

The logo for the Society for Research in Psychopathology (SRP) features the letters 'SRP' in a large, 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

2023 Contributors

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2023

An Interview with Sohee Park, SRP's President

MAITREYEE KULKARNI & HELEN YU

Dr. Sohee Park (she/her) was elected as the 35th President of SRP and is the Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor in the Department of Psychological Sciences at Vanderbilt University. Dr. Park directs the Body, Mind, and Brain Lab where her work primarily focuses on neurocognitive and social functioning in individuals with schizophrenia-spectrum conditions. She has studied three core impairments that precede the onset of schizophrenia and continue to persist throughout the course of illness: disturbances of working memory, social functioning, and bodily self-experiences. The work from her lab has shown that working memory impairments cascade to a wide range of cognitive impairments and social challenges across various neuropsychiatric conditions. Dr. Park also discussed the importance of abnormal perceptual processes in hallucinations and delusions and the impact of self-disturbances on a wide range of psychiatric conditions.

Dr. Park's academic journey has been anything but conventional. Originally a “Natural Sciences Tripos” major at the University of Cambridge with a strong background in mathematics and physics, she found her way into experimental psychology in her last year of college when it became obvious to her that physics was not for her. Her senior tutor who was a psychologist encouraged her to switch to experimental psychology. Dr. Park delved into courses in vision, audition and memory, and was introduced to the realm of working memory by Dr. Alan Baddeley with whom she explored the effects of rotational nystagmus and eye tracking on spatial and verbal working memory. After graduation, she returned home to Seoul, Korea but after futile attempts to find a job, she applied to graduate schools in the U.S. to study cognitive psychology. She was accepted to Columbia University and began studying psycholinguistics, focusing on concepts and categories. When her advisor left Columbia to go to a different university, Dr. Park made a pivotal decision to transfer to Harvard to continue her work in cognitive psychology first in Dr. Steve Kosslyn's lab but a chance conversation with another faculty member, Dr. Philip Holzman proved to be a true turning point.



Dr. Park emphasizes the value of personal narratives to gain insights into the lived experiences of those with psychiatric conditions and advocates for incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research methods with innovations in experimental paradigms.

Dr. Holzman was a founding member of SRP and one of the most eminent scientists working in schizophrenia research. He was looking for a graduate student in cognition who could work on experimental studies of memory and attention in people with schizophrenia. Although she had never taken any classes in clinical psychology and did not know much about psychosis, she was intrigued by the possibility of examining working memory and attention in humans and nonhuman primates in parallel, and she already had some expertise in working memory. She switched labs and almost immediately, she was sent to conduct eye tracking experiments with inpatients at Medfield State Hospital and at McLean Hospital. Lacking clinical training and without much knowledge of psychosis, this could have been disastrous, but she believes this was a blessing in disguise. Because she did not know much about psychosis and had not worked in any clinical settings before, she might have even benefitted. There was an openness to observe and interact with these participants without preconceived notions of what their behaviors would look like. Besides, eye trackers in those days were notoriously difficult to calibrate and it took her so long to calibrate a participant that an experiment that should have taken an hour would stretch to several hours and during those long sessions, there would usually be interesting conversations between the struggling graduate student and the struggling patient. She learned afterwards that these participants were all supposed to have very high scores on ‘negative’ symptoms of schizophrenia, characterized by social anhedonia, avolition and blunted affect. So how was it possible that they were quite happy to chat about the cafeteria food, the weather, sports, difficulties with this eye tracking machine and so on. This discrepancy between what might be extracted during clinical interviews and the potential capacity of the participant has always stayed in the back of her mind.

Despite some initial challenges, data collection yielded fruitful results in the end. Under the guidance of Dr. Holzman, she began to collaborate with Dr. Patricia Goldman-Rakic, a renowned neuroscientist at Yale. Together, they charted the spatial topography of working memory in the brain, conducting parallel experiments in humans and nonhuman primates, which led to a series of papers on working memory deficits of individuals with schizophrenia and those at risk for psychosis.

Following the completion of her Ph.D. in Psychology at Harvard, Dr. Park undertook a post-doc position at the McLean Hospital and after McLean, she moved to Switzerland to work as a research scientist at the Neurologische Klinik & Psychiatrische Hospital (Burghölzli) of the University of Zürich. In Zürich, she was able to observe neurological patients with cortical lesions as well as conduct memory and attention experiments in hospitalized individuals with schizophrenia at Burghölzli, which had a great significance for her. This was the clinic of Eugen Bleuler who coined the term “schizophrenia” a century ago. She returned to the US and has held faculty positions at Northwestern and Vanderbilt.

Her experiences at these hospitals in the US and Switzerland were formative in that she learned to appreciate how people with severe mental disorders or neurological disease construe the world to try to make meaning as their illness unfolds. She credits research ideas and approaches to interactions and conversations with participants. For example, one particularly memorable conversation outside of

clinical settings with a participant who had schizophrenia led to a significant move towards phenomenology and self-disorders research. Their conversation, which delved into topics like painting, nature of art, philosophy of madness, and phenomenology, convinced her to incorporate phenomenology in research. She emphasized the value of personal narratives to gain insights into the lived experiences of those with psychiatric conditions and advocated for incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research methods with innovations in experimental paradigms. Although Dr. Park does not have a clinical psychology degree, the different avenues in which she received training may have allowed for unique perspectives to shape her work today.

A major source of growth and influence for Dr. Park is her past and current students. She has worked with some of the most creative, productive and interesting trainees, many of whom are key members of SRP including Junghee Lee, Katy Thakkar, Tara Niendam, Scott Blain, Christine Hooker among others. It is safe to say that all of Dr. Park's students have launched their research careers at SRP.

As the incoming President of SRP, Dr. Park shared her thoughts on the conference and her vision for the society. Dr. Park became involved in SRP through her advisor Philip Holzman, as he was one of the original founders of the society. As a graduate student, she first attended SRP when it was a small meeting focused primarily on schizophrenia research. Dr. Park remembers the exciting opportunities to meet and exchange ideas with the most prominent scientists in the field doing groundbreaking research (Barbara Cornblatt, Elaine Walker, Keith Nuechterlein, Marty Harrow among many others). At this point, Dr. Park believes that the society is at a turning point and there is a clear opportunity for us to define who we are and where we want to go. While primarily a North American organization, she aspires for a more global presence, promoting diversity of ideas and perspectives by inviting scientists from all corners of the world. She noted that "expanding membership would add new perspectives and expand the scope of knowledge for the society." While this cannot be done in one year, Dr. Park is hopeful that this long-term goal would be beneficial to SRP. She further emphasized the importance of appreciating diverse backgrounds, paths and ideas, especially in leadership roles, as it is likely to lead to more innovative and robust science. She believes that having people from different training backgrounds or life experiences in leadership roles is important for the growth of SRP. Dr. Park would also encourage younger researchers to gain experience in various committees within the society, so they can participate in decision making and future leadership. Above all, she hopes that SRP will always create space and opportunities to exchange ideas, engage in rigorous debates and be reinvigorated with a love for science.

Regarding advice for graduate students and early career scientists, Dr. Park stressed the importance of pursuing research that genuinely excites and interests them at heart and the value of relishing research for its intrinsic merits, rather than following trends in the field. She also encouraged the building of peer relationships at SRP, as these connections are enduring, supportive, meaningful, and more valuable than hierarchical ones. These are the friends you will keep for life, who will grow with you.

