
A Theory of Aberrant Work-Life Navigation

human relations

1–27

© The Author(s) 2025



Article reuse guidelines:

sagepub.com/journals-permissions

DOI: 10.1177/00187267251385967

journals.sagepub.com/home/hum



Matthew B Perrigino 

Baruch College, USA

Ariane Ollier-Malaterre 

Université Du Québec à Montréal, Canada

Marcello Russo 

University of Bologna, Italy

Abstract

Everyone experiences major life transitions (e.g. relocation, job loss, birth of a child), and increasingly so as economic, technological, and social environments become more turbulent. Yet in accounting for how work-life decision-making associated with these transitions occurs, we argue that extant theory overfocuses on individual agency and rational thinking. In this article, we bridge an epistemological divide between the study of major life transitions and work-life decision-making by advancing a narrative theory of aberrant work-life navigation. Our theory overcomes blind spots around the study of “real life,” lived experiences, introducing work-life navigation as a messy, complex, and volatile process, capturing the ontology of how individuals experience major life transitions. We point out factors that inhibit rationality and constrain agency traditionally ascribed to work-life decision-making at the individual (intuitive and unconscious thoughts, emotions, impulsivity, and inaction) and contextual (work-life stakeholders, cultural norms, and regulations) levels. Further, we apply our theorizing to the most studied outcomes associated with major life transitions—work-life balance, conflict, and enrichment—to highlight how these are inherently subjective and, at times, determined by factors entirely beyond one’s control. We conclude by offering a future research agenda to empirically test our theory of aberrant work-life navigation.

Corresponding author:

Ariane Ollier-Malaterre, School of Management, Université Du Québec à Montréal, Montréal, QC, Canada.

Email: ollier.ariane@uqam.ca

Keywords

work and family, work-life decision-making, agency, rationality, work-life navigation, major life transitions

Introduction

Major life transitions—including common life cycle changes such as getting married or becoming a parent; voluntary decisions such as self-expatriating or launching a new business; and unexpected shocks such as being laid off or the start of a war that forces one to migrate—are large, durable, and sometimes radical role changes that simultaneously affect several life domains (e.g. work, family, community, and self-development) (Ashforth, 2001). Everyone experiences these transitions regardless of career path, life stage, family structure, or available resources, yet not everyone adapts to them in the same way (Schlossberg, 1981). Such transitions are increasingly frequent and drastic in environments of rapid technological advances, economic and climate instability, globalization, geopolitical tensions, and more diverse family structures (Blossfeld and Hofmeister, 2006; Greenhaus and Kossek, 2014; Meurs et al., 2008).

Given both the complexity and contemporary relevance of such transitions, we are interested in answering: *how are major life transitions that affect both work and life outside of work navigated and experienced?* Work-life decision-making theory offers a useful starting point in addressing how such transitions prompt cognitive processing involving work- and nonwork-related considerations that drive subsequent action (Powell and Greenhaus, 2006, 2012). While this area does well to capture complexities—including relational aspects (e.g. influence from a spouse or partner; Radcliffe and Cassell, 2014) and the (un)expectedness of such events (Crawford et al., 2019)—it heavily leverages the concepts of rationality and agency. Discerning an epistemological divide between the study of major life transitions and work-life decision-making (with studies occurring largely independent of one another and rooted in separate traditions), we argue that these two areas address the same core phenomena from an ontological standpoint; thus, incorporating complexities of major life transitions into work-life decision-making can enhance the comprehensiveness of work-life decision-making theory in multiple ways.

First, rooted in rational choice theory (March, 1994), a key assumption in much work-life decision-making research is that individuals navigate transitions logically (Cluley and Hecht, 2020). While this is valid and accounts for various heuristic biases that cloud judgment (Radcliffe et al., 2023), we contend that—as lived experiences—decision-making amidst the navigation of major life transitions is met with a range of intuitions (quick, automatic and often unconscious evaluations; Haidt, 2001), emotions, and other cognitive influences that may (or may not) be channeled into rational behaviors. Simply stated, work-life decision-making theory, grounded in the epistemology of psychology which foregrounds *reasoning*—a step-by-step process where at least some steps are performed consciously (Haidt, 2001)—tends to overlook certain factors that compel individuals to make somewhat irrational decisions.

Second, the framing of transitions as an “event” or “episode” belies that transitions are embedded in cultural and structural layers of context (Ollier-Malaterre and Foucreault, 2017), oversimplifying the navigation process to a matter of enacting the “right”

strategies. Work-life stakeholders, cultural norms, and regulations set parameters around what is considered otherwise rational, limiting how individuals construe and enact decisions. Further, normative and regulative contexts are not always static, thus adding uncertainty to decision-making environments (Lupu et al., 2018). On top of this, transition outcomes may be shaped by factors entirely beyond one's control (e.g. chance or luck; Liu and De Rond, 2016). Thus, the inherent assumption of rationality furthers an overemphasis on individual agency for generating optimal or desired outcomes.

Therefore, we conceptualize *work-life navigation* as the messy, complex, and volatile process capturing how individuals experience major life transitions and, in so doing, are influenced by individual (intuitive and unconscious thoughts, emotions, impulsivity, inaction) and contextual (work-life stakeholders, cultural norms, regulations) factors that inhibit rationality and constrain agency. This “messiness” lens—with the adjectives of messy, complex, and volatile referring to epistemological blind spots associated with how decisions and actions vary in the degree to which they are rational and agentic—brings a much-needed real-life perspective to understanding how major life transitions are navigated.

In the following sections, we adopt a narrative, phenomenon-based approach to develop our conceptualization of work-life navigation (Cornelissen, 2017; Fisher et al., 2021). First, we offer a nuanced analysis of work-life decision-making theory, highlighting important insights and relevant shortcomings. Next, we present a process model synthesizing both views, emphasizing different ways in which constraints on agency and inhibitions on rationality unfold, both of which are inherent to work-life navigation. Then, we address the subjectivity of commonly studied outcomes associated with major life transitions, noting how the individual and contextual factors we theorize affect both the work-life navigation process and the evaluation of its outcomes. We conclude with theoretical implications and an agenda for future research.

Theoretical background

Major life transitions have “long attracted scholars’ attention for (their) ubiquity and importance in people’s work- and non-work lives” (George et al., 2022: 102), tracing back to Schlossberg’s (1981) work from the 1970s addressing the “magnitude” of transitions (see Coddington, 1972; Holmes and Rahe, 1967; Tennant and Andrews, 1976). *Major life transitions* are large, durable, and sometimes radical role changes that simultaneously affect several life domains, encompassing ongoing role and identity (re)negotiation, embodied changes, and affective experiences (Ashforth, 2001; Ebaugh, 1988; Ladge et al., 2012). *Work-life decision-making* refers to how people make decisions that affect both work and nonwork roles (Greenhaus and Powell, 2016). Whereas the study of major life transitions is rooted in counseling psychology and psychosomatic research (close to individuals’ lived experiences), the epistemological origin of work-life decision-making comes from cognitive psychology and “incorporates many ideas from the broader decision-making literature . . . into the (work-nonwork) context” (Poelmans, 2005; Shockley and Allen, 2015: 286).

Despite these epistemological differences, the ontological overlap between these two areas of study is evident. Major life transitions such as getting married or becoming a parent, voluntary decisions such as self-expatriating or launching a new business, and

unexpected transitions such as being laid off or forced into early retirement—and, broadly, career *transitions* (Louis, 1980), life *spillovers* (Ragins et al., 2014), and *liminal periods* of “parental, occupational and household identities” (Schaefer et al., 2025: 196)—are addressed in work-life decision-making as anchoring *decisions* (Radcliffe and Cassell, 2014), life shock *events* (Crawford et al., 2019), and major *episodes* “that lead to long-term changes in an individual’s work and family roles, such as quitting a job or entering the labor market” (Vo et al., 2024: 364).

Opportunities for symbiosis arise from these two distinct areas of study (epistemology) addressing a common phenomenon (ontology). Rather than position the phenomenon in chicken-or-egg terms (i.e. does work-life decision-making prompt major life transitions or vice versa; c.f. Nohe et al., 2015), we recognize the two are inherently intertwined given their complexity. Major life transitions encompass work-life decision-making as one factor that shapes the navigation of these experiential processes, whereas work-life decision-making includes cascading effects and negotiation with others when pursuing or responding to major life transitions (Radcliffe and Cassell, 2014). Our value proposition is two-fold: we (1) incorporate the complexities of major life transitions to expand work-life decision-making theory beyond its core epistemological foundation, and (2) use this expanded view of work-life decision-making theory—including our notion of aberrations—to broaden understanding of how work-life decisions (specifically) and major life transitions (broadly) are subjectively appraised and experienced. Since we root our work in the work-life decision-making epistemology, we offer a more detailed assessment of its nuanced insights and strengths, and a sharper critique of its shortcomings.

Building blocks to address ontological blind spots in work-life decision-making

Work-life decision-making is based on rational choice theory (March, 1994). The logic of consequences is “synonymous with rational decision making” where individuals weigh choices and select the one that maximizes utility, even though in reality “decision-makers are likely to consider some, but not all, available options and, to make choices that lead to sufficiently positive, not maximally positive, consequences” (Cluley and Hecht, 2020: 49). Under the logic of appropriateness, “decision makers follow rules or procedures that they see as appropriate to the situation and consistent with their socially-constructed identities” (Powell and Greenhaus, 2012: 323), such that “following (decision-making) rules is not a utility maximizing exercise” (Cluley and Hecht, 2020: 64). Navigating major life transitions involves a combination of the two logics (Vo et al., 2024), both of which are subject to heuristic biases (Radcliffe et al., 2023).

