Official ARP-sponsored Preconference at SPSP 2018

Personality Dynamics, Processes, and Functioning

Early personality psychologists such as Gordon Allport had already stressed the importance of dynamics, processes, and functioning going on within the person. However, interest in those aspects of personality psychology seemed to have waned in favor of more nomothetically oriented, structural approaches focusing on the organization of traits across persons. In the last 15 years, personality psychology has made major leaps from such descriptive research (How can individual differences be described? Which trait structures are there?) to a more explanatory and dynamic science of personality (Which processes underlie traits? How and why do traits manifest? How does personality "function" in different contexts?), thus bridging structure- and process-based approaches to personality.

Currently, personality psychologists are growing more and more interested in the dynamic organization and interplay of thoughts, feelings, desires, and actions within persons who are always embedded into social, cultural, and historic contexts. Current “hot topics” include (but are not limited to):

- Within-person consistency and variability
- Transactions between persons and situations or environments
- Personality functioning (both normal and abnormal)
- Biophysiological and social mechanisms underlying the expression and effects of personality
- Mechanisms of personality and identity development across the lifespan
- Personality signatures and if-then contingencies
- Personality coherence and dynamic within-person organizations

These topics are studied with a range of methods which are geared towards assessing and analyzing their dynamic nature, such as (but not limited to) ecological momentary sampling of personality manifestations in real-life; dynamic modeling of time-series or longitudinal personality data; network modeling and simulations; and systems-theoretical models of dynamic processes. Although the topics and methods seem varied, they are tied together by the motivation for a more dynamic understanding of personality and individual differences.

The preconference brings together 72 scholars interested in a dynamic and process-focused science of personality. It is indeed timely to convene in a preconference as interest in dynamic personality psychology is growing, with special issues and handbooks dedicated to the topics. Most recent examples include a target article on “Integrating Personality Structure, Personality Process, and Personality Development” by Baumert and colleagues in the European Journal of Personality (with several commentaries and a rejoinder); a special issue on “Within-Person Variability” in the Journal of Research in Personality, edited by Vazire and Sherman; a special issue on “Dynamic Personality Psychology” in the Journal Personality and Individual Differences, edited by Rauthmann, Beckmann, Noftle, and Sherman; and a forthcoming Handbook of Personality Dynamics and Processes (Elsevier), edited by Rauthmann.

We hope that this preconference will be interesting, stimulating, and productive!

John Rauthmann, Eranda Jayawickreme, Mike Furr, & Will Fleeson
Wake Forest University
Schedule

THURSDAY, March 1:

08:00 AM – 09:30 AM  Symposium 1:  Dynamics of Personality Change and Growth  90 min
09:30 AM – 10:20 AM  Posters (and Break)  50 min
10:20 AM – 11:50 AM  Symposium 2:  Process and Dynamics of Person-Situation Transactions  90 min
11:50 AM – 1:00 PM  Lunch Break  70 min
01:00 PM – 02:30 PM  Symposium 3:  Methodologies for Studying Personality Dynamics and Processes  90 min
02:30 PM – 02:45 PM  Break  15 min
02:45 PM – 04:15 PM  Symposium 4:  Extreme Groups as a Key to Understanding Personality Dynamics and Functioning  90 min

The times are determined by slots given to the preconference by SPSP. Times may vary slightly if need be.

Location and Rooms
The preconference will be located in the Hanover E room on the Lower Level 2 of the Hyatt Regency. This room – able to accommodate max. 72 people – has a classroom seating (rows of tables and chairs), with one podium (and no head table). It is equipped with a screen, projector, wired podium microphone, wired audience microphone, and computer audio. Speakers must individually arrange to bring a laptop, any adapters (especially for Mac-books), and clickers.

