

**Society for
Interpersonal
Theory and
Research**

SITAR Newsletter

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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Past President

Krista Trobst, Ph.D.
Psychology Department
York University
4700 Keele Street
Toronto, ON M3J 1P3
CANADA
ktrobst@aol.com

President

Debbie Moskowitz, Ph.D.
Psychology Department
McGill University
1205 Dr. Penfield Avenue
Montreal, QC H3A 1B1
CANADA
dsm@ego.psych.mcgill.ca

President-Elect

Terence J. G. Tracey, Ph.D.
446J Payne Hall, MC 0611
Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ 85287-0611
ttracey@asu.edu

Vice President

Kenneth Locke, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
Student Health, Room 204
University of Idaho,
Moscow, ID 83844-3043
kllocke@uidaho.edu

Executive Officer

Stephen Strack, Ph.D.
VA Ambulatory Care Center
351 East Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
snstrack@aol.com

Members-at-Large

Marc Fournier, Ph.D.
University of Toronto
fournier@utsc.utoronto.ca

Lynne Henderson, Ph.D.
Stanford University
lynne@psych.stanford.edu

Pamela Sadler, Ph.D.
Wilfrid Laurier University
psadler@wlu.ca

Graduate Student Representative

Lindsay Ayearst
York University
layearst@yorku.ca

President's Message Debbie Moskowitz

Greetings! I hope this New Year finds everyone well and that you are beginning the new year with a sense of excitement about possibilities to come.

Our 9th annual meeting will be held on Friday May 19 and Saturday May 20, 2006 in Philadelphia. Plans for the meeting are going well. Local arrangements are being made by Anthony Ruocco and Lindsay Ayearst. They have arranged for us to stay and to meet at the Radisson Plaza Warwick Hotel. This is a landmark hotel on the National Registry of Historic Places and is located centrally in the heart of Philadelphia. The Call for Papers can be found elsewhere in this newsletter

In my President's Message's in the last issue, I encouraged you to think about increasing the diversity of topics related to interpersonal structure and

processes that are represented in our discussions. I asked you to invite a colleague whose work relates to interpersonal theory and process, but who has not attended the meeting before, to submit a presentation. Terry Tracey, the program chair, will also consider novel presentations that examine interpersonal theory and process in new contexts. For example, we suggested collaborating on a presentation with a colleague who works in an area of research that could be extended by the addition of interpersonal structure and processes. The colleague could present on what is currently being done, and you could follow with a theoretical talk on how this topic area would be enriched by examining interpersonal structure and processes. Other suggestions for alternative types of presenta-



tions would be welcomed.

In line with this theme of increasing the diversity of topics at

our meeting, we are delighted to have two guest speakers for this year's meeting, Professor Marvin Zuckerman and Professor Sigal Barsade.

Professor Zuckerman is well known for his work on personality trait structure, the psychobiological bases of personality, and the roles of genetic and biological diatheses, stress, and personality on psychopathology. He discovered the sensation-seeking trait and has examined the role of this trait in risk-taking behavior, alcohol and drug use, sports,

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Now is the Time to Make Your Reservations for SITAR's 9th Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, PA

This year's annual meeting will be held May 19-20 at the historic Radisson Plaza-Warwick Hotel. Featuring fashionable old English Renaissance architecture, the hotel is situated near world-renowned Rittenhouse Square, the city's most prestigious residential, commercial and business district. Although no two guestrooms are alike, all are well equipped with a variety

of amenities, including two telephones with dual phone lines, complimentary high-speed internet, bottled water, and hairdryers. The hotel also has a 24-hour fitness centre featuring cardio equipment and weights



Our special conference room rate of US\$145 (single or double occupancy) is available for the

nights of May 18-23. Reservations can be made either through the internet (www.radisson.com/philadelphia) or by telephone (215-735-6000 or 800-333-3333). Use the promotional code SITAR to access the special group rates, and be sure to make your reservation no later than April 5, 2006. Please see the inserts for more information about hotel bookings and conference registration.

Musings From The Lair by Don Kiesler

Recently some SITAR members have noted the lack of impact of our interpersonal research on the fields of psychology and psychiatry at large. I agree with that observation and have a few counter-strategies to share.

In the Preface of my 1996 volume I suggested that the distinctive components of contemporary Sullivianian interpersonal theory are two: the interpersonal transaction cycle and the interpersonal circumplex. (1) The *transaction cycle* has subtly permeated much of contemporary psychology and psychiatry to the point where its Sullivianian roots are no longer even recognized or acknowledged. Unfortunately, explicit tests of the cycle remain difficult to find outside the contemporary interpersonal area. Even our own studies have not taken full advantage of the powerful incorporation of the circumplex in tracking distinct sequences of covert and overt stages of cyclical interpersonal encounters. (2) The *interpersonal circumplex* continues to fail to realize its full ability to permeate trait and other applications in personality, psychopathology, and psychotherapy. Its two modern traditions – Benjamin’s three-plane SASB object relations version and the La-Forge-Suczek-Leary/Wiggins two-dimension versions – enjoy multiple applications in personality, psychopathology, and psychotherapy but, in my opinion, have failed to gain a prominent position in present-day psychology and psychiatry (certainly not in either’s textbooks).

