

The logo for the Society for Research in Psychopathology (SRP) features the letters 'SRP' in a large, bold, serif font. To the right of the letters is a vertical line composed of three parallel bars of increasing height.

Society for Research  
in Psychopathology

## Student Driven Publication

### **2021 Contributors**

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### **Special Mega Issue!**

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President Dr. Jutta  
Joormann

Multiple Years of Award  
Winners!

A Grad Student Call to  
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DEI Poster Award

**2021**

# An Interview with Jutta Joormann, SRP's Current President

JOHN PURCELL

Dr. Jutta Joormann is a Professor and Chair of Psychology at Yale University, studying how basic cognitive processes and individual differences in emotion and mood regulation increase the risk for the onset of depression and anxiety disorders. In 2021 she was elected as the Society for Research in Psychopathology's 33rd President. As part of our 2021 Annual Conference, current doctoral student John Purcell met with Dr. Joormann for a discussion on her passion for psychopathology research, aspirations for SRP, and visions for the future of clinical science.

## How did you become interested in psychopathology research?

I became interested during my doctoral training. I am originally from Germany where the clinical training is very different. I got my PhD in general psychology and then, moved on afterward to get trained as a therapist. I realized in conversations with my clients how fascinating depression and anxiety disorders are. Those were the two things I was treating in my first cases. I was fascinated by the cognitive processes and cognitions that people spoke about, and the role these factors may play in the emergence of psychopathology. My interest really stemmed from a clinical observational perspective.

## Where did you receive your training and who are the mentors who stand out to you?

My predoctoral training in Germany wasn't very mentor based, so I had to be very independent. I was always jealous I did not have regular meetings with someone to discuss my ideas, or data or what it looks like. When I came to the USA as a postdoctoral fellow in Ian Gotlib's lab at Stanford, I realized how wonderful mentorship is. He really helped me with my career by providing me with amazing opportunities to collect data, write scientific manuscripts, and get involved in grants.



**"Now we're focusing on A) training and mentoring the next generation because we've become bigger... B) increasing inclusivity by making the conference less about invitations."**

DR. JUTTA JOORMANN ON  
HER VISION FOR SRP DURING  
HER PRESIDENCY

## **What advice do you have for trainees interested in pursuing a research career?**

Well, you have to have high levels of frustration tolerance that goes along with the excitement for studying a given topic [laughter]. No, I'm partly joking, but you have to be really excited about the questions you are seeking answers to through your research. I have always been really interested and fascinated by questions related to the mechanisms underlying the development of mood and anxiety disorders, and I think that enthusiasm is more than half of what you need to get you through the difficult parts of a researcher career: papers being rejected, grants not being funded. As long as you're excited about the questions it'll get you through.

## **What have been pivotal points in your career?**

When I came to the USA and started my postdoctoral fellowship. At that point, neuroimaging was still new, especially in psychology. Receiving early training in neuroimaging allowed me to appreciate how important of a tool it would be going forward. It heightened my awareness of the importance of biological processes and how they interact with other factors that I had been looking at already, such as cognition and affect. Integrating more of the biological markers into my work was pivotal.

## **What advice do you have on integrating new skills or techniques?**

It's one of the real privileges we have in our job that we can get training in new things. My advice would be to always stay open to possibilities, as there will be things coming along that you will not be trained in. Remain open, interested, and unintimidated by those new developments. Dive in and take courses, and try to understand these new tools. Alternatively, sometimes it is just as important to identify the experts and set up collaborations. Be sure you can talk about your interests to other people who can share new methods that they have developed. It's nice to have wonderful members in your lab who are very good at doing different things, as science is truly a team effort. I enjoy this collaborative aspect of research immensely. It is much better than just sitting in front of the computer and thinking about things by myself. Along those lines, you often see the principal investigator's name attached to research, but there is always a large group of people helping and actually doing the work. I have tried to be very aware of that and give credit to everybody who has been involved in a research project, and think that recognition is an important thing for graduate students and trainees.

## **What is your vision for SRP over the next year?**

We are doing a lot to put forth a different vision. SRP started with a group of people who wanted to meet and talk about their interests and projects, but it has moved way beyond that. Now we're focusing on (A) training and mentoring the next generation because we've become bigger, and now include more post-baccalaureate researchers, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows; and B) increasing inclusivity by making the conference less about invitations. We need to be more open to the work of people who aren't currently members and how can they contribute to the kinds of questions we're currently asking.

## **What opportunities or challenges do you see the society facing in the coming years?**

I think it will be a little bit of a challenge to “find our own”, because we're not big like APS or APA, but we're also not small anymore. We are a completely volunteer organization, which limits us but also makes meetings more personal. I think people are more approachable because they're doing this because they're interested in the topics. It'll be interesting to see how the society develops as we're opening up to more people. I hope we become more inclusive, while also maintaining a meeting where everybody will talk to everybody. We need to continue to foster a society where grad students can approach faculty and faculty attend posters. This is one thing I always loved about SRP, that there aren't hierarchies, and we're small enough that you could talk to anybody.

## **What inspired you to run for president?**

SRP is my favorite conference! Every year, the presentations are highly relevant to what I do. The conference is still small enough that you can have great conversations with colleagues and students. It is a community that is really important to me. I have been attending for 20 years and it's still a great meeting for folks to get to know potential mentors and colleagues. It's wonderful to meet people you can continue to see along your career journey. That's an important reason to become more inclusive, so that more people have that opportunity.

## **What are your hopes for the future of clinical science and SRP?**

We are well positioned to contribute to bigger societal questions. Historically, we may have been a little timid because our focus has been more focused on individual disorders and therapies, but we need to embrace the impact of culture in psychology. Right now, that perspective is missing but very important, and I think we are ideally positioning ourselves to better include it. Another consideration is that we rarely focus on sharing our work with the public or disseminating to people who could benefit from it.



# 2021 Early Career Award: Anna Weinberg

J WOLNY

Dr. Anna Weinberg, current Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair in Clinical Neuroscience at McGill University, received the Early Career Award at the 2021 Society for Research in Psychopathology meeting. This most recent accomplishment for Dr. Weinberg follows numerous recognitions for her contributions to the field of psychopathology research, such as the APA Rising Star Award (2016) and acceptance to the Royal Society of Canada: New Scholars College (2021).

She currently heads a lab (Translational Research in Affect and Cognition Lab) of her own design at McGill University, where her research focuses primarily on utilizing electroencephalography (EEG) to (1) identify markers that may confer vulnerability to developing mood disorders and (2) examine factors that may shape variability in those neural processes as they relate to risk for disorders such as anxiety and depression. Dr. Weinberg notes pivotal stages of development and moments of insight that led her to achieve success as an independent, early-stage researcher.

Dr. Weinberg had a unique route to her position today, as she took virtually no psychology coursework during her undergraduate career—studying English and Studio Arts at Wesleyan College. Following her graduation, Dr. Weinberg moved to New York and worked as a successful magazine journalist for seven years. As a journalist, her job was to write personality profiles, which required her to construct a narrative of what people think and desire: “I didn’t feel great about some of the things I wrote as a journalist because you have to develop a skill of fast intimacy—getting people to talk to you and reveal a lot. But then that information is not always used in the person’s best interest...There was a capacity for people to get hurt.” Ultimately dissatisfied with the career path she was on, Dr. Weinberg had the tenacity to self-correct. First, by taking night coursework in psychology and then working in research labs at Columbia University.



**"Our mobile EEG will allow us to boost recruitment, engage more people, but also diversify the samples we are getting and do more science outreach and psychoeducation in lots of different communities."**

DR. ANNA WEINBERG ON  
USING MOBILE EEG  
TECHNOLOGY TO TAKE HER  
RESEARCH FROM THE LAB  
INTO THE COMMUNITY

It was early in her exposure to research that Dr. Weinberg became very fascinated by the question: why under the same circumstances, do some people become ill and some people do not? This intellectual curiosity was shaped through her experience living in New York during 9/11 and working on a project that examined individuals who were in the towers on this tragic day. This research investigated whether the neural bases of emotion regulation would predict those who later went on to develop PTSD from those who did not. It was later during her career development, as a doctoral student under the mentorship of Drs. Greg Hajcak and David Klonsky at Stony Brook University, that Dr. Weinberg refined her interest in conducting primarily electrophysiological research.

The transition from doctoral training to the job market proved challenging for Dr. Weinberg, as is the case for many academics. However, current students and postdocs interested in pursuing careers in academia should pay close attention to the lessons Dr. Weinberg took from her job talks: “A lot of those conversations got me thinking more about if I were to start a lab, what direction would I go in and what would be the content. What were some of the flaws in the ways I was thinking about things previously...[During job talks] people with really different perspectives will ask you things in the way that you will not hear much in graduate school. That was definitely a very painful period of growth and failure, but ultimately was helpful, and caused a shift in the way I was thinking about things.” Dr. Weinberg was clearly an individual who had grit in the face of challenge and uncertainty in the early stages of her career. These traits have continued to foster her ability to make dynamic changes in how she views and conducts her research, particularly in light of the Covid19 pandemic. When the pandemic stopped her lab’s data collection process for an entire year, she successfully shifted to pool together large datasets with colleagues and published papers focusing on EEG methodology.

Despite these challenges in recent history, Dr. Weinberg is excited for the future directions and areas of growth for her lab; she has begun thinking about brain health more broadly and aims to examine a wider variety of indexes outside of mood disorders. Furthermore, Dr. Weinberg hopes to develop the mobile capacities of her lab and take her research questions beyond an artificial environment and out into the community: “[Our mobile EEG will allow us to] boost recruitment, engage more people, but also diversify the samples we are getting and do more science outreach and psychoeducation in lots of different communities. We will discuss what EEG and ERPs are, what we mean about brain health, and try to engage key stakeholders in communities in asking new questions and engaging in new forms of research.” Importantly, Dr. Weinberg is cognizant of issues related to increasing diversity at multiple levels within the field of psychology and considers how data collection practices might exclude people—particularly within psychophysiology research. She has taken stock of the factors which may make individuals less comfortable coming to the lab to participate in studies and has created the infrastructure to make improvements within this domain, “...so psychology can actually be a field in which everyone gets to have their experiences in the research record.”

# 2021 Early Career Award: Aidan Wright

EMILY ALBERTINA & CARTER FUNKHOUSER

Dr. Aidan Wright is an Associate Professor at the University of Pittsburgh and a recipient of the 2021 SRP Early Career Award. His research examines what personality (dys)function and psychopathology are, how they unfold over time, and what mechanisms cause or maintain them.

Dr. Wright's interests in personality psychopathology first emerged while working at an adolescent inpatient facility as an undergraduate at Penn State University. At this time, he was hoping to attend graduate school to become a clinical psychologist and had sought out this position to improve his chances of getting into graduate school. Dr. Wright was intrigued by the complexity of patients with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) and was struck by treatment providers' poor understanding of their pathology, which often made treatments ineffective or even harmful. Dr. Wright later expressed these thoughts in an extra credit essay for one of his courses, prompting an invitation from the teaching assistant to join Dr. Aaron Pincus's Penn State Personality Psychology Laboratory as an undergraduate research assistant.