Finally, when asked about achieving work-life balance, Dr. Park said that it is different for everybody, so it is important to find what works for you at different stages of your life. She believes that as scientists, it is essential to prioritize human relationships alongside intellectual pursuits. Her motto regarding work-life balance would be ‘People first, science next!’ Dr. Park joked “SPSS doesn’t have feelings, analyses can wait. But take care of your humans first.”

Sustained Contributions to Social Justice in Psychopathology

Award: Deidre Anglin

AIJIA YAO, LEXI BLOUIN, & ELIZABETH EBERLIN

Dr. Deidre Anglin is an Associate professor of psychology at the City College of the City University of New York (CUNY) and Graduate Center of CUNY where she studies the social epidemiology of psychosis. Dr. Anglin's research predominantly examines explanations for the relationship between race and ethnicity and the endorsement of psychotic-like experiences in individuals with and without psychotic disorders. Dr. Anglin's work also seeks to understand the stigma surrounding utilization of mental health services in African American populations and explanations for underutilization.

Dr. Anglin's interests in social epidemiology began while completing the clinical internship for her doctoral program. While working in inpatient settings, Dr. Anglin noticed a pattern: Black men coming into the Psych ER were more likely to be brought in by police and assumed to have schizophrenia despite displaying symptoms characteristic of mania. Even when working directly with one of these men and becoming acutely aware of an affective component to their psychosis, Dr. Anglin's observations were not taken seriously, "I kept getting, 'I've seen this before, that's schizophrenia....'" Dr. Anglin witnessed her requests for diagnostic reconsideration to be largely ignored, and witnessed this individual continue to decompensate, gaining weight from the host of antipsychotics tried without avail. Eventually, this person was given a mood stabilizer, and the difference was quick and drastic - clearly, this was the medication they had needed this whole time. This experience deeply impacted Dr. Anglin; she felt "we, the system, did this man an injustice, and I need to research this."

Following this experience, Dr. Anglin completed her PhD at Fordham University under her mentor Dr. Jay Wade, who was the only person at the university focused on multiculturalism, and who helped Dr. Anglin grow as a scientific writer.



To make psychological science equitable and inclusive, Dr. Anglin recommends her fellow investigators “walk out of the ivory tower of the research institute.” She highlights the importance of developing strategies to reach minoritized populations through community partnership and engagement.

Dr. Anglin went on to join Columbia University as a post-doctoral researcher studying psychiatric epidemiology. Dr. Anglin worked with a variety of mentors who helped her refine her two-pronged interest in working as a clinician and understanding the larger systems that societies operate within. In particular, Dr. Anglin connected with Drs. Bruce Link and Patricia Cohen. With Dr. Link and his focus on stigma research, Dr. Anglin had rich conversations regarding social interactions and the role of stigma. With Dr. Cohen's expertise in longitudinal data collection, Dr. Anglin was able to explore larger questions across time. From here, Dr. Anglin stayed on as an associate research scientist before accepting her current position in the Department of Psychology at the City College of New York (CCNY).

As a faculty member at CCNY, Dr. Anglin transitioned from a mentee to a mentor, and has drawn from her experiences working with a diverse array of researchers to cultivate a style all her own. Having refined her scientific writing under Dr. Jay Wade, Dr. Anglin prioritizes the development of this crucial skill with her mentees. She characterizes her mentorship style as direct, genuine, and honest. Not one to micromanage, she is focused on the big picture and allows mentees to show her what they are capable of. Students who are not afraid of constructive feedback will thrive under Dr. Anglin's mentorship.

In addition to describing her mentorship style, Dr. Anglin shared specific advice for success in general, for students pursuing a research career, and for anyone in the field interested in contributing to social justice efforts. As a general rule, Dr. Anglin highlights the importance of figuring out when one works best, which does not necessarily have to coincide with the traditional workday. For her, she capitalizes on her morning person tendencies and the flexibility in academia. In this way, she recommends finding a sustainable routine and honoring it. Dr. Anglin also suggests collaborating with people you are “productive with in a way that feels good,” encouraging researchers at all career stages to work with colleagues who embody shared values above and beyond intellect. For students pursuing a research career, Dr. Anglin urges them to thicken their skin and take rejection as an opportunity to grow. “Sometimes it's not personal, sometimes it is,” Dr. Anglin remarked. Regardless, she advises trainees not to let rejection discourage them, and to seek support in unanticipated places. Dr. Anglin also suggests that trainees, especially those at the postdoctoral level, take time to cultivate what they want to contribute. Lastly, in sharing advice for people in the field interested in contributing to social justice efforts, Dr. Anglin warns against staying isolated. Connect with the community in a way that makes sense in that career stage, a sentiment that Dr. Anglin holds as a central pillar of her research.

To make psychological science equitable and inclusive, Dr. Anglin recommends her fellow investigators “walk out of the ivory tower of the research institute.” She highlights the importance of developing strategies to reach minoritized populations through community partnership and engagement. Although community organizations might not have expertise in clinical science, they have robust knowledge about outreach strategies and critical issues for the specific population.

Additionally, Dr. Anglin underscores the essential nature of budgeting community outreach and partnership in grants to properly compensate the organizations for their efforts. Recently, Dr. Anglin's lab partnered with a community organization in the Bronx. By sitting down with people in the organization and walking through the research protocol together, she gained invaluable insight into her research question and recruitment materials. Engaging with communities can even begin at the undergraduate level; Dr. Anglin encourages these students to push changes together. Students can directly contribute to diversifying psychological science by working on a project that engages with individuals from underrepresented communities and improving accessibility to scientific findings.

What can institutions do to support minoritized scholars and diversify the next generation? Dr. Anglin emphasizes the power of being a part of an organization, such as those committed to social justice efforts and uplifting minoritized researchers for example. Organizations like these help create a sense of belonging and drive changes that support underrepresented scholars, like Dr. Anglin, to thrive in academia. Meanwhile, "[for individuals at all training levels]... find your support group by connecting with colleagues through conferences," she said. "It used to be more difficult 10 years ago, but now you can find allies especially in sessions that feature social justice and diversity."

When asked about pivotal points in her career, Dr. Anglin smiled. "It definitely has more to come." She envisions that one day the scientific knowledge on how biases impact people's health will turn into a shared, common knowledge. She is hopeful that this day will come, and remains dedicated to help making it happen.

2023 Early Career Award:

Antonia Kaczurkin

LINLIN FAN & SIENNA NIELSEN

Dr. Antonia Kaczurkin is the winner of the SRP 2023 Early Career Award. Dr. Kaczurkin is an Assistant Professor in Psychology at Vanderbilt University, where she directs the Brain Research And INternalizing Symptoms (BRAINS) Lab.

Dr. Kaczurkin earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, where she received mentorship from Dr. Shmuel Lissek. Following this, she undertook her APA-accredited clinical internship at Hennepin County Medical Center, located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. After her internship, she completed her postdoctoral training at the University of Pennsylvania with Dr. Theodore Satterthwaite.

When Dr. Kaczurkin began exploring graduate programs, she aspired to blend a research-oriented career with hands-on clinical work. This motivation led her to choose a clinically-oriented program. As she started to work closely with patients, she grew deeply passionate about understanding the fundamental causes of their distress and impaired functioning. She wanted to genuinely understand what was happening beneath the symptoms to inform effective treatments. This interest prompted Dr. Kaczurkin to delve deeper into the neurobiological mechanisms underlying internalizing disorders, anxiety, and depression. This mechanistic research holds great significance for Dr. Kaczurkin, as she believes that it is crucial to understand “*why* and *how* interventions work.”

