is in a highly satisfying relationship but is experiencing invasive jealous thoughts (e.g., suspecting that one's partner is secretly seeing someone else), distancing themselves from their partner and disengaging from the relationship might be a way of protecting themselves from potential harm that a transgression to the relationship or infidelity could induce. However, these hypotheses remain largely speculative and additional research is required to further our understanding of the effects of jealousy in the context of highly satisfying relationships.

Jealousy Predicting the Partner's Romantic Disengagement

We hypothesized that one's higher levels of jealousy at baseline would be associated with their partner's higher romantic disengagement nine months later. Our results partly support this hypothesis because women's jealous behaviors, but not their cognitions or emotions, were associated with men's higher romantic disengagement over time. Specifically, men reported higher levels of disengagement when their partner reported acting on their jealousy, through behaviors such as snooping, surveillance, or stalking. Unlike emotional and cognitive jealousy, jealous behaviors are a more direct approach to expressing one's doubts and suspicions because the jealous individual has to physically act on their jealousy by exposing behaviors that their partner can witness. Behavioral jealousy may also be more noticeable to the partner than emotional or cognitive jealousy. Hence, the accessibility of this type of jealousy could explain why only women's jealous behaviors were associated with their partner's level of disengagement.

Our findings suggest that in long-term couples, men's reaction to their partner's jealous behaviors might be to distance themselves from the relationship or to increasingly become emotionally indifferent over time. Considering that the couples from the current study were reporting high levels of relationship satisfaction and that partners might be more likely to trust each other, men might experience their partner's jealous behaviors as a sign of control or as a lack of trust. Over time, they might interpret this jealousy as mistrust and report higher levels of disengagement as a consequence. Further studies should consider investigating how jealous behaviors are interpreted by the partner who is not jealous and examine if these interpretations could help explain men's disengagement over time.

The Lack of Association between Men's Jealousy and both Partner's Disengagement

Overall, we found no strong associations between the three components of jealousy in men and their own disengagement. Small significant bivariate correlations were observed between men's jealous behaviors and their own disengagement at baseline, as well as between men's jealous thoughts and their own disengagement at baseline and follow-up. However, the components of jealousy in men were no longer associated with their own disengagement in the overall APIM model. This suggests that disengagement in men might be better explained by other relationship factors such as relationship satisfaction, commitment, attachment (e.g., Barry & Lawrence, 2013; Callaci et al., 2020) or as the current study suggests, their partner's level of disengagement.

Our results also suggest that men's perception of their own jealousy is not associated with their partner's disengagement over time. When examining previous research on men's jealousy and other relationship outcomes, we found potential explanations for this lack of finding. For instance, a previous dyadic study found that both partners reported higher levels of relationship satisfaction when men used rival-focused responses to jealousy, such as signs of possession (Guerrero, 2014). This suggests that men who act on their jealousy are perceived as being more caring instead of perceived as being possessive or controlling. Since women from the current study generally reported being highly satisfied with their relationship, they might interpret their male partner's jealous behaviors as a sign that they care about them and the relationship. Consequently, women might be less likely to disengage if they interpret their partner's jealous behaviors as signs of care and affection. In line with this hypothesis, Buss (1988) suggested that men's jealous behaviors in today's society might be explained from an evolutionary perspective, because it used to be favorable for men to engage in behaviors that would secure their mate in order to ensure their own reproduction. Nowadays, men may still use these kinds of behaviors to

maintain their relationship, which could explain our lack of findings. Taken together, these results suggest that there might be gender differences in the way that jealousy is perceived in relationships. Future research should consider examining jealousy from the partner's perspective (i.e., using a perspective in which one reports on their partner's jealousy) to better understand why men's jealousy was not associated with their partner's disengagement.

