

Student Driven Publication 2011

Dr. Ian Gotlib, 2011 SRP Zubin Award Winner

Shauna Kushner, *University of Toronto*
Zachary Millman, *University of Colorado*
Austin Williamson, *University of Iowa*

This Fall 2011, Dr. Ian Gotlib received the Joseph Zubin Award for his diverse and invaluable contributions to the field of depression research. We had the pleasure of talking to Dr. Gotlib after his address. Despite the variety of methods employed and the volume and impact of his work, Dr. Gotlib simply summed up his approach to depression research in two words, “integration” and “collaboration.” The future, Dr. Gotlib contends, depends on the field’s ability to connect findings from cognitive, genetic, and brain imaging research.

When describing the importance of collaborative work, Dr. Gotlib earnestly emphasized his appreciation for his graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and many collaborators. Whether at SRP or a colloquium at Stanford, he is always looking for someone who can teach him something new or explore a problem from a different angle. “I can’t work alone,” he explained. “I need the expertise that collaboration brings.” In addition to numerous collaborations in the U.S., Dr. Gotlib’s endeavors extend overseas, including international partnerships with Dr. Anja Fritzsche at the University of Hamburg, Dr. Adriane Arteché at the University of Oxford, and Dr. Kate Harkness at the University of Toronto. It is apparent that no distance is too great for synergy among enthusiastic psychopathology researchers.



Given his enthusiasm for research collaboration, it is no surprise that Dr. Gotlib described the benefits of an interdisciplinary background when we asked him about the keys to success for future researchers. He emphasized that breadth of training, knowledge, and skills sets not only allow individuals to produce meaningful advancements within their fields, but also will likely result in greater career longevity and less burnout. Dr. Gotlib encourages young investigators to develop a “thick skin.” It is his belief that those who can persevere through and learn from rejected manuscripts and grant proposals will succeed in the long run.

Dr. Gotlib spoke to the various aspects of his career in academia that are challenging, invigorating, and personally valuable. The diversity evident in his research program is what he values most. This is reflected in the variety of positions he has held throughout his career such as Clinical Psychologist, Director of Clinical Training, and Senior Associate Dean. Although he concedes that maintaining a healthy work-life balance can be challenging in academia, Dr. Gotlib asserted that the appealing advantages far outweigh the drawbacks. For example, he is especially grateful for his current station at Stanford. “I can’t imagine a better life than to be learning and teaching every day,” he said. “It can be a really great life.”

Importantly, Dr. Gotlib spoke to what he believes will optimize the future of psychopathology research. He pointed to not only the qualities of promising students, fellows, and junior faculty, but also the significance of training and grant program designs as crucial factors in assuring the production of novel, high-quality research. Citing the Early Investigator Awards offered by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD), Dr. Gotlib indicated, "It is extraordinarily important to have special support for new investigators." Hiring departments can also encourage quality research by offering "good start-up packages." Finally, at the graduate level, Dr. Gotlib suggests that training requires the integration of material across a range of disciplines. "The broader you can be coming out, the better you can be."

Talking with Dr. Gotlib stimulated excitement in us all about the future of our own careers,



psychopathology research in general, and Dr. Gotlib's work in particular. Dynamism and variety have kept Dr. Gotlib motivated to actively pursue research for over 30 years, and he certainly doesn't show any signs of slowing down.

Dr. Lee Anna Clark, Incoming SRP President

Ashley Kendall, *Northwestern University*

Elissa Hamlat, *Temple University*

Kathrin Herzhoff, *University of Toronto*

Dr. Lee Anna Clark, William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Professor of Psychology at the University of Notre Dame, will serve as President of SRP in 2011-2012. A prominent personality researcher, Dr. Clark is among the "most highly cited" psychologists according to the Institute for Scientific Information. She is currently one of 11 international members of the Work Group to revise the Personality and Personality



Disorders section of the DSM-5 and serves on several cross-cutting Study Groups for the DSM revision. Dr. Clark was kind enough to sit down with us to be interviewed as part of the SRP Publication Committee.

When asked about her goals for the Society as incoming president, Dr.

Clark stated wryly her primary aim is "not to mess up the Society." In her view, SRP is an

extraordinarily well-functioning organization, distinguished by its annual meeting. Coming in with an agenda of tangential activities, she said, could dilute the Society's focus. Dr. Clark believes that it is the Program Chair who is faced with the greatest challenge of the Executive Board; organizing the annual meeting. Dr. Clark expressed great pride about having identified



Jennifer Tackett, the 2011 SRP Early Career Award Winner, for this role, before she knew that Jennifer had won the award: "Part of my goal is to stay out of her way, to try to be helpful to her ... and to work with her to make the next meeting at least as good as all the rest have been."