The high comorbidity of anxiety and depression observed in her clinical work drove Dr. Kaczurkin to question the categorical diagnostic system (e.g., DSM) and to investigate the dimensionality of psychopathology. She commented, “The beginning was just trying to understand the patients because they don’t fit into these categories, and why is that?” Building on these research interests, Dr. Kaczurkin has also been fascinated by the concept of the internalizing spectrum.



**Dr. Kaczurkin
hopes that
dimensional, data-
driven models of
symptoms, such as
HiTOP, will
reinvent how we
consider
psychopathology
and the
classification
system.**

This theory proposes that internalizing symptoms do not simply exist in a binary manner but rather on a continuum, with variations in both intensity (e.g., ranging from mild to severe) and form (e.g., manifesting as depression or anxiety). Intrigued by these ideas, Dr. Kaczurkin was further inspired by the Hierarchical Taxonomy of Psychopathology (HiTOP), a consortium that is dedicated to exploring these research questions.

When asked about the key factors behind her early career success, Dr. Kaczurkin emphasizes the collective efforts of her trainees and says “it takes a village, and my lab is my village.” She attributes a significant portion of her achievements to her exceptional graduate and undergraduate students, who not only are intelligent and hardworking but also share her zeal for science. Her graduate students often introduce innovative ideas that inspire Dr. Kaczurkin, which she believes has substantially enhanced her research program.

Dr. Kaczurkin has acknowledged the multifaceted challenges faced by early career researchers, with securing funding standing out as particularly prominent. The pursuit of grants exerts tremendous pressure on early-stage investigators. In Dr. Kaczurkin's opinion, the over-emphasis on obtaining grants could be detrimental, as researchers should “care about doing good science” and there are numerous important questions that can be addressed with existing datasets. In light of this significant challenge, she believes that the best advice is to be persistent and to maintain the love and passion for science. Dr. Kaczurkin emphasizes that the intrinsic enthusiasm for the field not only fortifies resilience amidst the competitive game of funding applications, but also fosters an enduring commitment to long-term career development. Dr. Kaczurkin credits her mentors with imparting that enthusiasm to her. She learned from them that “if you love what you do, you’re going to succeed...what matters is that you’re happy at the end of the day.” Although for her that came in the form of research, she emphasizes that it holds true whether your passion lies in clinical work, academic research, or industry.

The parts of her research that Dr. Kaczurkin is particularly passionate about include hierarchical modeling of symptomatology. She hopes that dimensional, data-driven models of symptoms, such as HiTOP, will reinvent how we consider psychopathology and the classification system.

While Dr. Kaczurkin is excited about the progress of dimensional classification as more researchers are endorsing this novel idea, she foresees difficulty translating the research findings into practical applications for clinicians and meaningful cut-offs for insurance billing purposes. She is optimistic that a slow introduction of a new classification system, initially working on revising the DSM-5 to be more dimensional, will mitigate some of those practical concerns. Dr. Kaczurkin anticipates that transforming the DSM into a more dimensionally-friendly framework will be a long process, and she encourages everyone to engage in these conversations to push it forward.

Dr. Kaczurkin also anticipates major changes to how our field considers diversity in research and clinical practice. She highlights that, as a member of an underrepresented group, she feels particularly attuned to the problems associated with underrepresented minority populations in research. Dr. Kaczurkin recommends close collaborations with underrepresented populations so that researchers can earn the trust of research participants who have generally been distrustful of research studies. While Dr. Kaczurkin advocates for more worldwide projects, she acknowledges that this can be very challenging, as different countries have different rules regarding data sharing. The most important thing, in Dr. Kaczurkin's opinion, is to have an insider who can straddle both worlds to establish trust and facilitate collaboration. Dr. Kaczurkin is optimistic that "by expanding what we are doing now and being as inclusive as possible," the field of clinical psychology will continue to advance in its consideration of diversity.

Dr. Kaczurkin is grateful to receive recognition for her early career success in researching neurobiological mechanisms of internalizing disorders. She credits her current research team, as well as her past mentors, in helping her develop and execute research projects with passion and enthusiasm. For future directions, Dr. Kaczurkin is aiming to contextualize neurological findings in dimensional models of psychopathology. She also aims to center diversity and inclusion in her future work. We are excited to see where her experience and enthusiasm will take her.

2023 John Neale Sustained Mentorship Award: Keith Nuechterlein

KATIE BABBITT & PAN GU

Dr. Keith Nuechterlein, this year's winner of the John Neale Sustained Mentorship Award, has been a groundbreaking figure in the field of psychopathology, specializing in schizophrenia research. Initially pursuing electrical engineering at the University of Minnesota, Dr. Nuechterlein shifted his course of study to psychology following his emerging interest in psychology. This is where he first crossed paths with his lifelong mentor, Dr. Norman Garmezy, who served as both his undergraduate advisor and Ph.D. mentor, a figure Dr. Nuechterlein identifies as most influential in shaping his career. Fueled by his curiosity about serious mental illness, Dr. Nuechterlein worked on a psychiatric inpatient unit and became particularly fascinated by schizophrenia due to its unique symptomatology and his endearing conversations with patients. Dr. Nuechterlein also attributes this pivot of interest towards clinical research to Dr. Garmezy's guidance, unwavering support, and his investment in Dr. Nuechterlein's success.

After graduate school, Dr. Nuechterlein pursued an internship at the University of California, Los Angeles, where his passion for schizophrenia research when he joined the faculty led him to develop a first-episode psychosis program, the first of its kind at the university. He remained in the field of schizophrenia research, specializing his research to investigating cognitive factors and their remediation within the disorder. With a number of postdocs, including Dr. Michael Green, he developed hypotheses and data supporting the view that impaired cognition contributes greatly to the prediction of poor schizophrenia recovery.

Delving into Dr. Nuechterlein's illustrious career, one project that stands out as profoundly impactful to the field is the development of the MATRICS Consensus Cognitive Battery (MCCB). At the time of its development, this assessment tool addressed the significant lack of a consensus battery of tests measuring cognition in schizophrenia.



When asked about his mentorship philosophy, Dr. Nuechterlein emphasizes that his core principle is to “adapt to where the mentee is at” rather than adhering to a fixed style.

Researchers were facing difficulty examining the efficacy of different drugs and other treatments for improving cognitive deficits in this disorder. The journey to create this tool proved to be a very formidable challenge, requiring the integration and coordination of input from over 120 experts across various disciplines, each with their unique perspectives and convictions. Today, this test stands as the FDA's gold standard for measuring cognitive functioning in individuals with schizophrenia, is translated into over 40 languages, and is globally recognized. These days, Dr. Nuechterlein is most absorbed in his work on cognitive interventions for psychotic disorders. Improvements in cognition can be generalized to patients' functioning in day-to-day life. In his latest publication, Dr. Nuechterlein shows that adding aerobic exercise to computerized cognitive training improves cognitive performance 3 times more than cognitive training alone in the initial three months.