Women's Disengagement Predicting Men's Disengagement Over Time

Finally, even though we did not initially propose to investigate the association between both partners' romantic disengagement overtime, we found that women's higher romantic disengagement at baseline was associated with men's lower disengagement at follow-up. Initially surprising, this result could potentially be explained by similar reasons than the previous finding pertaining to women's emotional jealousy and the decrease in their disengagement over time. Specifically, in happy and stable couples, men may experience their partner's disengagement (i.e., emotional indifference, behavioral distancing) as a sign that they are pulling away from the relationship. These signals might evoke thoughts about the potential loss of their partner, which may generate fear, distress, a sense of insecurity in the relationship for men, or the realization that their partner is important to them. Hence, having these thoughts implies an involvement with the relationship, which could explain why they are less disengaged over time. However, these hypotheses remain largely speculative and as Callaci et al. (2020) showed in their investigation of couples who seek couple therapy, other relational and personal factors (e.g., depression and the actual context of the relationship) should be considered in future research to better our understanding of this process.

Strengths and Limitations

A first strength of this study is the use of a dyadic design because it enabled the consideration of the experience of jealousy for each partner. As a result, it was possible to link an individual's perception of their own jealousy to their partner's romantic disengagement. To our knowledge, this association had never been examined before, which makes our findings a significant contribution to the literature. Second, the prospective design of this study also allowed us to observe how jealousy could contribute to both partners' romantic disengagement over time. Considering that romantic disengagement is a process, observing couples over time increases our understanding of how it may occur. Third, using APIM analyses enabled us to take into account the influence that each partner has on one another. Finally, the large sample of this study was homogenous in cultural background, age, and several relationship characteristics (e.g., length of the relationship, mixed-sex couples, number of children), which reinforces the strengths of our findings.

However, this study should be interpreted while considering its limitations. The sample used in the present study was collected in the context of a larger research examining the sexual and relational well-being of long-term couples. Thus, couples could have been more committed or happier than average, limiting the possible range on disengagement and relationship satisfaction. The self-selection may also have influenced the results and induced other biases, such as positive sentiment override and social desirability. This may have precluded us from finding other associations between jealousy and disengagement that could exist in couples experiencing relationship difficulties. Furthermore, while the homogenous sample strengthens our findings, results from the present study may not generalize to all types of couples, including sexual and gender minority couples. Moreover, the scale assessing jealousy used a heteronormative frame that offers a limited perspective on jealousy (i.e., individuals could

experience jealousy because their partner interacted with another person that is not necessarily of this opposite sex) and collected data from an individual's perspective, as self-reported only (i.e., individuals' perspective on their own jealousy). Future research should consider observing jealousy from a different perspective, such as one's perception of their partner's jealousy. Finally, although the use of a prospective design is a strength, the period of time (9 months) between the two assessment points may have limited our ability to find other possible associations between jealousy and disengagement; the relationship between these variables may be more proximal than distal in time. Jealous thoughts or emotions may lead to increases or decreases in disengagement only at the specific moment of their occurrence, their effect might not last over long periods of time. Alternatively, it might be that for long-term couples who are high in relationship well-being, 9 months is too short to observe any reliable changes in relationship outcomes. Studies using prospective designs could provide additional insight on these associations over time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study contributes to increasing knowledge on the process of romantic disengagement overtime by exposing the role of jealousy and the ways in which relationship satisfaction can moderate the association between jealousy and romantic disengagement. Results show that for long-term couples, relationship satisfaction might moderate the association between jealousy and romantic disengagement for women only; emotional jealousy was associated with lower romantic disengagement in women who reported low to moderate levels of relationship satisfaction, and cognitive jealousy was associated with higher romantic disengagement in women who reported extremely high levels of relationship satisfaction. Findings also highlight that the experience of jealous emotions was related to lower levels of

romantic disengagement for women over time. These findings emphasize the importance of taking into account the context of the relationship when examining the effects of jealousy on relationship outcomes such as romantic disengagement. Future research should seek to identify other relational and personal factors that could contribute to the process of romantic disengagement overtime.

