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ZOMBIE AT WORK, (AGGRESSIVE) ZOMBIE AT HOME:
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK BOREDOM
AND ROMANTIC PARTNER UNDERMINING AND DISENGAGEMENT

by

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B.A. Saint Louis University, 2018

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science
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ABSTRACT

Work boredom is an understudied topic within Industrial/Organizational psychology, and studies have yet to examine work boredom in the context of the work-nonwork interface. The present study reviewed the current work boredom literature and then examined two pathways by which boredom may be related to employees' behavior at home. It proposed that negative affect, in the form of frustration, is a link between work boredom and undermining behaviors toward one's romantic partner. The cognitive pathway connecting work boredom with romantic partner disengagement, was proposed to be affective rumination. These pathways were expected to be buffered with a high work-nonwork segmentation preference. Data were gathered from 142 dyads of cohabitating romantic couples. Hypotheses addressing the spillover effect were not supported. However, work boredom was associated with both frustration and affective rumination. The study concludes with implications and future research suggestions.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In 1926, a diverse group of professionals and specialists gathered for the British Medical Association, Section of Medical Sociology's annual meeting. The topic deemed most pressing for the year's discussion was "The Physical and Mental Effects of Monotony in Modern Industry." One of the speakers, representing a shoe polish company, declared that industrialization had brought a "new form of monotony" critical for physiologists and psychologists to address. In a published manuscript summarizing the meeting, Davies, a member of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology, summarized the issue by stating:

Two hundred years ago there was nobody living who was faced with the necessity of performing a two-second operation all day long for years on end. There are many in that position to-day, and to that extent we have a new situation. (Davies, 1926, p. 473)

It has been nearly 100 years since the British Medical Association met to discuss concerns over monotony caused by industrialization and its impacts on the worker. However, today similar conversations regarding the changing nature of work are occurring on a global scale. With the rapid onset of technology's central role in the workplace, the World Economic Forum has declared automation as one of the most significant issues of our time (Hewitt, 2017). Automation may spark excited anticipation of more innovative work and new career paths, but some experts also fear that automation may *decrease* quality of life by oversimplifying jobs and creating boredom (Hewitt, 2017; Fisher, 1993; Cummings et al., 2016). An example of this can be found at Amazon, which employs over one million workers at the time of this proposal (Sumagaysay, 2020). While

warehouse workers once walked to shelves to locate items, passing them off and encountering other employees in the order fulfillment process, they now have individual stations that they do not leave in the course of the day. A team of robots instead comes to them, and the employees select the correct item that the robot is holding to put on a conveyor belt (Heath, 2014).

While technology continues to simplify many jobs, it is also the case that more and more people hold jobs that are beneath their abilities. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York has been collecting data on underemployment, which they define as possessing a degree but working in a job that does not require secondary education, since 1990. In 2020, they reported that 41.2 percent of recent college graduates and 34.4 percent of the workforce with a bachelor's degree or higher were underemployed. Prevalence rates vary across college majors, with the most severe underemployment rate being 73.2% of individuals holding a criminal justice degree (*The Labor Market for Recent College Graduates*, 2020). Underemployment is more of a problem than recent college grads needing to "pay their dues." It has been linked to a host of negative psychological, psychosocial, attitudinal, economic, and physiological outcomes (see Maynard & Feldman, 2011).

One specific and common consequence of underemployment is workplace boredom (Watt & Hargis, 2010; Watt, 2003; Harju & Hakanen, 2016; Thompson et al., 2013). On its own, work boredom is connected to threats to well-being such as accidents and noncompliance with workplace safety protocols (Game, 2007; Ahmed, 1990), committing counterproductive work behaviors (Bruusema et al., 2011), low job satisfaction, and missed workdays (Goldberg et al., 2011). Other individual outcomes not specific to work include physiological strain (Branton, 1970; Merrifield & Danckert et al., 2018) and negative emotions such as loneliness, sadness, anger, and worry (Mercer-Lynn et al., 2013; Chin et al., 2016).

To fully understand and ideally progress toward remedying workplace boredom -- a major societal concern for at least a century (Davies, 1926) -- we need to understand work boredom in its greater context. That is, work-induced boredom's impact on an employee's life outside of work. Negative impacts of work boredom may reach beyond the workplace, with psychological strain impacting the employee's family, romantic, and social relationships (Anderson & Winefield, 2011; Dooley & Prause, 2004; Feldman, 1996). Given that work and family comprise the most central roles in an individual's life and social support and relationship quality are critical to well-being (Frone et al., 1992), examining the spillover effects of boredom on family life is warranted.

The current study draws upon the stressor-strain and work-life interface literatures, considering work boredom as a stressor and examining its impact on frustration (affect) and work-related rumination (cognition). I hypothesize that an employee's work and home segmentation preference impact whether frustration and rumination due to workplace boredom spill over into the employee's home life or if the individual instead compensates for these adverse outcomes (see Figure 1).

This manuscript begins with a literature review comprised of an introduction to the current state of workplace boredom research, illustrating that little research has examined the effects of boredom outside of work. I then discuss the work-to-home spillover process, making a case that frustration induced by work boredom may lead to spousal undermining while rumination may lead to spousal disengagement, but that one's segmentation preference impacts these outcomes. I present the study results, relate them to existing research, and offer suggestions for future research and practice.

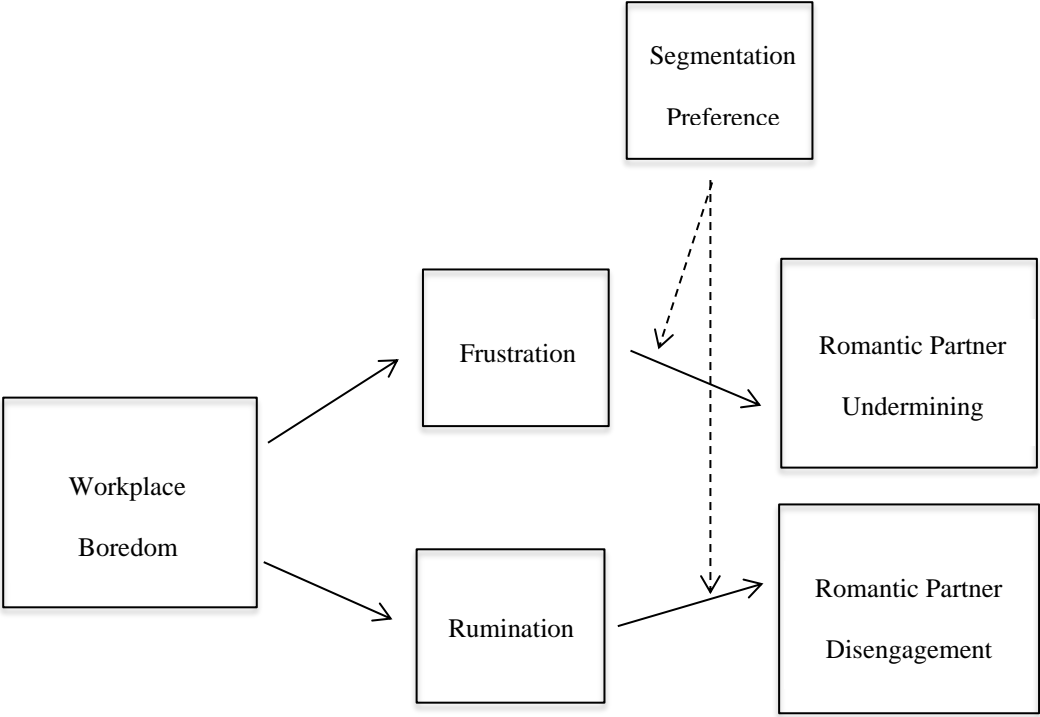


Figure 1: The Study Model.

CHAPTER 2: DEFINITION AND CAUSES OF WORK BOREDOM

Definition

"Traditional" literature on workplace boredom overwhelmingly focuses on the environment (Mael & Jex, 2015) of monotonous jobs such as assembly line work (Johansson, 1989; Grubb, 1975; Game, 2007; Molstad, 1986) or the outcomes of experimental tasks inducing monotony (Thackray et al., 1975; Pattyn et al., 2008). Few studies, however, have examined specific job or work characteristics that may lead to boredom, whether in blue- or white-collar jobs. The "contemporary" (Mael & Jex, 2015) approach to workplace boredom examines the impacts of individual circumstances and characteristics on the frequency and experience of boredom. Although more nuanced than earlier environmental work, the contemporary approach is incomplete because it does not extend to explore the impact that workplace boredom has on an employee's life outside of work.

While both common thought and original environmental research on boredom may support the idea that boredom results from monotonous working conditions, the question of how stimulation relates to and causes boredom is not as clear; various studies within the psychological literature posit that boredom is either an experience of high internal arousal (leading to agitation, frustration, and restlessness) or low internal arousal (lethargy, fatigue, weariness, and emptiness) (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014; Mael & Jex, 2015; Cummings et al., 2016). Some researchers see this as a theoretical conflict (see Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014), but there is also evidence to support boredom encompassing *both* high and low arousal (Harju and Hanaken, 2015; Vodanovich & Kass, 2011). For example, Harju and Hanaken (2015) assert that

workplace boredom can arise from one of three experiences: dysfunctional activation, unsatisfactory use of capabilities, and distorted temporal experience of the present. These experiences are further sorted into three broad categories: 1. Inertia (deactivation); 2. Acceleration (overactivation); and 3. dysrhythmia (erratic activation).

Deactivation reflects what is likely the most intuitive cause of boredom: work is slow with little to do. Conversely, acceleration describes when employees have so much to do that they put themselves on "auto-pilot." In this case, employees do not have time to reflect on the meaning of their work or possible creative solutions to task-related problems. Finally, erratic activation represents circumstances in which employees do not know what pace to expect from their work. This ambiguity may arise, for example, from frequent interruptions, which could hinder the employee's ability to focus and put them at risk for boredom (Harju & Hanaken, 2015).

Upon reviewing existing research, Mael and Jex (2015) also posit that boredom is too variable for a unitary definition that encompasses all possible boredom experiences. They integrate past boredom literature, current societal trends, and individual differences in boredom proneness into a 2x2 typology of boredom and potential causes (see Figure 2). The typology classifies boredom as either episodic or chronic and either situational or global. I discuss each of these classifications below.

Episodic boredom is temporary; a situation may at times be stimulating and other times boring. This kind of boredom is occasionally experienced in every job, despite how exciting it generally may be. Conversely, chronic boredom is when the central aspects of a job are boring; a chronically bored employee is consistently or continuously bored at work. Situational (e.g., job-

specific) and global boredom comprise the second axis. These factors refer to boredom's role in one's overall life (Mael & Jex, 2015).