When asked about his mentorship philosophy, Dr. Nuechterlein emphasizes that his core principle is "to adapt to where the mentee is at" rather than adhering to a fixed style. Drawing parallels to a meticulous clinical assessment, Dr. Nuechterlein stressed the importance of attentive listening and careful observations of mentees' needs. He carefully tailors his approach to suit each individual. He noted that mentees often struggle with self-confidence regardless of how bright and talented they are. Dr. Nuechterlein advocates for support for these individuals and stresses the power of acknowledging their talent. "You need to really work on building their confidence, so they can achieve what they already have the potential to do," he added.

For post-doctoral mentees, who often have substantial experience and confidence yet may underestimate the scope of their project, Dr. Nuechterlein shifts his focus to teach them how to reach the goal strategically. In an era where tenure positions are this competitive, publishing enough papers within the timeframe becomes prominent. Dr. Nuechterlein suggests mentees adopt the perspective of an early faculty member and encourage them to weave short-term milestones into their research planning to enhance their productivity. As for mentees who are confident and have well-defined goals, Dr. Nuechterlein mentioned, "What is important then is to give them enough freedom and connect them to the right resources." He concluded with a delightful note, "I love to mentor all these types."

Dr. Nuechterlein also shared invaluable wisdom for navigating challenging professional situations (i.e., paper/grant rejection). He acknowledged that critical reviews will never make you happy, but with experience one's coping mechanisms improve. In his earlier years, rejection could shake his confidence. For individuals in similar stages, peer support and reassurance from mentors are the best cure. With growing confidence in one's research, critiques become less daunting, and the ability to discern helpful feedback gradually emerges. Dr. Nuechterlein advised to wait a few days before revisiting the feedback, acknowledging that while some points may seem far-fetched, others hold merit. "Part of what that reviewer says is still ridiculous, but they have some good points," Dr. Nuechterlein mused.

Looking ahead, Dr. Nuechterlein offered his insight into the future of schizophrenia research. He pointed out “a tricky balance between biological and straight behavioral studies.” The field was swayed heavily into biological studies in the past few years, to the extent that biological measures must be a central part of studies to get grants. However, this approach yielded limited breakthroughs. Now, the field has gradually shifted back to combining psychological conceptualization with biological approaches. He underscores the importance of employing multiple levels of analysis and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations, asserting that “days of doing very important research as a clinical researcher working alone without other faculty are gone,” and emphasized that collaborations have been central to almost all recent major advances in the field of serious mental illness.

2023 Joseph Zubin Lifetime Achievement Award: Sherryl Goodman

EMILY GANN & CHLOÉ PEYROMAURE DE BORD

At the Society for Research in Psychopathology's 2023 meeting, Dr. Sherryl Goodman received the Joseph Zubin award to honor her lifetime contributions to the field of psychopathology research. Dr. Goodman is a Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Psychology at Emory University and is also a licensed psychologist in Georgia. At Emory, she directs the Children's and Mothers' Emotions Laboratory (CAMEL), which investigates how depression in mothers is associated with their parenting style, their children's understanding of sadness, and other factors that may contribute to the intergenerational transmission of risk for depression. She has also developed and evaluated interventions for depressed mothers by adapting Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for pregnant women, with the goal of reducing depressive symptoms both before and after birth in mothers with a history of depressive episodes through mindfulness-based practices.

Dr. Goodman received her bachelor's degree from Connecticut College in 1972, and emphasized how this institution played a role in shaping her career path. Ironically, Dr. Goodman did not originally envision herself as a psychopathology researcher. After graduating high school, her plan was to major in math; however, she was missing a prerequisite and enrolled in psychology because it met the science requirement. She described this shift as a pivotal moment that shaped her career, as she fell in love with psychology and ultimately pursued a career in this field. She highlighted the formative impact that her psychology professors had on her pursuing a research career. Hearing these professors passionately discuss the research of people in the field made her realize that this was a professional role she could pursue for a living. And her love of math came in handy with statistics.



On the future of psychopathology research, Dr. Goodman expresses an excitement about new technology that will broaden the scope of what can be asked and answered. She advises researchers to maintain a balance of willingness to try new methods, along with the use of tried-and-true techniques.

She also had several volunteer experiences that motivated her interest in this field such as working in a “child guidance” clinic and an in-patient setting for serious mental illness. These opportunities opened her eyes to the profound impact of psychopathology on people. Her work in the children’s clinic exposed her to the “mother blaming” ideas that professionals during that time had towards parent psychopathology, which would inspire her later research aiming to dismantle these negative and critical perspectives towards caregivers with mental illness.

Dr. Goodman trained under Dr. Donald Meichenbaum in the clinical psychology program at the University of Waterloo for her Ph.D. and graduated in 1978. Dr. Meichenbaum’s research focused on the influence of self-talk on our emotional state, and Dr. Goodman became fascinated with the impact of self-talk through observing children at the lab preschool in the Psychology building. She noticed that some young children spoke out loud to themselves, and the children who did speak to themselves were more successful at completing a difficult task. This became the focus of her dissertation, and she highlighted that this experience taught her the value of intensive coding of observations as an approach in research. Her research interests also originated from a grad school class she took on the high-risk method, which is the study of the emergence of psychopathology in the offspring of people with mental illness. She emphasized that her career in this area of study was launched by a call for proposals from the NIMH on the high-risk method, which led to her submitting a grant focused on mothers with schizophrenia. When reviewers pointed out the issue of specificity, she added mothers with depression as a comparison group, and soon realized that her interests lay in studying depression. This was the start of a long career focusing on “the interface between child and adult psychopathology” through examining the mechanisms by which maternal depression becomes associated with depression in their children.

While Dr. Goodman always had a developmental perspective (she’d been torn between applying to clinical versus developmental programs for grad school), at the beginning of her career she was primarily studying older children. But through doing her diagnostic interviews, she realized that there was an incredible amount of variability in terms of older children’s lifetime experience of their mother’s depression, which motivated her to study even younger children. During data collection for each study, she was already thinking about the focus of her next study, and eventually she started investigating postpartum and perinatal depression. Through collaborations with others, she was able to utilize various methodologies in her studies such as measuring cortisol levels and heart rate variability, and EEG. She also began her intervention work through a chance encounter with Dr. Sona Dimidjian at a workshop. Dr. Dimidjian was familiar with mindfulness-based cognitive therapy to prevent recurrence of depression. They went out to dinner together and Dr. Goodman described feeling as if “lightbulbs were going off,” as this conversation got her thinking about perinatal depression as a recurrence, and inspired her to see where the intervention potential was. This was the start of their long-term collaboration on Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for pregnant women as an intervention for perinatal depression. Their work together eventually led to the publication of two empirical papers and the book “Expecting Mindfully: Nourish Your Emotional Well-Being and Prevent Depression during Pregnancy and Postpartum” to disseminate their research outside of the scientific community.

Regarding the future of psychopathology research, Dr. Goodman highlights the exciting new advances in technology that will lead to new methodologies and analyses. She believes we will be able to ask and answer many things that were not feasible just a few years ago. However, she does advise against researchers being too attached to the newest, exciting methodology. Willingness to try new approaches and to see how they work, together with our tried-and-true approaches, is likely the best way to address our questions.

In her early career, it became possible to measure cortisol through saliva, where it was previously only possible through blood or urine samples. She became enthralled with the measurement of cortisol in her samples of pregnant mothers. But as she continued to see the research world change and grow, she was reminded of a basic tenet of her graduate training, which is that the questions we as psychopathology researchers are asking are complex and require multiple measures obtained from multiple sources and multiple methods.