References

Amato, P. R., & Previti, D. (2003). People's reasons for divorcing: Gender, social class, the life course, and adjustment. *Journal of Family Issues, 24*(5), 602–626. 10.1177/0192513X03024005002

Andersen, P. A., Eloy, S. V., Guerrero, L. K., & Spitzberg, B. H. (1995). Romantic jealousy and relational satisfaction: A look at the impact of jealousy experience and expression. *Communication Reports, 8*(2), 77 – 85. 10.1080/08934219509367613

Aylor, B., & Dainton, M. (2001). Antecedents in Romantic Jealousy Experience, Expression, and Goals. *Western Journal of Communication, 65*(4), 370–391. 10.1080/10570310109374717.

Barelds, D. P. H., & Dijkstra, P. (2006). Reactive, anxious and possessive forms of jealousy and Their Relation to Relationship Quality Among Heterosexuals and Homosexuals. *Journal of Homosexuality, 51*(3), 183–198. 10.1300/J082v51n03_09

Barelds, D. P. H., & Barelds-Dijkstra, P. (2007). Relations between different types of jealousy and self and partner perceptions of relationship quality. *Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy, 14*(3), 176–188. 10.1002/cpp.532

Barry, R. A., Lawrence, E., & Langer, A. (2008). Conceptualization and assessment of disengagement in romantic relationships. *Personal Relationships, 15*(3), 297–315. 10.1111/j.1475-6811.2008.00200

Barry, R. A. (2010). *Romantic Disengagement as a Developmental Process That Contributes to Marital Distress and Decline* (p. x, 2020 pages). [Universirty of Iowa] 10./17077/etd.pvpyupqb

Barry, R. A., & Lawrence, E. (2013). “Don’t stand so close to me”: An attachment perspective of disengagement and avoidance in marriage. *Journal of Family Psychology, 27*(3), 484–494. 10.1037/a0032867

Barry, R. A., Barden, E. P., & Dubac, C. (2019). Pulling away: Links among disengaged couple communication, relationship distress, and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Family Psychology, 33*(3), 280–293. 10.1037/fam0000507

Bernhard, K. F. (1986). *Jealousy: Its nature and treatment* (pp. 35–52). Springfield, IL: Thomas.

Bevan, J. L. (2008). Experiencing and communicating romantic jealousy: Questioning the Investment Model. *Southern Communication Journal, 73*(1), 42–67. 10.1080/10417940701815626

Boisvert, M.-M., Wright, J., Tremblay, N., & McDuff, P. (2011). Couples' reports of relationship problems in a naturalistic therapy setting. *The Family Journal, 19*(4), 362–368. 10.1177/1066480711420044

Brassard, A., Brault-Labbé, A., Gasparetto, C. A., Claing, A., & Lussier, Y. (2019). Validation de la version francophone de la Multidimensional Jealousy Scale [Validation of the French version of the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale]. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement.* Advance online publication. 10.1037/cbs0000155

Brennan, K. A., Clark, C. L., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Self-report measurement of adult attachment: An integrative overview. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (p. 46–76). The Guilford Press.

Buss, D. M. (1988). From vigilance to violence. *Ethology and Sociobiology, 9*(5), 291–317.10.1016/0162-3095(88)90010-6

Buss, D. M. (2003). The dangerous passion: Why jealousy is as necessary as love and sex: Book review [Review of the book *The dangerous passion: Why jealousy is as necessary as love and sex,* by D. M. Buss]. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 32*(1), 79–80. 10.1023/A:1021849614356

Callaci, M., Péloquin, K., Barry, R. A., & Tremblay, N. (2020). A dyadic analysis of attachment insecurities and romantic disengagement among couples seeking relationship therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 46(3), 399-412.* 10.1111/jmft.12422