Dr. Wright's research interests subsequently evolved over the course of completing a Masters at Villanova University, PhD at Penn State, and postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Pittsburgh and the State University of New York at Buffalo. While treating patients as a PhD student, Dr. Wright noticed that psychiatric diagnoses were simultaneously too specific (as evidenced by high comorbidity rates) and too non-specific (as evidenced by substantial within-disorder heterogeneity). He looked to quantitative models as an alternative way to understand the ontology of psychopathology and found that structures of personality (e.g., the Big 5) offer a holistic description of a person and are similar to contemporary structural models of psychopathology.



**...Dr. Wright has used ambulatory assessment to understand how personality functioning, psychopathology, and etiological processes unfold in everyday life.**

Encouraged by the potential for better structural organizations of psychopathology to facilitate progress in understanding etiology yet dissatisfied with the between-person and static nature of contemporary models of psychopathology and personality, Dr. Wright has used ambulatory assessment to understand how personality functioning, psychopathology, and etiological processes unfold in everyday life. Dr. Wright believes that the field as a whole is moving towards ambulatory methods. He talked about the potential application of these methods to the HiTOP (Hierarchical Taxonomy of Psychopathology) model, which seeks to delineate a better organizational structure of psychopathology, but is static and between-person like other models.

Dr. Wright has found his work in the field incredibly rewarding. For one, Dr. Wright enjoys the aspect of questioning and problem-solving in psychological research. Further, one of the aspects he has found most gratifying has been in his mentorship. He thoroughly enjoys collaborating as a team with his students and postdocs. He finds the diversity of interests in his lab something that has pushed his interests and career forward, and this has allowed him to work on many different projects at the same time. However, he has found that one of the most difficult aspects of conducting psychopathology research is the abstractness of some constructs, which can make the outcome of projects feel less tangible. Hobbies that involve tangible outcomes have been helpful for providing supplemental, more tangible accomplishments.

Dr. Wright's second piece of advice to early-career scientists relates to a strategy he has implemented in his own research. He believes that you should treat your research portfolio similar to a stock portfolio; try to diversify like you would with stocks and bonds. He explained that he believes having some research projects that are "low risk/low reward" is good. However, pushing the limits of the field and your questions offers a researcher the opportunity to move the field forward by re-evaluating a problem from multiple lenses (which nods back to trying to get a holistic description of a person/patient). This method also allows young career scientists a space to be bolder early in their career without worrying about not having the fundamental projects they need to push forward.



# 2020 Early Career Award: Scott Vrieze

KENDALL BEALS

Dr. Scott Vrieze, Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Minnesota, received the 2020 Society for Research in Psychopathology Early Career Award. In addition to this recent SRP award, in 2019 he was awarded the Janet Taylor Spence award for transformative early career contributions presented by the Association for Psychological Science and is a McKnight Land-Grant Professor at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Vrieze has mentored many students and made contributions to the field of biological and psychological risk factors for addiction, with the goal of moving from risk factors to causal factors.

Dr. Vrieze trained at the University of Minnesota, obtaining a PhD in clinical psychology in 2012. He worked with the late Dr. William M. Grove. Dr. Vrieze explained how it was freeing to work with Dr. Grove because he was highly competent yet nurturing, and gave Dr. Vrieze free rein to explore multiple areas of research and work with a variety of researchers. While speaking with Dr. Vrieze, he noted that he thinks of people who influenced, and continue to influence, his career as inspirations. Two inspiring advisors that stuck out to Dr. Vrieze during graduate school were Dr. Matt McGue and Dr. William Iacono, the 2014 John Neale Sustained Mentorship Award winner. He described these relationships to be incredibly helpful to his early career success due to the ability to receive unvarnished critical advice. Dr. Vrieze also stated the importance of working with inspiring people who are nurturing, guiding, and open to what you want to pursue.



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One of the experiences that led him to clinical psychology was working as a research assistant where he identified children in the juvenile court system who could benefit from mental health interventions. He explained how he worked with interesting and “fantastic” clinical psychologists on this project before getting involved as a research volunteer with Dr. Grove at the University of Minnesota. Through this experience Dr. Vrieze became interested in predicting violence. In graduate school, his interest in genetics, addiction, and large datasets developed; he started asking questions that went beyond pure prediction into explanation.

When considering what led to his early career success, Dr. Vrieze made it clear that he valued being able to do what he found interesting and rewarding. One of the most pivotal moments in his early career was working as a postdoctoral fellow in the biostatistics department at the University of Michigan. Although this was an unusual next step after receiving a clinical psychology PhD, Dr. Vrieze recommended that if an interesting opportunity pops up- take it. This experience exposed him to a whole new world of research, problems, and ideas outside of psychology.

Dr. Vrieze has mentored graduate students for years at the University of Minnesota and his mentor style reflects the experiences he had with his advisors. He believes in trying to let them develop on their own. “Everyone is different” he explained, “and needs tailored advice” - just like our genetics. His advice to new researchers? It’s more fun to try to ask big questions, to think big about what you want to accomplish in your career. We can get stuck in the minutia and we miss big questions that our field faces.

While reflecting on the field of behavioral genetics, Dr. Vrieze remarked “One thing we have really benefited from as a field is criticism”. As genetic research becomes more mainstream, he acknowledged that the criticism of the claims made in the field has forced researchers to address limitations that exist in study designs. Dr. Vrieze explained how, in the last 10 years, a new world of opportunity has opened up in behavioral genetics. While past genetic research used pedigrees, he is excited about using new techniques that allow him to investigate the interrelated genetics between people across the globe.

Dr. Vrieze notes that new students in the field of behavioral genetics will be the ones to carve new directions in the field. One big area of growth, Dr. Vrieze suggests, is in global genetic research. Expanding research to be more inclusive is crucial because we cannot miss out on all the ways in which people are different. This will help expand our understanding of what causes individuals to develop behavioral problems and how we can best help them.

# 2021 John Neale Sustained Mentorship Award: William Spaulding

ALEXANDRA AYALA & KARA STEVENS

Dr. William Spaulding, Professor Emeritus at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, received the John Neale Sustained Mentorship Award at this year's annual meeting of the Society for Research in Psychopathology. Other recent notable awards include the Kraepelin-Alzheimer Medal, awarded to Dr. Spaulding in Munich, Germany in 2014 for his work surrounding the treatment and rehabilitation of schizophrenia. Throughout his career, Spaulding has touched the lives of many patients, collaborators, and students while contributing immensely to the body of work investigating schizophrenia. Dr. Spaulding champions a philosophy regarding opportunity -- he says that, in his experience, finding an opportunity happens at the intersection of looking for and being prepared for an opportunity. Once you are prepared for an opportunity, you are ready to "jump on it" if one happens to float by. This sentiment characterizes his own training as well as the mentorship and training that he provides to others.

Dr. Spaulding's interest in psychopathology emerged in an Abnormal Psychology course during his sophomore year at Pomona College. He remained broadly interested in psychopathology, until his second year of graduate school at the University of Arizona. A self-declared "graduate student with a bad attitude," he found his niche in schizophrenia while completing an externship in the Tucson VA's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science under the "masterful mentoring" of their Chief of Psychology, Dr. George Hohmann. At this time, no faculty in the clinical program at the University of Arizona were studying or providing care to individuals with serious mental illness, including schizophrenia. Thankfully, Dr. Spaulding's graduate mentor, community psychologist Dr. Spencer McWilliams, introduced Dr. Spaulding to Dr. Rue Cromwell, then a faculty at the University of Rochester.



**According to Dr. Spaulding, being prepared for an opportunity, and being able to jump at an opportunity when it becomes available is an important part of a research career.**

He later became Dr. Spaulding's primary dissertation mentor from afar. Despite obtaining his Ph.D. in a speedy four years, Spaulding described himself as "virtually unemployable" and spent the summer of 1976 searching for opportunities, knowing he needed more training in schizophrenia. In an effort to continue his work in schizophrenia research, Dr. Spaulding relied on the connections he had made during graduate school and spent 3 years as a postdoc, working collaboratively with Dr. Cromwell at the University of Rochester.

Dr. Spaulding's *opportunity philosophy* is even more clearly illustrated by his early career experience in Lincoln, Nebraska. When he started at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, he knew that Nebraska had just undergone de-institutionalization of their state mental hospital and now had a large population of people presenting to the county mental health center with severe chronic schizophrenia and no psychologists to serve them. These institutional and community-based centers needed help, and Spaulding was recommended. As he says, the rest "just happened." By the end of the 1980s, Dr. Spaulding had helped create a state-of-the-art rehabilitation program and was running an NIH R01 randomized control trial for a cognitive therapy modality that he helped develop. The rehab program ran at the state hospital for over 20 years. As he mentioned, this was the result of the perfect storm: Spaulding was looking for opportunities, was prepared for an opportunity to come by, was approached with an opportunity, and immediately jumped on it.

This *opportunity philosophy* takes shape in his mentorship as well. During Dr. Spaulding's formative years of graduate school, Bandura's Social Learning Theory was at the forefront of psychology and has influenced his mentoring style. Accordingly, Dr. Spaulding's mentorship style is centered around role-modeling. Much of what Spaulding teaches his graduate students is taught through demonstrations and performing the tasks himself while his graduate students observe. He then invites his graduate students to imitate his actions, "and hopefully improve upon them," by providing opportunities for hands-on learning. As a mentor, Spaulding developed the idea that his major responsibility, having recruited the best graduate students he could, is to provide an environment that maximizes a graduate student's ability to be creative and innovative. He firmly believes in allowing students to figure out what really "pulls their trigger." In service of this goal, Dr. Spaulding encourages students to incorporate their own ideas into the research. He provides his mentees with opportunities to set those ideas into motion and watch them play out. Dr. Spaulding's own opportunity to create a treatment and rehabilitation program, in which he had a great deal of control towards determining how the program was run, has provided the framework for a training platform in which his graduate students spend 1-2 years as externs in this program, learning about clinical research. This program can grow and flourish, as Dr. Spaulding pushes his students to bring their own ideas to the work, encouraging them to step outside of his own thoughts and ideas.



When asked what advice he had for students interested in gaining mentorship skills, Dr. Spaulding responded that the most important aspect of being a great mentor is having had a great mentor. Dr. Spaulding states that Dr. Cromwell was an excellent mentor and that he can not imagine being where he is today without that mentorship. Spaulding explains that it is serendipitous that he is receiving the John Neale Mentorship award. The award is named after Dr. John Neale, who was also mentored by Dr. Cromwell, highlighting the great mentorship modeling that Dr. Cromwell cultivated. Importantly, Dr. Spaulding noted that learning from all your mentors is important: If a student does not particularly admire the type of mentor they are currently working with, this can still be a great learning lesson. Back to his *opportunity philosophy*, Dr. Spaulding believes that taking note of the things your mentors can provide you, and taking advantage of those opportunities, is key.