Though it may be chronic or episodic, situational boredom is siloed into one part of a person's life. An individual may experience boredom at work but feel engaged in other life domains such as time with family, involvement in hobbies, and participation in community activities. The opposite is also possible--one is bored by everything in life except work. Situational boredom with life but not work may be the case, for example, with workaholics. Global boredom is characterized by an individual finding all aspects of life boring, both work and non-work. While this may be due to individual differences, the authors mention that global boredom can be circumstantial, such as when a person is imprisoned (Mael & Jex, 2015).

In the current study, I adopt the Mael and Jex (2015) typology in its classifications of workplace boredom, examining the impacts of boredom that is both *chronic* and *situational* (i.e., job-specific) on one's home life. I do not examine the other forms of boredom described in the Mael and Jex typology for two reasons. First, every employee experiences the occasional episodic boredom at work, but the rest of the person's workday or work role could be engaging. Negative impacts of work boredom may not occur if the boredom is not recurrent. Second, because individuals who experience global boredom are bored by all aspects of life, examining global boredom in this study could confound results regarding the expected effects of one's job on boredom, as well as boredom's consequential impacts.

2

	Situational (e.g., job-specific)	Global
Episodic	<p>Specific boring stimuli or situations (meetings, project)</p> <p>Mood variations, biorhythms</p>	<p>Individual differences in:</p> <p>Intelligence</p> <p>Age</p> <p>Extroversion, stimulus seeking</p>
Chronic	<p>Total job has:</p> <p>Qualitative/quantitative overload</p> <p>Qualitative/quantitative underload</p> <p>Lack of meaning or purpose</p> <p>Lack of meaningful role</p>	<p>Depression, loneliness</p> <p>Resignation, defeat</p>

Figure 2: A 2x2 Typology of Boredom (Mael & Jex, 2015)

State vs. Trait Boredom Most existing research on job boredom has focused on the state of boredom and subsequent employee responses to this state (e.g., Bruusema et al., 2011). However, the most utilized and examined measure of boredom, The Boredom Proneness Scale (Farmer & Sundberg, 1986), examines boredom propensity as an individual trait. In factor analyses of this scale, Ahmed (1990) found within the 28-item measure two factors: *apathy* and *inattention*. Alternatively, Vodanovich and Kass (1990) argued that five distinct subscales comprise the Boredom Proneness Scale. The first subscale that the researchers identify, external stimulation, refers to the degree to which an individual requires that their environment is exciting, challenging, and dynamic. Instead of focusing on the environment, internal stimulation refers to how well a person can keep themselves entertained and interested. The affective response subscale examines felt emotions in response to boredom. Perception of time refers to the awareness of the speed at which time appears to move, as well as how one finds themselves

spending their time. Finally, restraint reflects how an individual reacts to having to wait, such as feeling either patient or restless.

Although the Boredom Proneness Scale was developed to measure boredom as a general trait, the identified subscales support the idea that boredom has several components. These components not only encompass stimuli from the environment but also include individual perceptions and affective responses. It is important to note that the proposed study does not examine individual differences in propensity to boredom but rather the impact of boredom resulting from one's job. Nevertheless, boredom proneness impacts job boredom, and therefore it will be controlled for in the proposed study.

Causes of Workplace Boredom

Eastwood and colleagues (2012) found that work pacing can affect an individual's ability to reflect on their job and work outputs; findings suggesting that a lack of meaning can contribute to boredom. A lack of meaning as a cause of boredom is well-supported in the boredom literature, both in the workplace (Mills, 1959; Heidegger, 1995; O'Connor, 1967; Barbalet, 1999, Locke & Lantham, 1990) and in other areas of psychology (van Tilburg & Igou, 2011, Fahlman et al., 2009; Landon & Suedfeld, 1969; Hamilton et al., 1984; Fenichel, 1951). Another way to measure work meaninglessness, Hackman and Oldham's (1975) low task significance, has also been connected to work boredom, along with low autonomy, a lack of task identity, and little task feedback (van Hooff and van Hooft, 2017).

Demographic differences in experienced boredom have been observed, but it is also important to consider if a third variable could be contributing to the relationship. Studies

examining the frequency of boredom reported by different populations have found that men, for example, report higher boredom rates than women (Chin et al., 2016; Watt & Hargis, 2010). Men and women, however, are still over- and under-represented in specific industries. Work is one of the main sources of time usage in a person's life, impacting daily mood fluctuations. One such male-dominated field is manufacturing. In 2019, men held 70.6 percent of all manufacturing jobs in the United States. They comprised even more of the workforce in specific manufacturing areas (i.e., iron and steel mills and steel product manufacturing, where 89.9 percent of employees are men) (*Employed Persons by Detailed Industry, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity*, 2020).

Traditional boredom researchers overwhelmingly using samples from occupations such as manufacturing has had an impact on work boredom research's foundation. Specifically, existing knowledge of work boredom reflects men performing tedious, blue-collar jobs. Even in more contemporary workplace boredom research, few studies examine workplace boredom among employees from other occupations that could be used as a comparison. The lack of diversity among samples makes it difficult to discern the extent of the environment's role in work boredom (rather than the role of individual traits).

Instead of attributing increased boredom among men to a trait inherent to gender, Chin and colleagues (2016) argue that women spend more time socially than men, which curbs boredom. Specifically, in their study regarding time use and emotions, social time explained thirty percent of the difference in boredom between the genders. Their study used an experience sampling method with a nationally-representative sample that reported their boredom experiences every thirty minutes for seven to ten days. While the study is not solely focused on

the workplace, it provides a comprehensive account of boredom fluctuations in daily life, including reports at, before, and after work. Women spending more time socially than men is also supported by women dominating industries such as education and health services (74.8%), comprising, for example, 88.5 percent of home health care workers (*Employed Persons by Detailed Industry, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity*, 2020).

Conveniently, Mael and Jex (2015) represent both trait and state factors in their boredom typology. According to their model and consistent with Eastwood and colleagues (2012), work over- or under-load and meaningless tasks or jobs are the primary causes of situational and chronic boredom. Occasional unengaging tasks, on the other hand, may cause boredom that is situational and episodic. Global and episodic boredom can arise from individual differences (such as boredom proneness), and finally, conditions such as depression or loneliness may cause boredom that is both global and chronic. These categories are illustrated in Figure 2.

CHAPTER 3: BOREDOM AND SPOUSAL UNDERMINING

There is a strong research basis for work stressors impacting how employees interact with their families and those interactions consequently affecting family well-being (see Mitchell et al., 2015). One variable that has emerged as an important indicator of work-originating stress and fatigue impacting family life is low job control. In their within-person study among employed parents, Williams and Alliger (1994) discovered that when employees experienced lower levels of control over their jobs on a given day, they brought home higher fatigue and stress levels. The researchers found that daily goal progress, however, was negatively related to distress. Chronically boring jobs may be characterized by a lack of meaning, and a consistently higher or lower number of tasks than employees prefer, resulting in possible fatigue or distress. Finally, a lack of job control and hindered progress characteristic of chronically boring jobs inflate this risk (Mael & Jex, 2015).

Couple relationship quality is one aspect of family life particularly impacted by work-home conflict. Both older and more recent meta-analyses have documented work-home conflict hindering relationship quality (Allen et al., 2000; Fellows et al., 2016), and research regarding work-nonwork conflict is continually expanding beyond organizational outcomes, such as turnover, to include family life. An individual's negative work-related thoughts and feelings may adversely influence their actions, potentially lowering their romantic partner's relationship quality and satisfaction (Bakker et al., 2013; Carnes, 2017; Lavner & Clark, 2017; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Sanz-Vergel et al., 2012). Individuals experiencing work-originated distress also tend to intensify negative partner interactions such as arguments and criticisms (Matthews et al., 2006); resource depletion may lead to agitated employees becoming agitated romantic partners.

Wang and colleagues (2019), for instance, found that employees who had to pretend to have a positive mood while interacting with their supervisor experienced ego depletion, which ultimately led to spousal social undermining.

Evidence has suggested that people who are bored (van Tilburg & Igou, 2011; O'Boyle et al., 1993) or prone to boredom (Mercer-Lynn et al., 2013; Rupp & Vodanovich, 1997) may respond to their state with anger, aggression, or hostility. However, existing research has not been conducted in regard to the work environment, nor to one's family, and has certainly not examined the impact of work boredom on one's family life. Instead, studies have been concerned with topics such as hostility towards one's outgroup as measured by fictitious prison sentencing (van Tilburg & Igou, 2011) or by self-reports from people classified as boredom-prone (Rupp & Vodanovich, 1997).

While there do not appear to be any studies specifically examining the relationship between workplace boredom and family aggression, there are studies linking boredom to other forms of aggression. Similarly, there is research on work-induced negative affect and aggression toward one's family (Meier & Cho, 2019), but not on boredom's possible role in this process. In a longitudinal study, Meier and Cho (2019) discovered that work-related affective strain caused individuals to socially undermine their romantic partners. The stressor that they investigated, however, was workload, a variable that may appear antithetical to work boredom or mental underload. However, the authors explained that unfinished tasks acted as a mechanism through which workload led to hindered detachment from work.

Without task completion, individuals are unlikely to feel that they have accomplished what they need at work, making detachment at home challenging (Syrek & Antoni, 2014).

Because boredom at work often involves low levels of task identity, i.e., working on tasks without having the satisfaction of seeing them completed, individuals working boring jobs may not feel that they have properly "wrapped up" at the end of the day. This lack of satisfaction could perhaps impact employees' agitation levels and frustration at the end of the workday -- emotions that might ultimately impact their family members.

When considering the relationship between negative affect caused by work boredom and romantic partner undermining, pieces of the puzzle are missing. There is a strong, established connection between work-caused negative affect and spousal undermining behaviors. However, boredom has not been considered as a driver in the stressor-affective strain-undermining relationship. This study attempts to fill gaps in the work boredom and spillover literatures by examining work boredom and spousal undermining in the same model.

The Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis

Chronically and situationally bored employees desire more than they are receiving from their work environment or job; at work, they do not derive meaning nor experience goal fulfillment. Well-established and universal affective responses to obstructed goal fulfillment are frustration (Baldamus, 1951; Stagner, 1975; Perkins & Hill, 1985; van Hooft & van Hooff, 2018) and feelings of a lack of control. Unfortunately, low job control may further increase frustration caused by job boredom.