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

De Silva, P., & Marks, M. (1994). Jealousy as a clinical problem: Practical issues of assessment and treatment. *Journal of Mental Health, 3*(2), 195–204. 10.3109/09638239409003799

Dandurand, C., & Lafontaine, M.-F. (2014). Jealousy and couple satisfaction: A romantic attachment perspective. *Marriage & Family Review, 50*(2), 154–173. 10.1080/01494929.2013.879549

Elphinston, R. A., Feeney, J. A., Noller, P., Connor, J. P., & Fitzgerald, J. (2013). Romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction: The costs of rumination. *Western Journal of Communication, 77*(3), 293–304. 10.1080/10570314.2013.770161

Kayser, K. (1993). *Perspectives on marriage and the family. When love dies: The process of marital disaffection.* New York: Guilford Press.

Kenny, D. A., Kashy, D.A., & Cook, W. L. (2006). *Dyadic data analysis.* New York: Guildford.

Kersten, K. K. (1990). The process of martial disaffection: Interventions at various stages. *Family Relations, 39,* 247–265. 10.2307/584869

Khalifian, C. E., & Barry, R. A. (2016). Trust, attachment, and mindfulness influence intimacy and disengagement during newlyweds' discussions of relationship transgressions. *Journal of Family Psychology, 30*(5), 592–601. 10.1037/fam0000194

Kline, R. B. (2016). Methodology in the social sciences. Principles and practice of structural equation modeling (4th ed.). Guilford Press.

Kaufman-Parks, A. M., Longmore, M. A., Giordano, P. C., & Manning, W. D. (2019). Inducing jealousy and intimate partner violence among young adults. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships,* 36(9), 2802–2823. 10.1177/0265407518802451

Gottman, J. M. (1999). *The marriage clinic: A scientifically based marital therapy*. New York: W W Norton & Co.

Guerrero, L. K. (2014). Jealousy and relational satisfaction: Actor effects, partner effects, and the mediating role of destructive communicative responses to jealousy. *Western Journal of Communication, 78*(5), 586–611. 10.1080/10570314.2014.935468

Guerrero, L. K., Hannawa, A. F., & Babin, E. A. (2011). The communicative responses to jealousy scale: Revision, empirical validation, and associations with relational satisfaction. *Communication Methods and Measures, 5*, 223–249. 10.1080/19312458.2011.596993

Mathes, E.W. (1985). Jealousy and romantic love: A longitudinal study. *Psychological Reports, 58*, 885–886.

Muthén, L. K. & Muthén, B. O. (1998–2017). *Mplus user's guide* (8th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Muthén & Muthén.

Pfeiffer, S. M., & Wong, P. T. (1989). Multidimensional jealousy. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 6*(2), 181–196. 10.1177/026540758900600203

Pines, A. M. (1992). Romantic jealousy: Five perspectives and an integrative approach. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training, 29*(4), 675–683. 10.1037/0033-3204.29.4.675

Puente, S., & Cohen, D. (2003). Jealousy and the meaning (or nonmeaning) of violence. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 29*(4), 449–460. 10.1177/0146167202250912

Rydell, R. J., McConnell, A. R., & Bringle, R. G. (2004). Jealousy and commitment: Perceived threat and the effect of relationship alternatives. *Personal Relationships, 11*(4), 451–468. 10.1111/j.1475-6811.2004.00092

Sabourin, S., Valois, P., & Lussier Y. (2005). Development and Validation of a Brief Version of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale with a Nonparametric Item Analysis Model. *Psychological Assessment, 171*(1), 15–27. 10.1037/1040-3590.17.1.15

Spanier, G. B. (1976). Measuring dyadic adjustment: New scales for assessing the quality of marriage and similar dyads. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 38*(1), 15–28. 10.2307/350547