For students interested in research broadly, and specific to psychopathology, Dr. Spaulding urges students to think carefully about what a research career means to them. He advises students to break down what they are interested in, what they like about research, and what they envision themselves doing. He advises students to think about what opportunities they are prepared to jump on. According to Dr. Spaulding, being prepared for an opportunity, and being able to jump at an opportunity when it becomes available is an important part of a research career.

Dr. Spaulding's career has been nothing short of impressive. From blazing his own trail during his graduate years and creating a state-of-the-art rehabilitation program during his early career to his continued dedication to quality research and mentorship, his contributions to the field of schizophrenia treatment and research are substantial. In the truest sign of a great mentor, when asked what he was most proud of in his career, Dr. Spaulding stated: "Of all the things that have happened in my professional life, what I am most proud of is my students."

# 2020 John Neale Sustained Mentorship Award: Lee Anna Clark

JESSICA AREND

Dr. Lee Anna Clark is the William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Professor of Psychology at the University of Notre Dame. She is a clinical psychologist and researcher specializing in the assessment of personality disorders. As a testament to her expertise in personality disorders, Dr. Clark developed the Schedule for Nonadaptive and Adaptive Personality (SNAP), a psychological test that measures personality pathology, and served as a member of the personality disorder working groups for both the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5) and the International Classification of Diseases, 11th Edition (ICD-11). In 2017, she was awarded the SRP Joseph Zubin Award for Lifetime Contributions.

Dr. Clark is being honored by the society again, receiving the 2020 John Neale Sustained Mentorship Award at this year's virtual meeting. It was immediately clear why she was chosen for the award when we met on a Zoom video chat. We sipped coffee in our respective homes and laughed as our cats meowed loudly in the background. I was instantly put at ease by her warmth and her down-to-earth demeanor.

Years of being mentored have cultivated Dr. Clark's unique style of successful mentorship. Her first mentor was her childhood cello teacher, Fred Hoepfner. She still recalls the interest with which he discussed her life and aspirations, not just her music lessons. As an undergraduate, Dr. Clark fondly recalled being mentored by a Professor of Japanese, Dr. Eleanor Jordan, while studying psycholinguistics. Dr. Jordan was renowned worldwide for her academic contributions to her field and was also a woman who was married and raising a child – a particularly non-traditional path at the time. Similarly, Clark's next academic mentor, Dr. Karen Brazell, was a successful woman in academia. Dr. Clark was appreciative that she saw demonstrated, in the early stages of her career, that women could have both careers and families.



**"I try simply  
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DR. LEE ANNA CLARK  
ON MENTORSHIP  
SENSITIVE TO  
STUDENTS'  
INDIVIDUALITY

While earning her doctorate in Clinical Psychology at the University of Minnesota, Dr. Clark was mentored by Dr. James Butcher. He mentored Dr. Clark as a professional, building her network of scholarly connections and paving the way for Dr. Clark to attend certain conferences that would advance her career. Dr. Clark also spoke fondly of an informal mentor, Dr. Auke Tellegen, who provided the “intangibles” of how to be a good scholar.

As she recounted her past mentors, Dr. Clark emphasized that mentoring is not about a single individual. “We often think of a mentor as one person,” Dr. Clark said, “but people will have different roles. The person that will provide emotional support may not be the same person who gives you practical advice.” She referenced the National Conference for Faculty Diversity and Development’s Mentoring Map. Dr. Clark encouraged academics at all stages to fill out their “mentor map” multi-directionally, to build a network of support that can meet multifaceted needs.

When asked about her advice to mentors specifically, Dr. Clark warned that mentorship can be one of the most difficult components of faculty positions. Dr. Clark emphasized that, in her work as a mentor, she has strived to remain a constant learner. “Whatever [mentorship] style you develop, it should have some flexibility. Every student is different, and you need to be sensitive to those individual differences.” Dr. Clark highlighted the importance of tailoring mentorship to each student’s individuality while remaining equitable. Her aspiration in mentorship is not to create duplicates of herself, or even to convince her students to pursue an academic path. “I would never push someone to become an academic. Rather, I try simply to help my mentees see that I love [academia] – because they might decide that they love it too.”

Dr. Clark spoke of the academic life as one full of rejections and failures. “I think that striving to think of failures as learning experiences is important,” Dr. Clark advised. “The [goal] is to bounce back with some new information you can use for the next step.” Dr. Clark also spoke to the pace of academic life. “Find a balance between doing too much and doing too little,” she said, smiling knowingly. In her observations, the most successful researchers have a “conveyor-belt” approach to their work. At a given time, they are simultaneously cycling through different states of grant proposals, data collection, analysis, and manuscript writing. Dr. Clark advised academics to utilize every poster or presentation as a step towards a manuscript. “When you say that ‘future research should’ – remember that you could be that researcher.”

This future work approach is reflected in her own publication on the tripartite model of depression and anxiety. After wondering about the comorbidity of depression and anxiety for years, Dr. Clark began to question why researchers focused so heavily on similarities while overlooking differences. Dr. Clark, together with her husband and career-long collaborator, David Watson, developed the tripartite model to explain the commonalities and distinctions between depression and anxiety. This publication became a springboard for many of her own research questions, as well as for others (it has been cited over 5,600 times!).

Another career highlight for Dr. Clark has been her contribution to personality nosology. She recalled reading the DSM-III early in her education and wondering why personality disorders were defined differently in diagnoses than in her personality psychology coursework. As Dr. Clark pointedly stated, “personality pathology should be related to what personality psychologists are studying.” Accordingly, Dr. Clark has been involved in diagnostic manual revision for over 40 years, including the development of the DSM-5 and ICD-11. She stated that today's diagnostic manuals are “the closest we’ve come” to integrating these approaches.

Fundamentally, Dr. Clark saw assessment as key in both the tripartite model and personality pathology diagnosis. When she noticed that measures to assess personality traits broadly did not exist, she developed her own — the SNAP. Dr. Clark attributed her career steps to a combination of good mentorship, networks, a fair amount of luck, and a bit of audacity. “Don’t hesitate to advocate for yourself. Make sure that people know what you’re interested in doing and things that you’d like to contribute to.”

Going back to her early mentorship experiences, Dr. Clark emphasized that this framework of advocating for yourself is especially important for women and other people of marginalized identities. Her passion for the advancement of women in academia was evident. Dr. Clark spoke of the “leaky pipeline,” as described in research literature; while women are no longer underrepresented in graduate programs and lower level professorships, there is still underrepresentation in tenured and especially Full Professor faculty positions. Women are more likely to leave academia or to slow their work to focus on family. Dr. Clark quickly added that she does not consider this decision to be entirely bad, speculating that “if men would also pay more attention to their families – slow down, be a little less career oriented – then there would be more room for women to advance.” Dr. Clark spoke to the importance of academics being more transparent about their work and family lives. “I have felt it’s important to let my mentees know that I have a family and a family life [in addition to work]. Not just to say, but to demonstrate, that you can have a multifaceted life.” Reflected in this statement is the core of Dr. Clark’s mentorship style, and my impressions during our interactions – while she is a successful researcher and fierce advocate, at the end of the day she is a person first and supports her mentees in their individuality.



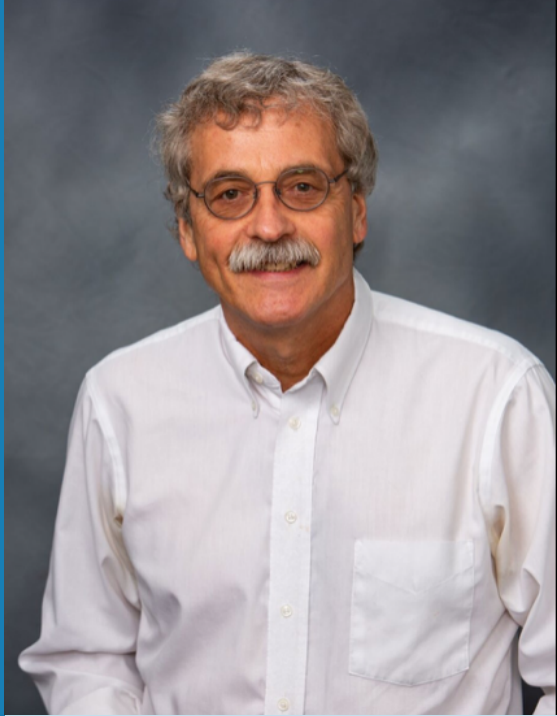
# 2019 John Neale Sustained Mentorship Award: David Watson

MARY BLENDERMANN, ERIN BONDY, & SAMANTHA PEGG

Dr. David Watson, the Andrew J. McKenna Family Professor of Psychology at the University of Notre Dame, received the John Neale Sustained Mentorship Award at the 2019 meeting of the Society for Research in Psychopathology. In addition to this recent SRP award, in 2015 he was awarded the Jack Block Award for Distinguished Research in Personality presented by the Society for Personality and Social Psychology. Throughout his impressive career, Dr. Watson has mentored many students while making significant contributions to the fields of personality, mood, and assessment research.

Dr. Watson trained at the University of Minnesota beginning in 1975. He worked with Dr. Auke Tellegen. Although it sometimes was challenging to arrange meetings, Dr. Watson was clear about how Dr. Tellegen was incredibly supportive and fantastic as an intellectual advisor. As an example, Dr. Watson described the many hours his advisor would put in reviewing programming code by hand. For learning about more practical issues in academia (e.g., how to go to conferences, getting manuscripts completed and submitted), Dr. Watson praised the help of Dr. Phil Kendall, who served as another crucial mentor during his days as a graduate student.

During our conversation, Dr. Watson noted the distinction between advisor and mentor. While he was in graduate school, advisors were there for academic matters but did little in the way of professional development. This “older advising model” changed in the 1980s, according to Dr. Watson. He remarked, “By the time I became a faculty member, I was more broadly concerned about the students.” This shift toward a mentoring relationship, and his experiences with past advisors, informed the way he approached his own mentorship style.



**"I'm not  
producing  
clones of  
myself."**

DR. DAVID WATSON  
ON MENTORSHIP  
THAT PRIORITIZES  
STUDENTS' PASSIONS

As a personality psychologist specializing in scale construction, Dr. Watson has had the opportunity to develop a broad range of interests. He has worked on scales measuring a wide variety of constructs, ranging from symptoms of mood disorders to unusual sleep phenomena to schizotypy to—in one memorable situation at the University of Iowa—agricultural safety and farm-related accidents. Dr. Watson makes a point of extending this intellectual openness to his students. The first time he sits down to talk to a new graduate student, rather than introducing them to his program of research or describing his latest grants, he inquires about their interests and what really fascinates them. Dr. Watson's goal as a mentor is to equip his students to pursue their own passions, not his - "I'm not producing clones of myself," he stated wryly.