In a pair of studies, one naturalistic and the other experimental, van Hooff and van Hooff (2018) found an association between boredom and frustration. Further, they discovered that perceived and subjective autonomy moderated the extent to which bored employees became

frustrated, in that participants reporting the least amount of workplace autonomy experienced the highest level of frustration. Employees in chronically boring jobs likely do not have the autonomy to rid their workdays of boredom -- the opportunity to do so would change the fundamental nature of their role. Therefore, individuals who experience chronic and situational boredom at their jobs may be at particular risk of high frustration.

Several theories have proposed consequences of frustration at work, originating as early as Dollard and colleagues' frustration-aggression hypothesis in 1939. The frustration-aggression hypothesis postulates that frustration arises from interference with active goals or activities and that individuals react aggressively to such obstruction. Fox and Spector (1999) later developed their own frustration-aggression model, expanding upon Dollard and colleagues' hypothesis by adding specific negative affective responses to frustration caused by goal interruption.

Frustration due to hindered goal progression or organizational constraints may lead employees to engage in counterproductive work behavior. Counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) are purposeful actions driven by an intent to negatively impact an organization or its employees. CWBs are negatively related to positive emotion (Spector & Fox, 2005; Fox et al., 2001; Goh et al., 2003; Miles et al., 2002), and may be used as a coping mechanism (Perrewé & Zellars, 1999; Shoss et al., 2016; Spector & Fox, 2005; Fox & Spector, 1999) when an employee does not have it in their power to change a negative work situation or when they perceive injustice at work. However, an employee's reaction to frustration is impacted by their perceived likelihood of punishment or accountability (Dollard, 1939). If the employee is sure that they will be punished for committing a CWB, they are not likely to act in response to their frustration.

Thus, they may not always successfully cope with their frustration while at work and, therefore, risk carrying their negative emotions and thoughts from work into the home sphere.

Hypothesis 1: Work boredom is positively related to frustration.

Hypothesis 2: Work boredom is positively related to spousal undermining, and this relationship will be mediated by frustration.

CHAPTER 4: WORK BOREDOM AND NON-WORK DISENGAGEMENT

Existing work boredom research has not extended to impacts on employees' home cognition and affect, and there do not appear to be any studies specifically targeting work boredom's relationship with family disengagement. However, several studies support bored employees becoming disengaged at work. This research spans from the earlier "traditional" environmental work to the contemporary focus on individual characteristics' impacts on boredom. Qualitative research and ethnographies have also touched upon employees' adjustments from disengagement while at work to situations requiring engagement, such as the difficulties inherent in transitioning from a monotonous job to interacting with others (see Molstad, 1988). Finally, several studies establish a relationship between ego depletion and passivity (Baumeister et al., 1998; Vonasch et al., 2017; Baumeister & Vohs, 2007).

Disengagement and self-distraction are common responses to state boredom. Employees may daydream, create games and rewards out of their task at hand, or mentally recite, count, or sing (e.g., Game, 2007; Molstad, 1986; Pattyn et al., 2008; Branton, 1970). Disengagement coping behaviors can be categorized as emotion-focused rather than problem-focused; instead of confronting the problem's source, an individual employs mental tactics to mitigate negative emotional states caused by the stressor. Disengagement due to work events is also used as a coping mechanism at home. Individuals, particularly men and husbands, frequently cope with work stressors by withdrawing once at home (Repetti 1989; Repetti & Wood, 1997; Schultz et al., 2004). These mental tactics may make a situation easier to bear in the short term but ultimately involve resource depletion resulting from consistent coping with negative emotion (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Mercer-Lynn and colleagues (2013) used a sample of 837 undergraduates to examine relationships between boredom proneness and internalization disorders. Students who scored higher in boredom proneness, as compared to their peers, reported higher levels of internalization disorders, including dysphoria, neuroticism, and experiential avoidance. In a second study, the researchers discovered a positive relationship between boredom proneness and attention problems, feelings of a lack of purpose, and emotional awareness. Although, by definition, individuals high in boredom proneness more frequently experience boredom, this study did not explicitly examine boredom at the *state* level. Also, because Mercer-Lynn and colleagues conducted the study with the purpose of factor analysis, no connections were made between boredom and other areas of the students' lives such as the home sphere. In all three studies included in the manuscript, the undergraduates who participated had a mean age of around twenty, making it unlikely that a large proportion of the sample lived with family (and, in particular, a family they had started).

Those who are more boredom prone and, therefore, more frequently experience boredom, report behaviors such as experiential avoidance and attention problems. Specific situations also increase the odds that an individual disengages as a response to a work stressor. A lack of work control may cause an employee to respond with CWBs (Perrewe & Zellars, 1999; Shoss et al., 2016; Spector & Fox, 2005; Fox & Spector, 1999), but the coping response is dependent on the extent to which the employee could realistically change their job conditions. Problem-focused coping behaviors may be adopted if control could realistically be gained, for example, by redesigning one's work tasks or by approaching a manager or coworker. Conversely, if a stressor is perceived to originate from the organization at large, an employee may feel that they

have no power to address such stressor, leading them to direct their efforts to reducing possible negative emotional impact.

Escaping into fantasy during a boring task may appear to be a coping mechanism preferable to CWBs. However, there are ways in which self-distraction from boredom may also result in negative outcomes. Engaging in imagination may cost the worker valuable cognitive resources, drawing energy and attention away from a performed task and subsequently depleting resources, slowing work progress (Molstad, 1986). The risks of decreased progress may not only harm the organization but could also be potentially hazardous to the employee.

The vigilance decrement is a term to describe increased reaction times due to tedious tasks. Pattyn and colleagues (2008) examined the impacts of a monotonous monitoring task on reaction times among students from a military academy, finding that as time-on-task increased, participants experienced increased mental underload and slowed reaction times. Consistent with their diminished performance, participants reported the task's length and the time between presented stimuli disruptive to successful task completion. To cope, they engaged in mental activities to distract from their task, such as mentally singing a song, counting, or daydreaming. These behaviors may have made the exercise more bearable, but they also contributed to cognitive resource depletion. With fewer cognitive resources, the students performed more poorly as time elapsed. The authors argue that mental underloading, rather than overloading, causes performance detriments as time-on-task increases.

For many jobs, quick reaction times and task attention are essential for effective and safe central role performance. In a two-year observational study in a light engineering factory, Branton (1970) connected boredom and self-distraction to "unsuccessful hand movements." Self-

distracted employees experienced decreased sensitivity to their environment, hindering their ability to accurately and efficiently react to unexpected events (such as a sudden increase in production line speed). Unsuccessful hand movements especially occurred during times of variability in speed, and in total, around 90 percent of injuries employees sustained were to their hands. Manufacturing requires the usage of one's hands to assemble products. Therefore, hand injuries can hinder the employee's ability to effectively perform the essential duties of their role and cause missed workdays.

Another study among manual workers (this sample being chemical processing plant employees) found that those who employed partial engagement and disengagement boredom-coping strategies were the most likely to disregard their workplace's safety protocols. These employees reported: trying to speed through boring tasks, thinking about a reward they would give themselves after the task (classified by the author as a partial engagement strategy), focusing on interacting with coworkers, and daydreaming (classified as a disengagement strategy) (Game, 2007).

In Molstad's (1986) four-year ethnographic study of brewery bottlers, he details his specific imaginations to distract from the task at hand, such as the example below:

When doing this work I experienced strong feelings of mental regression. My fantasies became progressively more childlike, until I was actually holding imaginary conversations with the beercans (*sic*) in my hands. (p. 226 – 227)

Molstad then states that it was very difficult and effortful to regain typical thinking upon leaving work. Reports of coping strategies being helpful at work but causing difficulties once one is no longer working continue throughout the article. In another example, he states that he lost himself

in fantasy on the job and resented being forced to leave his daydreaming to be in the present moment. For instance, he expressed occasional regret about taking his lunch break in the employee breakroom because it necessitated him leaving his "fantasy world" (p. 227). Molstad's fantasizing was pleasant on the job, but ultimately caused him to be irritated with requirements to be in the present moment -- he instead preferred to mentally self-separate from his environment.

For those holding chronically boring jobs, boredom is inherent to their position. By this logic, chronically but situationally bored employees (Mael & Jex, 2015) may have little choice but to engage in emotion-focused coping strategies such as disengagement. If the stressor of monotonous work conditions is causing a strain of mental underloading, an employee is likely to cope by focusing their attention elsewhere. This process is resource-depleting, leaving the individual with less energy when they return home. Thus, the disengagement cycle may continue from work to home.

Rumination

Stressors that cannot easily and effectively be coped with may cause cognitive resource depletion, but they may also lead to rumination. Drawing from her past work on response theory (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991), Nolen-Hoeksema (2008) defines rumination as "a mode of responding to distress that involves repetitively and passively focusing on symptoms of distress and on the possible causes and consequences of these symptoms" (p. 400). Rumination and worry are universal and automatic to the extent that they are a default response to stress and new or ambiguous situations (Verkuil et al., 2010; Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991). According to the perseverative cognition model, rumination can also become habitual. An individual may

repeatedly think of a stressor even when it is no longer present, prolonging the stressor's negative physiological impacts and depleting the individual's energy (Brosschot et al., 2006).

Cropley and Zijlstra (2011) categorize work-related rumination as either problem-solving rumination, affective rumination, or detachment. Affective rumination involves repetitive thinking focused on the negative aspects of work, while problem-solving rumination involves thinking of how work stressors may be alleviated. Detachment from work may be detrimental in the sense that bored employees expend energy on the job both to redirect their thoughts from their work and to generate boredom-relieving thoughts.

In a three-wave study, Sousa and Neves (2020) examined boredom and work overload's relationships with emotional exhaustion and disengagement via Cropley and Zijlstra's (2011) work-related rumination factors (affective rumination, problem-solving pondering, and detachment). The authors adopted Demerouti and colleagues' (2001) disengagement conceptualization of "distancing oneself from one's work, and experiencing negative attitudes towards the work object, work content, or one's work in general" (p. 501). Sousa and Neves (2020) found that not only was work boredom positively related to affective rumination and detachment, but that boredom resulted in disengagement through the mechanism of affective rumination. They also found that employees reporting higher work boredom levels reported engaging in lower levels of problem-solving pondering. Finally, boredom was also directly related to emotional exhaustion and disengagement, which endured over a two-week period after initial work boredom reports.