Meals
Meals (including gluten-free, vegetarian, vegan options), provided by SPSP, will be available in the Grand Hall on Lower Level 2 of the Hyatt Regency, just steps outside the preconference room. Attendees from all preconference are free to access food anytime during following open hours (and leftover hot beverages will be left out until they are gone):

- Breakfast:  08:00 AM – 09:00 AM
- AM Break:  10:00 AM – 11:00 AM
- Lunch:  11:30 AM – 01:00 PM
- PM Break:  02:30 PM – 03:30 PM
Posters
The preconference has access to 15 double-sided poster boards, located just outside the preconference room in the Grand Hall on Lower Level 2 of the Hyatt Regency. The poster zone in this room is Grand Hall A. Access to the posters is possible from 09:30 AM until 10:20 AM. This slot has been determined by the SPSP organizers. The poster boards are 6’ wide by 4’ high and are bulletin board style. Posters can be affixed with thumb tacks, which will be provided. Please plan for time at the beginning and end of your session to hang and remove posters.

Name Badges
Individuals attending both a preconference and the convention will use their same badge Thursday-Saturday. All name badges (preconference only AND combo preconference/convention) need to be picked up at registration in the Hyatt Regency on Lower Level 2 during the following times:

- Wednesday, February 28: 03:00 PM – 08:00 PM
- Thursday, March 1: 07:00 AM – 06:30 PM

Badges will not be available at individual preconference rooms. We highly recommend that attendees pick up their badges Wednesday night to avoid lines and delays Thursday morning before the preconference.

Important Reminders from SPSP Organizers
► ABSOLUTELY NOTHING MAY BE ADHERED TO WALLS or other surfaces in the conference room. The hotel charges steep cleaning fees if members of their team see anything affixed to surfaces in the room, regardless if residue is left or not. Those fees will be passed on to your preconference.

► The preconference room will be open and ready/available for you to arrive and get setup at 07:00 AM on Thursday, March 1. SPSP staff and AV technicians will be making rounds to answer questions and help trouble shoot any issues before your preconference gets started.
Symposia

We have **four symposia**, each with **4-5 presentations (90 min)**. The first two are about substantive research areas, the third deals with methodological and statistical issues when studying personality dynamics, and the fourth combines a substantive and methodological perspective.

**Dynamics of Personality Change and Growth**  
Chairs: Eranda Jayawickreme & Erik Noftle  
*Features talks that look at personality dynamics and processes across the lifespan, especially as they pertain to systematic ways of personality change and growth (e.g., following adversity)*

- Jon Adler  
- Laura Blackie  
- Frank Infurna  
- Nathan Hudson  
- William Chopik

**Processes and Dynamics of Personality-Situation Transactions**  
Chairs: John Rauthmann & Ryne Sherman  
*Features talks that examine how transactions between persons and situations or environments can explain personality variability and stability*

- Gabriela Blum  
- Anna Baumert  
- Kai Horstmann  
- Ryne Sherman  
- David Funder

**Methodologies for Studying Personality Dynamics and Processes**  
Chair: Mike Furr  
*Features talks that detail state-of-the-art and advances in methodologies (e.g., designs, methods, statistics) of studying personality dynamics, processes, and functioning.*

- Marco Perugini  
- Bill Revelle  
- Vivian Zayas  
- Robin Edelstein

**Extreme Groups as a Key to Understanding Personality Dynamics and Functioning**  
Chair: Will Fleeson & Aidan Wright  
*Features talks on personality psychopathology and exceptional morality that demonstrate how extreme groups yield unique insights for “normal” personality dynamics in a more concentrated and more effective way*

- Jennifer Lodi-Smith  
- Max Barranti  
- Karin Colfman  
- Lauren Bylsma
Narrative Identity Development in Adulthood: Process and Structure
Jonathan M. Adler, *Olin College of Engineering*
Monisha Pasupathi, *University of Utah*

While narrative identity first emerges in adolescence, it continues to develop across the adult lifespan. This talk will discuss the ways in which socially-situated processes of self-narration impact the narrative architecture of identity. Narrating oneself is shaped by proximal and broad social contexts, as well as by the individual narrator who creates some consistency of theme and structure to their lives over time and across contexts. The act of narrating and the subsequent life stories produced are consequential for individuals’ psychological well-being. The empirical literature supporting these theoretical assertions will be reviewed and the discussion will be grounded in one individual life story.