Our concern is that the progression of extant theory suffers from what Cunliffe (2022: 8) refers to as epistemological defensiveness, or ensuring “that particular types of knowledge, theorizing and theory are perpetuated.” While work-life decision-making theory does well to contest the rational choice paradigm in which it is rooted, it has failed to embrace the pursuit of antirationalist models and remains tethered to its rational choice origins born from the “cognitive revolution of the 1960s” (Haidt, 2001: 816). This remains problematic for three reasons.

First, work-life decision-making implies that even decisions subject to heuristic biases still embed some rationality (Oaksford and Hall, 2016). At the risk of introducing a sense of pessimism into an optimistic area of work-life research (c.f. Perrigino et al., 2018) and sensitive to the fact that this extends to the “more maligned aspects of human behavior and cognition” (Sullivan-Bisset, 2025), we encompass the ontological reality that individuals’ lived experiences span beyond decisions guided by consequences and appropriateness. Stated simply, humans are subject to acting *irrationally*. Thus, the first way we augment work-life decision-making theory is by tapping into the more irrational side of individuals—addressing, for example, instances of impulsivity and inaction—capturing not only cynical views of human nature (e.g. “functional stupidity;” Alvesson and Spicer, 2016) but also positive views in which intuitions and unconscious drives support decisions that reflect a person’s needs and values (Abadie and Waroquier, 2019).¹

Second, work-life decision-making theory overemphasizes individual agency, as per the depiction of proactive choices to pursue a transition and descriptions of how individual roles accumulate over time (Perrigino et al., 2022). The epistemological divide noted above has led to an underappreciation of how work-life decisions are socially constructed in the presence of multiple and at times competing cultural and regulative influences (Ollier-Malaterre and Foucreault, 2017). Thus, a second way we augment this area of study is by including situational context as a critical constraint on how “rational, intentional evaluative process(es)” unfold (Lupu et al., 2018: 155) and how transitions are embedded in layers of proximate (work-life stakeholders) and distal (cultural norms and regulations, in one or several countries) contexts.

Third, espoused theories culminate in an objectively “best” (logic of consequences) or “satisfactory” (logic of appropriateness) outcome: *goal-achievement* associated with enhancing work-life balance and reducing work-life conflict (Allen et al., 2020; Hirschi et al., 2019), *successful* work-life image adaptation (Ladge and Little, 2019), *enhanced ability* to cope with future work-life shock events (Crawford et al., 2019), and so forth. Missing is recognition that these outcomes are “inherently subjective” (Rothbard et al., 2005: 254). Thus, a third way in which we augment work-life decision-making theory is by addressing the post-hoc appraisal of decision-making outcomes to crystallize how major life transitions are experienced. Again, balancing cynicism with positivity, we recognize how individuals use counterfactual thinking to consider when hypothetical outcome(s) associated with major life transition *could have been* better or worse than the actual outcome(s) experienced. Linking to our second contribution, we also account for when outcomes are shaped by factors entirely beyond one’s control (e.g. luck).

A theory of aberrant work-life navigation

We present our theoretical framework in Figure 1 to depict *work-life navigation* as a messy, complex, and volatile process, capturing how individuals experience major life transitions that affect both work and life outside of work. Beginning on the left, we position major life transitions (as defined above) as the prompt for work-life navigation. As a boundary condition, we do not address *why* an individual pursues a particular transition—especially since transitions that come as an unexpected “shock” are not necessarily pursued or sought (Crawford et al., 2019). Instead, we focus on *how* decision-making

unfolds and drives subsequent behaviors. This focus aligns with our research question, with the passive voice and “are navigated” (versus “navigate”) phrasing indicative of how the unfolding of both planned and unexpected transitions restricts agency in various ways, thus making navigation a more passive (versus agentic) process.

The boundaries of Figure 1 reflect the assumptions of extant theory: individuals use the logic of consequences to navigate major life transitions as rationally as possible (top portion) and/or the logic of appropriateness to navigate major life transitions within more bounded rationality constraints (bottom portion) (c.f. Radcliffe et al., 2023). As noted, both paths are logical, rooted in rational choice theory with a primary aim to enhance *subjective* outcomes—hence the cloud imagery on the right side of Figure 1—including work-life balance (satisfaction with and effectiveness in meeting expectations across work and nonwork roles; Wayne et al., 2017), conflict (the degree to which responsibilities and demands between work and nonwork roles are incompatible; Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985), and enrichment (the degree to which work experiences enhance nonwork experiences, and vice versa; Greenhaus and Powell, 2006).

In the center of Figure 1, we incorporate how individual and contextual factors collectively create aberrations to work-life navigation, where behaviors and decisions may be *irrational*. First, we refer to individual factors—intuitive and unconscious thoughts, emotions, impulsivity, and inaction—all of which are person-centric views where aberrations in work-life navigation are understood through the lens of the focal individual (Kossek et al., 2012). Second, we refer to contextual factors—work-life stakeholders, cultural norms, and regulations—that capture how work-life navigation occurs in specific family and societal contexts (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013) and can further induce aberrations that constrain agency and inhibit rational decision-making. Recognizing that most factors are inherently related (i.e. neither purely individual nor contextual), we depict these as overlapping circles at the center of Figure 1.

While it is tempting to infer that aberrations associated with work-life navigation are likely to yield sub-optimal outcomes, we refrain from caricaturing such relationships in an honest effort to break free from the pervasive epistemic bias toward rationality, agency, and the enactment of “right” responses. Instead, we offer the possibility that agency constraints and a lack of rationality also yield positive outcomes based on not only subjective appraisal but also—as depicted by the star in Figure 1—luck, which can course correct aberrant work-life navigation.

Individual factors that inhibit rationality and restrict agency

Work-life decision-making theory recognizes how heuristic biases prevent individuals from making thoughtful and holistic decisions—including reality blindness and option blindness, which emphasize how individuals have a propensity to either completely neglect or fail to fully appreciate nonobvious but still important factors (Radcliffe et al., 2023). Further, the positive illusion (Bazerman and Moore, 2012) speaks to the propensity for individuals to overestimate their ability to minimize or eliminate the detrimental outcomes associated with a decision. For instance, an individual focused on the potential career benefits of an international assignment may be overly optimistic that relocation will not cause practical or emotional difficulties for the family (Lazarova et al., 2010), failing to appreciate the implications for other family members.

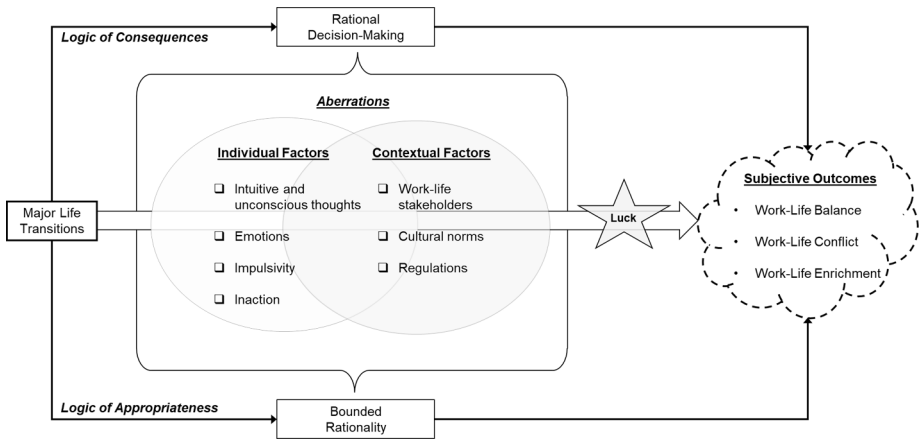


Figure 1. Framework for a theory of aberrant work-life navigation.

(1) The gradient block arrow in the middle of Figure 1 denotes how the appraisal and experience of major life transitions outcomes are shaped by individual and contextual factors (Carlson et al., 2023); (2) The dotted-line cloud shape denotes the subjectivity inherent to outcomes associated with work-life balance, conflict, and enrichment (Rothbard et al., 2005); (3) The star shape denotes how factors entirely beyond one’s control (e.g. luck) can further disrupt or course-correct aberrant work-life navigation.

We add to this body of work by noting that when navigating a major life transition in all its complexity and uncertainty, individuals appraise the upcoming change by relying not only on analytical assessments but also intuitive judgment and unconscious thoughts (Epstein, 1994; Simon, 1987). These assessments and subsequent behaviors may be laden with emotions (Lerner et al., 2015), accompanied by impulsivity (Ma-Kellams and Lerner, 2016), and undermined by inaction (Connor-Smith et al., 2000). In conceptualizing each below, we include select examples for our narrative theorizing. We add examples in Table 1 to highlight work-life navigation’s applicability to diverse employees and employment, social, political, and cultural contexts.

Intuitive and unconscious thoughts. Because of the equivocality and uncertainty inherent in major life transitions, individuals’ appraisal and behaviors may be driven by instantaneous and automatic judgments—intuitions—stemming from knowledge, beliefs, patterns, and techniques that are the product of experience and learning (Barnard, 1938). In other words, individuals likely have “gut” reactions in how to navigate these transitions, which can provide valuable information (Sonenshein, 2007). Intuitions emerge suddenly and effortlessly as automatic reactions to equivocal and uncertain events (Dane and Pratt, 2007; Haidt, 2001); they are relayed to the conscious mind by affect and unconscious cognition (Dienes and Perner, 1999).