Dr. Goodman is excited and optimistic for the future of research but believes we should still manage our expectations of what is to come because often, one question answered can open the door to a whole breadth of new questions to explore. She believes that “as long as we stay open to the next questions, I think we’re in good shape”.

When asked what advice she had for students and postdocs, Dr. Goodman suggested that trainees stay open to new experiences and opportunities. While she acknowledged that this can be difficult because there are times when you have to say no, she cautioned against refusing an opportunity because it would take you in a different direction than the path you’re currently on. Her advice is that trainees should think carefully about their criteria when deciding whether to pursue an opportunity, and her perspective is that if the opportunity is taking you in a different direction, that might even be a reason to say yes. Dr. Goodman’s long and successful career exemplifies the fact that research interests change over time, and it’s important to be open to new collaborations because pursuing an opportunity that you have less experience with could be a valuable opportunity for learning and growth for yourself, professionally, and for the field.

In conclusion, she attributes her success to persistence. In research, we all will face rejections or hit a wall. She acknowledges that there were several projects that she was tempted to put aside, but turned out to be successful due to her persistence to not give them up but rather try new things to accomplish her aims. Her regrets are the projects she didn’t pursue. Rejection can easily lead us all to feel “horrificed, embarrassed, or even punished”. The easy route may be to shift to what we know will come to fruition, but by doing so we may leave many stones unturned.

Student Award Winners



This year SRP gave out a variety of student awards, including the SRP Scholarship Award, the DEI Poster Award, the Smadar Levin Award, the Travel Awards, and the President's Awards. We reached out to all of the award winners to be interviewed for the newsletter, with these interviews included subsequently.

2023 Smadar Levin Award: Jessica Duda

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

I am a doctoral student at Yale University mentored by Dr. Jutta Joormann (primary advisor), with mentorship also from Drs. Dylan Gee and Tyrone Cannon. The project I presented at SRP this year was completed in collaboration with Dr. Gee's lab. I'm grateful for all of the wonderful mentorship I've received in my program. My research focuses on the effects of early adversity, especially exposure to unpredictable and uncontrollable environments in childhood, on learning and decision-making across development, and associations with internalizing pathology.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

A fascination with the human mind, a general enjoyment of the research process, and a desire to improve treatment options for people I love.

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

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. The research process is full of surprises, detours, and set-backs. Most of the most successful researchers have been rejected many times by journals, grants, graduate programs, fellowships... the list goes on. Keep on trying! (And find supportive friends and mentors along the way.)

What researcher or research group are you following right now and why?

Dr. Willem Frankenhuis at Utrecht University is doing very interesting theoretical and computational work to understand



“A fascination with the human mind, a general enjoyment of the research process, and a desire to improve treatment options for people I love.”

WHY JESSICA
DUDA BECAME
INTERESTED IN
THE EFFECTS
OF EARLY
ADVERSITY

adaptive responses to early life adversity. I am also interested in work from Dr. Aprajita Mohanty's group at Stony Brook examining top-down versus bottom-up factors in threat-related perception in anxiety.

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

Research is just one part of your life's tapestry - be sure to build in time for hobbies, self-care, family, and friends.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

I play Irish fiddle at a local pub on Sundays.

2023 Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Poster Award: Lillian Hammer

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

My name is Lillian (Lily) Hammer. I am finishing my 3rd year in the clinical psychology doctoral program at the University of Southern Mississippi under the mentorship of Dr. Kelsey Bonfils. The current focus of my research is in understanding the associations between exposure to minority stress and psychopathology, such as schizophrenia, or schizophrenia-like experiences, primarily in sexual and gender minority groups.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

While I greatly enjoy the process of conducting research, I always wanted my research to have the potential to improve outcomes for individuals experiencing mental health concerns. I was initially drawn to schizophrenia-spectrum disorders as current medications are not always sufficient in combating symptoms of these disorders, especially negative symptoms. In this way, there is still much work to be done to advance our understanding of and interventions for schizophrenia and related disorders. As I began my doctoral program, this focus broadened and I was very drawn to research that could accomplish these goals, while also serving my fellow members of the LGBTQ+ community.

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

Apply for and pursue opportunities, even if you think that they may be a long-shot! While you may not receive the grant or award you applied to, all experiences can be used as opportunities to challenge yourself, learn new skills, and make connections with other researchers in your field of interest. Reframing these experiences with a growth mindset will remind you that graduate school and a research career is all about a constant pursuit of new knowledge and goals. When viewed from that perspective, it is hard to ever truly fail.



“While I greatly enjoy the process of conducting research, I always wanted my research to have the potential to improve outcomes for individuals experiencing mental health concerns.”

HOW LILLIAN
HAMMER BECAME
INTERESTED IN
PSYCHOPATHOLOGY
RESEARCH

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

Dr. John Pachankis of the Yale School of Public Health is a researcher I follow whose work appears every time I do a literature search for a project about which I am passionate. I am particularly interested in his publications on affirmative treatments for mental health concerns in sexual and gender minority groups.

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

I would tell myself to make sure I set aside time to do the things that I enjoy outside of research. You have many responsibilities in graduate school, but having the balance between that and other activities is what will help avoid burn out. Being able to make time for other activities can ensure you stay passionate about the research that you're doing.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

I am an avid knitter! In my free time I enjoy knitting sweaters and accessories for myself and my loved ones.

2023 Scholarship Award (and DEI Poster Award Runner Up): Katrina Rbeiz

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

I am currently a third year Clinical Science PhD student (going onto my fourth year) at Vanderbilt University under the mentorship of Dr. Sohee Park. My research interests broadly include addressing disparities in the measurement, diagnosis, and treatment of serious mental illness in ethnically diverse populations. I hope to identify risk factors (e.g., trauma, migration) and resilience (e.g., racial-ethnic identity) factors for diverse populations with schizophrenia spectrum disorders, particularly in Middle Eastern and North African populations. My ultimate goals will be to use this information to treat the symptoms of psychosis through developing culturally valid assessments and interventions.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

I first became involved in psychopathology research in Dr. Tom Kwapil's lab at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign where I had the opportunity to run ecological momentary assessment studies measuring daily affective experiences, investigate the psychometric validity of schizotypy assessments, and conduct semi-structured interviews with people high on schizotypal personality traits to better understand their symptoms. I knew I wanted to be involved in schizophrenia spectrum condition research from the 8th grade, and I was lucky to be introduced to this research during my freshman year of college, and to have worked with such a supportive team of mentors and collaborators within the Project on Life Experiences Lab.

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



Katrina “hopes to identify risk factors (e.g., trauma, migration) and resilience (e.g., racial-ethnic identity) factors for diverse populations with schizophrenia spectrum disorders, particularly in Middle Eastern and North African populations.”

I would highly recommend students to take this time to build professional and academic relationships within and outside of their fields to gain a more interdisciplinary approach to science. Working with collaborators encourages researchers to be courageous in the questions they investigate and provides them with a community of researchers they can seek out for academic advice and project ideas. We often forget that we are in the training stages of our careers, and that it is perfectly okay to not have all of the answers. Collaborating on and exploring ideas with people across institutions, labs, and disciplines fills those spaces of uncertainty, and broadens our horizons to projects we may not have previously known were possible to pursue.

What researcher or research group are you following right now and why?