Dr. Watson noted that one of the most challenging aspects of mentoring is giving students feedback on their work. His approach to feedback draws on his work on individual differences, which has shown that different people may interpret the same feedback very differently. To ensure his feedback will be well-received, he tries to adopt his students' points of view. He offers encouragement when he knows it will inspire a student to try harder, but he also doesn't hold back criticism, knowing that anyone in academia has to be able to handle rejection. He is meticulous about feedback on students' writing, adjusting his comments to suit their level of development as a writer. For some students, he said, all they need is a model paper to inspire their style, while others benefit from instruction on subject-verb agreement. No matter what he has to say, Dr. Watson emphasizes to his students that he is on their side, and he is offering criticism because he wants to help them grow.

Although it was difficult for Dr. Watson to explain exactly why his students benefit from his mentoring so much, he mentioned some practices that he thinks his students appreciate. His students call him by his first name, and he allows them to choose the mentoring style and frequency of meetings they find most helpful. He gives regular assigned readings to his lab members, exposing them to quantitative methods that are relevant to their analyses. He mused, "I think I have excellent time management skills," explaining that he reserves several mornings a week for challenging projects. He has carefully honed his aptitude for intense focus, a trait he calls "absorption," and makes a habit of spending periods of time as short as twenty minutes working on elements of larger projects. When a student submits a paper to him for edits, he makes a point of handing back the paper with his comments within a few days. Dr. Watson prioritizes his students' needs and preferences - treating them like the professional scientists he wants them to become.

Dr. Watson had a few pieces of advice for students and postdocs interested in gaining and sharpening mentorship skills of their own. He cautioned that there is an inherent power differential in the mentorship role, and that it is important to be aware of that. He emphasized the importance of taking on each student's perspective and meeting them where they are. He suggested that students seeking to develop their own mentorship style should draw on their experiences, reflecting on what their previous mentors did or said that the student found to be effective or ineffective for them. "Mentorship partly comes down to what type of person you think you are or want to be," he noted. Regardless of what one's mentorship style looks like, Dr. Watson highlighted how critical mentorship is to the futures of those one is mentoring: "As a faculty member, you are so important to the careers of people."

# 2020 Joseph Zubin Lifetime Achievement Award: Barbara Cornblatt

DANIELLE B. ABEL

Dr. Barbara Cornblatt is the winner of Society for Research in Psychopathology's 2020 Joseph Zubin Award. The Zubin Award is a lifetime achievement award given to researchers who have made a significant contribution to our understanding of psychopathology. Interestingly, this is not Dr. Cornblatt's first time winning an award named in Dr. Zubin's honor. Rather, in recognition of her contributions to psychopathology research as an early career researcher, she received the Zubin Memorial Fund Award at the New York State Psychiatric Institute in 1996. Thus, Dr. Cornblatt's 2020 SRP award brings her full circle, and she couldn't be more deserving given her contributions toward early identification and intervention for those at clinical high risk for psychosis.

Originally from Boston, Dr. Cornblatt earned her bachelor's degree in English Literature from Syracuse University in 1964, an MBA in Industrial Psychology from Baruch College, and her doctorate in Experimental Psychology from The New School University, College of Social Research in New York. Throughout the 1980's and 90's, Dr. Cornblatt worked as a research scientist at The New York State Psychiatric Institute, an arm of Columbia University Medical School. She is currently a Professor of Psychiatry & Molecular Medicine, Hofstra-Northwell School of Medicine, in NY and is the Director of the Recognition and Prevention (RAP) program at Northwell.



**Dr. Cornblatt founded the Recognition and Prevention (RAP) program, one of the first and longest lasting CHR programs in the country...Due to the efforts of Dr. Cornblatt, her collaborators and others in the field...CHR has since become a major field in psychopathology research.**



At Columbia, her primary mentor was Dr. Nikki Erlenmeyer-Kimling, and it was while working with Dr. Erlenmeyer-Kimling that Dr. Cornblatt first developed her interest in identifying and developing interventions for children at-risk for schizophrenia. Together, Drs. Cornblatt and Erlenmeyer-Kimling conducted the New York High Risk Project, which followed the offspring of parents with schizophrenia from childhood into their thirties in order to identify risk factors for conversion to schizophrenia. This landmark study identified biological and biobehavioral indicators of genetic liability for schizophrenia-spectrum disorders and informed our current understanding of the developmental course of these illnesses.

In her interview, Dr. Cornblatt explained how the field of psychopathology has changed over her career. For instance, her career began at a time when research widely blamed schizophrenia on parents—particularly mothers—and other environmental triggers. Thus, her work in genetic high risk for schizophrenia was like a “spring awakening” which brought a wave of new perspectives on the origins of the disorder. Dr. Cornblatt was indeed a pioneer in multiple domains of psychopathology research. She recounted how as a junior researcher, her attempts to convince senior researchers at Columbia that cognition played an important role in schizophrenia were dismissed. Undeterred, Dr. Cornblatt developed one of the first computerized measure of cognition, the Continuous Performance Test – Identical Pairs (CPT-IP), and, with it, demonstrated that both those with at-risk for and diagnosed with schizophrenia exhibit robust attentional deficits. In doing so, she validated her initial intuitions about the importance of cognition and created a task that is now considered the “gold standard” for the measurement of attention and vigilance in schizophrenia.

While the above undoubtedly established Dr. Cornblatt as a prominent schizophrenia researcher, she is arguably best known for her contributions in the inception of Clinical High Risk (CHR) research. As Dr. Cornblatt explained, after conducting the New York High Risk Study, she was beginning to feel burnt out since there was no clear pathway to intervention. She said she wanted to work with at-risk children who were experiencing symptoms rather than those whose risk was based on their parents. After all, not everyone at genetic risk for schizophrenia goes on to develop the disorder. Thus, Dr. Cornblatt was looking for a change. As Dr. Cornblatt described it, that change came with a little bit of serendipity. While in Australia to present at a drug company meeting, Dr. Cornblatt happened upon a sign posted advertising a different conference across town. She decided to attend, and that conference happened to be the first meeting run by Dr. Patrick McGorry, one of the founders of CHR research. Dr. Cornblatt described it as the best meeting she had ever been to. She said it was one of those “Aha” moments; she couldn’t believe that Dr. McGorry was working with at-risk adolescents with attenuated symptoms of psychosis— the same work that she had dreamed of doing.

The serendipity did not stop there! Dr. Cornblatt said that after returning home, she excitedly shared her ideas about this work at an NIH study section in Washington. As she put it, she was “chattering away” with whoever was sitting next to her about how she wanted to do this type of interventional research for children at CHR. Not two weeks later, Dr. Cornblatt received a phone call. It turns out that at the NIH, she was talking to Dr. John Kane, the chairman of psychiatry at the Zucker School of Medicine, and he was now calling to gauge her interest in establishing a CHR program at the Zucker Hillside Hospital. Two months later, she founded the Recognition and Prevention (RAP) program, one of the first and longest lasting CHR programs in the country. She is now in her 23rd year at Zucker-Hillside and has served over 800 people with CHR. Due to the efforts of Dr. Cornblatt, her collaborators and others in the field (most notably Tom McGlashan and Scott Woods at Yale), CHR has since become a major field in psychopathology research. In fact, Dr. Cornblatt joked about the vast difference in number of citations she now includes in her CHR talks saying, “my slides used to cite just a small sliver of studies; now they [the citations] go up to the ceiling.”

As a prestigious and productive investigator in psychopathology research, Dr. Cornblatt offered two pieces of advice for those in the early stages of a research career. First, she said you must go with the ups and downs, and be prepared to deal with a lot of downs. She explained that a research career that depends on grant funding can be very intense. As she put it, “you just think you have the whole idea of how to survive in the field, and then somebody will come around and change the whole field and change the major criteria for funding.” But her response was simple: “You just have to go with it.” She explained that the field is continuously growing and holding on to ideas that are changing won’t serve you. So, the key to a successful research career is to be flexible and “go with the flow.” Dr. Cornblatt’s second piece of advice was on a more personal note, pressing the necessity of social support in your family life. Dr. Cornblatt explained that she was able to succeed in her career due to the support of her husband. As two psychologists, Dr. Cornblatt and her husband both had busy careers, but they never prioritized one career over the other. She said that they shared home and childcare responsibilities evenly and learned to compromise when their work schedules conflicted with one another. Dr. Cornblatt stressed that this type of flexibility and support from your partner/family is necessary to progress in both your career and personal life.

When asked about the future of psychopathology research, Dr. Cornblatt spoke about how the field is currently moving toward “big science.” However, Dr. Cornblatt believes that these things come and go in waves. Right now, the emphasis is on large-scale, international studies and computerized, rapid data collection approaches. While Dr. Cornblatt appreciates the value of this type of research and believes it may yield some important breakthroughs, she emphasized that smaller studies that are highly theoretical and model driven will also always be relevant and impactful as well. Thus, Dr. Cornblatt believes it is important for junior scholars to become involved in all types of research projects. In fact, Dr. Cornblatt is part of a collaboration which was recently awarded a \$52 million grant to develop the Psychosis Risk Outcomes Network (ProNET), a research program involving 26 institutions across eight countries which will provide the most inclusive international sample of patient data in the CHR field. However, Dr. Cornblatt is also still conducting smaller-scale studies within the RAP program, focusing on social functioning and cognition in those with CHR. In this way, she says her many research interests over the years have converged. As she puts it, “Old research can still have a big impact on new research.”

Overall, Dr. Cornblatt expressed an immense love and appreciation for her career. As she said, “I can’t imagine anything better than coming up with interesting questions and being able to design studies to answer them.” Her career has never been boring, and with the progression of research over the years, there is always something that keeps her interested. Thus, for Dr. Cornblatt, psychopathology is the “the greatest field ever.”

# 2019 Joseph Zubin Lifetime Achievement Award: Daniel Klein

CASSANDRA FLEMING, SAMANTHA FRADKIN, & JACOB PINE

During the SRP 2019 annual meeting, we spoke with the recipient of the Joseph Zubin Award for Lifetime Contributions in Psychopathology, Dr. Daniel Klein. Dr. Klein is a Distinguished Professor of Psychology at Stony Brook University. Dr. Klein's research focuses on the development of mood disorders, including intergenerational transmission and risk factors, particularly temperamental emotionality and reward and threat sensitivity. He is currently the Principal Investigator (PI) on the longitudinal Stony Brook Temperament Study and co-PI on the Adolescent Development of Emotions and Personality Traits, both of which investigate antecedents and pathways to the development of mood and anxiety disorders.

Dr. Klein's interest in clinical psychology was spurred by an undergraduate abnormal psychology course he took with Dr. Raymond Knight at Brandeis University. This led to Dr. Klein joining Dr. Knight's lab, which focused on schizophrenia. After completing his bachelor's degree, Dr. Klein attended the clinical psychology doctoral program at SUNY Buffalo under the mentorship of Drs. Richard Depue and Michael Raulin. In the course of this work, Dr. Klein noted that individuals with schizophrenia with a good prognosis tended to exhibit features more characteristic of mood disorders than psychotic disorders. This was prior to the shift from a broad to a narrow conceptualization of schizophrenia in DSM-III, and inspired Dr. Klein to pursue a career primarily focused on mood disorders.