Moreover, unconscious wishes and biases also influence decision-making (Freud, 1950; Epstein, 1994). Unconscious thoughts are influential when people face complex decisions (Dijksterhuis and Nordgren, 2006), adding inefficiencies or oversights in decision-making when navigating major life transitions. The impact of such unconscious influences is disputed, as the argument that “sleeping on it” leads to better decisions (Hogarth, 2010) has

Table 1. Illustrative examples of theorized individual factors.

Category	Scenario
Intuitive and unconscious thoughts	<p>An individual . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • . . . may spend painstaking time analyzing the pros and cons toward deciding between job offers in two different countries, but then discard the list they have established, listening to their bodily reactions as they visualize both options and follow their intuition. • . . . whose remote work and flexible schedule are essential to their work-life balance and to the functioning of their family may nonetheless self-sabotage by accepting a new job despite realizing that their new organization will be unsupportive of remote work and their new supervisor seems to adhere strongly to work devotion schemas.
Emotions	<p>An individual . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • . . . in an angry divorce, requests full custody of the children without appraising whether full custody is compatible with their work schedule and work-related demands. • . . . who recently learned that their parent faces serious health challenges decides to quit their job and care for the parent full-time, motivated by the love for their parent or anticipated guilt associated with outsourcing the care (despite the potential for dire financial, career, and personal well-being consequences).
Impulsivity	<p>An individual . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • . . . obtaining a promotion succumbs to the impulsive desire to purchase luxury items beyond their budget. • . . . planning on retiring in six months decides to quit immediately when learning that the company is planning layoffs, anticipating that their resignation will save another co-worker's job.
Inaction	<p>An individual . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • . . . who is pregnant, even though rationally recognizing the need to seek accommodation and inform her manager, is unable to make the request. • . . . so overwhelmed by the life-changing prospects that a job opportunity offers, skips the interview even though they desired to attend and participate in it.

been contested (Newell and Shanks, 2014). We argue that unconscious influences, to some degree, likely lead individuals to make decisions for which—even when and after consciously deliberating—they are unable to fully articulate the reasoning beyond attributing it to intuition (Lufityanto et al., 2016; McKenzie, 1994; Plessner and Czenna, 2008). An extreme case is self-sabotage (Freud, 1930), where individuals undercut their chances at successful work-life navigation—from pursuit of marriage (Peel and Caltabiano, 2021) to career success (Post, 1988)—due to unconscious bias.

Emotions. Emotions play a critical role in work-life decision-making: negative affect associated with relationship tension shapes decision-making among dual-earner couples (Crawford et al., 2019), guilt affects choices made by working mothers (Aarntzen et al., 2019), and fear can limit important career and life decisions (Greenhaus and Powell, 2016). On the one hand, emotions are a necessary function in this process, activating cognitive and motivational dispositions that influence appraisal (Lerner et al., 2015). Indeed, important goals and threats associated with major life transitions arouse a range of emotions that can vary in valence (e.g. excitement or fear) and energy (e.g. serenity or frustration) (Zajonc, 1980). Strong emotions triggered by a major life transition may alter cognition to induce systematic thinking and activate implicit goals that positively impact the appraisal of a major life transition and work-life navigation (Lerner et al., 2015).

On the other hand, however, emotions and energy (a state of arousal linked to affective experiences; Quinn et al., 2012) can restrict thought-action repertoires, particularly when emotions are high-arousal and negative (Barsade and Gibson, 2007; Fredrickson and Branigan, 2005). An individual who feels nervousness—a high-arousal, negative emotion—about a career transition might adopt a narrow focus on the job-related facets of the event (enhancing heuristic biases; Radcliffe et al., 2023), while remaining detached from other facets intentionally (e.g. explicitly discussing and delegating responsibilities to one’s spouse) or unintentionally (e.g. implicitly trusting or taking for granted one’s spouse to “pick up the slack” amidst the transition).

Emotions can create aberrations in decision-making involving major life transitions in various ways. Fear accounts for Akratic action, or instances characterized by a “weakness of will” where individuals hold a belief that they recognize as irrational or unjustified yet follow through with it anyway (Coates, 2012; Kalis et al., 2008)—such as when the male breadwinner of the family *declines* a promotion even though the decision to *accept* is consistent with both the logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness. Building on Lupu et al.’s (2018) work that formative experiences affect decision-making in adulthood, negative emotions associated with traumatic events can account for instances of self-sabotage and other unconscious influences noted above (Freud, 1930). Segueing to our next sub-section, emotions can also prompt impulsivity, or the “tendency to act with relatively little forethought” (Dickman, 1990: 95).

Impulsivity. Impulsivity, where individuals “go with the flow,” is a multidimensional personality trait characterized by a heightened sense of urgency, lack of perseverance, lack of premeditation, and sensation seeking (Whiteside and Lynam, 2001). Impulsive individuals engage in spontaneous or quick decision-making (Ma-Kellams and Lerner, 2016; Shiloh et al., 2002), where a lack of premeditation can result in decisions made “on the spot” (Jäger and Rüsseler, 2016)—as in the case of a “you only live once” approach to life (Smiley, 2015). As noted above, high-energy emotions can prompt individuals to act with passion (Hoffman and Friese, 2016), such as suddenly quitting one’s job based on the slightest provocation.

Beyond emotions, time also explains impulsivity. While work-life decision making accounts for the distinction between planned and shock events (Crawford et al., 2019; Vo et al., 2024), individuals may succumb to impulsive intertemporal choices, or “the

tendency to forego a large but delayed reward and to seek an inferior but more immediate reward” (i.e. immediate versus delayed gratification; Kim and Lee, 2011: 1140). As a multidimensional, often maladaptive trait, impulsivity includes attentional, non-planning, and motor subtypes, with motor impulsivity referring to an “inability to inhibit an inappropriate action or response” (Baker et al., 2024: 1)—which may or may not manifest in the form of various psychiatric disorders (Miller et al., 2010), a point to which we return in the General Discussion. For example, a significant promotion might produce a rapid spending spree on luxury goods that goes beyond one’s means.

Inaction. Extant theory recognizes that choosing not to act is another rational decision that can contribute to generating preferred outcomes. For example, Hirschi et al. (2019) theorize disengagement strategies associated with delaying the pursuit of certain work or family goals (see also Carlson et al., 2025). Little et al.’s (2015) work highlights how a viable approach for pregnant employees is avoiding accommodations or assistance from a supervisor or co-workers. Verbruggen and De Vos (2020) draw on the psychology of doing nothing to argue for instances where people avoid action when pursuing or prematurely abandoning career-related goals. Still, the psychology of doing nothing—like these other examples—reflects a “rational-emotional model of the factors that predispose humans to do nothing,” such as calculating costs and benefits, and anticipating regret and negative emotions (Anderson, 2003: 139).

Yet the stress associated with major life transitions can make individuals susceptible to involuntary disengagement such as inaction (“freezing up”) and cognitive interference (when one’s “mind goes blank”) when action or decision-making is expected or required (Connor-Smith et al., 2000: 977). Such inability to make decisions can be caused by neurobiological mechanisms in the human brain (see Roelofs, 2017; Ward and Wegner, 2013). While inaction may be made manifest in individuals with mental health conditions (Vislá et al., 2016), the magnitude of major life transitions can impact otherwise healthy individuals. Indeed, the stress associated with some major life transitions may be so intense that it creates musculoskeletal symptoms where an individual becomes physically incapable of acting (Broekman et al., 2023). This raises a critical distinction between the willful choice of not acting versus the inability to act. For example, an individual weighing whether to take an expatriate assignment might evaluate pros and cons, formally declining the role (“not acting”). In contrast, one might experience the sensation of freezing up when prompted with the decision (“inability to act”).

Summarizing the role of individual factors. While we consider recognition of automatic processing (Maertz et al., 2019) and habitual decision making (Radcliffe et al., 2023) as key features of extant work-life decision-making theory, Lindebaum and Zundel (2013: 867) warn that the “reducibility of psychological states to brain processes” is too great a simplification. Returning to Figure 1, we built on these foundational works to conceptualize four interrelated factors that account for aberrations in work-life navigation—intuitive and unconscious thoughts, emotions, impulsivity, and inaction—that begin to unpack the more irrational psychological states of decision-making that can occur when individuals navigate major life transitions.

Table 2. Illustrative examples of theorized contextual factors.

Category	Scenario
Work-life stakeholders	<p>An individual . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . . . pondering how enrolling in an online MBA program will impact family and personal life asks their supervisor about the extent to which their organization sponsors MBAs. . . . in a Western societal context allows in-laws an outsized influence in shaping whether and how they pursue different major life transitions. . . . is reluctant to relocate away from their expensive veterinarian who provides quality care for the family’s elderly dog, passing on job opportunities to remain with the current organization that provides a generous pet insurance policy. . . . unable to detach from their feelings toward a partner who has since moved on from the relationship might still pursue opening a bakery that the couple once dreamed of managing together, even if this had been the partner’s idea.
Cultural Norms	<p>An individual . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . . . decides to move an aging parent into the home and provide care for them due to expectations of the collectivistic culture in which they were raised, even though they do not have adequate time, space or resources. . . . decides to emigrate to a country with greater normative acceptance of homosexuality. . . . gives up on pursuing parenthood to continue their career, swayed by narratives that it is impossible to “have it all.” . . . who, as a young woman, notices and experiences the increased entry of Middle Eastern women’s entry into STEM fields, considers pursuing this career path based on the popularity and acceptance of this possibility.
Regulations	<p>An individual . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . . . whose state or country passes prenatal legislation goes on leave sooner than expected. . . . whose company lays them off illegally is not aware of employment legislation and protections. . . . defies the law to engage in a peaceful political protest concerning a war. . . . decides to close their business due to stricter regulations on overseas imports/exports.