Consistent with the perseverative cognition model, Sousa and Neves's (2020) study suggests that the energy-depleting effects of boredom persist after the experience of workplace

boredom, itself, passes. These lasting impacts may be due to rumination about the negative aspects of work and attempts to detach from the work experience. Because emotional exhaustion and disengagement caused by work boredom persisted for two weeks, it is reasonable to assume that individuals in their study carried feelings of exhaustion and disengagement into their home spheres. Work and home are not 'separate worlds' with no impact on the other (Kanter, 1977). While Sousa and Neves (2020) did not directly measure spillover effects of work boredom to home life, they established a link between work-boredom-induced rumination and disengagement that is likely to be sustained well beyond the workday.

Cognitive reactions to workplace boredom include self-distraction while at work and rumination both at work and at home. These processes are resource-depleting, leading to decreased energy upon arrival at home at the end of the workday. Just as generating thoughts to counter boredom at work distracts from one's job, ruminating about work while at home distracts from one's romantic partner.

Hypothesis 3: Work boredom will be positively related to rumination.

Hypothesis 4: Work boredom will be positively related to spousal disengagement, and this relationship will be mediated by rumination.

CHAPTER 5: SEGMENTATION PREFERENCE AS A MODERATOR

Spillover and Compensatory Hypotheses

Work-related states, both affective and cognitive (such as frustration and rumination), often endure beyond the workplace and impact the employee while at home. This process is known as spillover. Evidence suggests that spillover from negative states is longer-lasting than spillover from positive states (Sonnentag & Binnewies, 2013) and that negative, but not positive, work-induced mood persists into the home sphere (Williams & Alliger, 1994). Compared to home-to-work spillover, individuals also more strongly experience work-to-home spillover (Brotheridge & Lee, 2005; Williams & Alliger, 1994). The longevity of negative mood increases the likelihood that it impacts social support and family satisfaction, two factors that are most integral to one's sense of life satisfaction and global wellbeing.

Rather than experiencing spillover, some individuals choose to combat work-originating negative states by engaging in activities that help "make up" for unfavorable conditions or experiences. The process of negativity either spilling over from work to home or motivating engagement in recovery activities is illustrated by spillover and compensatory hypotheses, respectively (Wilensky, 1960). Kabanoff and O'Brien (1980) expanded upon spillover and compensatory and spillover hypotheses by ranking both work and non-work on five key dimensions: autonomy, variety, skill utilization, pressure, and social interaction. Individuals whose work and home lives both are low in the dimensions experience passive spillover or generalization. Those with under-stimulating jobs yet stimulating home lives are described as supplementally compensating.

There is a plethora of research regarding work-originating negative emotions impacting one's home life (see Mitchell et al., 2015), but the role that boredom plays in this process has been unexamined. However, some evidence does exist suggesting that state boredom spills over into the next workday, creating an individual spiral with the potential to cause global boredom (van Hoof & van Hooft, 2017). Studies that do examine monotony's influence on life outside of work have had mixed findings, although most support the notion that employees with monotonous and unchallenging jobs engage in monotonous and unchallenging activities off-work (Meissner, 1971; Rousseau, 1978; Karasek & Theorell, 1990). Conversely, one study did find the opposite; repetitive, unchallenging work led employees to engage in more diverse and challenging activities off-work (supplemental compensation) (Mansfield & Evans, 1975). These different outcomes may be dependent on effortful actions to either integrate or separate work and home lives.

Boundary Theory

Individuals vary in their preferences for preventing their work thoughts and emotions from encroaching on their lives outside of work, and vice-versa. Some individuals are more oriented toward shielding their work lives from outside intrusions, while others have a stronger home orientation (Methot & LePine, 2016; Song et al., 2008). Work-nonwork and nonwork-work conflict arise when participation in one domain makes it difficult to effectively perform in the other. Situations causing conflict may be time-, behavior-, or strain-based. Time-based conflict occurs when one cannot fully attend to one domain due to time spent in another. Behavior-based conflict occurs when behaviors expected of family and work roles greatly differ.

Lastly, as examined in this study, strain-based conflict involves strain such as fatigue, apathy, anxiety, or irritability arising in one domain and negatively impacting role performance in the other (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Depending on one's values and orientation, people will employ different strategies to erect boundaries between work and home, conceptualized by Nippert-Eng (1996) as "boundary work." Boundary work strategies are classified as either behavioral, temporal, physical, or communicative (Kreiner et al., 2009).

An illustration of boundary work is someone family-oriented leveraging technology (a behavioral tactic) by not taking work calls or answering emails after work hours (Ashforth et al., 2000; Kreiner et al., 2009; Park et al., 2020) in an attempt to keep work from intruding on their home life. Although Kreiner and colleagues' (2009) categories of boundary work are specific to the work-home relationship, one may also apply their categories to home-work boundary strategies. For example, a work-oriented person may avoid taking time off work to attend their child's extracurricular events, a behavior categorized as controlling work time (a temporal tactic). As well as having preferences for creating boundaries around specific domains, individuals differ in their preferences toward the strength or permeability of such boundaries (Ashforth et al., 2000). The present study is concerned with work-nonwork conflict. Nevertheless, this section also addresses family-work conflict in order to illustrate boundary preferences.

In addition to the "location" and "strength" of boundaries, individuals fall along a spectrum in their preference for separated or integrated domains. Boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000) postulates that the two ends of the poles for the work-home and home-work interfaces are complete segmentation of roles and complete integration of roles. The most segmentation-oriented individuals will not let their work and home roles intersect in any way. These

individuals will regularly engage in boundary work to separate work and home, attempting to keep domain-specific emotions and thoughts in their respective "places." The opposite is true of integration-oriented individuals, who frequently and fluidly move between or simultaneously perform both roles.

In their series of qualitative studies with Episcopal clergy, Kreiner and colleagues (2009) provide detailed examples of work-life integration. When describing boundary work tactics, one clergywoman explained how she was able to keep her infant with her during her work no matter the location, going on to describe breastfeeding during a meeting at a bishop's office. Her job allows for a high amount of role integration; she has the ability to simultaneously perform her mother and clergywoman roles. Individuals have their own personal work-home segmentation preferences, and specific jobs, work environments, and organizational policies may facilitate segmentation or integration.

An incongruity in reality and boundary preferences can create either an intrusion or a distance-based boundary violation. An intrusion occurs when someone on the segmentation end of the segmentation-integration spectrum has an event "break through" their erected boundary. On the other hand, distance occurs when someone desires integration of their work and home spheres, but they cannot experience a part of their work life outside of work or an aspect of their home life while working. These violations can lead to work-family (Kreiner et al., 2009) and family-work conflict, respectively. In a 2015 meta-analysis, Nohe and colleagues describe specific negative work-family outcomes at work, at home, and globally. Among the effects are burnout, cynicism, disengagement, depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, irritation, need for recovery, depression, somatic health complaints, and parental distress.

The research on work boredom's impacts on one's home life is limited. However, with an application of boundary theory and segmentation preferences, it is reasonable to assume that some employees may be more successful in avoiding work-to-home boredom spillover. Specifically, individuals who have a segmentation (rather than integration) preference for their work-home boundaries are more likely to engage in boundary work, thus preventing workplace thoughts and feelings from impacting them while they are at home.

Hypothesis 5: Segmentation preference will moderate the mediated relationship between work boredom and spousal undermining via frustration. More specifically, workplace boredom will lead to spousal undermining via frustration only for those with an integration preference.

Hypothesis 6: Segmentation preference will moderate the mediated relationship between work boredom and spousal disengagement via affective rumination. More specifically, spousal disengagement will lead to disengagement via rumination only for those with an integration preference.

Gender Differences

It is important to consider any environmental or individual characteristics that may influence the relationship between frustration and rumination and family spillover. Gender, or differences in societal roles expected of men and women, impacts individuals' relationships with their work and home lives. Several factors make women more vulnerable both to the intensity of

work-related strain and to work-home conflict. Women typically have higher neuroticism levels than men, experiencing negative emotions more frequently and for longer durations of time. Women also tend to ruminate more than men (Mitchell et al., 2015). Thus, women may be particularly vulnerable to negative cognitive and affective states impacting their home lives.

Additionally, societal roles impose pressure on women to be both positive and engaging parents and supportive romantic partners. Greenhaus and colleagues (2001) theorize that one's roles fall on a "hierarchy of centrality" and that threats to the higher-ranked roles are more likely to negatively impact one's sense of identity and well-being (Thoits, 1991; Frone & Rice, 1987). If negative impacts from work make it harder for women to behave in a way that is expected of their family role, they may feel stronger role-conflict than would men in the same situation.

Women are more likely to value and be employed in jobs that offer flexibility over salary (Bustelo et al., 2020), and family leave policies in the United States are wholly oriented toward women. Therefore, along with generally having stronger preferences overall, women often have greater opportunities than men to protect their home domain. Finally, women are also more likely than men to engage in positive coping strategies such as seeking social support and vocalizing their problems (Taylor et al., 2000; Chin et al., 2016). This strategy may protect against the likelihood of work stressors causing significant strain and that strain subsequently spilling into the home sphere (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999). Unique differences between genders in societal role expectations, work characteristics, and social factors may influence work-home boundary dynamics. Gender, therefore, will be controlled in the present study.

CHAPTER 6: METHOD

Participants

The targeted study sample was employees and cohabitating romantic partners (married or unmarried). Rather than relying only on employee self-reports, a dyadic approach to spillover (i.e., having both employees and partners complete surveys) was used to provide a richer and more accurate representation of each employee's impact on their partner. Additionally, dyadic research allows for observation of any discrepancies between employees' self-reports and their partners' recounting of the employees' behaviors.

All participants were a minimum of 18 years of age. The primary, employee participants were required to work a minimum of 20 hours per week, and the employees' spouses or significant others needed to cohabitate with them at the time of survey completion. The target sample size for this study was 300 dyads. This number is similar to other studies that utilize dyadic data to examine constructs similar to this study (e.g., Wang et al., 2019; Park, 2012). Unfortunately, this target was not reached. Instead, the final sample consisted of 142 dyads: 284 individuals, in total. More information on the data collection process can be found in the “Procedure” section, below.

Focal Participants

Women comprised most of the focal participants, at 57.7% ($N = 82$), while 38.7% of participants ($N = 55$) were men and 3.5% ($N = 5$) identified as “non-binary/third gender” or “something else.” The participants' average age was 37.51 ($SD = 12.24$). The youngest

respondent was 19, and the oldest was 75. Most participants were Caucasian/white ($N = 119$; 83.2%), followed by Asian/Pacific Islander ($N = 16$; 11.2%), and African American/Black ($N = 4$; 2.8%). One participant was American Indian or Alaskan Native (.7%), and nine identified as Hispanic/Latino (6.3%). The survey allowed participants to select as many ethnicities as they saw fit.