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study Variables

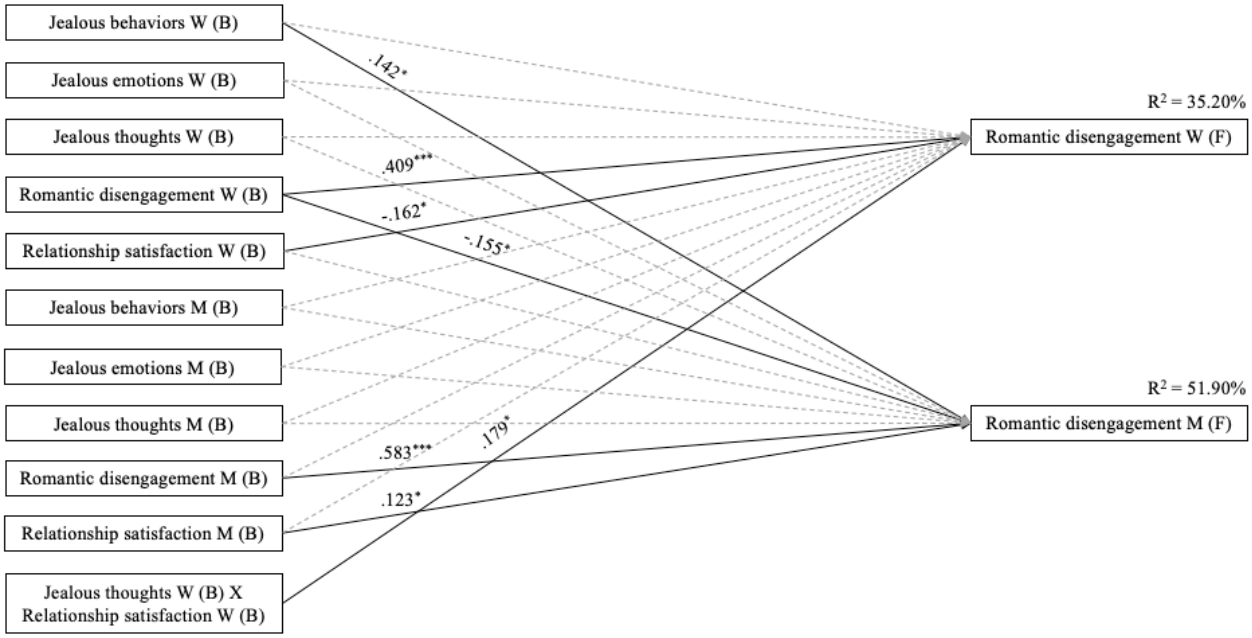
Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Men													
1. Jealous behaviors (B)	11.79	5.45	–										
2. Jealous emotions (B)	30.93	9.63	.406***	–									
3. Jealous thoughts (B)	15.19	7.29	.533***	.362***	–								
4. Relationship satisfaction (B)	15.78	3.20	-.074	-.068	-.261**	–							
5. Romantic disengagement (B)	2.34	0.90	.176*	.013	.342***	-.675***	–						
6. Romantic disengagement (F)	2.46	1.10	.110	.068	.233**	-.495***	.643***	–					
Women													
7. Jealous behaviors (B)	13.89	5.58	.134	.167	-.008	-.299***	.189*	.313***	–				
8. Jealous emotions (B)	33.49	9.66	.178*	.301***	.084	-.148	.002	.138	.383***	–			
9. Jealous thoughts (B)	15.38	7.29	.096	.118	.119	-.208*	.042	.212*	.455***	.389***	–		
10. Relationship satisfaction (B)	16.45	2.55	-.128	-.069	-.194*	.477***	-.233**	-.196*	-.221**	-.151	-.431***	–	
11. Romantic disengagement (B)	2.10	0.73	.076	.066	.113	-.403***	.301***	.185*	.292**	.054	.350***	-.616***	–
12. Romantic disengagement (F)	2.19	0.70	.140	.005	.191*	-.256**	.291**	.242**	.208*	-.081	.178*	-.375***	.513***

Note. B = baseline; F = Follow-up.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$ ***$p < .001$.