MBA: Master of Business Administration.

Contextual factors that inhibit rationality and restrict agency

Work-life navigation does not occur in a vacuum but in levels of context, where decisions occur in relation to others and the social environments in which individuals are embedded. In this section, we explain how aberrations associated with work-life stakeholders, cultural norms, and regulations create further ripple effects that affect work-life decision-making. We include select examples in our narrative theorizing, below, and offer additional illustrative examples in Table 2.

Work-life stakeholders. Work-life decision-making is both an individual and relational process, including decision-making among dual-earner couples (Radcliffe and Cassell, 2014). Russo and Morandin (2023: 1) note that “various work and family stakeholders present in an individual’s network can create significant constraints and opportunities that are capable of inhibiting or enhancing their agency.” We raise this in reference to Crawford et al.’s (2019) suggestion that decision-making involves not only an *individual* decision, but also joint *dyadic* (e.g. dual-earner couples) or *group* (e.g. multiple family members; Vo et al., 2024) decisions based on the compilation of individuals’ perceptions (which may or may not be congruent).

First, compounding effects can reinforce aberrant work-life navigation to the extent that inhibitions on rationality are similar across the focal individual and relevant stakeholders. Individuals may not always choose the people they consult based on rational reasoning, with emotions shaping behavioral adaptation to a situation (Carver and White, 1994; Zajonc, 1980). If anxiety or preoccupation prevails, individuals may interact more with stakeholders who are likewise pessimistic, narrowing the range of options individuals explore as they navigate a major life transition. Unconscious drives can intervene in this process where people engage in selective interactions to create opportunity structures that confirm their sense of self (Swann, 1987). In other words, people may interact mostly with similar others who will concur with their own views, such that unconscious mechanisms of preferential attention (i.e. being more attentive to social feedback that meets self-conceptions), selective encoding and retrieval (remembering information that serves identity goals), and selective interpretation (i.e. granting greater validity to feedback that is congruent with one’s self-conceptions) may be at play (Swann, 1987).

A second possibility is that the focal individual is rational in their approach to work-life navigation, but subject to influence from stakeholders prone to their own unique individual factors described above (Lubit, 2002; Malhotra and Bazerman, 2007; Reh et al., 2018). When decision-making involves negotiation with others, individuals are prone to take an illogical position or succumb to an irrational impulse—potentially undermining their own interests (Grenny, 2016). In these scenarios characterized by an initial lack of consensus, work-life stakeholders’ intuitive thoughts and impulsivity prompt aberrations by influencing the focal individual (e.g. via emotional crossover; Rofcanin et al., 2019). One byproduct here is that stakeholders who are more peripheral to one’s social network—rather than those who hold a central position—may possess an outsized influence (Thomason, 2022). Indeed, the affect and unconscious desires that partly drive interactions with stakeholders help explain why navigating major life transitions is considered a process not fully under one’s control (Schlossberg, 1981).

Cultural norms. Major life transitions are embedded in the societal contexts in which they occur (Beham et al., 2023; Kossek and Ollier-Malaterre, 2013; Piszczek and Berg, 2014). Work-life decision-making theory recognizes how cultural norms create parameters on which the logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness are based (Poelmans et al., 2013). For example, Lupu et al. (2018: 155) draw on Bourdieu’s work to describe how “habitus—historically constituted and embodied dispositions—structures perceptions about what is ‘right’ and ‘normal’ for working mothers and fathers.” Indeed, parents prime their children’s expectations throughout adolescent development (Ary et al., 1999;

Cochran and Brassard, 1979). Ample evidence supports asymmetrical effects of “sex typing” (Blair, 1992) children’s household labor where—in both traditional and gender egalitarian cultures—parents are more likely to assign certain chores (e.g. washing the dishes) to their daughters instead of their sons (Dotti Sani, 2016; Evertsson, 2006). Cultural context thus sets and *limits* the contours of individuals’ imagined possibilities of “future selves” (Markus and Wurf, 1987; Morandin et al., 2021) such as how heterosexual dual-earner couple partners internalize and jointly reproduce traditional gender roles (Radcliffe et al., 2023).

By setting boundaries around the logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness, cultural norms simultaneously establish expectations around what is *not rational*. Yet, critically, we recognize that individuals are still capable of agentic action despite embeddedness in their normative contexts (c.f. Holm, 1995). The concept of reactance captures how individuals experience a subconscious pull to engage in counter-normative behaviors when they feel that their ability to make their own choices is threatened or constrained (Brehm, 1966). This can occur when decisions and behaviors fall outside the scope of localized and global norms (Warren, 2003). For example, a young adult with overprotective parents—even though they are extremely close to their family—might disrespect their wishes and appear to forsake family values by pursuing an international job opportunity due to an implicit desire to attain greater independence and experience the world (Zhang et al., 2025). Paradoxically, this is one example that suggests individuals are more agentic than they are given credit for within work-life decision-making theory, albeit one characterized by a decision that is otherwise not rational.

Regulations. Long-standing statutes and laws create conditions that reduce uncertainty in decision-making environments. On the one hand, regulations—much like cultural norms—set the bounds for the logic of consequences and logic of appropriateness, albeit with more rigidity by distinguishing what is legal from illegal. Research on legal philosophy suggests that rational actors will follow (reasonable) laws (Aarnio, 1986), resulting in constraints on possible courses of action. For example, an employee may pursue uprooting their family for a “work from anywhere” opportunity, only to realize that their organization is not incorporated in the location to where they wish to move or that their desired location does not offer “digital nomad” work visas (Sánchez-Vergara et al., 2023). Thus, agency is constrained by regulative context.

On the other hand, just as work-life navigation is a dynamic process, so too are regulative (and cultural) contexts in which navigation occurs. As such change occurs, individuals are subject to get swept up in bandwagon effects, or “the propensity of an individual to adopt the viewpoint of the majority even if their own viewpoint is different” (Bindra et al., 2022: 305). For example, legislative changes prompting a crackdown on illegal immigration and an increase in deportations may compel migrant workers to leave the country in which they are residing—even though they are in the country legally and all their documentation and paperwork is up to date.

Summarizing the role of contextual factors. Returning to Figure 1, contextual factors involving interactions with work-life stakeholders and embeddedness in cultural and regulative contexts create aberrations to work-life navigation. Stakeholders can reinforce the focal individual’s aberrations (when consensus exists) or inhibit otherwise rational decision-making

by virtue of their own individual factors (when disagreement exists). Cultural norms and regulations constrain agency by scoping out appropriate behavior, simultaneously creating the foundation for behaviors outside this scope to be perceived as irrational.

Work-life navigation outcomes

We now turn to the relationship between aberrant work-life navigation and outcomes associated with major life transitions (work-life balance, conflict, and enrichment), highlighting their inherent subjectivity and how, at times, they are shaped by forces beyond one's control.

Subjectivity. Under the rational choice model, decisions produce a “best” (per the logic of consequences) or “satisfactory” (per the logic of appropriateness) outcome (Simon, 1955). In adopting this paradigm, work-life decision-making theory devotes surprisingly limited attention to the fact that work-life balance, conflict, and enrichment are “inherently subjective constructs, and the focal person is probably the most accurate source of information regarding his or her desires, perceptions, and attitudes” (Rothbard et al., 2005: 254). We crystallize this with the block arrow in Figure 1, reflecting the subjectivity of these outcomes in that interpretation is filtered through individual and contextual factors (Carlson et al., 2023). In extreme cases, outcomes may be interpreted with genuine illusion (where, “on a few moments’ prompted reflection they would be willing to admit [their interpretation] is invalid;” Cohen, 1981: 323) or with denial (“refusal to perceive the physical facts of the immediate environment [and] common reluctance to accept the implications of some event;” Baumeister et al., 1998: 1107).

We suggest that evaluating such experiences induces contrast effects, a cognitive bias in that one's perspective is altered when comparing two different things rather than evaluating them independently. Specifically, outcomes associated with major life transitions invite counterfactual thinking, or “what might have been” scenarios (Miller et al., 1990: 305)—for example, a hypothetical outcome that *would have been* more aligned with societal expectations or one's gender role beliefs *had it happened* (Manca et al., 2025). Because work-life navigation occurs in imperfect decision-making environments, individuals can always generate counterfactuals, “mental representations of alternatives to the past and produce consequences that are both beneficial and aversive to the individual” (Epstude and Roese, 2008; Roese, 1997: 133). They may consider some alternatives “that are evaluatively better than actuality” and others “that are worse than actuality” (Roese, 1999: 570–571), creating framing effects associated with how they appraise work-life outcomes. Even rational decision-making will not result in optimal work-life outcomes *per se*, in part because the (over)simplification of complex decisions can lead to more positive affective experiences associated with decision-making (Hanoch et al., 2007).

Further, contextual factors play a key role in framing how outcomes are appraised, particularly when social contexts are static and enduring (Suchman, 1995). For example, potential work and career paths for men (seeing no other options than providing for the family) and women (not questioning time or energy devoted to caregiving) may be obscured to the extent that individuals remain beholden to traditional gender role norms. Yet the male breadwinner who works excessively to provide for his family and spends

limited time with his wife and children—what, objectively, work-life scholarship grounded in rational choice might regard as “low” work-family balance or “high” work-family conflict—might experience subjectively optimal outcomes in the sense that he perceives he is fulfilling his work and family role responsibilities in the best possible way(s). The same is true for regulations such as parental leaves: highly educated French mothers, for example, usually return to work full-time and enroll their babies for long days in childcare centers right after their short maternity leave (16 weeks, several of which are taken before birth). They may not realize that the length of this leave and societal expectations that they do not interrupt their careers stem from historical practices of the Parisian noblesse that used to send newborns to the countryside wet nurses so the mothers could meet their high-society entertainment obligations (Ariès, 1973). Thus, they may not imagine alternative paths and outcomes other than what they experience as their lived reality.