I also isolated the participants who did not pass the survey on to their partners, to ensure there were no nonrandom differences between the larger sample and the dyadic data. Of these 114 individuals, 100 provided demographic data. Like those who passed the survey forward, they were mostly women ($N = 63$, 55.3%), and their mean age was 34.79. The youngest participant was 19, and the oldest was 60 years of age. The participants reported a similar racial makeup as did the dyadic, focal individuals (White: $N = 80$, 70.2%; Asian/Pacific Islander: $N = 9$; 7.9%; Hispanic/Latino: $N = 8$, 7.0%; American Indian or Alaskan Native: $N = 3$; 2.6%).

The only area where the samples differed from each other was a larger proportion of the sample of individuals who did not pass the survey to their partners was Black or African American ($N = 10$; 8.5%) than was the dyadic sample, which was used for analyses.

Romantic Partner Participants

The 142 romantic partner participants who completed the shorter survey were similar to their spouse or partner in age, ranging from 19 to 68 years of age ($M = 38.19$, $SD = 11.81$). They also reported comparable ethnicities: Caucasian/white ($N = 116$; 81.1%); Asian/Pacific Islander ($N = 16$, 11.2%); African American/Black ($N = 4$; 2.8%); American Indian or Alaskan Native ($N = 2$; 1.4%); Hispanic/Latino ($N = 11$; 7.7%). A slight majority were men ($N = 72$; 50.3%), while

women and non-binary/third gender and “something else” comprised 46.9% ($N = 67$) and 2.1% ($N = 3$) of the sample, respectively. As the partner participants needed a code to complete their survey, there were not enough individuals who were unpartnered and took the shorter survey to compare demographics.

Procedure

Data for this study were procured from two sources, using two separate methods. First, I created a flyer (see Appendix) describing the survey. I distributed the flyer on social media and directly to personal contacts. I requested that anyone completing the survey, or viewing the flyer, share the survey link with others. This is a method known as “snowball sampling.”

Unfortunately, this method did not produce the proposed sample size (300 dyads; 600 individuals). To bolster my sample, I submitted an amendment to the university’s Institutional Review Board (IRB), detailing the addition of the survey to Prolific (a data collection site primarily used for social sciences). Thus, participants in the final sample originated from separate sources, but all completed the same survey measures.

For the Snowball sample, for ease of use, both individuals in the couple used the same link to complete their surveys. The primary participant was instructed and required to complete their survey first. At the beginning of the survey, Qualtrics required the participant to specify themselves as either the primary respondent or the respondent’s romantic partner. The selected option then dictated which version of the survey was displayed. The primary participant option branched to the entire survey, except for the partner-report measures of undermining and disengagement. Conversely, those participants who selected the romantic partner option were

only able to access the partner-report measures. These measures were not available to the romantic partner, however, until they entered a unique ID.

To link survey responses, the primary participant received a Qualtrics-generated randomized ID number to give to their romantic partner. The number was displayed at both the beginning and the end of the survey, and the participant was instructed to write down or record the ID. The focal participant was also provided with the option to input their or their romantic partner's email address for reception of an emailed copy of the unique ID. Along with this option was text notifying respondents that including an email could result in a possible loss of confidentiality. When the romantic partner began the survey and indicated that they were the partner respondent, they were then required to input the unique ID before the survey would progress. Qualtrics provides information regarding this process here:

<https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/common-use-cases-rc/assigning-randomized-ids-to-respondents/>.

After nine months of data collection, 178 individuals completed the survey – far fewer than the proposed 600 participants. Additionally, most of the focal participants did not have their romantic partner successfully complete the shorter survey. The snowball sampling method produced a sample of 44 dyads. Thus, another data collection method, Prolific, was employed.

Unlike the Snowball method which used one branched survey, two surveys were listed on Prolific. The studies were titled “Work/Home Psychology Study – PRIMARY” and “Work/Home Psychology Study – PARTNER”. The studies were only visible to Prolific members who reported having a romantic partner who was also on Prolific, and with whom they would participate in studies. Aside from the two surveys being listed separately, the method to

collect the Prolific data and the snowball sampling data were the same. Participants who completed the full survey were paid \$2.51, and their romantic partners were paid 87 cents.

Measures

Work Boredom

Employee participants completed Lee's (1986) twelve-item scale of work boredom. On a scale of 1 (*never*) to 4 (*very often*), they indicated the amount of boredom they experience during a typical workday. A sample item is "Are there long periods of boredom on the job?" Their score was then summed with a score on the Dutch Boredom Scale (DUBS) (Reijseger et al., 2013). The DUBS is a 6-item measure scored from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). One item is "I feel bored at my job."

Because I used a summed scale for work boredom, I checked individual and combined internal consistency statistics. The Cronbach's Alpha for the DUBS (Reijseger et al., 2013) was .87, and the alpha for the Lee scale (1986) was .96. Combined, the alpha was .96.

Frustration

Work-induced frustration was measured using Peter and O'Connor's (1980) three-item scale. A sample item is "Being frustrated comes with the job." Items are measured with a six-point Likert scale; 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*).

Rumination

Affective rumination was measured with the five-item subscale from Cropley and colleagues' (2012) fifteen-item rumination measure, which is set on a scale of 1 (*very seldom or never*) to 5 (*very often or always*). This study did not utilize the other measure's other subscales: problem-

solving rumination and detachment. Employees with chronically boring work are unlikely to have the ability to change the structure of their jobs, and thus, problem-solving rumination is not the focus of this study. The detachment items are redundant with the segmentation preference construct. For example, a detachment rumination item from the scale is "Do you feel unable to switch off from work?" An example of an affective rumination item is "Are you annoyed by thinking about work-related issues when not at work?"

Segmentation Preference

The primary participants reported their segmentation preference by completing Kreiner's (2006) scale (which Kreiner found to have a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.91). The original measure is four items, only measuring work interfering with home life. I added an additional four items, switching the work and home wording to also measure home interfering with work. The scale points range from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). A sample original item is "I like to be able to leave work behind when I go home." Its counterpart is "I like to be able to leave home behind when I go to work."

Due to an error in item wording, two items were omitted from analyses. Specifically, the altered item intended to read "I don't like to have to think about family/personal matters while I'm at work" was instead presented to participants as "I don't like to have to think about family/personal matters while I'm at home." I thank the Prolific participant who brought this error to my attention. This mistyped statement and its counterpart, "I don't like to have to think about work while I'm at home" were not included in analyses, resulting in six final scale items.

Spousal Undermining Behavior

Romantic partner participants completed Vinokur and van Ryn's (1993) five-item scale on social undermining, reporting how frequently their partner undermined them in the past month. In three waves of the authors' scale validation, Cronbach's alphas ranged from .84 to .86. The items are on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very frequently*). A sample item is "How often does the spouse or significant other criticize you?".

Disengagement

Participants completed two measures of disengagement for this study (Reis & Carmichael, 2006 & Stuart, 1983). Seven items by Reis and Carmichael (2006) comprise the Validation and General subscales of their shortened version of the Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale (PPRS). An example item is: "My partner usually seems interested in what I am thinking and feeling." The items are on a Likert scale of 1 (*not at all true*) to 5 (*completely true*). Five items from Stuart's (1983) Communication with Partner scale were also included. This measure originates from the *Couples Precounseling Inventory*, and only items assessing one's partner's behaviors (rather than reporting one's own behavior) were selected for this survey. The items are scored from 1 (*almost always*) to 5 (*almost never*), and an example item is: "I feel that my partner understands what I communicate."

Upon testing the reliabilities of the disengagement items, I discovered that Stuart's (1983) scale performed poorly, with a Cronbach's Alpha of .59. Therefore, only the Reis and Carmichael (2006) measure was retained. I felt comfortable making this call, as I did not have a strong theoretical rationale guiding the combination of the measures. The PPRS, which I used in analyses to represent disengagement, demonstrated strong internal consistency (CA = .93).

Control Variables

Boredom Proneness. To control for trait boredom, employee participants completed Vodanovich and colleagues' (2005) "Boredom Proneness Scale Short-Form" (BPS-SF), a truncated version of Farmer and Sundberg's (1986) Boredom Proneness Scale. The shortened scale contains twelve items and is scored from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly disagree*). Two factors, internal and external stimulation, are each represented by six items. In the BPS-SF creation study, the two subscales demonstrated acceptable internal consistency: internal stimulation = .86, external stimulation = .89. I used the full scale. An example item from the internal stimulation subscale is "I find it easy to entertain myself," and an example item from the external stimulation subscale is "It would be very hard for me to find a job that is exciting enough."

Work Centrality. The focal participants answered Bal and Kooji's (2011) shortened version of Hirschfeld and Feild's (2000) work centrality measure. The measure consists of three items: "The major satisfaction in my life comes from my job", "The most important things that happen to me involve my work", and "I have other activities more important than my work" (reverse coded), and is scored from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Bal and Kooij (2011) reported a Cronbach's Alpha of .75.

Gender. Employee and spouse participants answered the question "What is your gender?" by selecting one of the following choices: Man; Woman; Non-binary/third gender; Something else; or Prefer not to say. If the participant chose the "Something else" option, they had the opportunity to type a response in a text box.

Demographics

All participants were asked to answer questions regarding their gender, age, race, and ethnicity. Job-specific information, such as tenure and industry, was also gathered. Finally, the demographics section included family-related questions such as marital status and the number of children presently living in the household.

Data Cleaning

Four datasets were combined for analyses: one each for the focal and partner surveys from both the snowball and Prolific methods. The snowball data were collected from late July 2021 to December 2021, bar two responses from January and April 2022. Before data cleaning, there were 178 recorded responses: 126 from focal respondents and 52 from their partners. After filtering the focal participants for study variable completion, 74 complete surveys remained. Of the 52 partner responses, 44 successfully entered the randomized ID that they received from their romantic partner (the focal participant) and completed the survey. The snowball method produced 44 complete dyads.

Prolific data were collected from March to May of 2022. Two-hundred thirty-five focal participants submitted surveys. Unlike the Snowball data, more participants initially responded to the participant survey (389). However, it appears that this is due to the Prolific workers not fully reading the survey instructions before starting a Qualtrics response; once asked for the five-digit ID to begin the survey, 251 exited the platform, leaving blank data fields for their case. I then checked the IDs of the remaining participants, deleting any ($N = 17$) that were not five numerical characters. Additionally, I checked to see if there were matching focal surveys with ID numbers such as “00000,” “12345,” or “11111.” These data were deleted from analyses, and

participants were rejected from the study on the grounds of not following the study instructions. Of the Prolific surveys, 99 focal and partner surveys had matching IDs and complete data and thus were included in analyses. After data cleaning, IDs were matched, and the two matched datasets were combined via concatenation.