**Dr. Klein cautioned researchers not to focus exclusively on cross-sectional symptoms and ignore the psychopathological context of those symptoms, including co-occurring symptoms, development, and course, that might signal different etiological processes.**



When asked about the work that he was most proud of, Dr. Klein cited his efforts to distinguish chronic and episodic depression. Until DSM-IV, major depressive disorder (MDD) was thought to be primarily episodic in nature. Dr. Klein's research focused on a subgroup of depressed patients who never had sustained periods of full remission, and demonstrated that they differ from those with a more classical episodic course on a number of important clinical and etiological features. This work provided much of the basis for the distinction in DSM-5 between persistent depressive disorder and major depression.

Much of our conversation with Dr. Klein centered on the complexity of mental illness and its implications for the future of the field. Of note, Dr. Klein mentioned that while he was heartened by the field's embrace of dimensional approaches to psychopathology, he cautioned researchers not to focus exclusively on cross-sectional symptoms and ignore the psychopathological context of those symptoms, including co-occurring symptoms, development, and course, that might signal different etiological processes.

By way of career advice, Dr. Klein suggested that young investigators focus on projects that interest them, rather than what appears to be trendy at the moment. In Dr. Klein's opinion, there is greater uncertainty about the direction of the field now than at any point in his career, and while that can make it difficult for young investigators to decide where to invest their time and energy, it is also exciting in that it provides a broad license to pursue novel hypotheses and approaches. In thinking back on his own career path, Dr. Klein observed that one can never fully anticipate what new collaborations, projects, and findings will emerge and where they will take you, so young researchers should always remain open to and embrace new opportunities as they arise.

# Students Harness the Power for Social Change in Clinical Science

Cynthia M. Villanueva & Renée Martin-Willett  
University of Colorado Boulder

In her book "On Being Included," Sara Ahmed makes two critically important observations of institutional spaces. One, that "the responsibility for diversity and equality is unevenly distributed," and two, that "if diversity and equality work is less valued by organizations, then to become responsible for this work can mean to inhabit institutional spaces that are also less valued" (Ahmed, 2012). As graduate students in a clinical psychology PhD program, we argue that the responsibility for equity falls upon every member of our organizations equally, moving beyond either relegating this work to a 'less than' category, or worse, performing what Ahmed terms "image work," in which issues are discussed but action is not taken. There are many "calls to action" like this one, but it is important to keep in mind that this is still work that must be done and promises that must be kept. Students of psychology and neuroscience have the power to inspire change and demonstrate leadership in the work of equity and inclusion in research, teaching, and clinical care. Thus, this letter is a brief report on one such actionable approach: Initiating a collaborative needs assessment.

As trainees navigating academic hierarchies, it can be challenging to recognize the power that we hold, and even more frightening to wield it. However, graduate students are uniquely positioned to assess the needs of their department given their roles as trainees, but also as mentors and teachers. We can find our strength and voices in creating community, and in our own experience; this process can be positive and collaborative. Working in groups whose members span diverse backgrounds and perspectives maximizes innovation, creativity, and divergent approaches. Groups can be within your own department, or across institutional boundaries. For example, several multi-university student groups have already organized to enact change, such as Psychology Students for Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (PSIDE) and Dismantling Systemic Shortcomings in Education and Clinical Training (DiSSECT).

But what is a collaborative needs assessment? In this context, "needs" are defined as the difference between the current state of something and its "target" state (Roth, 1990). Thus, a collaborative assessment identifies areas that are not in their target state, as well as areas of strength. In the ongoing process of conducting a student-led collaborative needs assessment of our own training program at the University of Colorado Boulder, we highlight the following lessons we hope to share with other students to be aware of when initiating changes in their own respective programs.

1. Engage all levels of program members. Initial work can be driven by students with gradually increasing faculty involvement towards including members at all levels. For example, our student group wrote an open letter to faculty that sparked the creation of student and faculty subgroups, each with a focus on key areas such as BIPOC mentorship or clinical training.
2. Maintain frequent communication. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) workgroups should cut across programs and positions of power, with frequent, multi-level communication (e.g., between students and faculty, department chairs, and high-level university figures).
3. Track goals transparently. Making public commitments, tracking ongoing progress, and sharing that information program-wide can be an effective way to motivate continued efforts. For example, semesterly program updates and reports can be posted on department websites.
4. Persist. Do not be dissuaded by forms of institutional resistance. Approaching change at the accreditation or university board level can create the push needed to motivate departments to commit to anti-racist reforms. Letters to the editor, such as the National Call to Action Letter to APA, can be powerful, especially when they gain public attention.
5. Collaborate across divisions. We don't have to do this alone. Sharing resources can significantly strengthen and quicken your impact. There are several platforms for pooling resources such as the BRIDGE Clinical Psychology Network, and publicly available training courses like this one from the University of Pittsburgh. In our department, clinical students are beginning to coordinate with social psychology students on the topic of undergraduate research experience. Academic Twitter is also a great place to learn what other groups are doing.

A collaborative needs assessment is just the beginning of a process that requires frequent re-commitments to learning, growing, and holding ourselves and each other accountable. We cannot rest the power of change on any one group of people, nor can we expect a single DEI taskforce to uproot the longstanding systemic inequities embedded in our academic traditions and cultures. Instead, we must equally share the responsibility for equity, and we must prioritize the value of equity within our organizations. We believe that many clinical training programs would like to do better, we just need a place to start. While many have felt terrified, angry, frustrated, and moved by the injustices of systemic racism and structural inequality continuing to rip at the seams of this country, we have also found hope through actions within our reach.

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Cynthia M. Villanueva is a graduate student in the Clinical Psychology PhD program at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her research interests focus on emotion-related processes in psychopathology, with a particular emphasis on examining individual differences in emotion language and emotion regulation in bipolar and unipolar mood disorders. She is also interested in how stigmas against talking about mental illness and expressed emotions may contribute to health inequities in minority communities.



Renée Martin-Willett is a Clinical Psychology graduate student at the University of Colorado Boulder. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Southern California and her master's degree from Vanderbilt University. Her research interests include transdisciplinary models of psychopathology in neuroscience, with an emphasis on co-occurring disorders with substance use, underrepresented populations, low-resource settings, and global health and immigration.



# Student Award Winners



This year SRP gave out a variety of student awards, including two new awards: the SRP Scholarship Award and the DEI Poster Award. We reached out to all of the award winners to be interviewed for the newsletter. Those interviews are included subsequently, including features on the winners of the new awards written by Dr. Alex Moussa-Tooks.

# 2021 Scholarship Award Feature: Dominique Black

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Dominique Black is currently a senior research assistant at the Medical University of South Carolina. Under the mentorship of Dr. Lindsay Squeglia, PhD and Dr. Kevin Gray, MD, her research utilizes the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) Study, a longitudinal dataset that observes adolescents beginning at age 9-10. This study is the largest body of research in the United States investigating risk and resilience related to substance use in adolescence, as well as its subsequent consequences. Accordingly, this dataset is optimal for Dominique's interests, which center around the intersection between dysfunctional coping in individuals with internalizing problems and substance use.

Her passion for research starts with wanting to advance understanding of the neurobiological underpinnings and psychosocial determinants of substance-use disorder, which she hopes to leverage to study and implement new recovery treatments. Accordingly, she is interested in the development and implementation of evidence-based treatments for individuals with substance use problems.

Given that comorbidity rates between substance use disorder and other mental health conditions are high, Dominique is also interested in pursuing dual diagnosis research on individuals with substance use disorder. She has her eye on substance-use treatment research from Drs. Katie Witkiewitz and Kamilla Venner at the University of New Mexico, who implement mindfulness-based interventions for substance use and culturally effective adaptations of evidence-based treatments, respectively. Because the stigma to seek help in black communities is detrimental, Dominique shares that her "life goal is to reduce this stigma through dissemination of information, increasing access, and creating programs that help low-income individuals seek the help they need."



**Dominique's life goal is to reduce the stigma in black communities around seeking help "through dissemination of information, increasing access, and creating programs that help low-income individuals seek the help they need."**

Dominique first became interested in psychopathology research while at Clemson University, under the mentorship of Dr. Kaileigh Byrne. Dominique had the opportunity to work directly on a study investigating how an inpatient recovery-coaching intervention could help overcome specific risk factors and barriers to recovery in individuals hospitalized due to complications from a substance use disorder. For Dominique, hearing study participants share their experiences enriched her personal experience, inspiring her to pursue a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology to help change the lives of individuals who struggle with substance use disorder.

When asked what advice she has for aspiring or more junior graduate students, Dominique emphatically commented, “Get rid of your imposter syndrome, you deserve to be in the position you are in!” She also reminds us to “not be afraid to ask questions, people are there to help you, but they can’t help you if you don’t ask.”


But Dominique is not all research all the time; in fact, she shared that she once locked eyes with Queen B (Beyoncé) herself and described it as the most magical moment I ever experienced.”

# 2021 Scholarship Award Feature: Kevin Narine

WILLIAM JAMES COLLEGE

Kevin Narine is a current clinical psychology doctoral student at William James College in Newton, MA, where he is mentored by Drs. Natalie Cort and Lindsey Davis. He is a recipient of the Serving the Mental Health Needs of the Underserved Scholarship and a Center for Multicultural and Global Mental Health (CMGMH) Fellow. Kevin's research and clinical interests include examining cultural factors impacting anxiety-related disorders and suicide risk in diverse populations and developing affirmative, evidence-based treatments for these conditions. In addition, he is interested in the traumatic sequelae of racism and how systemic oppression relates to the development and maintenance of anxiety and trauma-related conditions.

Some of these interests are long-standing. Kevin received his bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies from the University of Pennsylvania in 2018. Before graduate school, he was trained as a research assistant at the Center for the Treatment and Study of Anxiety at the University of Pennsylvania under Dr. Edna Foa. Kevin reminds us that psychopathology is often underexamined in minoritized populations. He commented, "it is essential to understand cultural and systemic factors influencing the development and maintenance of psychopathology in diverse populations." He is passionate about investigating this gap in the literature to understand how anxiety-related disorders operate and impact marginalized subgroups within the LGBTQ+ community (e.g., minoritized racial/ethnic individuals). Ultimately, he hopes that this burgeoning area of research will contribute to the development of affirmative, evidence-based treatments for underserved communities.

A portrait of Kevin Narine, a young man with short, wavy brown hair, smiling slightly. He is wearing a dark blue shirt. The background is a blurred green, suggesting an outdoor setting with foliage.