Luck. Extant work-life decision-making theory factors in uncontrollable shocks as a prompt for work-life navigation (Crawford et al., 2019). Interestingly, however, the prevailing assumption is that resource investment, collaboration with other work-life stakeholders, and other factors *within* the focal individual’s control allows them to “handle work-life shock events” (Vo et al., 2024: 381). We augment these views to recognize and account for the existence of external factors *entirely beyond* one’s control (either occurring later in the work-life navigation process or present throughout) that dictate outcomes largely regardless of agency.

Luck, or lack thereof, is a universal experience. Bad luck—for instance, a sudden economic downturn that occurs shortly after one quits their secure corporate job to start their own business—can create work-life conflict, and is understood through age-old axioms including the line from Robert Burns’s 1785 poem that reads “the best laid plans of mice and men often go awry” and the Yiddish proverb, “we plan, God laughs.” Conversely, being in the “right place at the right time” speaks to experiences of good luck (Watts, 1999). In fairness, sometimes luck is “a *post facto* phenomenon that infers random variation” where subsequent sensemaking can account for the remaining unexplained random variation (Parnell et al., 2012: 107). Indeed, acknowledging the agentic capabilities of individuals, some outcomes attributed to luck may have more logical explanations within the scope of one’s own control (Spector, 1982), as in the case of how a “lucky” repatriation offer and subsequent improvements in work-life balance for the focal person and their family are driven by years of hard work.

Yet luck also exists as serendipity (Roberts, 1989). This includes scenarios “where one seeks A but finds B, and where B is ultimately more highly valued” or where “A is sought and A is found, but via a route quite different from that originally envisioned” (Liu and De Rond, 2016: 25–26). When one seeks A but finds B, consider a chance encounter during an interview trip where an individual—randomly seated next to a family-friendly executive on the flight—finds an even more ideal opportunity than the one for which they were interviewing (that gives them a flexible schedule, remote work access, and greater work-life balance). When A is sought and A is found but via a quite different route, here we need to look no further than to the self-serving bias where individuals erroneously attribute positive outcomes as caused by their own agency (Miller and Ross, 1975). An individual might believe they receive a promotion because of hard

work and effort, leading to work-life enrichment where they are invigorated to invest greater energy and time in family activity. Yet, unbeknownst to them, they were passed over for consideration and only received the offer when the desired candidate(s) chose to pursue opportunities elsewhere.

General discussion

We developed a theory of aberrant work-life navigation, highlighting how individual (intuitive and unconscious thoughts, emotions, impulsivity, inaction) and contextual (work-life stakeholders, cultural norms, regulations) factors inhibit rationality and constrain agency, creating “messiness” in how individuals navigate major life transitions. Below, we discuss our theoretical advancements and provide generative ideas for future research.

Theoretical implications

We advance work-life decision-making theory by offering a more complex yet realistic account of lived experiences involving the process of (aberrant) work-life navigation. Our theory is as an important complement to—not replacement of—existing theory, encompassing not only the cornerstones of (bounded) rationality and individual agency but also their counterparts of irrationality and agency constraints. Further, we embrace the inherent subjectivity of work-life constructs and how major life transitions are socially constructed. Recognizing the importance of considering work-life issues in context, we raise important considerations associated with the underlying “meaning” of work-life balance, conflict, and enrichment as they pertain to the eye of the beholder. Thus, our work may prove informative for investigating issues of psychometric equivalence (Min et al., 2021), generating measures that capture psychological comparisons and contrast effects between individuals’ “real” versus “imagined” work-life outcomes (Manca et al., 2025), and epistemic discussions around construct conceptualization (Wayne et al., 2017).

We enhance work-life decision-making theory by encompassing multiple components into a unified framework (individual *and* relational decision-making; planned *and* shock events) and by broadening its scope. Whereas much focus is on specific events (“episode processing;” Maertz et al., 2019) and discrete decisions, our epistemological blending captures the fact that major life transitions—or what are often referred to as “anchoring decisions,” “life shock events,” and “major episodes of work-family conflict”—are long, complex, and dynamic situations where decision-making may incur aberrations as work-life navigation unfolds.

We further enhance the generalizability of work-life decision-making theory by demonstrating its applicability across multiple areas of study that capture work-life navigation as a key, phenomenological experience underlying numerous constructs and topics of investigation. This includes our narrative examples in the context of job loss, expatriation, pregnant employees, and the supplemental examples in Tables 1 and 2. The universality of our framework creates a host of possibilities for future research (discussed below), including its contextualization to non-Western and Global South settings (Ollier-Malaterre and Foucreault, 2017). For example, we can generalize that all of humanity is

subject to the influence of emotions yet recognize that emotions are experienced differently across cultures (Mesquita et al., 2016).

Finally, we add nuance to work-life decision-making theory by addressing major life transitions as context-embedded phenomena. As an analogy, neo-institutional theory long argued actors are conditioned by the institutions in which they are embedded (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Similarly, work-life decision-making theory does well to recognize how cultural norms and regulations constrain agency by conditioning expectations (Lupu et al., 2018). Yet neo-institutional theory failed to account for the paradox of embedded agency—that is, how actors are agentic and reflexive within the same environments by which they are conditioned (Holm, 1995)—and subsequent views emerged to capture how actors are shaped by *and* shape their contexts (Lawrence et al., 2013). We used this to recognize that individuals are *capable* of agentic action at the intersection of their specific layers of contexts to account for how agentic action can produce “irrational” behavior (as defined by normative and regulative contexts). This point further highlights that, while we overall emphasized the need to better account for agency constraints and irrationality, these are two distinct pieces: individuals can exercise agency or rely on conditioned behaviors to pursue irrational or rational choices, respectively.

Directions for future research

We encourage future research to build on our three core theoretical contributions that extend work-life decision-making theory: inaction and impulsivity; constraints on agency; and the inherent subjectivity of outcomes associated with major life transitions. First, building on the idea that “any effort to be universally precautionary will be paralyzing” (Sunstein, 2002: 32), future research should explore instances of inaction such as when and why individuals “freeze up” when navigating major life transitions. The personality literature points to perfectionism and compulsive indecisiveness as contributing factors (Frost and Shows, 1993), while the motivation literature points to fear of failure (Cacciotti et al., 2016). These are enduring paradigms that work-life decision-making studies can integrate without the need to develop new scales or devise new study methodologies—and, from an individual factors standpoint, are natural complements for considering how values influence work-life navigation (via the logic of appropriateness).

In line with a series of essays published in *Human Relations* in the mid-2010s, we invite the application of neuroscience-based perspectives (Butler et al., 2017; Healey and Hodgkinson, 2014). We encourage cross-pollination with research on neurodiversity that “takes neurological developments traditionally regarded as atypical or even as diagnosable disorders. . .and conceptualizes them as normal human variation” (Krzeminska et al., 2019: 453). Just as Erbil et al. (2025: 455) criticize the assumption of neurotypicality as an “ignorant design” for human resource management that fails to “recognize, capture, and accommodate the unique needs of neurodivergent individuals,” so too do we argue that work-life decision-making studies theorize through the lens of neurotypicality. While there is much to unpack, we encourage strengths-based approaches (e.g. benefits associated with inaction and impulsivity) that seek to understand how neurodiverse individuals’ “unique perspectives, character advantages, and cognitive abilities” produce aberrations that enhance work-life navigation (Iqbal et al., 2025: 37).

Second, regarding agency constraints, we encourage integration of reciprocal determinism: in critiquing that “explanations of human behavior have generally favored unidirectional causal models emphasizing either environmental or internal determinants of behavior,” Bandura (1978: 344) asserted that “psychological functioning involves a continuous reciprocal interaction between behavioral, cognitive, and environmental influences.” Even though some work-life decision-making research recognizes that decision-making “does not progress in a logical sequence” (Radcliffe and Cassell, 2014: 793) and that the environment in which one is embedded shapes values and beliefs (Lupu et al., 2018), we encourage systematic attention to the role of environmental factors—especially when they are compounded and reinforced by individuals’ beliefs associated with predestination and fate.

Essentially, we charge future research with finding the middle ground in balancing agentic versus non-agentic considerations. Returning to our incorporation of luck, studies can investigate *atypical* major life transitions. Liu and De Rond (2016: 29) note that what some perceive as serendipitous events or luck can be attributed to recognition that “opportunities may exist when social dynamics discourage others to exploit atypical opportunities”—suggesting that what appears on the surface as a largely non-agentic influence may, in fact, be driven by agentic factors such as (implicit) recognition or foresight. Indeed, atypical transitions are ideally suited for this line of inquiry since “theory building can best be examined in extreme contexts because the dynamics being studied are more visible” (Ladge et al., 2012: 1453).