The Relationship between Lifetime Adversity and Ego Resiliency
Laura E. R. Blackie, *University of Nottingham*

Earlier work has investigated the relationship between lifetime adversity and resilience, suggesting that a moderate degree of cumulative lifetime adversity functions to cultivate resilience to subsequent stressors encountered in daily life. I will outline the design of a longitudinal study that attempted to address the question of whether the experience of adversity can cultivate resilience. This type of research question requires longitudinal measurement invariance to be established, and in this study this could not be established for the Ego Resiliency Scale. Issues surrounding the unique challenges of studying the impact on adversity over time will be discussed.

The Promise of Intensive Longitudinal Research Designs for Studying Resilience and Growth: Insights from The Pathways to Character Study
Frank J. Infurna, *Arizona State University*

The resilience and post-traumatic growth literatures have been instrumental in illuminating potential pathways that individuals follow in the aftermath of adversity. Limitations of this research include its reliance on long-intervals between assessments and retrospective assessments for determining growth. This talk presents the research design and preliminary results from an intensive longitudinal study on individuals in midlife (ages 50–65) who are assessed monthly for a two-year period on character strength, well-being, and adversity. The discussion focuses on the promise of intensive longitudinal designs for examining the nature of change following adversity, mechanisms underlying resilience and growth, and individual characteristics that may increase or decrease the likelihood of resilience and growth.

You have to follow through: Attaining behavioral change goals predicts volitional personality change
Nathan W. Hudson, *Southern Methodist University*

Most people desire increases in each big five trait. Moreover, prior research has found these desires predict trait growth (e.g., desiring extraversion predicts growth therein). The present 16-week longitudinal study tested whether changing state-level behaviors predicted trait change. Participants were provided prewritten “challenges”—concrete behaviors representative of high levels of desired traits—that they could accept and attempt to complete each week. Results indicated successfully completing challenges—but not merely accepting them—predicted trait growth. Thus, desiring change or acquiescing to interventions does not appear to be sufficient—volitional trait change may require successfully following through and implementing behavioral changes.
The bright side: The effects of optimism in the context of close relationships
William Chopik, Michigan State University

Having a generalized expectation for good things to happen in the future—optimism—is associated with many intra- and interpersonal benefits. However, the study of optimism has generally focused on individuals and neglected the effect that other people’s optimism might have on us. I detail a series of analyses using the Health and Retirement Study (N=2,758 couples followed over 10 years) that examine the effects of optimism on the health of older adults. Variations of actor-partner interdependence models and structural equation modeling reveal that actor and partner optimism are linked to health primarily through changes in health behavior over time.

Processes and Dynamics of Personality-Situation Transactions

Chairs: Rauthmann & Sherman

The NIPS Process Model – A systematization of processes in personality-situation transactions
Gabriela Blum, University of Koblenz-Landau

The Nonlinear Interaction of Person and Situation (NIPS) Process Model will be introduced as a framework for organizing processes according to the shape of their effect on outcome behavior. The NIPS Process Model differentiates between four classes of psychological processes: activation (including person’s threshold and demands of a situation), tendency (including person’s bias and alternatives in a situation), inhibition (including person’s avoidance and restrictions in a situation), and predictability (including person’s variability and selectivity in a situation). A concrete example will be given of how such a class of processes can be studied empirically.

‘Sensitive periods’ in adult personality development? Testing a mechanism of stability and change in dispositional victim sensitivity
Anna Baumert, Max Planck Institute for Research on Collective Goods, Bonn, and TUM School of Education
Simona Maltese & Tanja Lischetzke, University of Koblenz-Landau

Life transitions might be crucial for personality development because entering novel social contexts can open ‘sensitive periods’ in which experiences are not fully determined by personality but trigger personality changes. In 310 undergraduate students, we assessed perception of and rumination about injustice on a weekly basis and tested whether these experiences (i) were predicted by dispositional victim sensitivity at the start of the term and (ii) positively predicted intraindividual change in victim sensitivity across one year. In a quasi-experimental design, for first-year students, experiences predicted dispositional change (ii), but for higher semester students we found stabilizing transactions (i).