Figure 1

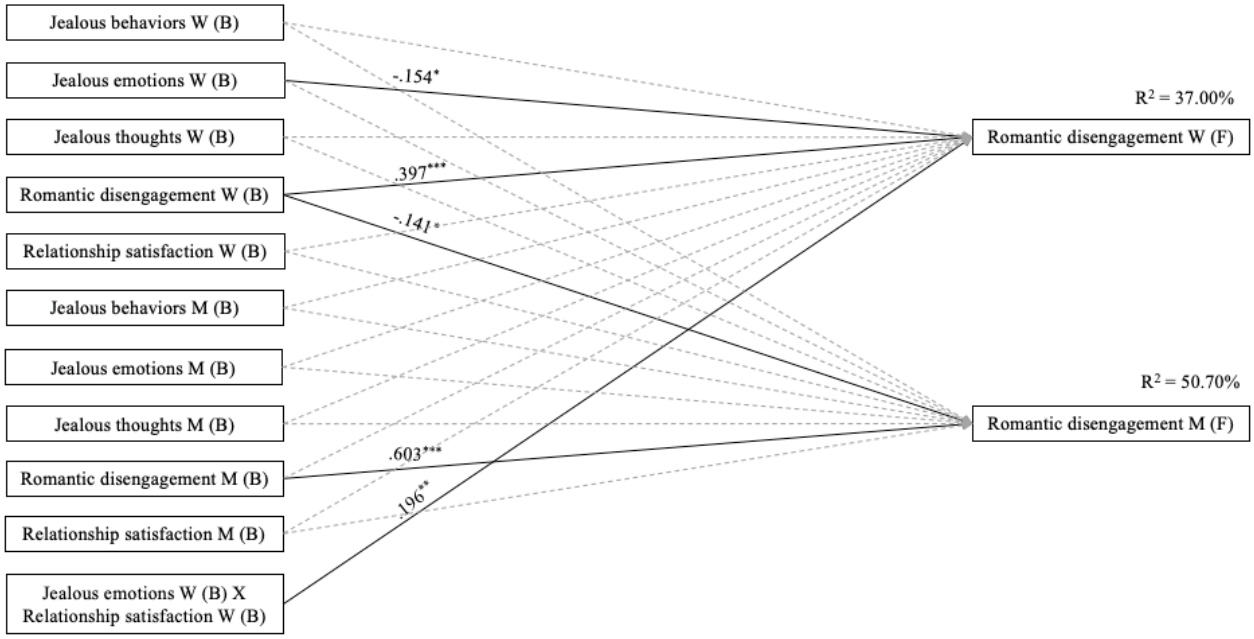
Jealousy Predicting Romantic Disengagement and the Significant Jealous Thoughts x Relationship Satisfaction Interaction in Women



Note. Path analyses showing jealousy, relationship satisfaction, and romantic disengagement at baseline predicting romantic disengagement at follow-up (N = 141 couples). Statistics shown are standardized regression coefficients. Dashed line = Non-significant paths. M = Men; W = Women; B = Baseline; F = Follow-up. Significant correlations between exogenous variables and between endogenous variables were specified, although not shown here for lack of space. ***$p < .001$. **$p < .01$. *$p < .05$.

Figure 2

Jealousy Predicting Romantic Disengagement and a Significant Jealous Emotions x Relationship Satisfaction Interaction in Women



Note. Path analyses showing jealousy, relationship satisfaction, and romantic disengagement at baseline predicting romantic disengagement at follow-up (N = 141 couples). Statistics shown are standardized regression coefficients. Dash line = Non-significant. M = Men; W = Women; B = Baseline; F = Follow-up. Significant correlations between exogenous variables and between endogenous variables were specified, although not shown here for lack of space.

***$p < .001$. **$p < .01$. *$p < .05$.