Third, by eschewing the proposition-based approach to theorizing in favor of a narrative approach, we remained largely agnostic about directionality and whether aberrations will result in more positive or more negative outcomes. Yet we also problematized the notion of “positive” and “negative” outcomes, given their inherent subjectivity. We encourage future research to lean into this idea, investigating whether inducing a post-hoc advantageous comparison (a “worse” hypothetical experience than the actual experience) alters an individual’s appraisal of their experience for the better. Quasi-experimental designs can determine whether individuals who are subjected to an advantageous comparison (versus a control group) generate more positive reassessments of prior experiences, with such designs yielding practical benefits for participants in terms of their mental health and well-being. Further, future research can incorporate social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) and equity theory (Adams, 1963) to determine (whether and how) to which referent others’ outcomes individuals evaluate their own experiences.

We also encourage qualitative work not only because it is uniquely positioned for polycontextual analyses that account for multiple layers of context (Ollier-Malaterre, 2024) but also because of the practical impact it can have on study participants. Lupu et al. (2018: 163) observed during their data collection that “participants referred to the [interview] process as “cathartic” and many expressed gratitude for the reflection space that the interview process allowed.” In this sense, we hope that future research not only advances understanding of aberrant work-life navigation but also, in doing so, provides a forum for study participants to engage in retrospective sensemaking that better equips them to navigate future major life transitions.

Conclusion

Since the turn of the century (c.f. Friedman and Greenhaus, 2000), work-life decision-making theory has made many advancements under the rational choice paradigm. Yet given the current state of extant theory, we argued for the necessary departure from the rational choice paradigm—advancing our theory of aberrant work-life navigation—to better capture the messy, complex, and volatile nature of major life transitions and individuals' lived experiences. Importantly, our theory is not a replacement for but rather a complement to extant theory (per our framework) such that the two can be paired together. Thus, we hope that our *ad maiora* (“toward greater things”) sentiment invigorates research on work-life decision-making theory and expands its applicability across areas of management and interdisciplinary scholarship.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to Jeffrey Greenhaus for his insights associated with the development of our manuscript. We are also grateful to our Associate Editor, Yasin Rofcanin, and two anonymous reviewers for their guidance and developmental feedback throughout the review process.

Funding

The authors disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This research was funded through support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to the Canada Research Chair on Digital Regulation at Work and in Life (#CRC-2021-00534).

AI usage declaration

The authors acknowledge that they have followed Human Relations' AI policy. No AI was used for preparing the manuscript.

ORCID iDs

Matthew B Perrigino  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1411-9470>

Ariane Ollier-Malaterre  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2315-5091>

Marcello Russo  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0452-7673>

Note

- 1 Our use of the term “irrational” refers to how an observer would struggle or fail to see the underlying reason or logic associated with an action undertaken by the focal individual, or how the focal individual fails to acknowledge that their rationale for an action may be a post hoc construction (Haidt, 2001).

References

- Aarnio A (1986) *The Rational as Reasonable: A Treatise on Legal Justification*. Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company.
- Aarntzen L, Derks B, van Steenbergen E, et al. (2019) Work-family guilt as a straightjacket. An interview and diary study on consequences of mothers' work-family guilt. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 115: 103336.

- Abadie M and Waroquier L (2019) Evaluating the benefits of conscious and unconscious thought in complex decision making. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 6(1): 72–78.
- Adams JS (1963) Towards an understanding of inequity. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 67(5): 422–436.
- Allen TD, French KA, Dumani S, et al. (2020) A cross-national meta-analytic examination of predictors and outcomes associated with work–family conflict. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 105(6): 539–576.
- Alvesson M and Spicer A (2016) *The Stupidity Paradox: The Power and Pitfalls of Functional Stupidity at Work*. London: Profile Books.
- Anderson CJ (2003) The psychology of doing nothing: Forms of decision avoidance result from reason and emotion. *Psychological Bulletin* 129(1): 139–167.
- Ariès P (1973) *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime*. Paris: Seuil.
- Ary DV, Duncan TE, Duncan SC, et al. (1999) Adolescent problem behavior: The influence of parents and peers. *Behaviour Research and Therapy* 37(3): 217–230.
- Ashforth BE (2001) *Role Transitions in Organizational Life: An Identity-Based Perspective*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Baker C, Fairclough S, Ogden RS, et al. (2024) Trait impulsivity influences behavioural and physiological responses to threat in a virtual environment. *Scientific Reports* 14(1): 9484.
- Bandura A (1978) The self system in reciprocal determinism. *American Psychologist* 33(4): 344–358.
- Barnard CI (1938) *Functions of the Executive*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Barsade SG and Gibson DE (2007) Why does affect matter in organizations? *Academy of Management Perspectives* 21(1): 36–59.
- Baumeister RF, Dale K and Sommer KL (1998) Freudian defense mechanisms and empirical findings in modern social psychology: Reaction formation, projection, displacement, undoing, isolation, sublimation, and denial. *Journal of Personality* 66(6): 1081–1124.
- Bazerman MH and Moore DA (2012) *Judgment in Managerial Decision Making*. New York: Wiley.
- Beham B, Ollier-Malaterre A, Allen TD, et al. (2023) Humane orientation, work–family conflict, and positive spillover across cultures. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 108(10): 1573–1597.
- Bindra S, Sharma D, Parameswar N, et al. (2022) Bandwagon effect revisited: A systematic review to develop future research agenda. *Journal of Business Research* 143: 305–317.
- Blair SL (1992) The sex-typing of children's household labor: Parental influence on daughters' and sons' housework. *Youth & Society* 24(2): 178–203.
- Blossfeld HP and Hofmeister H (2006) *Globalization, Uncertainty and Women's Careers: An International Comparison*. London: Routledge.
- Brehm JW (1966) *A Theory of Psychological Reactance*. New York: Academic Press.
- Broekman MM, Brinkman N, Ramtin S, et al. (2023) Magnitude of incapability and pain intensity are associated more with unhelpful thoughts than stressful life events. *Chronic Stress* 7: 24705470231179644.
- Butler MJ, Lee N and Senior C (2017) Critical essay: Organizational cognitive neuroscience drives theoretical progress, or: The curious case of the straw man murder. *Human Relations* 70(10): 1171–1190.
- Cacciotti G, Hayton JC, Mitchell JR, et al. (2016) A reconceptualization of fear of failure in entrepreneurship. *Journal of Business Venturing* 31(3): 302–325.
- Carlson DS, Hackney K, Thompson MJ, et al. (2025) The impact of father's pregnancy discrimination on the work–family interface: An action-regulation approach. *Human Relations*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00187267241305277>

- Carlson DS, Quade MJ, Wan M, et al. (2023) Keeping up with the Joneses: Social comparison of integrating work and family lives. *Human Relations* 76(8): 1285–1313.
- Carver CS and White TL (1994) Behavioral inhibition, behavioral activation, and affective responses to impending reward and punishment: The BIS/BAS Scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 67(2): 319–333.
- Cluley H and Hecht TD (2020) Micro work-family decision-making of dual-income couples with young children: What does a couple like us do in a situation like this?. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* 93(1): 45–72.
- Coates A (2012) Rational epistemic akrasia. *American Philosophical Quarterly* 49(2): 113–124.
- Cochran MM and Brassard JA (1979) Child development and personal social networks. *Child Development* 50(3): 601–616.
- Coddington RD (1972) The significance of life events as etiologic factors in the diseases of children: II. A study of a normal population. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 16(3): 205–213.
- Cohen LJ (1981) Can human irrationality be experimentally demonstrated?. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 4(3): 317–331.
- Connor-Smith JK, Compas BE, Wadsworth ME, et al. (2000) Responses to stress in adolescence: Measurement of coping and involuntary stress responses. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 68(6): 976–992.
- Cornelissen J (2017) Editor's comments: Developing propositions, a process model, or a typology? Addressing the challenges of writing theory without a boilerplate. *Academy of Management Review* 42(1): 1–9.
- Crawford WS, Thompson MJ and Ashforth BE (2019) Work-life events theory: Making sense of shock events in dual-earner couples. *Academy of Management Review* 44(1): 194–212.
- Cunliffe AL (2022) Must I grow a pair of balls to theorize about theory in organization and management studies? *Organization Theory* 3: 1–28.
- Dane E and Pratt MG (2007) Exploring intuition and its role in managerial decision making. *Academy of Management Review* 32(1): 33–54.
- Dickman SJ (1990) Functional and dysfunctional impulsivity: Personality and cognitive correlates. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 58(1): 95–102.
- Dienes Z and Perner J (1999) A theory of implicit and explicit knowledge. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 22(5): 735–808.
- Dijksterhuis A and Nordgren LF (2006) A theory of unconscious thought. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 1(2): 95–109.
- DiMaggio PJ and Powell WW (1983) The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review* 48(2): 147–160.
- Dotti Sani GM (2016) Undoing gender in housework? Participation in domestic chores by Italian fathers and children of different ages. *Sex Roles* 74: 411–421.
- Ebaugh HRF (1988) *Becoming an Ex: The Process of Role Exit*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Epstein S (1994) Integration of the cognitive and the psychodynamic unconscious. *American Psychologist* 49(8): 709–724.
- Epstude K and Roese NJ (2008) The functional theory of counterfactual thinking. *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 12(2): 168–192.
- Erbil C, Özbilgin MF and Gündoğdu N (2025) Neuronormativity as ignorant design in human resource management: The case of an unsupportive national context. *Human Resource Management Journal* 35(2): 455–475.
- Evertsson M (2006) The reproduction of gender: Housework and attitudes towards gender equality in the home among Swedish boys and girls. *The British Journal of Sociology* 57(3): 415–436.
- Festinger L (1954) A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations* 7(2): 117–140.

