

2022-2023

Harold J. Plous Award Lecture

UC SANTA BARBARA

Daniel Conroy-Beam

“The Most Important Decision You’ll Ever Make”

Wednesday, April 12, 2023 | 4pm | Alumni Hall, Mosher Alumni House



Mating is at the center of our universe. Whom we fall in love with affects every corner of our lives, from the mundane to the momentous. Moreover, over deep time, mate choice has been one of the most potent forces responsible for shaping who we are as a species. Yet our understanding of how we choose our mating partners and how these choices reverberate out through our lives is shockingly imprecise. This year's Plous lecture will illustrate how computer simulations of human mating markets can help us model the complex decision processes guiding our love lives. We will discuss how these simulations shed light on how people choose their romantic partners and how they could be harnessed to help people form happier relationships.

Dr. Dan Conroy-Beam is an associate professor in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences. His research takes an evolutionary and computational perspective on human mating. His work combines computer simulations with cross-cultural studies of real relationships to understand how people around the world determine what they want in a partner, how they select their partners, and how they navigate the intricacies of romantic relationships.

The Harold J. Plous Memorial Award was established in 1957 to honor Harold J. Plous, Assistant Professor of Economics. The award is given annually to a faculty member of the rank of Assistant Professor or Instructor who has demonstrated outstanding performance by creative action or contribution to the intellectual life of the college community.