Besides continuing to follow the work of all the labs I had been in previously, I'm very excited about all the work being done on social determinants of mental health (as seen in [this paper](#)), particularly in the psychosis field where researchers are shining a light on the environmental factors that impact and protect people's mental wellbeing. Similarly, I've been eager to follow all the work on [ethnoracial diversity](#) across the psychosis spectrum, and how to better account for this when measuring risk and resilience factors. Capturing experiences of resiliency (quantitatively and qualitatively) across cultural groups has also been an interest of mine, which is why I'm glad to see a call for moving from risk to resilience in psychosis research in [this recent paper](#).

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

Don't be afraid to try and fail than to never have tried at all. Failure is a very common occurrence before, during, and (I'm sure although I cannot yet confirm) after graduate school, so get used to the feeling, and use it to continue learning, persevering, and trying for whatever it is you are passionate about. And if you're no longer passionate, do not be afraid to pivot and try a different route.

I was one of *those people* that started a podcast [[High Impact Coffee Hour](#)] with a wonderful friend of mine during the COVID-19 lockdown, where we invited scientists at all stages in their careers to discuss their graduate journey, research interests, as well as their career paths. We discuss this question at great lengths with our guests, so perhaps sharing the [spotify link](#) would be helpful for people interested in pursuing graduate school, particularly in psychology.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

I'm Lebanese American, and lived in 6 countries before moving to the U.S. at the age of 18.

2023 Travel Award: Rebecca Brady

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

I am an MD-PhD Student (Defended PhD in May 2023, planning to graduate in 2025) at the Washington University School of Medicine. My mentors are Christopher Smyser and Cynthia Rogers. My research interests include perinatal neighborhood crime exposure, newborn functional connectivity, early childhood externalizing behaviors, callous-unemotional traits, and parenting behaviors.

I studied how living in a high crime area during pregnancy related to newborn functional connectivity, parenting, and externalizing behaviors in toddlerhood. I also examined how newborn functional connectivity was related to preschoolers' empathy, prosociality, and callous-unemotional traits.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

I double majored in Philosophy and Neuroscience as an undergraduate at Duke University. During my studies, I became interested in the development of morality and how that process might go awry in children with emerging psychiatric illnesses. I also noticed that children who violate moral norms and/or demonstrate disruptive behaviors early in life are stigmatized, which hurts their educational and social opportunities. I wanted to investigate the causes of early disruptive behaviors and, ideally, design interventions to help children before they get labelled as a "problem child."

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



“I would have told myself to learn how to code sooner and to take more statistics courses. I took a class in R during my third year of graduate school and it was a game-changer.”

REBECCA
BRADY'S
ADVICE TO
HER PAST
SELF

My advice for aspiring graduate students is to find a mentor who will truly support you. I joined the WUNDER lab to learn neonatal neuroimaging, even though the lab did not focus on my topic of interest, disruptive behaviors. Upon finding out my interests, my mentors supported me in developing my own projects and helped me find additional mentors with expertise in disruptive behaviors. Their support was invaluable!

What researcher or research group are you following right now and why?

That is a great question! In the callous-unemotional traits field, I have been following Amy Byrd, Essi Viding, Georgette Flemming, Paul Frick, and Luke Hyde's groups. I also follow Rebecca Waller's work closely, but I collaborate with her, so I am not sure that counts. In the neighborhood crime and adversity fields, I follow Dylan Gee, Margaret Sheridan, Katie McLaughlin, Christopher Monk, Luke Hyde, Kathryn Humphreys, and Kimberly Noble's groups, along with many others. In terms of neuroimaging methods, I follow Ted Satterthwaite, Damien Fair, and Dustin Scheinost, just to name a few. Finally, in the perinatal space, I am very interested in Jonathan Posner, Samantha Meltzer-Brody, Nicki Bush, Marissa Spann, Darby Saxbe, Catherine Monk, and Claudia Lugo-Candelas' work. There are tons of talented researchers working on these topics, which makes it an exciting time to be in the field!

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

I would have told myself to learn how to code sooner and to take more statistics courses. I took a class in R during my third year of graduate school and it was a game-changer.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

I have a miniature golden doodle named Axon!

2023 Travel Award: Alexandra Vazquez

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

I am a Doctoral Candidate in the Clinical Science program at Michigan State University. My mentors are Dr. S. Alexandra Burt, Dr. Shaunna L. Clark, and Dr. Elizabeth A. Shewark. My research focuses on investigating the etiology and development of youth resilience to neighborhood adversity with the ultimate hope of informing policy reform and intervention efforts aimed at fostering youth resilience.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

In the early stages of my undergraduate career, I became aware of the historical scarcity of research on marginalized populations within the field of clinical science. I thus sought out research experience in a lab focused on risk and resilience factors among Latinx mother-child dyads and ultimately grew quite passionate about taking a strengths-based approach to studying psychopathology among marginalized and underserved populations.

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

Time management is critical, there is always more work to be done as an academic so it's very important to be mindful of your priorities and preserve time for self-care. I would also encourage students to seek out a peer mentor in addition to faculty mentors, whether that be a more senior graduate student, a post-doc, or both. Having mentors at various stages of their careers has been incredibly helpful for me.



“Time management is critical, there is always more work to be done as an academic so it’s very important to be mindful of your priorities and preserve time for self-care.”

**ALEXANDRA
VAZQUEZ’S
ADVICE FOR
JUNIOR
RESEARCHERS**

What researcher or research group are you following right now and why?

Dr. Michael Ungar at the Resilience Research Centre. Some of Dr. Ungar's recent work has endeavored to incorporate cultural considerations into resilience conceptualizations, theories, and interventions. This is an area of resilience science in need of much more attention and I am eagerly hoping to engage in this work myself in my postdoctoral training.

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

I would encourage myself to be more bold in regard to networking earlier in my career. As I've grown in my confidence as a scholar, I've formed connections with many talented academics who have challenged and deepened my thinking. I only wish I had begun forming these connections sooner.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

I love to cook and bake in my free time. My friends and family insist that I should market and sell my focaccia bread.

2023 Travel Award: Pan Gu

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

I am currently a second-year cognitive neuroscience student at the University of Texas at Dallas. Under the guidance of Dr. Jerillyn Kent, my research focuses on investigating deficits present across psychological disorders, with the aim of disentangling the unique versus shared mechanisms contributing to the dysfunctions. I am also grateful for the wisdom that I continue to receive from my previous mentors, including Dr. Ivy Tso and Dr. Takakuni Suzuki.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

I was captivated by this field of research during my undergraduate years, and this interest was further nurtured while working as a post-baccalaureate coordinator under the supervision of Dr. Ivy Tso and Dr. Stephan Taylor. Having the opportunities to explore the social cognitive world of patients using various methods truly solidified my interest in the field. I am hoping that one day my research might translate into innovative interventions.

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

Discovering your true research passion takes time and requires patience. While it's easy to identify areas you're not so interested in, finding the subject you're willing to dedicate your career to is much harder. Don't rush the process; everyone's interests shift and could be easily influenced by new experiences and opportunities. In today's collaborative environment, we're fortunate to have the luxury to pivot research interests, even at later stages than you might have expected.



“Discovering your true research passion takes time and patience...Don't rush the process; everyone's interests shift and could be easily influenced by new experiences and opportunities.”

**PAN GU'S
ADVICE FOR
JUNIOR
RESEARCHERS**

What researcher or research group are you following right now and why?