- Fisher G, Mayer K and Morris S (2021) From the editors—Phenomenon-based theorizing. *Academy of Management Review* 46(4): 631–639.
- Fredrickson BL and Branigan C (2005) Positive emotions broaden the scope of attention and thought-action repertoires. *Cognition & Emotion* 19(3): 313–332.
- Freud S (1930) *Civilization and Its Discontents*. London: Hogarth Press.
- Freud S (1950) *Totem and Taboo*. New York: Norton.
- Friedman SD and Greenhaus JH (2000) *Work and Family: Allies or Enemies? What Happens When Business Professionals Confront Life Choices*. New York: Oxford University.
- Frost RO and Shows DL (1993) The nature and measurement of compulsive indecisiveness. *Behaviour Research and Therapy* 31(7): 683–692.
- George MM, Wittman S and Rockmann KW (2022) Transitioning the study of role transitions: From an attribute-based to an experience-based approach. *Academy of Management Annals* 16(1): 102–133.
- Greenhaus JH and Beutell NJ (1985) Sources of conflict between work and family roles. *Academy of Management Review* 10(1): 76–88.
- Greenhaus JH and Kossek EE (2014) The contemporary career: A work–home perspective. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior* 1: 361–388.
- Greenhaus JH and Powell GN (2003) When work and family collide: Deciding between competing role demands. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 90(2): 291–303.
- Greenhaus JH and Powell GN (2006) When work and family are allies: A theory of work-family enrichment. *Academy of Management Review* 31(1): 72–92.
- Greenhaus JH and Powell GN (2016) *Making Work and Family Work: From Hard Choices to Smart Choices*. New York: Routledge.
- Grenny J (2016) *How to deal with the irrational parts of a negotiation*. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2016/06/how-to-deal-with-the-irrational-parts-of-a-negotiation> (accessed 4 July 2023).
- Haidt J (2001) The emotional dog and its rational tail: A social intuitionist approach to moral judgment. *Psychological Review* 108(4): 814–834.
- Hanoch Y, Wood S and Rice T (2007) Bounded rationality, emotions and older adult decision making: Not so fast and yet so frugal. *Human Development* 50(6): 333–358.
- Healey MP and Hodgkinson GP (2014) Rethinking the philosophical and theoretical foundations of organizational neuroscience: A critical realist alternative. *Human Relations* 67(7): 765–792.
- Hirschi A, Shockley KM and Zacher H (2019) Achieving work-family balance: An action regulation model. *Academy of Management Review* 44(1): 150–171.
- Hogarth RM (2010) Intuition: A challenge for psychological research on decision making. *Psychological Inquiry* 21(4): 338–353.
- Holm P (1995) The dynamics of institutionalization: Transformation processes in Norwegian fisheries. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 40(3): 398–422.
- Holmes TH and Rahe RH (1967) The social readjustment rating scale. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research* 11(2): 213–218.
- Iqbal Q, Volpone SD and Piowar-Sulej K (2025) Workforce neurodiversity and workplace avoidance behavior: The role of inclusive leadership, relational energy, and self-control demands. *Human Resource Management* 64(1): 37–57.
- Jäger DT and Rüsseler J (2016) Low arousing positive affect broadens visual attention and alters the thought-action repertoire while broadened visual attention does not. *Frontiers in Psychology* 7: 1652.
- Kalis A, Mojzisch A, Schweizer TS, et al. (2008) Weakness of will, akrasia, and the neuropsychiatry of decision making: An interdisciplinary perspective. *Cognitive, Affective, & Behavioral Neuroscience* 8(4): 402–417.

- Kim S and Lee D (2011) Prefrontal cortex and impulsive decision making. *Biological Psychiatry* 69(12): 1140–1146.
- Kossek EE and Ollier-Malaterre A (2013) Work-family policies: Linking national contexts, organizational practice and people for multi-level change. In: Poelmans S, Greenhaus JH and Las Heras MM (eds) *Expanding the Boundaries of Work-Family Research: A Vision for the Future*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 3–31.
- Kossek EE, Ruderman MN, Braddy PW, et al. (2012) Work–nonwork boundary management profiles: A person-centered approach. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 81(1): 112–128.
- Krzeminska A, Austin RD, Bruyère SM, et al. (2019) The advantages and challenges of neurodiversity employment in organizations. *Journal of Management & Organization* 25(4): 453–463.
- Ladge JJ and Little LM (2019) When expectations become reality: Work-family image management and identity adaptation. *Academy of Management Review* 44(1): 126–149.
- Ladge JJ, Clair JA and Greenberg D (2012) Cross-domain identity transition during liminal periods: Constructing multiple selves as professional and mother during pregnancy. *Academy of Management Journal* 55(6): 1449–1471.
- Lawrence TB, Leca B and Zilber TB (2013) Institutional work: Current research, new directions and overlooked issues. *Organization Studies* 34(8): 1023–1033.
- Lazarova M, Westman M and Shaffer MA (2010) Elucidating the positive side of the work-family interface on international assignments: A model of expatriate work and family performance. *Academy of Management Review* 35(1): 93–117.
- Lerner JS, Li Y, Valdesolo P, et al. (2015) Emotion and decision making. *Annual Review of Psychology* 66(1): 799–823.
- Lindebaum D (2016) Critical essay: Building new management theories on sound data? The case of neuroscience. *Human Relations* 69(3): 537–550.
- Lindebaum D and Zundel M (2013) Not quite a revolution: Scrutinizing organizational neuroscience in leadership studies. *Human Relations* 66(6): 857–877.
- Little LM, Major VS, Hinojosa AS, et al. (2015) Professional image maintenance: How women navigate pregnancy in the workplace. *Academy of Management Journal* 58(1): 8–37.
- Liu C and De Rond M (2016) Good night, and good luck: Perspectives on luck in management scholarship. *The Academy of Management Annals* 10(1): 409–451.
- Louis MR (1980) Career transitions: Varieties and commonalities. *Academy of Management Review* 5(3): 329–340.
- Lubit R (2002) The long-term organizational impact of destructively narcissistic managers. *Academy of Management Perspectives* 16(1): 127–138.
- Lufityanto G, Donkin C and Pearson J (2016) Measuring intuition: Nonconscious emotional information boosts decision accuracy and confidence. *Psychological Science* 27(5): 622.
- Lupu I, Spence C and Empson L (2018) When the past comes back to haunt you: The enduring influence of upbringing on the work–family decisions of professional parents. *Human Relations* 71(2): 155–181.
- Maertz CP Jr, Boyar SL and Maloney PW (2019) A theory of work-family conflict episode processing. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 115: 103331.
- Ma-Kellams C and Lerner J (2016) Trust your gut or think carefully? Examining whether an intuitive, versus a systematic, mode of thought produces greater empathic accuracy. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 111(5): 674–685.
- Malhotra D and Bazerman M (2007) *Negotiation Genius: How to Overcome Obstacles and Achieve Brilliant Results at the Bargaining Table and Beyond*. New York: Bantam Dell.

- Manca C, Russo M, Leone L, et al. (2025) The good executive in the wake of COVID-19: Using story completion to study the rise and development of alternative selves. *Frontiers in Psychology* 16: 1499311.
- March JG (1994) *A Primer on Decision Making: How Decisions Happen*. New York: Free Press.
- Markus H and Wurf E (1987) The dynamic self-concept: A social psychological perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology* 38: 299–337.
- McKenzie CR (1994) The accuracy of intuitive judgment strategies: Covariation assessment and Bayesian inference. *Cognitive Psychology* 26(3): 209–239.
- Mesquita B, Boiger M and De Leersnyder J (2016) The cultural construction of emotions. *Current Opinion in Psychology* 8: 31–36.
- Meurs JA, Breaux DM and Perrewe PL (2008) The family and HRM in North America: How demographic and social changes are shifting the way work–family issues are managed by organizations and employees. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 19(8): 1455–1471.
- Miller DJ, Derefinko KJ, Lynam DR, et al. (2010) Impulsivity and attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder: Subtype classification using the UPPS impulsive behavior scale. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment* 32: 323–332.
- Miller DT and Ross M (1975) Self-serving biases in the attribution of causality: Fact or fiction? *Psychological Bulletin* 82(2): 213–225.
- Miller DT, Turnbull W and McFarland C (1990) Counterfactual thinking and social perception: Thinking about what might have been. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 23: 305–331.
- Min H, Matthews RA, Wayne JH, et al. (2021) Psychometric evaluation of work-family conflict measures using classic test and item response theories. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 36: 117–138.
- Morandin G, Russo M and Bergami M (2021) Imagining the newcomer–supervisor relationship: Future relational self in the workplace. *Human Resource Management Journal* 31(4): 1010–1024.
- Newell BR and Shanks DR (2014) Unconscious influences on decision making: A critical review. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 37(1): 1–19.
- Nohe C, Meier LL, Sonntag K, et al. (2015) The chicken or the egg? A meta-analysis of panel studies of the relationship between work–family conflict and strain. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 100(2): 522–536.
- Oaksford M and Hall S (2016) On the source of human irrationality. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 20(5): 336–344.
- Ollier-Malaterre A (2024) *Living with Digital Surveillance in China. Chinese Citizens' Narratives on Technology, Governance and Privacy*. *Routledge Studies in Surveillance*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ollier-Malaterre A and Foucreault A (2017) Cross-national work-life research: Cultural and structural impacts for individuals and organizations. *Journal of Management* 43(1): 111–136.
- Ollier-Malaterre A, Valcour M, Den Dulk L, et al. (2013) Theorizing national context to develop comparative work–life research: A review and research agenda. *European Management Journal* 31(5): 433–447.
- Parnell JA, Dent EB, O'Regan N, et al. (2012) Managing performance in a volatile environment: Contrasting perspectives on luck and causality. *British Journal of Management* 23: S104–S118.
- Peel R and Caltabiano N (2021) Why do we sabotage love? A thematic analysis of lived experiences of relationship breakdown and maintenance. *Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy* 20(2): 99–131.