Dr. Clark joined SRP years ago, at the invitation of Drs. Susan Mineka and Don Fowles. In reflecting on changes over the course of her membership, she noted that with the emergence of methods like biometrics, the Society has become more focused on neuroscience. She thinks that by and large, however, members still recognize such methods as tools to be used to understand psychopathology, rather than as shifting the central focus of SRP toward genetics or neurobiology. In her view, another way in which the society has changed is that it now represents a greater breadth of psychopathology research. This includes a growth in personality disorder research, a greater focus on depression and anxiety, and the inclusion of previously unrepresented psychopathologies such as eating disorders. She thinks that this increased scope of interest is due in large part to the growing understanding that these conditions are

interrelated, and that common processes cut across many types of psychopathology.

Dr. Clark is often regarded as a role model for graduate students, particularly women. Even

in the current tough employment market, she advises that the road to success for current students is pursuing research that truly interests them in the most rigorous manner possible. "If you start following the money," she said, "you'll lose your passion." She maintains that a career in academia can be more difficult for women, but does not have to be. In the context of a range of possible personal life choices and pursuits, she suggested—at the same time jokingly and very seriously—that the most important step a woman can take is selecting the right partner. If a partner is open to moving, she explained as one example, it allows a young researcher to pursue the positions most commensurate with her abilities and interests. With regards to having a family, she adds: "One thing I can say is that there is no good time to have children. You just have to do it. There are good things and bad things about any time you pick. But in my perspective it's absolutely worth it."

In closing, Dr. Clark advised all graduate students to take advantage of the knowledge of more senior colleagues to further their careers: "Don't hesitate to ask your advisor to introduce you to people at SRP. If your advisor isn't able to, take the bull by the horns, and introduce yourself. Particularly in this Society, I can't think of anyone who wouldn't be willing to talk to a student. Don't be intimidated! We all know that you are the future."

Dr. Jack Blanchard, 2011 SRP Program Chair

Mara Hart, *University of Louisville*

Catherine Robertson, *University of Louisville*

Camille Wilson, *University of Maryland – Baltimore County (UMBC)*

As part of the 2011 SRP Publication Committee, we had the opportunity to sit down with Dr. Jack Blanchard during the 2011 SRP conference. During our conversation with Dr. Blanchard, it was easy to see his enthusiasm for SRP. As someone who has been a part of SRP since its beginning, we were able to catch a glimpse of how his involvement with the organization has shaped his career as well as how SRP itself has grown and developed over the years.

Dr. Blanchard began his research career as a graduate student at SUNY Stony Brook under the mentorship of Dr. John Neale. He attributes Dr. Neale as the person who most inspired his research interest in schizophrenia. It is fitting that Dr. Neale is also this year's SRP winner of the Mentor Award, an honor given to outstanding mentors whose students have progressed to productive and successful academic careers.

After completing his internship and postdoctoral fellowship at the Eastern Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute at the Medical College of Pennsylvania, Dr. Blanchard's research career in the experience and expression of emotion in schizophrenia led him to the University of New Mexico and then to his current position at the University of Maryland, College Park where he currently serves as the Director of the Clinical Program.

One of his recent ongoing projects is the Collaboration to Advance Negative Symptoms Assessment in Schizophrenia (CANSAS), a workgroup dedicated to the development of a new measure of negative symptoms in schizophrenia. His collaborators include Dr. Ann Kring, a colleague during his graduate

school years and his former mentee, Dr. Bill Horan. Both Drs. Kring and Horan are prominent members of the society.

Dr. Blanchard attended one of the first SRP meetings as a graduate student. He recalled feeling amazed to meet people whose research he admired and influenced his own interest in the field. When asked about his fondest memories of SRP, he recounted the special exchanges and dinners over the years with mentors, colleagues, peers and students. Dr. Blanchard emphasized the importance of these social (in addition to intellectual) opportunities offered by the annual conference.



As his career progressed over the years, so did his involvement and role in SRP. In addition to responsibilities as SRP Program Chair, he also invests in current students and new researchers in the field – often sharing over lunch or dinner his passion and commitment to research in schizophrenia. Dr. Blanchard noted that this year marked the largest attendance in SRP's history – a long way from SRP's early days as a one-room meeting on Harvard's campus. Dr. Blanchard reflected on how psychopathology research has changed over the years, which can be seen through the evolution of SRP itself. Upon its inception, the conference focused on schizophrenia research. The increasing complexity and broadening of the field of psychopathology is reflected in the expanded domains of research (e.g., depression, childhood disorders) emphasized at the conference, as well as the increasingly sophisticated methods of exploring these disorders (e.g., fMRI). This collectively points to the exciting and dynamic state of the field of research in psychopathology.