This is a hard question! During my time at SRP, I was constantly amazed by the outstanding research showcased. I was particularly intrigued by the cognitive training work presented by Dr. Keith Nuechterlein, Dr. Aubrey Moe's exploration of first-episode psychosis, and Dr. Ann Haynos' neurofeedback studies.

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

If I could talk to my past self, I'd have quite the lecture to give! Foremost, I would emphasize that entering grad school is like getting ready at the starting line of a marathon. It's a long haul and it demands diligence, perseverance, and strategic planning. It's all about pacing yourself and building good habits from the get-go. Don't try to push yourself too hard and exhaust yourself, thinking you can just coast later. Instead, plan small, start small, but slowly form these good habits that will later feed into better research.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

I just ventured into the world of volleyball and discovered a new appreciation for coordination and focus.

2023 President's Award:

Scott Blain

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

I'm currently a postdoctoral fellow in The Ohio State University's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health. I work with Dr. Ivy Tso and my research focuses on transdiagnostic mechanisms of social dysfunction.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

I've always had a strong interest in psychology and individual differences, partially inspired by growing up as a quirky kid trying to fit in to a small town in the rural south. My interests in psychopathology were further solidified when I got involved in undergraduate research at Vanderbilt University, with Dr. Blythe Corbett and SRP's own Dr. Sohee Park.

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

Try to figure out a workflow and scientific lifestyle that work for you, in a way that can be sustained long-term. It can be tempting to focus on maximizing your CV. Figuring out the process of science and creating work-life balance can be even more important than piling up publications, especially when it comes to avoiding burnout and ensuring long-term success.

What researcher or research group are you following right now and why?

Several come to mind! I'm really interested in cutting-edge approaches to data collection spearheaded by folks like Dr. Laura Germine, as well as the computational work done by Dr. Yael Niv and Dr. Quentin Huys.



“Try to figure out a workflow and scientific lifestyle that work for you, in a way that can be sustained long-term...Figuring out the process of science and creating work-life balance can be even more important than piling up publications...”

DR. SCOTT
BLAIN'S ADVICE
FOR JUNIOR
RESEARCHERS

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

Always stay curious and remember to have fun!

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

When I'm not working on science, you'll probably find me cuddling with one of my cats—"Cumin" and "Nutmeg"—while reading or playing RPGs.

2023 President's Award: Hanjoo Kim

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

I am currently pursuing a postdoctoral research fellowship at the Heinz C. Prechter Bipolar Research Program at the University of Michigan. I am fortunate to have two wonderful mentors in my program, Drs. Sarah Sperry and Melvin McInnis. My research primarily focuses on the longitudinal dynamics of symptoms associated with the distress and impairments experienced by individuals with bipolar spectrum disorders, such as anxiety, depression, suicidality, and family relationships. Concurrently, I am working on a project that explores the potential underlying mechanisms of emotion dysregulation in bipolar spectrum disorders.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

The passing of my maternal grandfather, a Korean War veteran, greatly influenced my interest in psychopathology research. Despite his painful memories from the war, he remained one of the kindest souls I have ever encountered. A few months after his passing, I volunteered for a deployment to Afghanistan to reconnect with him and gain a deeper understanding of his wartime sufferings. Amidst frequent mortar and rocket attacks, I observed significant differences in how my comrades coped with stressful situations and emotional challenges. These observations ignited my interest in psychopathology research, driving me to explore the mechanisms of emotional dysregulation in individuals grappling with affective disorders.

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

If my daughter grows up and expresses a desire to pursue a PhD, I would likely share these words with her: “I am immensely proud of your eagerness to challenge yourself by embarking on a graduate program. Undertaking such a program is no small feat.



“Amidst frequent mortar and rocket attacks, I observed significant differences in how my comrades coped with stressful situations and emotional challenges. These observations ignited my interest in psychopathology research...”

HOW DR. HANJOO KIM
BECAME INTERESTED IN
THE MECHANISMS OF
EMOTION
DYSREGULATION IN
AFFECTIVE DISORDERS

You will encounter highly intellectual people, including your faculty, and at times, you might feel overshadowed by their knowledge. However, remember that everyone starts from a different point. The key is to continually strive to improve and become a better version of yourself. Moreover, there is no such thing as a ‘wrong choice.’ If you discover that your studies do not engage you as much as you anticipated, that is perfectly fine. Without trying, you would never know whether it suits you or not. Your decision to step out of your comfort zone is a courageous act, and you should take pride in that.”

What researcher or research group are you following right now and why?

I am currently tracking the progress of several research groups. In addition to the group led by Professor Michelle Newman, my former PhD advisor at Penn State, I have been following the work of Drs. David Fresco and Douglas Mennin, professors at the University of Michigan and Columbia University, respectively. Their insightful articles on repetitive negative thoughts have significantly influenced my current research work. I have also been following Lauren Hallion at the University of Pittsburgh and Professor Thomas Rodebaugh at Washington University in St. Louis. I appreciate their versatility in using various research and statistical methods, as well as their ability to think outside the box. I have been tracking their research endeavors even before they became faculty members.

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

Should I encounter my past self just starting graduate school, I might say this: “You will find yourself relying heavily on frozen meals, but remember to prioritize your health as well. Also, believe it or not, your English fluency is bound to improve significantly, so don’t worry about it, my friend!”

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

My first pet was not a dog or cat, but it was a chicken. When I was six, I hatched a chick from an egg in a fit of scientific curiosity. The chick, fed on my love and organic grains from my maternal grandmother, grew into a rooster. My parents tolerated his presence until the day he decided to use my mom’s prized piano as his personal restroom and started waking my dad up at 5 am every morning with his crowing concerts. One day, I realized that my rooster was gone. My mom told me he had gone to find his mother, but she had actually rehomed him with a neighbor who had a larger backyard. I missed him terribly, as I had not had the chance to say goodbye. That night, I dreamt of him returning. I woke up to the sound of a rooster crowing and found out it was not a dream. He had walked more than a mile to return to our house.

That was the last time I hugged him and said goodbye, truly goodbye. Since then, I have become a sort of chicken whisperer, advocating for their intellectual capabilities. This experience also turned me into an avid bird watcher.

2023 President's Award: Samantha Pegg

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

I am currently a 6th year graduate student at Vanderbilt University in the Clinical Science PhD program under the mentorship of Dr. Autumn Kujawa. My research is focused on how alterations in social and emotional processes contribute to the onset and maintenance of mood disorders, particularly neural underlying mechanisms.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

I initially became interested in studying psychopathology as an undergraduate research assistant working with Drs. Amanda Jensen-Doss and Jill Ehrenreich-May. I really enjoyed learning about both dissemination and implementation science work and treatment research for mood and anxiety disorders, and my interest in psychopathology research blossomed from there!

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

One piece of advice that I had received was to make sure to schedule in personal time. We do and juggle so much at times as graduate students, and making sure to schedule in time for hobbies and things that I enjoy too was helpful.

What researcher or research group are you following right now and why?

I always enjoy reading new research from our lab's collaborators, including work from the labs of Drs. Daniel Klein, Anna Weinberg, and Dan Foti.



“My research is focused on how alterations in social and emotional processes contribute to the onset and maintenance of mood disorders, particularly neural underlying mechanisms.”

SAMANTHA
PEGG'S
RESEARCH
FOCUS

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

I would say, grad school is such a unique time in our career path and goes by surprisingly quickly! Try to enjoy and learn as much as you can!

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

I have two dogs named Tater and Yuka.