- Perrigino MB, Dunford BB and Wilson KS (2018) Work–family backlash: The “dark side” of work–life balance (WLB) policies. *Academy of Management Annals* 12(2): 600.
- Perrigino MB, Kossek EE, Thompson RJ, et al. (2022) How do changes in family role status impact employees? An empirical investigation. *Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Sciences* 4(5): 393–409.
- Piszczyk MM and Berg P (2014) Expanding the boundaries of boundary theory: Regulative institutions and work–family role management. *Human Relations* 67(12): 1491–1512.
- Plessner H and Czenna S (2008) The benefits of intuition. In: Plessner H, Betsch C and Betsch T (eds) *Intuition in Judgment and Decision Making*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 251–265.
- Poelmans S, Greenhaus JH and Stepanova O (2013) The present and future of work–family decision making. Expanding the boundaries of work–family research: A vision for the future. In: Poelmans S, Greenhaus JH and Las Heras MM (eds) *Expanding the Boundaries of Work–Family Research: A Vision for the Future*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 137–155.
- Poelmans SA (2005) The decision process theory of work and family. In: Kossek EE and Lambert S (eds) *Managing Work–Life Integration in Organizations: Future Directions for Research and Practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 264–286.
- Post RD (1988) Self-sabotage among successful women. *Psychotherapy in Private Practice* 6(3): 191–205.
- Powell GN and Greenhaus JH (2006) Managing incidents of work–family conflict: A decision-making perspective. *Human Relations* 59(9): 1179–1212.
- Powell GN and Greenhaus JH (2012) When family considerations influence work decisions: Decision-making processes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 81(3): 322–329.
- Quinn RW, Spreitzer GM and Lam CF (2012) Building a sustainable model of human energy in organizations: Exploring the critical role of resources. *Academy of Management Annals* 6(1): 337–396.
- Radcliffe L, Cassell C and Spencer L (2023) Work–family habits? Exploring the persistence of traditional work–family decision making in dual-earner couples. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 145: 103914.
- Radcliffe LS and Cassell C (2014) Resolving couples’ work–family conflicts: The complexity of decision making and the introduction of a new framework. *Human Relations* 67(7): 793–819.
- Ragins BR, Lyness KS, Williams LJ, et al. (2014) Life spillovers: The spillover of fear of home foreclosure to the workplace. *Personnel Psychology* 67(4): 763–800.
- Reh S, Tröster C and Van Quaquebeke N (2018) Keeping (future) rivals down: Temporal social comparison predicts coworker social undermining via future status threat and envy. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 103(4): 399–415.
- Roberts RM (1989) *Serendipity*. New York: Wiley.
- Roelofs K (2017) Freeze for action: Neurobiological mechanisms in animal and human freezing. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 372(1718): 20160206.
- Roese NJ (1997) Counterfactual thinking. *Psychological Bulletin* 121(1): 133–148.
- Roese NJ (1999) Counterfactual thinking and decision making. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review* 6(4): 570–578.
- Rofcanin Y, Las Heras M, Bosch MJ, et al. (2019) A closer look at the positive crossover between supervisors and subordinates: The role of home and work engagement. *Human Relations* 72(11): 1776–1804.
- Rothbard NP, Phillips KW and Dumas TL (2005) Managing multiple roles: Work–family policies and individuals’ desires for segmentation. *Organization Science* 16(3): 243–258.
- Russo M and Morandin G (2023) A network approach to work–family conflict. *Human Resource Management Review* 33(2): 100943.

- Sánchez-Vergara JI, Orel M and Capdevila I (2023) “Home office is the here and now.” Digital nomad visa systems and remote work-focused leisure policies. *World Leisure Journal* 65(2): 236–255.
- Schaefer A, Gattrell C and Radcliffe L (2025) Understanding the liminal situation of lone-parent and blended families—A review and agenda for work–family research. *International Journal of Management Reviews* 27(2): 196–220.
- Schlossberg NK (1981) A model for analyzing human adaptation to transition. *The Counseling Psychologist* 9(2): 2–18.
- Shiloh S, Salton E and Sharabi D (2002) Individual differences in rational and intuitive thinking styles as predictors of heuristic responses and framing effects. *Personality and Individual Differences* 32(3): 415–429.
- Shockley KM and Allen TD (2015) Deciding between work and family: An episodic approach. *Personnel Psychology* 68(2): 283–318.
- Simon HA (1955) A behavioral model of rational choice. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 69(1): 99–118.
- Simon HA (1987) Making management decisions: The role of intuition and emotion. *Academy of Management Perspectives* 1(1): 57–64.
- Smiley CJ (2015) From silence to propagation: Understanding the relationship between “Stop Snitchin” and “YOLO”. *Deviant Behavior* 36(1): 1–16.
- Sonenshein S (2007) The role of construction, intuition, and justification in responding to ethical issues at work: The sensemaking-intuition model. *Academy of Management Review* 32(4): 1022–1040.
- Spector PE (1982) Behavior in organizations as a function of employee’s locus of control. *Psychological Bulletin* 91(3): 482–497.
- Suchman MC (1995) Managing legitimacy: Strategic and institutional approaches. *Academy of Management Review* 20(3): 571–610.
- Sullivan-Bisset E (2025) *Elements in Philosophy of Mind: Irrationality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sunstein CR (2002) The paralyzing principle. *Regulation* 25(4): 32–37.
- Swann WB (1987) Identity negotiation: Where two roads meet. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 53(6): 1038–1051.
- Tennant C and Andrews G (1976) A scale to measure the stress of life events. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 10(1): 27–32.
- Thomason B (2022) Ideal or idiosyncratic? How women manage work-family role conflict with focal and peripheral role senders. *Organization Science* 33(3): 901–925.
- Verbruggen M and De Vos A (2020) When people don’t realize their career desires: Toward a theory of career inaction. *Academy of Management Review* 45(2): 376–394.
- Víslá A, Flückiger C, Grosse Holtforth M, et al. (2016) Irrational beliefs and psychological distress: A meta-analysis. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* 85(1): 8–15.
- Vo LC, Lavissière MC, Lavissière A, et al. (2024) “Commit professional suicide or take up my pilgrim’s staff again?”: A cultural examination of how female managers resolve shock events in developing regions. *Human Relations* 77(3): 360–397.
- Ward AF and Wegner DM (2013) Mind-blanking: When the mind goes away. *Frontiers in Psychology* 4: 650.
- Warren DE (2003) Constructive and destructive deviance in organizations. *Academy of Management Review* 28(4): 622–632.
- Watts DJ (1999) Networks, dynamics, and the small-world phenomenon. *American Journal of Sociology* 105(2): 493–527.

- Wayne JH, Butts MM, Casper WJ, et al. (2017) In search of balance: A conceptual and empirical integration of multiple meanings of work–family balance. *Personnel Psychology* 70(1): 167–210.
- Whiteside SP and Lynam DR (2001) The five factor model and impulsivity: Using a structural model of personality to understand impulsivity. *Personality and Individual Differences* 30(4): 669–689.
- Zajonc RB (1980) Feeling and thinking: Preferences need no inferences. *American Psychologist* 35(2): 151–175.
- Zhang C, Luo Y and Zhang R (2025) Parenting behaviors and deviant peer affiliation among Chinese adolescents: The mediating role of psychological reactance and the moderating role of gender. *BMC Psychology* 13(1): 379.

Matthew B Perrigino, is an assistant professor of management at Baruch College’s Zicklin School of Business. His research focuses on the intersection of work and personal life, specifically in terms of work-life flexibility policy effectiveness and the ways in which managers can (or fail to) support their employees’ lives outside of the workplace. His work has been published in various peer-reviewed journals including *Academy of Management Review*, *Academy of Management Annals*, *Journal of Management*, *Human Relations*, *Human Resource Management*, *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, and *Journal of Vocational Behavior*. [Email: matthew.perrigino@baruch.cuny.edu]

Ariane Ollier-Malaterre, holds the Canada Research Chair in Digital Regulation at Work at the University of Quebec in Montreal (ESG-UQAM). Her research examines digital technologies and the boundaries between work and life across different national contexts. She has published *Living with Digital Surveillance in China. Citizens’ Narratives on Technology, Privacy, and Governance* (Routledge, 2024) and co-authored over 80 chapters and articles in management, sociology, psychology, and information systems journals (e.g. *Academy of Management Review*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Human Relations*, *Journal of Management*, *Human Resource Management*, *Human Resource Management Review*, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *Annual Review of Sociology*, *Work, Employment & Society*, *Community, Work and Family*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *Computers in Human Behavior*, *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, *Surveillance & Society*). She co-chairs the Technology, Work and Family research community of the Work and Family Researchers Network and has received the Kanter Award for Excellence in Work-Family Research. [Email: ollier.ariane@uqam.ca]

Marcello Russo, is Full Professor of Organizational Behavior at the University of Bologna and the Global MBA Director at Bologna Business School in Italy. He has been a Visiting Scholar at Kedge Business School, France and Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. He is an expert on work-life balance, with a focus on what individual strategies and organizational factors can help individuals accomplish their ideal model of work-life balance, and has published in leading scholarly journals, including *Harvard Business Review*, *MIT Sloan Management Review*, *Journal of Management*, *Academy of Management Annals*, and *Human Relations*. [Email: marcello.russo2@unibo.it]