**"It is essential to understand cultural and systemic factors influencing the development and maintenance of psychopathology in diverse populations."**

KEVIN NARINE ON  
INVESTIGATING  
PSYCHOPATHOLOGY IN  
MINORITIZED  
POPULATIONS



Along this line of inquiry, Kevin has been interested in the work of Dr. Monica Williams at the University of Ottawa. He shares that he has found Dr. Williams' work on the role of culture and identity on psychological disorders, including OCD and PTSD to be meaningful, timely, and inspiring. For the future, he hopes to see research from her lab on the development and maintenance of anxiety-related disorders, as well as culturally responsive treatments for psychological disorders across diverse populations.

Prior to entering graduate school, Kevin would have advised himself to “take time to be intentionally present in the relationships that you build and maintain with the people around you (e.g., friends, advisors, professors). They are an essential element to supporting you in your own personal and professional development.” For aspiring or more junior graduate students, Kevin recommends finding mentors inside and outside of one's program, who genuinely care about your growth as a graduate student. He describes that these mentors could be individuals who share aspects of your identities or values to foster meaningful connections. Such mentors, he shares, can be vital in developing one's interests in research and clinical spaces, while providing guidance to pursue your values and goals.

Some may not know that Kevin grew up on a small island off the coast of Guyana, South America, called “Wakenaam,” with a population of about 4000 people!

# 2021 Diversity Equity & Inclusion Poster Award Feature: Natasha Drobotenko

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

Natasha is a current first-year PhD student in the Clinical Psychology program at Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario, Canada), supervised by Dr. Jeremy Stewart. She was previously co-supervised by Dr. Caroline Pukall for her master's thesis, which she was proud to share was presented at a previous SRP meeting. Her research is focused on assessing risk factors for suicidal behaviours and non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) in adolescents and young adults, with a focus on negative urgency, adverse childhood events, and revictimization.

Her interest in mental health goes back to high school, when she took her first psychology class: Introduction to Sociology, Anthropology, and Psychology. She had always been interested in understanding people's experience with depression and anxiety, and was immediately drawn to psychopathology. She describes being fascinated to learn about the classic and landmark studies in psychology, as well as the existence of the DSM and the magnitude of disorders that have been classified and can be studied! Her interest in psychopathology research peaked during her undergraduate degree, where she regularly heard about on-going research at the university, learned the theories behind psychopathology, and heard individual experiences as a crisis line responder. These experiences shaped her interests, which include uncovering the underlying mechanisms in suicide specifically, as well as to contribute to treatments and interventions.

Natasha is also interested in the association between suicide and revictimization and childhood maltreatment. Accordingly, she has been particularly interested in work from Dr. Kate Harkness's Mood Research Lab, Drs. Anna Weinberg and Greg Hajcak's work utilizing event-related potentials to identify biological correlates of psychopathology, and continues to be inspired by work from her own lab (Queen's Emotions and Risky Behaviour in Youth).



**"Lean into the learning - let it humble you and allow yourself to take risks. Being a researcher means being a life-long student - you'll become more familiar with what's out there but the field is ever changing and you have hundreds of colleagues with unique perspectives and takes."**

NATASHA  
DROBOTENKO'S  
ADVICE TO HER  
PAST SELF

Natasha encourages junior trainees to take their time and be kind to themselves. “As you navigate graduate school, you will be presented with many opportunities that you will be excited to take part in and not want to miss out on – this doesn’t mean you need to say “yes” to all of them. Pick the opportunities that make the most sense for you and your research career. Know that saying “no” can be the kindest thing you can do sometimes – both as self-care but also keeping yourself available for the right opportunity when it presents itself. Your best work will be the one that ignites your passion, and not necessarily the first one you have the chance to jump on.” In a similar vein, Natasha provided sage advice to her past self: “Lean into the learning – let it humble you and allow yourself to take risks. Being a researcher means being a life-long student – you’ll become more familiar with what’s out there but the field is ever changing and you have hundreds of colleagues with unique perspectives and takes.”

In her free time (that she reminds us can be limited!), Natasha is an avid gamer. She grew up playing video games on Gameboy and PS2 systems and, eventually, discovered a love for PC gaming. This past year, she built her own gaming PC, which happens to double as a great research station when she wants to implement heavy statistical approaches.

# 2021 Diversity Equity & Inclusion Poster Award Feature: Thien-An Le

CAPITAL OCD & ANXIETY PRACTICE

Dr. Thien-An Le is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow and Licensed Psychological Associate at the Capital OCD and Anxiety Practice (COAP) in Austin, TX, where she provides specialty treatment for OCD, Selective Mutism, and other anxiety disorders across the lifespan under the supervision of Dr. Ginny Fullerton. Dr. Le completed her APA-accredited pre-doctoral residency through Baylor College of Medicine at Texas Children's Hospital in the Obsessive-Compulsive and Anxiety Disorders Program and the Pediatric Health Psychology Program.

Dr. Le earned her master's and doctoral degrees in Clinical Psychology from the University of Central Florida, under mentorship of Dr. Jeffrey E. Cassisi in the Health Psychology Lab. Her doctoral dissertation examined the protective role of familism during the current COVID-19 pandemic; this work was awarded runner-up for the SRP Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Poster Award. Dr. Le has developed a program of research focused on (1) cost-effective and feasible interventions for medical and mental health concerns, such as childhood obesity and access to mental health care for under-accessed youth, (2) cross-cultural and intersectional considerations in the assessment of psychological impact, and (3) assessment development and psychometric feasibility with a cross-cultural lens.

She enjoys health psychology due to the opportunity to learn about diverse research topics due to the myriad of co-occurring mental health and physical health challenges. Her interests in concurrent health and psychological challenges have kept Dr. Le interested in work coming out of the Health Psychology Lab at her home institution, the University of Central Florida. She also follows research by the Kurtz Psychology Group and the Center for Children and Families at Florida International University, given her interests in Selective Mutism.



**Dr. Le's program of research focuses on:**  
**1) Cost-effective and feasible interventions for medical and mental health concerns...**  
**2) Cross-cultural and intersectional considerations in the assessment of psychological impact**  
**3) Assessment development and psychometric feasibility with a cross-cultural lens**



For Dr. Le, family is one of her most important values. She grew up with four sisters in an immigrant family and commented fondly of how her “parents and sisters modeled the importance of paving your own path to gain the experiences you want.” Accordingly, throughout her graduate school experience, her family and friends provided the support she needed to execute a “nevertheless she persisted” mentality. Dr. Le has been immensely grateful for her family, chosen family, friends, Dr. Cassisi, and dissertation committee members who provided the pillars of support towards completing her doctorate degree.

Dr. Le reflected on how mentors played an integral role in shaping and further developing her research and clinical interests, including questions related to anxiety disorders. This required supportive collaboration to identify combined strengths and ways to bridge her mentors’ expertise with her own clinical interests, which informed her research interests. In thanks to these experiences, Dr. Le has learned that the relationship between mentee and mentor is most critical in developing into a well-rounded scientist-practitioner. For future graduate students, she encourages seeing the interview process for graduate programs as bi-directional and seeking feedback from the current graduate students. For current graduate students, she advises to “keep persisting! You have already made it into graduate school, one of the hardest feats. While everyone experiences graduate school uniquely, it is universally challenging, so keep pushing forward and find ways to balance your life outside of work to refuel your motivation and drive. This is also where having a mentor who understands and supports a healthy work-life balance comes into play.”

# An Interview with Erik Nook, the 2021 Smadar Levin Award Winner

YALE UNIVERSITY

## Can you provide some basic info about your current position and research focus?

Sure! I graduated from Harvard Psychology's Clinical Psychology PhD Program under the supervision of Prof. Leah Somerville in July 2021, and I'm currently a Postdoctoral Fellow at Yale University, where I work with Prof. Dylan Gee. I'll be an incoming Assistant Professor at Princeton University starting July 2022. I integrate several tools to study how language and emotion interact. Some questions I'm interested in are: How do people use words to represent and regulate their emotions? How do children and teenagers learn about emotion words? How does the brain support emotional experiences? How do emotion representation, emotion regulation, emotion development, and their neural correlates go awry in psychopathology? I hope that refining our understanding of emotion and language can help us both identify the processes that produce psychopathology, as well as the therapeutic processes that help reduce symptoms.

## What got you interested in psychopathology research?

I grew up in a town of 800 people in rural Iowa. My mom was the local veterinarian, and my dad was the local chiropractor. Every day, I'd help them in their clinics: Spinning blood samples, aiding with c-sections, reading x-rays... It was great! I developed a deep love for health science and always thought I'd be a doctor. But in college, I took some psychology classes and completely fell in love. I jumped into research and really enjoyed working with Kevin Ochsner on emotion regulation projects. My life path then became clear: I wanted to dedicate myself to understanding the emotional processes underlying psychological disorders and how we can then use this knowledge to help people boost their emotional health.



**"...I wanted to dedicate myself to understanding the emotional processes underlying psychological disorders and how we can then use this knowledge to help people boost their emotional health."**

DR. ERIK NOOK ON HIS  
RESEARCH INTERESTS

## **Do you have any advice for aspiring or current graduate students?**

1) Do what you love. It's so so so easy to feel unmoored and anxious about how to spend your time. I have always tried to use my own inner enjoyment as a guide for picking what projects to pursue, what conferences to attend, what lab to join, which practica to do, etc. It hasn't led me astray, so I'd recommend it! 2) Be kind. This is a difficult job in a difficult world, and being someone who is invested in building up others and making supportive environments can do so much good. I have been so lucky to have had amazing advisors who are brilliant and kind, and I do my best to pass it on. This cycle of kindness has enriched my life in so many ways. 3) Get enough sleep. I aim for 8 hours a day and the times I get less than that are because I am up playing a computer game or out with friends. This path is a marathon of marathons (one paper took me 10 years from data collection to publication!), so ensure you set up healthy habits that can carry you for the long haul. Prioritize taking care of your physical, social, mental, and emotional health while pouring yourself into the work you love.

## **What researcher or research group are you following right now and why? (i.e., whose research are you particularly interested in?)**

Oh my goodness, there are so many people doing amazing things!! Beyond my advisors (Leah Somerville, Dylan Gee, Matt Nock, Kevin Ochsner, Jamil Zaki, Ajay Satpute), I'm very much inspired by the work of Kate McLaughlin, Craig Rodriguez-Seijas, Darby Saxbe, Renee Thomas, Lisa Feldman Barrett, Luke Chang, Hyowon Gweon, and many others.

## **What advice would you give your past self when entering grad school?**

Your life's about to change for the better. Use the skills you're learning on yourself to approach and tolerate anxiety. Invest in slow, careful work. Everything gets done eventually. Keep that focus on others: Your community means so much.

## **Tell us a fun fact about yourself!**

I used to have a pet squirrel. His name was Mr. Squirrelywhirley.

# An Interview with Bitá Zareian, a 2021 Travel Award Winner

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

## Can you provide some basic info about your current position and research focus?

I am a fourth year Clinical Psychology graduate student at the University of British Columbia. I am co-supervised by Drs. Joelle LeMoult and Frances Chen. I am broadly interested in how gonadal hormones affect adolescent women's risk of developing depression. In particular, I am interested in the role of reward processing and stress response as mediating factors in the association between hormonal contraceptive use and depressive symptoms, especially anhedonia.