When asked if he had a “plan B” for his life in the event his research career did not work out, Dr. Blanchard laughed and said that he always knew he wanted to pursue research in some capacity, though uncertain as to how things would unfold. Throughout his career, unexpected opportunities emerged that continued to confirm his academic and research interests. Dr. Blanchard encourages current graduate students and researchers early in their careers to be prepared for these unexpected opportunities. Graduate school goes quickly, he reminded us. Thus, making the most of each moment, remembering that these years are a time to evolve into the clinician or researcher that you want to become, is important. He advises students to be intentional and strategic in seeking out training opportunities beyond the classroom, towards developing skills and preparedness for their careers. Mentors and



advisors can serve as a valuable resource to navigate a career path. Dr. Blanchard was a beneficiary of enriching mentorship, which he now shares with future colleagues in psychopathology research at SRP and beyond.

Dr. Deanna Barch, SRP President Elect

Tim Campellone, *University of California, Berkeley*

Erin Lawton, *Washington University in St. Louis*

Rachel Waford, *University of Louisville*

As a part of this year’s SRP Publication Committee, we had the honor of interviewing Dr. Deanna Barch, Professor of Psychology, Psychiatry and Radiology at Washington University in St. Louis and President-Elect of SRP. Dr. Barch received her Ph.D. from the University of Illinois and is now a leading researcher in the area of emotion-cognition interactions in schizophrenia.

In an effort for us as students to seek guidance from Dr. Barch, we first asked what she wished she knew as a graduate student. She responded that life post-graduate school only gets busier, so current graduate students should now “take time to smell the roses”.



At some point during their education, every student thinks about their “Plan B.” For some of us, our Plan B represents a radical departure from the world of psychology. For Dr. Barch, however, it was very clear that her passion and her path were in psychology. In high school, Dr. Barch served as peer counselor, a position that led her to choose psychology as a major in college. After graduation, Dr. Barch worked as a case manager at a mental health facility, when she realized her desire to turn toward the world of research. This led her to graduate school and ultimately to where she is today.

During her very productive career as a researcher, Dr. Barch has been part of several important studies,

including serving as Co-Principal Investigator on the recently completed first phase of CNTRICS. Among all her work, Dr. Barch recalled one study as being the most fun. This study, conducted in 2005 with Dr. Cameron Carter, explored whether administration of d-amphetamine (a dopamine agonist) improves cognition among medicated patients with schizophrenia. More than the study results, which showed improvements in cognition, Dr. Barch recalled enjoying the ability to directly improve the lives of the individual study participants.

Dr. Barch's current research represents in part a shift from her earlier work in cognition and schizophrenia (which she is still continuing). When asked what contributed to this shift, Dr. Barch stated, "it was serendipitous; a colleague came knocking." Dr. Joan Luby, Associate

Professor of Child Psychiatry and Founder and Director of Washington University School of Medicine's Early Emotional Development Program, approached Dr. Barch about a possible collaboration regarding the use of imaging to explore depression in preschool-age children.

Dr. Barch identified her long-standing interest in developmental psychopathology as the "methodological" link between her earlier work and present work. She described previous work using a sibling model to study schizophrenia, but described frustration in being able to recruit very young siblings in this work. Her current work allows her to pursue research interests related to early developmental mechanisms of psychopathology. Dr. Barch remains interested in developmental work in schizophrenia, and she indicated that improved models are needed in this area.



Dr. Barch's commitment to the exploration and support of new research is reflected in her extensive resume and integral presence at SRP. When asked what it is about SRP that she enjoys so much, Dr. Barch quickly stated that SRP is the only meeting she attends annually and that this "smallish" meeting is full of the "best people in the field doing all kinds of interesting things." She further stated, "it's not about showing each other up; it's all about sharing." In terms of future research, Dr. Barch predicts strong efforts to develop treatments for the cognitive and negative symptoms of schizophrenia. Dr. Barch stated, "At this point,

negative symptoms have not received the same level of research attention (relative to positive symptoms), so they will become the focus." In her own work, Dr. Barch has plans to adapt reward processing and disorganization tasks to push this effort forward.

Consistent with the focus of a number of SRP presentations this year, Dr. Barch also sees the need to examine the currently arbitrary distinction between schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, and bipolar disorder. Dr. Barch stated, "We are forcing categories. I hope we can do a better job of identifying those directions and creating a common definition." This sentiment was expressed by a number of speakers in widely varied fields at this year's meeting. With all of this "cross-fertilization," it is no wonder Dr. Barch likes SRP so much!

Regarding plans and ideas for SRP's future growth, Dr. Barch foremost identified a desire to reinstate discussion groups for women in science to address their unique challenges. Secondly, she aims for development of additional graduate student opportunities. SRP's policy is, and has been, that students are limited to poster

presentations. Dr. Barch relayed a story about being in the audience during a less than successful graduate student talk, and understands that first presentations in large venues can be nerve racking. Nonetheless, Dr. Barch would like to provide a venue for students to be involved with talks or discussions, perhaps as a lunch session or in a data-blitz format (for example, a number of students afforded 5 minutes each).

Dr. Barch's enthusiasm for psychological science and SRP was evident throughout our discussion. Her commitment to advancing the field, as well as the organization, has clearly been present over the course of her career. Her enthusiasm and commitment toward the field and the society are both palpable and contagious.