How many states make a trait? A comprehensive meta-analysis of experience sampling studies
Kai T. Horstmann, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
John F. Rauthmann, Wake Forest University

The repeated assessment of daily behavior has gained popularity over recent years and is now a core design for the assessment of the dynamic person. The relation of an average state, assessed across multiple measurement occasions, and a personality trait, is referred to as trait-expressions (Fleeson & Gallagher, 2009). It remains yet unclear how different factors, such as the assessment of states and traits, the number of items used during state-assessment, as well as the number of measurement occasions affect trait-expression. The
current study meta-analytically investigates these important questions based on currently $k = 9$ studies (with $N = 1127$ participants and a total of 38,219 measurement occasions). Results show that the average trait-expression depends on the number of measurement occasions, the study design, as well as the personality trait investigated. Implications of these results and possible recommendations for future experience sampling studies are discussed.

**The Role of Personality Traits in Situation Selection**

Ryne A. Sherman, Texas Tech University

The notion that individual differences (e.g., personality) play a role in the kinds of situations in which we find ourselves (i.e., situation selection) is largely agreed upon among modern psychologists. However, a review of the empirical literature shows that the evidence for links between personality and daily situations is (a) minimal and (b) suffers from methodological flaws (i.e., common rater variance). This talk presents data from two short-term longitudinal data sets measuring personality and situations encountered in daily life. Contrary to psychological-lore, no evidence for situation selection is found.

David Funder discusses the presentations and puts them into a wider perspective.

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**Methodologies for Studying Personality Dynamics and Processes**

**Chair:** Furr

**Personality traits as emergent properties: models and implications**

Marco Perugini & Giulio Costantini, University of Milan-Bicocca

Personality traits can be conceived as weakly emergent properties arising from networks of phenomena influencing dynamically each other over time. The relative stability of personality traits is due to equilibria reached within such networks and can be perturbed by intervening on specific nodes. This network perspective offers tools that allow identifying which nodes constitute the most promising targets for experimental interventions. Building on this view, we will propose a general framework for testing causality in personality research that should reduce the gap between basic experimental and personality research. An example with the trait of Conscientiousness will be presented.

**Formal models for personality dynamics**

William Revelle, Northwestern University

That people differ over time is obvious. How they differ is more complicated. Individual differences in variability, frequency, persistence, and choice may all be described within a computational model (the CTA model) that may be applied at multiple levels of analysis (within and between individuals as well as between groups of individuals). I will outline the model, and show how thinking dynamically allows us to integrate structural and process model of personality. Stable personality traits will be considered as the patterning of changes in thinking, feeling, wanting, and doing over time.

**Towards reverse engineering personality: From situation assessment to personality to behavioral prediction**

Vivian Zayas, Cornell University

From social cognitive perspectives, each person’s “mind” is characterized by a distinctive cognitive-affective network that mediates responses across diverse situations. But how does one assess this network? Capitalizing on the idea that the nature of a person’s network is revealed in observable *if ... then ...* situation-behavior
profiles, we describe the highly-repeated within-person approach for assessing the “psychological ingredients” of situations that a person (or group of persons) responds to. Towards a goal of reverse engineering personality, assessed situation-behavior profiles can be used to infer the nature of a person’s network and to predict future responses to diverse situations.

**Neuroendocrine Measures as a Window into Dynamic Personality Processes**

Robin Edelstein, *University of Michigan*

Like many more traditional personality characteristics, neuroendocrine markers are relatively stable over time and across situations, yet also dynamic in response to short- and long-term changes in social contexts and life experiences. Thus, hormone measures can provide valuable insight into dynamic personality processes, including those that people may be less able or willing to self-report. I will discuss recent work from my lab on changes in hormones associated with close relationship processes. We find that people show declines in testosterone as a function of relationship experiences that promote nurturance; these changes may be functional in supporting long-term relationships, but people who are characteristically uncomfortable with closeness may be less likely to show such declines.