## What got you interested in psychopathology research?

Early on in my psychology undergraduate degree, I developed an interest in anhedonia, and discovered that this cardinal symptom of depression deserves more attention both clinically and in the academic literature. I became curious why and how one can lose interest in almost all activities that were once enjoyable. Therefore, in graduate school, I chose to focus my research on gaining a better understanding of anhedonia and the aberrant reward processing that contributes to this experience.

## Do you have any advice for aspiring or more junior graduate students?

My advice to both aspiring and junior graduate students is that they should try to balance their studies with self-care and fun activities. While graduate school provides an amazing opportunity to learn and grow in our respective research fields, it is a long, and at times, stressful journey. It's important to allow time for your hobbies and self-care! A balanced life helps you maintain good mental health during your time in graduate school.



**"Early on in my psychology undergraduate degree, I developed an interest in anhedonia, and discovered that this cardinal symptom of depression deserves more attention both clinically and in the academic literature."**

BITA ZAREIAN'S  
PERSPECTIVE ON THE  
SYMPTOM THAT IGNITED  
HER PASSION FOR  
PSYCHOPATHOLOGY  
RESEARCH

## **What researcher or research group are you following right now and why? (i.e., whose research are you particularly interested in?)**

I follow many inspiring researchers in the field. Notably, I admire Dr. Diego Pizzagalli's work on understanding the neurobiological aspects of anhedonia. I believe that, to understand anhedonia, we need to understand the complex neural pathways that are involved in valuation and anticipation of rewards, as well as other aspects of reward processing such as learning about the reward and effort expenditure to attain the reward. Dr. Pizzagalli's work has greatly contributed to our understanding of reward processing by assessing the functional, structural, and neurochemical brain abnormalities that underlie or are associated with depression, and in particular anhedonia.

## **What advice would you give your past self when entering grad school?**

I am so fortunate to be at the University of British Columbia where there is an abundance of great opportunities available for graduate students' professional development. For instance, clinical work, research, teaching, and mentoring undergraduate students all provide unique and invaluable skills that will contribute to a career in clinical psychology. However, it is important to balance the range of opportunities available, with the time available. If I were able to go back and give myself any advice, I would tell myself to say yes to opportunities as they arise but to take my time, as graduate school is a long-term commitment with ample opportunity to develop along the way.

## **Tell us a fun fact about yourself!**

A fun fact about me is that I make time for baking. I particularly like to decorate cakes for gatherings with friends and family. In my spare time, I search online for tips, tricks, and inspiration for new designs.



# An Interview with Jaisal Merchant, a 2021 Travel Award Winner

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ST. LOUIS

## Can you provide some basic info about your current position and research focus?

I'm currently a 3rd year clinical psychology doctoral candidate at Washington University in St. Louis working in the Cognitive Control and Psychopathology lab under the mentorship of Dr. Deanna Barch. My research largely focuses on examining impairments in motivation and pleasure as they relate to social affiliation and goal-directed behavior in schizophrenia and related disorders. I'm also committed to diversity equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts and am a co-founder and co-leader of Dismantling Systemic Shortcomings in Education and Clinical Training (DiSSECT), a student-led organization dedicated to facilitating anti-racist change in mental health training programs.

## What got you interested in psychopathology research?

I initially explored my interest in psychology both through work in social and cognitive psychology labs, and by shadowing at psychiatric hospitals. Over time, I came to realize that it was possible to bridge my interest in investigating large-scale psychological questions with my goals to have a positive impact on those with serious mental illness, and that psychopathology research was the way to do so. So, the summer before my senior year of college, I began work as a research assistant at McLean Hospital's Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder Program, under the mentorship of Dr. Eve Lewandowski and Dr. Dost Ongur (and was lucky enough to continue working with them full-time post-graduation). This experience solidified my desire to pursue schizophrenia research long-term.



**"I would urge aspiring graduate students to gather information about mentorship styles and expectations of prospective advisors and strongly weigh this information when making their graduate school decisions."**

JAISAL MERCHANT'S  
ADVICE FOR ASPIRING  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
STUDENTS

### **Do you have any advice for aspiring or more junior graduate students?**

Your advisor has so much power to shape your graduate school experience! I would urge aspiring graduate students to gather information about mentorship styles and expectations of prospective advisors and strongly weigh this information when making their graduate school decisions. I have been incredibly lucky to have had amazing mentors (both pre- and in graduate school), and I cannot stress enough the positive impact of having an advisor that supports and encourages you in your own goals (beyond their goals for you).

### **What researcher or research group are you following right now and why? (i.e., whose research are you particularly interested in?)**

To inform my ongoing research, I follow work that is closely tied to my academic interests involving motivation, pleasure, and social experiences in schizophrenia. I follow a variety of researchers in this line of work such as Drs. Eric Granholm, Ann Kring, David Gard, and Daniel Fulford (among many others). I also aim to follow research on the impact of race and other marginalized identities on psychopathology to inform and improve my research and clinical practice. The work of Dr. Deidre Anglin, for example, has been quite impactful for me. I also would highly recommend Dr. Jonathan Metzl's book 'The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia became a Black Man's Disease.'

### **What advice would you give your past self when entering grad school?**

The advice I would have given myself when entering graduate school (and that I continue to remind myself of) is that my research is at its best when I am at my best. Taking a step back from a project to enjoy the outdoors, get that extra hour of sleep, or catch up with a friend benefits not only my mental and physical wellbeing but also the quality of my research.

### **Tell us a fun fact about yourself!**

I really enjoy hiking and backpacking, and led some backpacking trips in college.

# An Interview with Grant Jones, a Winner of the 2021 President's Award AND Travel Award

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

**Can you provide some basic info about your current position and research focus?**

My name is Grant Jones and I am a 4th year Clinical Psychology Phd Candidate at Harvard University. My mentor is Dr. Matthew Nock. My research centers around how altered states of consciousness play a role in the flourishing of underserved communities. My research has particularly centered around three core areas — mindfulness, music, and psychedelics — and investigating the relationship that these domains share with well-being in diverse populations.

**What got you interested in psychopathology research?**

My relationship with my advisor (Matt Nock) played a huge role in getting me interested in psychopathology research. He has really championed and supported my ideas, and opened my eyes to how research can be an outlet through which I channel all of my passions. I will forever be grateful to Matt for being an absolutely incredible advisor.

**Do you have any advice for aspiring or more junior graduate students?**

Follow your passions! Do you. You will receive a lot of narratives around what you should study and how you should spend your time, but what really matters is following what gives you the most joy in this work.



**"My research has particularly centered around three core areas - mindfulness, music, and psychedelics - and investigating the relationship that these domains share with well-being in diverse populations."**

GRANT JONES ON  
THE FOCUS OF HIS  
RESEARCH

**What researcher or research group are you following right now and why? (i.e., whose research are you particularly interested in?)**

I am following a group of psychedelic researchers at Johns Hopkins (P.I.: Roland Griffiths) and University of Alabama at Birmingham (P.I.: Peter Hendricks). They recently received the first NIH grant in 50 years for psychedelic treatment research. I really am looking forward to the results and future government-funded psychedelic studies that these researchers get involved in (and, hope to get involved myself!)

**What advice would you give your past self when entering grad school?**

There will be ups and downs, but you're on the right path. Enjoy as much as you can.

**Tell us a fun fact about yourself!**

I am a lifelong singer and I incorporate my music into my research!

# An Interview with Jamilah Silver, a Winner of the 2021 President's Award AND Travel Award

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY

## Can you provide some basic info about your current position and research focus?

I am currently a third-year student in the clinical psychology PhD program at Stony Brook University, under the mentorship of Dr. Daniel Klein. My scientific focus is on the assessment, etiology, and course of irritability and depression from early childhood through adolescence. Specifically, I am interested in disentangling the heterogeneity of irritability throughout early childhood and adolescence and examining the manifestations and consequences of preschool depression.

## What got you interested in psychopathology research?

I witnessed first-hand the effect of environmental, temperamental, and interpersonal factors during early development and the potential for malleability and change. This, combined with early experiences at NIMH which allowed me to investigate the developmental and neurobiological processes underlying depression, allowed me to develop a keen interest in understanding how early environmental experiences and individual predispositions relate to psychopathology.

## Do you have any advice for aspiring or more junior graduate students?

For aspiring graduate students, my advice would be to choose fit over fame when it comes to determining where to apply and, eventually, attend. The right environment and right level of passion are more than enough to breed excellence, regardless of whether a prestigious institution is behind the degree.



**"The right environment and right level of passion are more than enough to breed excellence, regardless of whether a prestigious institution is behind the degree."**

JAMILAH  
SILVER'S WISE  
WORDS FOR  
PROSPECTIVE  
GRADUATE  
STUDENTS



## **What researcher or research group are you following right now and why? (i.e., whose research are you particularly interested in?)**

I currently follow the work of Dr. Ellen Leibenluft, Dr. Argyris Stringaris, and Dr. Melissa Brotman in the Emotion and Development Branch at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), Dr. Lauren Wakschlag in the Department of Medical Social Sciences at Northwestern University, and Dr. Joan Luby and Dr. Deanna Barch at Washington University in St. Louis. I am particularly interested in these research groups, as they conduct cutting-edge work in elucidating the mechanisms underlying severe irritability and depression in youth and leveraging this knowledge to guide the development of novel targeted interventions. These research programs greatly inform the work that I currently do, as well as the development of my own research program.

## **What advice would you give your past self when entering grad school?**

Imposter syndrome never truly goes away! My advice to my past self when entering grad school would be to reward myself whenever I accomplish something (even the little things!) so that I am not focused on what I haven't done or where I haven't succeeded.

## **Tell us a fun fact about yourself!**

During my first year of graduate school, I raised a service puppy with the Guide Dog Foundation. While with me, he learned positive socialization, basic obedience, and ideal house manners, and even learned a little bit about psychopathology and intervention when he accompanied me to class. After the year, he returned to the Foundation to move ahead with his formal training and career as a service dog.

# An Interview with Shuquan Chen, a 2021 President's Award Winner

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

## Can you provide some basic info about your current position and research focus?

I am a fourth-year PhD student in Clinical Psychology at Columbia University, working with Dr. George A. Bonanno. Broadly speaking, my research seeks to better understand, classify, and predict affective psychopathology (e.g., depression, anxiety, and PTSD) and resilience in the aftermath of stress and potential trauma. I am particularly interested in how flexibility in emotion regulation informs transdiagnostic risk and resilience, and how culture shapes the function of emotional processes.