CHAPTER 7: RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, possible and observed scale ranges of the variables, and Cronbach's Alphas are presented in Table 1. All measures demonstrated high internal consistency. There were slight problems with range restriction for the following measures: relationship quality (focal participant- and partner-reported), boredom proneness, and segmentation preference. Specifically, for all measures except boredom proneness, participants answered on the higher end of the measures (signifying higher relationship quality and a stronger preference toward work-home segmentation). For boredom proneness, those with the lowest levels scored 22 points, when the lowest possible score was 12. The most boredom-prone participants scored 68 out of a possible 84 points.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and reliabilities

	Variable	Mean	SD	Possible Range	Observed Range	Alpha
1	Work Boredom(F)	70.90	25.79	22-154	30-150	.96
2	Frustration(F)	11.50	4.33	3-21	3-21	.83
3	Received Undermining(P)	8.70	3.09	5-25	5-17	.85
4	Enacted Undermining(F)	8.87	3.24	5-25	5-20	.88
5	Affective Rumination(F)	10.75	3.88	4-20	4-20	.90
6	Disengagement(P)	19.77	2.82	7-35	14-25	.93
7	Work Centrality(F)	7.63	3.82	3-21	3-18	.82
8	Segmentation Preference(F)	33.57	5.13	7-42	21-42	.80
9	Relationship Quality(F)	50.18	6.50	8-56	24-56	.94
10	Relationship Quality(P)	51.27	6.16	8-56	22-56	.96
11	Boredom Proneness(F)	39.22	9.45	12-84	22-68	.79

Note: $N = 142 - 142$. Focal participant responses are denoted with (F); partner responses denoted (P).

Correlations

Work boredom was correlated with the study's mediating variables, frustration and affective rumination, to nearly the exact extent (.51 and .52, respectively). Of the outcome variables, work boredom was related to undermining but not disengagement. Disengagement was not correlated with affective rumination but was correlated with both enacted and received undermining. This was unexpected. Interestingly, the correlation between frustration and affective rumination (.60) was much stronger than the correlation between frustration and

romantic partner-reported undermining (.24). The two outcome behaviors were also correlated, albeit weakly (.21). These relationships provide backing for altered hypotheses utilizing work boredom, frustration, affective rumination, and romantic partner disengagement and undermining. For a correlation matrix including all hypothesis variables and controls, see Table 2.

Table 2: Correlations

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Work Boredom(F)	--												
2 Frustration(F)	.51**	--											
3 Received Undermining(P)	.24**	.18*	--										
4 Enacted Undermining(F)	.28**	.17*	.58**	--									
5 Affective Rumination(F)	.52**	.60**	.21*	.26**	--								
6 Disengagement(P)	.16	.12	.57**	.38**	.14	--							
7 Work Centrality(F)	-.31**	-.23**	-.03	.09	-.05	.03	--						
8 Segmentation Pref.(F)	.13	-.04	.10	-.06	-.05	.11	-.12	--					
9 Relationship Quality(F)	-.09	-.03	-.40**	-.41**	.03	-.49**	-.06	-.15	--				
10 Relationship Quality(P)	-.16	-.07	-.48**	-.21*	-.02	-.62**	-.02	-.22*	.63**	--			
11 Boredom Proneness(F)	.41**	.42**	.27**	.32**	.28**	.17*	-.02	.07	-.22**	-.21*	--		
12 Gender(P)	.17*	-.00	.05	-.17*	.07	.17*	.03	.11	.01	-.26**	.04	--	
13 Gender(F)	.16	.06	.13	.18*	.19*	-.03	-.03	.08	-.05	-.04	.04	-.35**	--

Note: $N = 141 - 142$. Focal participant responses are denoted with (F); partner responses denoted (P).

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis Testing

All analyses were run using IBM's SPSS and the Hayes PROCESS macro (2017) and controlled for employee-reported boredom proneness and work centrality, and both employee and partner reported relationship quality and gender. Adding the control variables eliminated one participant from analyses; thus, the final sample size for analyses was 141. For the simple linear regressions (hypotheses one and three), the first model included the controls only, and the predictor was entered into the second model. The mediations (hypotheses two and four) and moderated mediations (hypotheses five and six) used PROCESS models 4 and 14, respectively. Regarding the control variables for these hypotheses, the PROCESS models included a box specific to entering covariates. The use of the Hayes PROCESS add-in also enabled me to test hypotheses using bootstrapping ($N = 5,000$) with a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval.

Hypothesis 1

To test the first hypothesis, frustration was regressed on work boredom ($R^2 = .33$, $F(1, 133) = 9.49$, $p < .001$). The control variables alone accounted for 24.1% of the variance in frustration scores, and the addition of work boredom into the model explained a further 9.2%. Work boredom was connected with frustration toward one's job ($B = .06$, $SE = .02$, $p < .001$), supporting hypothesis one. It is noteworthy, however, that boredom proneness had a higher beta than work boredom ($B = .13$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$). Refer to Table 4.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis two examined the possible indirect relationship between work boredom and romantic partner undermining via frustration. Work boredom was significantly and positively associated with frustration ($R^2 = .33$, $F(7, 133) = 9.49$, $p = .000$) ($B = .06$, $SE = .02$, $p = .000$), but frustration was not associated with romantic partner undermining ($R^2 = .29$, $F(8, 132) = 6.82$, $p = .000$) ($B = .04$, $SE = .06$, $p = .278$). Finally, neither the relationship between boredom and undermining ($B = .01$, $SE = .01$, $p = .277$) nor the indirect relationship ($B = .00$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI [-.006, .013]) was supported (see Table 3). Thus, hypothesis two was not supported.

Table 3: Test of frustration as a mediator of the relationship between work boredom and partner undermining

	Outcome: Frustration		Outcome: Partner Undermining	
	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>
Constant	2.841	.708	18.31**	6.186
Work Boredom(F)	.064**	4.276	.013	1.089
Boredom Proneness(F)	.130**	3.431	.030	1.019
Relationship Quality(F)	.055	.870	-.066	-1.408
Relationship Quality(P)	-.023	-.332	-.180**	-3.501
Work Centrality(F)	-.115	-1.317	.010	.160
Gender(F)	-.381	-.657	.349	.816
Gender(P)	-.698	-1.210	-.173	-.404
Frustration(F)			.038	.602
R ²	0.333**		.293**	
<i>F</i>	9.492		6.821	

N = 141; Note: Focal participant responses are denoted with (F); partner responses denoted (P).
 $p < .05 = *$, $p < .01 = **$

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis three tested the relationship between work boredom and affective rumination. Model one (including all controls and excluding work boredom) explained 17.8% of the variance in the outcome, with an incremental 14.8% of the variance in affective rumination scores explained by work boredom. After being entered in the second step of the model ($R^2 = .33$, $F(8, 132) = 8.00$, $p < .001$), work boredom was the only variable significantly associated with affective rumination ($B = .08$, $SE = .01$, $p < .001$) (see Table 4). Hypothesis three was supported.

Table 4: Linear regression results (H1 & H3)

	H1 Outcome: Frustration <i>B</i> (<i>SE</i>)	H3 Outcome: Affective Rumination <i>B</i> (<i>SE</i>)
Work Centrality(F)	-.115(.087)	.131(.079)
Gender(F)	-.381(.580)	.712(.526)
Boredom Proneness(F)	.130(.038)**	.028(.034)
Relationship Quality(P)	-.023(.070)	.018(.063)
Relationship Quality(F)	.055(.063)	.054(.058)
Gender(P)	-.697(.576)	.091(.523)
Work Boredom(F)	.064(.015)**	.081(.014)**

N = 141; Note: Focal participant responses are denoted with (F); partner responses denoted (P).
 $p < .05 = *$, $p < .01 = **$

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis four tested the indirect effect of work boredom on romantic partner disengagement through affective rumination. As referenced in Table 5, boredom was significantly and positively related to employee affective rumination ($R^2 = .32$, $F(7, 133) = 8.83$, $p = .000$) ($B = .08$, $SE = .01$, $p = .000$), and affective rumination was associated with romantic partner disengagement ($R^2 = .43$, $F(8, 132) = 12.25$, $p = .000$) ($B = .22$, $SE = .11$, $p = .048$). Other variables demonstrating an effect on romantic partner disengagement included both focal- ($B = -.17$, $SE = .07$, $p = .028$) and romantic partner-reported relationship quality ($B = -.44$, SE

=.08, $p = .000$). However, the indirect effect was not significant ($B = .02$, $SE = .01$, $CI[-.002, .046]$). Therefore, hypothesis four was not supported.

Table 5: Test of affective rumination as a mediator of the relationship between work boredom and partner disengagement

	Outcome: Affective Rumination		Outcome: Partner Disengagement	
	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>
Constant	-2.066	-.567	43.694	9.237
Work Boredom(F)	.081**	5.927	.001	.057
Boredom Proneness(F)	.028	.819	-.013	-.282
Relationship Quality(F)	.054	.941	-.166*	-2.219
Relationship Quality(P)	.018	.277	-.440**	-5.346
Work Centrality(F)	.132	1.660	.029	.278
Gender(F)	.712	1.353	-.826	-1.201
Gender(P)	.091	.175	.067	.098
Affective Rumination(P)			.225	1.995
R2	0.317**		0.426**	
<i>F</i>	8.831		12.247	

$N = 141$; Note: Focal participant responses are denoted with (F); partner responses denoted (P).
 $p < .05 = *$, $p < .01 = **$

Hypothesis 5

My fifth hypothesis expanded upon hypothesis four, adding a second-stage moderator to the model testing the indirect relationship of work boredom on partner undermining through frustration. Both the model examining work boredom's relationship with frustration ($R^2 = .33$,

$F(7, 133) = 9.49, p = .000$) and the final model ($R^2 = .30, F(10, 130) = 5.48, p = .000$) provided a strong data fit. However, the only variable significantly associated with partner undermining was partner-reported relationship quality ($B = -.18, SE = .05, CI [-.284, -.079]$) (see Table 6). The index of moderated mediation for segmentation preference was not significant, and there was no interaction between segmentation preference and frustration in predicting undermining ($B = -.00, SE = .00, CI [-.002, .000]$). Thus, the hypothesis that having a work-home segmentation preference would buffer the relationship between frustration and undermining was not supported.