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**Extreme Groups as a Key to Understanding Personality Dynamics and Functioning**

**Chairs: Fleeson & Wright**

**Autism Spectrum Disorder and Functional Personality Maturation across the Lifespan**

Jennifer Lodi-Smith & Jonathan D. Rodgers, *Canisius College*

Studying individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) can provide interesting insights into lifespan personality development. ASD is associated with low levels of extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and self-concept clarity (Lodi-Smith et al., under review; Rodgers et al., 2018). We argue that the “deficits in social communication and social interaction” (APA, 2013) at the heart of ASD contribute to this personality profile and that this personality profile sets up risk for poor outcomes across the lifespan. We consider potential optimism in the form of variability of personality within individuals with ASD and future directions for this research topic.

**Identifying moral exemplars: Who is consistently and frequently moral in everyday life?**

Max Barranti & Erika Carlson, *University of Toronto*

We identify moral exemplars (top 5th percentile) and compare the dynamics of their personalities to those of midlevel (50th percentile) and low moral character (bottom 5th percentile). Specifically, we explore the consistency of moral behavior in daily life and in the lab, abilities that might explain moral character (e.g., intelligence, emotion regulation), social outcomes (e.g., liking, status), and other features of personality such as trait centrality and density distributions for moral traits.

**Unpacking the balance of emotion and cognition: predicting adaptive behavior and psychological health in high risk populations and aversive circumstances**

Karin Coifman, Kent State University

In this presentation, we examine how high-risk ruminative cognition can be counterbalanced by the ability to differentiate emotional experiences. We test this relationship in high-risk patients with Borderline Personality Disorder, in patients with Social Anxiety Disorder, and in a typical college population. In each sample we demonstrate the individual and interacting association of these phenomena with risk-related behavior, from self-injury to social avoidance.
Affective dynamics in daily life in adolescents at high and low familial risk for depression

Lauren Bylsma, University of Pittsburgh

Depression is associated with alterations in affective dynamics, and offspring of a parent with a history of depression are at three times greater risk of developing depression themselves. Comparing affective dynamics in youth at high vs. low familial risk for depression can help elucidate potential vulnerability factors for depression. I will present data from a 10-day ecological momentary assessment study with 9-13yo high and low risk adolescents assessing affect, emotional reactivity, and regulation strategies in response to daily life events. High risk youth exhibit alterations in daily life affective functioning, suggesting that these alterations may precede the onset of depression.
List of Registered Attendees

Jonathan Adler
Esra Ascigil
Maxwell Barranti
Anna Baumert
Alex Benson
Laura Blackie
Andrew Blake
Gabriela Blum
Kathryn Bollich
Mark Brandt
Emily Britton
Erika Carlson
William Chopik
Robert Clark
Roberto De La Rosa
Ewa Domaradzka
Robin Edelstein
Malgosia Fajkowska
William Fleeson
David Funder
Mike Furr
Kathryn Graeff
William Graziano
Robert Griffo
Marie Hennecke
Riley Hess
Sarah Heuckeroth
Anne Holding
Kai Horstmann
Victoria Hotchin
Rick Hoyle
Ritsuko Iwai
Eranda Jayawickreme
Keryn Kahn
Rebekka Kesberg
Noam Keshet
Lili Khechuashvili
Laura Koenig
Daniel Lee
Nick Lee
Justin Lockhart
Jenn Lodi-Smith
Dillon Luke
Ryan Lundell-Creagh
Chelsea Nexie Madia
Kira McCabe
Miranda Mcintyre
Michal Miaskiewicz
Travis Miller
Fredrik Nilsen
Atsushi Oshio
Marco Perugini
Jennifer Pickett
Mike Prentice
John Rauthmann
Stephen Read
Angela Receveur
Robert Redford
William Revelle
Juliette Richetin
Katherine Rogers
Leah Schultz
Ted Schwaba
Suzanne Segerstrom
Ryne Sherman
Tadahiro Shimotsukasa
Rebecca Shiner
Joanna Sosnowska
Hasagani Tissera
Amanda Warner
William Woods
Vivian Zayas