## What got you interested in psychopathology research?

My interest in psychopathology research originated from my volunteer work as a crisis hotline operator when I was in college. Having the opportunity to learn about the lived experience of individuals with emotional distress and life-threatening behaviors, I became interested in contributors to mood and anxiety disorders. At the same time, when reading literature, I came across the concept of emotion regulation. I was fascinated by the idea that people not only experience emotions but also actively regulate them. Dr. Susan Nolen-Hoeksema's work on rumination and depression intrigued my interest in emotion dysregulation as a transdiagnostic risk factor for psychopathology. I continued exploring my research interests during my undergraduate studies and eventually developed my current research focus. Driven by an innate curiosity about statistics and methodology, I have also strived to keep myself updated with the recent development of methods and apply them in my work to advance research on psychopathology and resilience.



**"There is no need to be perfect in everything. Neither is there an urgency to do all things immediately. It is necessary to cut yourself some slack."**

SHUQUAN CHEN'S  
ADVICE TO HIS  
PAST SELF

## **Do you have any advice for aspiring or more junior graduate students?**

This is both a challenging and exciting time for psychopathology research as there have been advances and debates on the theory, measurement, mechanism, and treatment of psychopathology. I think it is beneficial for aspiring or more junior graduate students to read broadly about these perspectives, learn and apply different research and statistical methods, and gradually develop a line of work that they are genuinely passionate about.

## **What researcher or research group are you following right now and why? (i.e., whose research are you particularly interested in?)**

There are several research groups that I am following right now: Dr. Jutta Joormann's group at Yale University and their multi-method research on cognitive processes and emotion regulation in depression and anxiety; Dr. Gal Sheppes's group at Tel Aviv University and their experimental studies on emotion regulation choice; Dr. Jonathan Rottenberg's group at the University of South Florida and their work on optimal functioning following depression and anxiety disorders; Dr. José Soto's group at Penn State University and their research on the interaction of culture and emotion on health; Dr. Craig Rodriguez-Seijas's group at the University of Michigan and their research using advanced statistical methods to investigate the impact of stigma, discrimination, and societal prejudice that minority population face; Dr. Denny Borsboom's group at the University of Amsterdam and their work on network models and measurement of psychopathology.

## **What advice would you give your past self when entering grad school?**

There is no need to be perfect in everything. Neither is there an urgency to do all things immediately. It is necessary to cut yourself some slack. Get enough sleep, spend time with your loved ones, practice saying no (which is fine and necessary), and establish your list of priorities.

## **Tell us a fun fact about yourself!**

I grew up in a home that only had cats, but now I am a dog person.

# An Interview with Katrina Aberizk, a 2021 President's Award Winner

EMORY UNIVERSITY

## **Can you provide some basic info about your current position and research focus?**

I am a third-year graduate student in clinical science at Emory. My mentor is Dr. Elaine Walker. I am broadly interested in how stress influences brain morphology and function, and especially in individuals at-risk for psychosis.

## **What got you interested in psychopathology research?**

I was an undergraduate intern at a group outpatient program in Syracuse, NY. I was regularly struck by the difference between the old, tired psychiatric center and gleaming glass buildings of the local medical hospital. The buildings provided a tangible contrast between the limitations and lack of progress in psychiatry and the modernity of other areas of medicine. I spent four years working in neuropsychiatric research after completing my undergraduate degree and developed a specific interest in multimodal brain imaging as a technique for examining influences of stress on the brain.

## **Do you have any advice for aspiring or more junior graduate students?**

Don't worry about what anyone else is doing. Trust your process. Set priorities.



**"I am broadly interested in how stress influences brain morphology and function, and especially in individuals at-risk for psychosis."**

KATRINA  
ABERIZK ON  
THE FOCUS OF  
HER RESEARCH

**What researcher or research group are you following right now and why? (i.e., whose research are you particularly interested in?)**

I try to keep up with the findings of consortia projects, which generally includes ABCD, BSNIP, ENIGMA, and of course, NAPLS. More specifically and otherwise, I read a lot from Dr. Vijay Mittal's and Dr. Scott Small's groups because I'm somewhere along a deep dive into the neurobiology of stress. Similarly, I find myself reading a lot out of a group in the UK that includes Dr. Phil McGuire. More recently, I've been getting into physiology as I learn more about the basis of functional magnetic resonance imaging.

**What advice would you give your past self when entering grad school?**

Be curious and know your values. Also, maybe learn to cook better before entering graduate school.

**Tell us a fun fact about yourself!**

I was a bartender in college. Great practice for clinical work!



# An Interview with Lilian Li, a 2021 President's Award Winner

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

## Can you provide some basic info about your current position and research focus?

I received my Ph.D. in Psychological Science from the University of California, Irvine in June, 2021 and am currently a postdoctoral fellow at Northwestern University. My graduate school mentor is Dr. Elizabeth Martin and my postdoc mentor is Dr. Stewart Shankman. My research broadly focuses on understanding how affective processes (e.g., experience, regulation, meta-emotions) contribute to risk for psychopathology using a multimodal approach (e.g., self-report, behavior, electrophysiology). In particular, I am interested in examining how the affect-psychopathology relation unfolds over time, from momentary fluctuations to long-term developmental trajectories.

## What got you interested in psychopathology research?

I credit my undergraduate mentor, Dr. Howard Berenbaum, for inspiring me to pursue research in psychopathology. I joined his lab as a research assistant and then, under his mentorship, completed my honor's project examining the role of emotional awareness in the development of peculiar beliefs. This initial research experience furthered my interest in studying affective risk markers of psychopathology and taught me a lot about how to design studies to answer the questions that intrigue me.



**"I think it is vitally important to develop a diverse array of methodological and statistical skills. These skills will allow you to think more creatively about the ways you can test your hypothesis."**

DR. LILIAN LI'S  
ADVICE FOR  
MORE JUNIOR  
RESEARCHERS

### **Do you have any advice for aspiring or more junior graduate students?**

I think it is vitally important to develop a diverse array of methodological and statistical skills. These skills will allow you to think more creatively about the ways you can test your hypothesis. Also, I think it is also good to read outside of your discipline. I think a lot of novel papers borrowed methods from outside of (clinical) psychology, such as using the dynamic systems theory to study early warning signals for depression.

### **What researcher or research group are you following right now and why? (i.e., whose research are you particularly interested in?)**

Currently, I read a lot of papers on affect dynamics and psychopathology (e.g., Drs. Peter Kuppens and Marieke Wichers) - these researchers have several papers showing that altered affect dynamics can be utilized as personalized risk markers for depression. Also, I am doing more research on detecting feelings in text (i.e., sentiment) and using text sentiment to identify risk markers for depression; I have been following the work from Drs. Johannes Eichstaedt and Munmun De Choudhury.

### **What advice would you give your past self when entering grad school?**

Perfect is the enemy of good! This focus on perfectionism (e.g., writing papers, being an expert in everything) will do you more harm than good.

### **Tell us a fun fact about yourself!**

I did 2 or 3 commercials as a child (before age 5). Sadly, my acting career never took off haha!

# 2021 Student Contributors



Danielle B. Abel is a fourth-year doctoral student in the clinical psychology program at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). She works under the mentorship of Dr. Kyle Minor studying how social and emotional impairment manifest in the daily lives of those with schizophrenia. Her research uses ambulatory methods to measure to daily functioning and gain a more nuanced understanding of social deficits in schizophrenia.



Jessica Arend (she/they) currently works as a research coordinator at the University of Minnesota Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry. Jessica's research focuses on the identification of psychosis risk and the neurobiological mechanisms underlying cognitive and social dysfunction in psychotic disorders. More broadly, Jessica is interested in the development of preventative and interventional care for people with serious mental illnesses.



Alexandra Ayala is an IPREP Fellow at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, where she works in the CLASP Lab under the mentorship of Dr. Kyle Minor. Currently, she is applying to clinical psychology programs for the Fall 2022 semester. Throughout graduate school, she hopes to conduct research specific to her interests in developmental psychopathology, symptoms of psychosis, and schizophrenia-spectrum disorder.



Emily Albertina works at Washington University School of Medicine. Her current position is a Technician 1 within a neuroinformatics group aiding in the processing and release of Human Connectome Project data. Emily's research interests involve understanding the treatment and etiology of internalizing disorders and trauma, including understanding the structural and functional neural correlates of these experiences. Her most recent research project examined associations between resting state functional connectivity with self-reports of internalizing symptoms and traumatic life events using data from the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development Study.



Kendall Beals is a clinical research coordinator in the Vanderbilt Psychotic Disorders Program at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Her research interests center on how deficits in social cognition and affective expression interact with functioning in people with schizophrenia-spectrum disorders.





Carter Funkhouser is a doctoral candidate at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He is broadly interested in studying etiology and risk for depression and anxiety symptoms in the context of promising alternative models of psychopathology such as the network theory, Hierarchical Taxonomy of Psychopathology (HiTOP), and Research Domain Criteria (RDoC). Within this context, he aims to integrate laboratory and digital mental health methods to better understand and predict the development and maintenance of internalizing symptoms.



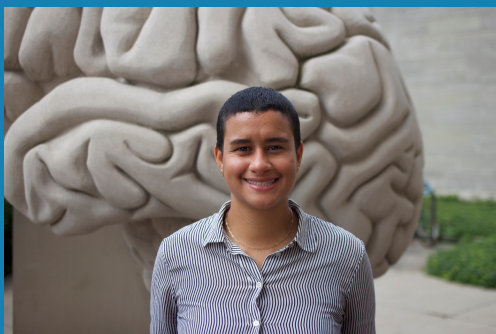
Chloé Peyromaure de Bord (she/her) is a research coordinator in Dr. Jerilyn Kent's Action, Cognition & Translational Neuroscience (ACTN) Lab at The University of Texas at Dallas. Her research interests include social cognition impairments across the psychosis spectrum, and the neural correlates of psychotic disorders, and trauma and stress-related disorders.



John Purcell researches the cognitive and affective processes underlying the perception of risk and uncertainty, and their associations with decisions to pursue reward in psychosis-spectrum disorders. He is currently on internship at the Minneapolis Veterans Affairs Health Care System.



Kara Stevens is a postbacc researcher in Dr. Scott Sponheim's Cognition and Brain Lab at the University of Minnesota and Minneapolis VA. In this lab, Kara completed her senior honors thesis regarding episodic memory in patients with schizophrenia and their first-degree relatives. Currently, she is an EEG and MEG technician working on studies involving psychosis, bipolar disorder, mTBI, and PTSD. Her research interests primarily include neural correlates of cognitive and executive functioning within these groups.



J Wolny is a second-year doctoral student in Clinical Science under the mentorship of Dr. Bill Hetrick at Indiana University, Bloomington. J is interested in integrating social psychological theory and neuroscientific techniques to take a racially- and culturally- informed approach to examining mental health phenomena (e.g., psychosis-spectrum psychopathology). Accordingly, their current research employs neuroimaging techniques (EEG) and psychometric evaluation to examine (1) Racial differences in self-reported paranoia and, (2) Neurophysiological correlates of other-race facial processing.

The background of the top section is a dark blue field with a complex network of thin, light blue lines connecting small, glowing white dots, resembling a neural network or a data web. The SRP logo is centered in the upper portion of this background.

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