Table 6: Test of segmentation preference's moderating effect on frustration's mediation of work boredom on partner undermining

	Outcome: Frustration		Outcome: Partner Undermining	
	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>
Work Boredom(F)	.064**	4.276	.013	1.091
Boredom Proneness(F)	0.130**	3.431	.030	1.032
Relationship Quality(F)	.055	.870	-.068	-1.434
Relationship Quality(P)	-.023	-.332	-.182**	-3.492
Work Centrality(F)	-.115	-1.32	.004	.060
Gender(F)	-.381	-.657	.415	.948
Gender(P)	-.698	-1.21	-.161	-.374
Frustration(F)			.336	.936
Seg. Preference(F)			.094	.466
Seg. Pref*Frustration			-0.009	-.846
R2	0.333**		0.297**	
<i>F</i>	9.492		5.479	

$N = 141$; Note: Focal participant responses are denoted with (F); partner responses denoted (P).
 $p < .05 = *$, $p < .01 = **$

Hypothesis 6

My final hypothesis examined segmentation preference as a second-stage moderator of the indirect relationship between work boredom and partner disengagement via affective rumination. In the first step of the model ($R^2 = .32$, $F(7, 133) = 8.83$, $p = .000$), work boredom was found to be the only variable significantly associated with affective rumination ($B = .08$, $SE = .01$, $CI [.054, .108]$). However, in the second step of the model ($R^2 = .43$, $F(10, 130) = 9.91$, $p = .000$), affective rumination was not significantly associated with partner disengagement ($B = 1.10$, $SE = .73$, $CI [-.340, 2.541]$). Rather, variables demonstrating a significant effect on partner disengagement included both focal- ($B = -.17$, $SE = .08$, $CI [-.314, -.017]$) and partner-reported ($B = -.44$, $SE = .08$, $CI [-.607, -.279]$) relationship quality. As was the case with hypothesis five, the index of moderated mediation was not significant ($B = -.00$, $SE = .00$, $CI [-.005, .002]$), and thus, hypothesis six was not supported. Refer to Table 7.

Table 7: Test of segmentation preference's moderating effect on affective rumination's mediation of work boredom on partner disengagement

	Outcome: Affective Rumination		Outcome: Partner Disengagement	
	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>
Work Boredom(F)	.081**	5.927	-.005	-.243
Boredom Proneness(F)	.028	.819	-.009	-.204
Relationship Quality(F)	.054	.941	-.165*	-2.198
Relationship Quality(P)	.018	.277	-.443**	-5.352
Work Centrality(F)	.132	1.660	-.010	-.095
Gender(F)	.712	1.353	-.652	-.922
Gender(P)	.091	.175	.231	.331
Affective Rumination(P)			1.100	1.511
Seg. Preference(F)			.252	1.106
Seg. Pref.*Aff. Rum.			-0.025	-1.221
R2	0.317**		0.433**	
<i>F</i>	8.831		9.913	

N = 141; Note: Focal participant responses are denoted with (F); partner responses denoted (P).
 $p < .05 = *$, $p < .01 = **$

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION

Theoretical Implications

This study is perhaps the first to examine the impact of workplace boredom on employees' home lives. As work boredom is generally understudied, the study findings help bolster an emerging area of research and contribute to both the work boredom and work-nonwork literatures. Hypotheses examined work boredom's connection with cognitive and affective states: affective rumination and frustration, respectively. I also explored work boredom's indirect relationship with behaviors toward one's romantic partner. The cognitive path to spillover involved work boredom eliciting affective rumination and ultimately resulting in disengaging from one's romantic partner. Affectively, work boredom was expected to be associated with frustration, leading the employee to engage in undermining behaviors toward their partner. The data supported work boredom's impact on both affective rumination and frustration, but not the mediating effects on the employee's undermining or disengagement toward their partner.

I adopted the spillover theory in my hypotheses, expecting a person's boredom in their work domain to impact their behaviors toward their romantic partners, in their home domain. Evidence supports both work-originating negative states persisting into the home sphere (Williams & Alliger, 1994), and enduring longer than positive states (Sonnetag & Binnewies, 2013). Very little work has been published regarding the enduring effects of work monotony, specifically, but existing studies mostly support employees engaging in similarly stimulating (or unstimulating) home activities once off work. That is, boring tasks at work lead to engaging in

boring tasks at home (Meissner, 1971; Rousseau, 1978; Karasek & Theorell, 1990). However, the research is mixed, and there is also evidence to suggest that individuals react to monotonous and meaningless work by engaging in more meaningful and stimulating activities when off-the-clock (Mansfield & Evans, 1975). It is possible that the positive mood elicited by fulfilling off-work activities prevented bored employees from being a disengaged and undermining romantic partner when at home.

Individuals experiencing work boredom may also make specific efforts to prevent their negative work states from impacting their romantic relationships. While I did have the focal participants report on their preference for keeping work and home separated, I did not gather data on positive behaviors toward one's romantic partner. Romantic partnerships are complex, and the realities of cohabiting and sharing responsibilities may simply overtake a person feeling frustrated or ruminating on their boring job. Additionally, in several of my analyses, relationship quality (reported by both the focal and partner participants and entered as a control) was the only variable significantly associated with the outcomes of romantic partner disengagement and undermining. There are many relationship factors that went unconsidered in this study, but it does appear that relationship quality plays a more important role in undermining and disengagement than does work boredom, frustration, or affective rumination. If a more thorough approach were taken to explore relationship dynamics, we would have a more complete picture of the work boredom spillover process.

Practical Implications

The extant work boredom research has connected the construct to negative outcomes such as accidents and noncompliance with workplace safety protocols (Game, 2007; Ahmed, 1990), committing counterproductive work behaviors (Bruusema et al., 2011), low job satisfaction, and absenteeism (Goldberg et al., 2011). In fields outside of Industrial/Organizational Psychology, researchers have found associations between general boredom and physiological strain, (Branton, 1970; Merrifield & Danckert et al., 2018) and negative emotional states such as loneliness, sadness, anger, and worry (Mercer-Lynn et al., 2013; Chin et al., 2016).

The negative affective state examined in this study, frustration, was found to be connected to work boredom. This suggests that designing jobs to be sufficiently stimulating and meaningful could help prevent employees from becoming frustrated or preoccupied with negative feelings that arise while working. Job content, itself, may not even need changing – a benefit for organizations contending with job design for inherently monotonous roles, or those which employees do not find meaningful. Prior research suggests that even perceived or subjective job autonomy can positively influence the extent to which bored employees become frustrated (van Hooff & van Hooft, 2018). By better designing or enriching boring jobs, deleterious individual and organizational outcomes (such as counterproductive work behaviors) may be minimized or avoided. However, these impacts would likely vary, depending on the boredom proneness of the individual; my analyses suggest that boredom proneness is a stronger predictor of frustration than is work boredom.

Finally, while the unsupported spillover hypotheses was not the desired study outcome, it is an encouraging piece of evidence for the worker experiencing a chronically boring job. The impacts of a boring work life may not break through the work-nonwork boundary. Especially for

individuals who are less work-oriented and more home-oriented, specific job benefits might outweigh any negative consequences of boring work.

Strengths and Limitations

It is important to interpret all results considering the study's strengths and limitations. A theoretical strength of this study is its examination of the boredom state. Rather than define boredom solely in terms of environmental and internal stimulation, I reviewed several theories of boredom before hypothesizing its spillover effects. Specifically, this study classifies work boredom as a state that can be chronic or transient, global or situational (Mael & Jex, 2015), focusing on chronic and situational boredom. Additional study method strengths include the multi-source data, which provides an ability to examine the study variables from both the individual and partner point-of-view. Study participants were also diverse, particularly with respect to age and gender.

Dyadic data is a strength of this study, but the manner of data collection does present some challenges to validity. For instance, participants who received the survey via Snowball sampling may have had concerns regarding their anonymity, as each participant either knew me personally or was connected to a person whom I know. Additionally, for the Snowball sample, I provided the option for individuals to automatically send their unique survey ID to their or their romantic partner's email address. This option was at the start of the survey. As they continued with the study, participants who submitted email addresses (most of which contained names and were, therefore, identifiable) may have felt uncomfortable disclosing information such as their feelings toward their relationship quality and behaviors socially deemed as negative.

Despite research supporting the impact of segmentation preference on work-to-home spillover and employee well-being (see Nohe et al., 2015), hypotheses adopting segmentation preference were not supported. Although I used a well-validated, commonly used measure for work-nonwork integration and segmentation, participants reported on their *preference* for separating or integrating the work and home spheres. For many reasons, the individuals in the study may not have been able to align their behaviors and reality with their desired work-nonwork structure. This disconnect can not only lead to frustration and hindered work and life satisfaction (Kreiner et al., 2009), but desired and actual segmentation may function differently, as constructs.

A strong contextual factor that could have influenced the incongruity between desired and actual segmentation preference is the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic – the period during which the study data were collected. It is certainly a possibility that such a disruption to individuals' working and home lives impacted the study data, beyond work and home segmentation. During the pandemic, the average worker experienced a high level of frustration when forced to abruptly adapt their and their family members' lifestyles, with no foreseeable end point (Kubacka et al., 2021). Thus, the significant relationship between boredom and frustration should be carefully considered and warrants further examination.

Future Research

The “contemporary” approach to work boredom integrates individual characteristics (Mael & Jex, 2015), and work centrality may play a role in the amount of work boredom and work-related frustration one perceives; work centrality and work boredom were negatively

correlated, as were frustration and work centrality. Conversely, a longitudinal design may examine the impacts of work boredom on one's rating of their work centrality. As researchers adopt the contemporary boredom approach, they may want to consider individual characteristics such as work centrality. Along with individual factors, this research suggests that several contextual influences should be considered by future researchers studying work boredom spillover. While the present study used control variables such as relationship satisfaction, boredom proneness, and work centrality in analyses, I did not further consider stressors that a couple may be facing which could impact undermining and disengagement behaviors.

Future research may also want to more closely examine the competing hypotheses of boredom as a state of internal over- or under- arousal (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014) and any possible differential effects such experiences of boredom might have on spillover and crossover. It would also be interesting to test Harju and Hanaken's (2012) categories of workplace boredom (deactivation, overactivation, and erratic activation) and see if the arousal states of boredom correspond with affective and cognitive outcomes, beyond frustration and deactivation.

Another theory from this study that could be examined with more nuance in relation to work boredom is the spillover theory. Kabanoff and O'Brien (1980) provide five key dimensions for stimulating work and non-work lives. The researchers suggest that individuals who are not adequately stimulated at work, yet have stimulating home lives, undergo a supplemental compensation process. This study did not holistically examine the qualities of participants' work and home spheres, nor individual characteristics or circumstances which may have influenced the spillover or compensation processes. For instance, spillover likely functions very differently for individuals with "traditional" and remote working arrangements. There is much more to

consider and learn regarding how work boredom impacts an individual and their relationships outside of work.