2023 President's Award: Emilia Cárdenas

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

I am currently a doctoral candidate in clinical psychology at Vanderbilt University. I work under the mentorship of Dr. Autumn Kujawa. My research focus is on identifying early risk factors for the development of depression across multiple levels of analysis.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

I became interested in psychopathology research during my undergraduate training when I learned about the Bucharest Early Intervention Project in an introduction to psychology course. I became deeply interested in how stress gets “under the skin” and increases some individuals' risk for psychopathology while others are resilient.

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

My biggest advice for aspiring or junior graduate students is to identify mentors that are doing engaging and thoughtful work but are also kind. Kind mentors have sustained my desire to continue an academic career.

What researcher or research group are you following right now and why?

I am following Dr. Anna Weinberg's work at McGill University's TRAC Lab, as she works to identify environmental processes by which biological vulnerability are translated into psychopathology.



“My biggest advice for aspiring or junior graduate students is to identify mentors that are doing engaging and thoughtful work but are also kind. Kind mentors have sustained my desire to continue an academic career.”

**EMILIA
CÁRDENAS'
ADVICE FOR
JUNIOR
RESEARCHERS**

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

I would tell myself to go to bed! I am able to be more productive and kind when I sleep a full eight hours.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

I have been a volunteer with Achilles International's Nashville chapter throughout graduate school. We work to empower runners with disabilities through athletic programs and social connection. They have 28 chapters in 19 states (shameless plug to find a chapter in your city today or start one yourself)!

2023 President's Award: Quanfa He

Please tell us about your current school/position, mentors, and research focus.

My name is Quanfa (Frank) He, and I am a fifth-year clinical graduate student working with Dr. James J. Li at UW-Madison. My research focuses on measurement invariance in mental disorders among youths and young adults as well as neurogenetic and environmental contributions to externalizing and neurodevelopmental disorders.

What got you interested in psychopathology research?

A major reason that I became interested in psychopathology research was the possibility and prospect of helping children, adolescents and young adults reach their full potential via research and direct services. Another reason was that working with data for research projects brings me peace, a sense of achievement and purposefulness.

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

It's never too early to start thinking about "Why." Why are you doing the projects that you are doing; what makes your research significant and impactful; outside of the confines of data, what project would you like to design to achieve your research and personal goals, and why? And for more junior researchers considering graduate school, why do you want to (or feel like you need to) join a PhD program rather than pursuing your goals in some other ways?

What researcher or research group are you following right now and why?

I follow many members of SRP; some researchers that I have been hugely inspired by include: Dr. Ashley Watts, Dr. Miri Forbes, Dr. Craig Rodriguez-Seijas and Dr. Shirley Wang.



“Don't be afraid to explore topics; also, start taking on a critical lens since day one of graduate school. Have more confidence in yourself and think of yourself as an expert...”

QUANFA HE'S
ADVICE TO
HIS PAST
SELF

They are all conducting rigorous clinical science research in highly innovative and ground-breaking ways; I also find their presentations extremely engaging and I look up to them to become better communicators of science.

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

Don't be afraid to explore topics; also, start taking on a critical lens since day one of graduate school. Have more confidence in yourself and think of yourself as an expert (while constantly being open to constructive criticisms, fresh perspectives, new ideas, and innovative methods). Sometimes, you can find the answer to a research question in previous literature; sometimes, we are the ones creating the literature.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself!

I have a chinchilla and a cat at home; watching them play with each other brings me joy.

2023 Student Contributors



Kathryn (Katie) Babbitt is a recent graduate from Vanderbilt University where she worked as a research assistant and honors student in Dr. Sohee Park's Clinical Neuroscience Lab. During her gap year, she plans to continue to research how trauma affects emotional embodiment, interoception, and psychosis risk.



Alexandra (Lexi) Blouin (she/her) is a clinical research assistant at the Early Psychosis Intervention Center (EPICENTER) at Ohio State University Medical Center working with EPICENTER director/PI Dr. Nicholas Breitborde. Lexi is interested in the impact of sleep disruption on symptom severity and functional impairment in early psychosis, including the clinical high-risk population.



Linlin Fan recently received her Ph.D. in Psychological Sciences from The University of Texas at Dallas (TX, U.S.) and will start her position as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Macau (Macau SAR, China) in Aug. 2024. Using an integrative bio-psycho-social approach, her work broadly examines threat dysregulation (e.g., paranoia) and socioemotional processes in schizophrenia and psychosis. She also strives to translate these findings into effective interventions by developing neuromodulation strategies and psychosocial treatments targeted at improving socioemotional functioning in clinical populations.



Elizabeth Eberlin is thrilled to be starting as a first-year doctoral student in the Clinical Science program at Michigan State University working with Dr. Katherine Thakkar. She is interested in studying the interplay between cognition and perception within schizophrenia spectrum disorders to explore processes such as aberrant salience of stimulus and delusional belief formation. She also hopes to understand whether this line study can inform current evidence-based therapies to improve outcomes for individuals with psychosis.



Emily Gann (she/her) is currently a research assistant at The University of Alabama's Alabama Life Research Institute. Emily's research primarily focuses on language abnormalities during speech production in schizophrenia and schizotypy.



Pan Gu is a third-year doctoral student at The University of Texas at Dallas. Under the supervision of Dr. Jerillyn Kent, she aims to understand the common versus specific underlying mechanisms involved in psychopathology, particularly those contributing to social dysfunction, using neuroimaging and other interventions.



Raviv Kruger (he/they) is currently a graduate student in the Applied Cognition and Neuroscience program at the University of Texas at Dallas. He works in the ACTN lab directed by Dr. Jerillyn Kent and remotely assists in the IVRL lab at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln directed by Dr. Katie Edwards. They are interested in investigating how minority stress impacts transgender and gender diverse communities, and how these impacts translate into health disparities.



Maitreyee Kulkarni is a doctoral student in the Neuroscience program, with a concentration in Cognitive Neuroscience research at University of Texas at Dallas. She works in the Action, Cognition and Translational lab directed by Dr. Jerillyn Kent. Her broader research interests are Neuropsychology and Neuroanatomy. More specifically, she is interested in investigating the neuroanatomical correlates of higher order cognitive functions in individuals with psychotic disorders to develop specific structural targets for therapeutic interventions.



Sienna Nielsen, M.S. is a Clinical Science PhD candidate at the University of Michigan. Her work in Dr. Aidan Wright's Personality Processes and Outcomes Lab investigates the measurement of self and identity functioning.



Chloé Peyromaure de Bord (she/her) is a research coordinator in Dr. Jerillyn 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 social determinants of mental health in minoritized groups.



Aijia Yao is a Clinical Psychology Ph.D. student in the Hamilton Lab at Rutgers University. She is interested in how sociocultural factors impact daily mental health experiences, presentations, and social media use among adolescents. Specifically, she hopes to explore depression and suicidality in minoritized teens, unraveling risk and protective factors unique to their sociocultural backgrounds. Aijia also loves to communicate psychological science by creating culturally-sensitive materials tailored to the audience.



Helen Yu currently works as a research assistant at the University of Minnesota in Dr. Scott Sponheim's CAB Lab. Her research interests include investigating neural mechanisms of cognitive processes and clinical presentations in psychotic disorders.

The background of the top section is a blue gradient with a complex network of white lines and dots, resembling a neural network or a web. The SRP logo is centered in a white rectangular box.

SRP

**Society for Research
in Psychopathology**

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