Conclusion

This study expanded on work boredom research by examining the impacts that boring work has on an individual's behaviors toward their cohabitating romantic partner. Both focal, employee participants and their partner provided data, lending multi-source support for hypotheses. While work boredom was associated with both frustration and affective rumination, these states were not connected with their hypothesized behavioral outcomes (undermining behaviors toward, and disengagement from, the romantic partner). The employee's preference for separating their work and home lives also did not have any significant effect on the extent to which frustration and affective rumination "spilled over," leading to antisocial relationship behaviors.

The multi-source data, study design, sample diversity, and the research's theoretical backing provide integrity for this study and my conclusions. However, contextual factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and a smaller-than-desired sample size may have impacted the study results. There is much potential to improve upon this research and to continue making strides in understanding the impacts of chronically boring work on individuals' global well-being.

It has been a century since the British Medical Association, Section of Medical Sociology met to discuss the physical and mental impacts of work monotony on the employee – what was considered a new and alarming concern with the rise of industrialization (Davies, 1926). Since this meeting, work, and the role of work in individuals' lives, has drastically changed. Still, too

many individuals contend with chronically boring jobs. Researchers should continue efforts to understand the complexity in monotony. With this knowledge, practitioners will be better empowered to work toward every individual being satisfied with their work's level of stimulation and personal meaning.

**APPENDIX A:
SURVEY MEASURES**

Focal Participant Survey

Work Boredom (Lee, 1986)

The questions that follow all deal with your experience of your job as dull or exciting. Please answer the questions with respect to your own reactions to your present job.

1. Do you get bored with your work?
2. Is your work tedious?
3. If the pay were the same, would you like to change from one type of work to another from time to time?
4. Do you like the work you do?
5. Do you get tired on the job?
6. Do you find the job dull?
7. Does the job go by too slowly?
8. Do you become irritable on the job?
9. Do you get apathetic on the job?
10. Do you get mentally sluggish during the day?
11. Does the time seem to go by slowly?
12. Are there long periods of boredom on the job?

Never	Sometimes	Often	Very often
1	2	3	4

Dutch Boredom Scale (Reijseger et al., 2013)

Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements.

1. At work, time goes by very slowly
2. I feel bored at my job
3. During work time I daydream
4. It seems as if my working day never ends
5. I tend to do other things during my work
6. At my work, there is not so much to do

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Boredom Proneness (BPS-SF) (Vodanovich et al., 2005)

Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the following statements.

1. It is easy for me to concentrate on my activities
2. I find it easy to entertain myself
3. I get a kick out of most things I do
4. In any situation I can usually find something to do or see to keep me interested
5. Many people would say that I am a creative or imaginative person
6. Among my friends, I am the one who keeps doing something the longest
7. Having to look at someone's home movies or travel slides bores me tremendously

8. Many things I have to do are repetitive and monotonous
9. It would be very hard for me to find a job that is exciting enough
10. Unless I am doing something exciting, even dangerous, I feel half-dead and dull
11. It seems that the same old things are on television or the movies all the time; it's getting old
12. When I was young, I was often in monotonous and tiresome situations

Items 1-6 = Internal Stimulation; 7-12 = External Stimulation

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Frustration (Peters et al., 1980)

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

1. Trying to get my job done is a very frustrating experience.
2. Being frustrated comes with the job.
3. Overall, I experience very little frustration on this job.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

Rumination (Cropley et al., 2012)

Please answer the following questions in terms of how often you have these thoughts while NOT at work.

1. Do you become tense when you think about work-related issues during your free time?
2. Are you annoyed by thinking about work-related issues when not at work?
3. Are you irritated by work issues when not at work?
4. Do you become fatigued by thinking about work-related issues during your free time?
5. Are you troubled by work-related issues when not at work?
6. After work I tend to think of how I can improve my work-related performance
7. In my free time I find myself re-evaluating something I have done at work
8. Do you think about tasks that need to be done at work the next day?
9. I find thinking about work during my free time helps me to be creative
10. I find solutions to work-related problems in my free time
11. Do you feel unable to switch off from work?
12. I am able to stop thinking about work-related issues in my free time
13. Do you find it easy to unwind after work?
14. I make myself switch off from work as soon as I leave
15. Do you leave work issues behind when you leave work?

Items 1-5 = Affective Rumination; 6-10 = Problem-Solving Rumination;

11-15 = Detachment

Very Seldom or Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often or Always
1	2	3	4	5

Segmentation Preference (Kreiner, 2006)

1. I don't like to have to think about work while I'm at home
2. I prefer to keep work life at work
3. I don't like work issues creeping into my home life
4. I like to be able to leave work behind when I go home

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Work Centrality (shortened version of Hirschfeld & Feild, 2000, used in Bal & Kooij, 2011)

Please indicate how accurately the following statements describe your job.

1. The major satisfaction in my life comes from my job
2. The most important things that happen to me involve my work
3. I have other activities more important than my work

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Partner Survey

Social Undermining Behavior (Vinokur & van Ryn, 1993; Feinberg et al., 2012)

How much does your spouse or significant other...

1. act in an unpleasant or angry manner toward you?
2. make your life difficult?
3. show he or she dislikes you?
4. make you feel unwanted?
5. criticize you?

Not at All	Very Little	A Little	Quite a Lot	A Great Deal
1	2	3	4	5

Disengagement (Reis & Carmichael, 2006; Stuart, 1983)

Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale

Please answer the following questions about your current romantic partner.

My partner usually:

1. ...really listens to me
2. ...is responsive to my needs
3. ...esteems me, shortcomings and all
4. ...values and respects the whole package that is the "real" me
5. ...expresses liking and encouragement for me
6. ...seems interested in what I am thinking and feeling
7. ...values my abilities and opinions

Items 1-2 = General; 3-7 = Validation

Not at All True	Somewhat True	Moderately True	Very True	Completely True
1	2	3	4	5

Communication with Partner

Mark the degree to which these statements describe your communication with your partner.

1. I feel that my partner listens attentively when I speak.
2. I feel that my partner understands what I communicate.
3. I feel that my partner often asks me to do various things.
4. My partner expresses appreciation for the things I do in response to his/her requests.
5. I feel that my partner tells me too many negative things about myself or our relationship.

Almost Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Almost Never
1	2	3	4	5

**APPENDIX B:
IRB APPROVAL LETTERS**



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Institutional Review Board

FWA00000351 IRB00001138,
IRB00012110
Office of Research
12201 Research Parkway

Orlando, FL 32826-3246

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

July 19, 2021

Dear Kenzie Dye:

On 7/19/2021, the IRB determined the following submission to be human subjects research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Zombie at Work, (Aggressive) Zombie at Home: The Relationship Between Work Boredom and Spousal Undermining and Disengagement
Investigator:	Kenzie Dye
IRB ID:	STUDY00003066
Funding:	None
Grant ID:	None

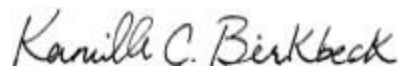
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis Oversight Signed KD.pdf, Category: Faculty Research Approval; • 6.29 Recruitment Flyer.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • 7.14 IRB Dye 3066 Exempt 254 Thesis PARTNER 06.28.2021.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • 7.14 IRB Dye 3066 Exempt 254 Thesis SONA Focal 06.28.2021.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • 7.17 IRB Dye 3066 Debriefing Statement 71621.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • 7.17 IRB Dye 3066 Exempt 254 Thesis SONA PARTNER 07.16.2021.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • 7.17 IRB Dye 3066 Thesis HRP-255 07.16.2021.docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • 7.27 IRB Dye 3066 Exempt 254 Thesis Focal 07.16.2021.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Thesis Qualtrics_FOCAL.docx, Category: Survey / Questionnaire; • Thesis Qualtrics_PARTNER.docx, Category: Survey / Questionnaire;
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This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made, and

there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please submit a modification request to the IRB. Guidance on submitting Modifications and Administrative Check-in are detailed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within the IRB system. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request so that IRB records will be accurate.

If you have any questions, please contact the UCF IRB at 407-823-2901 or irb@ucf.edu. Please include your project title and IRB number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kamille C. Birkbeck". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kamille Birkbeck

Designated Reviewer



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Institutional Review Board

FWA00000351
IRB00001138, IRB00012110
Office of Research
12201 Research Parkway
Orlando, FL 32826-3246

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

February 28, 2022

Dear Kenzie Dye:

On 2/28/2022, the IRB determined the following submission to be human subjects research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Modification / Update
Title:	Zombie at Work, (Aggressive) Zombie at Home: The Relationship Between Work Boredom and Spousal Undermining and Disengagement
Investigator:	Kenzie Dye
IRB ID:	MOD00002677
Funding:	Name: PSYCHOLOGY
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.28 IRB Dye 3066 Thesis HRP-255 07.16.2021.docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • Prolific Study Listing Text 2.22.22.docx, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Thesis IRB Revision 254 FOCAL 02.17.2022.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Thesis IRB Revision 254 PARTNER 02.19.22.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Thesis IRB Revision Debrief 02.19.22.pdf, Category: Consent Form

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made, and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please submit a modification request to the IRB. Guidance on submitting Modifications and Administrative Check-in are detailed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within the IRB system. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request so that IRB records will be accurate.

If you have any questions, please contact the UCF IRB at 407-823-2901 or irb@ucf.edu. Please include your project title and IRB number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,

Katie Kilgore
Designated Reviewer

**APPENDIX C:
RECRUITMENT MATERIALS**

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Work/Home Psychology Study

You are invited to help psychologists better understand how people's work conditions impact their home lives.

**ANSWER A
15-20 MIN
ONLINE
SURVEY**

Questions will ask about your attitudes, feelings, and actions surrounding your work and non-work lives.

You must be at least 18 and work 20 hours per week or more.

**QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?
CONTACT
KDYE@KNIGHTS.UCF.EDU OR FACULTY
SUPERVISOR STEVE.JEX@UCF.EDU**

**HAVE YOUR
PARTNER
ANSWER A 5-10
MIN SURVEY**

To participate your spouse or romantic partner must live with you. You will receive a code that they will use to access their survey.

Your spouse or partner does not have to be employed to participate.

**Follow this link:
<https://tinyurl.com/workhomestudy>
Please share this flyer or the survey link with
friends, family, and coworkers**



All responses are confidential

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