In what follows, I identify several research situations that present barriers to better incorporation of contemporary interpersonal research into psychology and psychiatry at large. I also propose antidotes to each of these barriers which SITAR members might be able to implement. Certainly my own expertise is not up to the task.

First, it’s unfortunate that Big Five factor research was popularly launched with Costa & McCrae’s NEO instead of by Wiggins’ IAS-R-B5. Subsequent prolific Big-Five investigations in both personality and psychopathology have been saddled with findings for Agreeableness which line up well with the circumplex affiliation axis, but with Extraversion findings that are some 45 degrees removed from the circumplex control axis. Is there some statistical procedure that SITAR members might

offer to Costa & McCrae that would permit easy and routine translation of NEO Agreeableness and Extraversion five-factor scores into circumplex AFF and CON equivalents? Surely there’s some routine way in which the circumplex axis scores could be provided (and analyzed) so that easy translations of Big-Five personality findings could be made to the interpersonal circumplex, and vice versa. Consider the multiple advantages we enjoy from Alden-Wiggins-Pincus’ development of a circumplex version of Horowitz’s classic Inventory of Interpersonal Problems! Is there anything that can be done similarly for the NEO inventory?



“First, it’s unfortunate that Big Five factor research was popularly launched with Costa & McCrae’s NEO instead of by Wiggins’ IAS-R-B5.”

Second, we have a similar intramural problem in integrating our SASB three-plane inventories and our various inventories of the two-dimensional circumplex (ICL, IBI, IIP-C, IAS-R, IMI-C, CLOIT-R, ICRS-R, etc.). My understanding is that the two-dimensional circumplex is recoverable from the SASB, if not in octant scores, at least in the two axis (CON and AFF) scores. Both literatures are extensive, yet findings (including tests of complementarity) are not at present translatable across the three-plane and two-dimension systems. Again, can our talented SITAR members come up with statistical or other packages that might routinely translate SASB findings into two-dimensional equivalents, and vice versa? Resultant integration of findings and construction of bridges between the two areas would be markedly facilitated. A remedy could not help but facilitate a more monolithic and challenging presentation of our two closely related intramural subfields to psychology and psychiatry at large.

Third, we haven’t given much explicit attention to the different challenges, problems, and consequences of *trait* versus *state* circumplex measurement. Many of our circumplex measures can be adapted to both trait and state applications, al-

though some are more clearly trait in emphasis (e.g., IAS-R, ICL) while others were designed for state measurement in various situational contexts (e.g., IMI-C, CLOIT-R, ICRS-R). We have given little systematic consideration of the effects on findings of context-bound (state) versus context-free (trait) assessments. The problems seem not to have emerged so much in trait or interpersonal style assessment, but are increasingly evident in state applications. It’s clear from more recent state IMI-C studies that “strong” interpersonal situations can override participant expressions of either control or affiliation stylistic behaviors. These demanding contextual factors often produce various measurement anomalies – reducing variance on one or the other circumplex axis scores, playing havoc with the internal consistencies of some octant scores, or “flattening” one or the other axis of circular MDS analyses. These anomalies are clearly contextual since circumplex measurements obtained in other situational contexts show different anomaly patterns, or in some cases no evidence whatsoever of any of the same psychometric difficulties. In turn, existence of any one of these psychometric aberrations presents significant problems for testing interpersonal predictions in particular studies, especially those involving interpersonal complementarity. These un-conceptualized difficulties often encourage both interpersonal and other interested researchers to shy away from repeated applications of our state circumplex measures. My opinion is that we need to start tracking these contextual effects. For example, we can begin to catalogue the effects of extremely strong control situations (e.g., boss-worker interactions, surgeon-patient interactions) or extremely strong affiliation situations (e.g., close friends, lovers). Over time, this examination would permit our methodologies, tests and theories to become more sophisticated and valid. Moskowitz and Zuroff’s recent work on “flux, pulse, and spin” demonstrates how patterns of state variability in interpersonal behavior can define in much greater depth interpersonal correlates of personality traits. I am suggesting that approaches are needed that might similarly illuminate structural and psychometric interpersonal correlates of *situational, contextual factors*. SITAR mem-

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Kiesler (cont.)

bers might develop new procedures to address and track these contextual state measurement issues and begin to offer relevant theoretical elaborations.

Fourth, I would very much like to see SITAR initiate publication of a "Biannual (every other year) Review of Contemporary Interpersonal Research." In my opinion, we need to put considerably more energy into regular summary, integration, and critique of our own theoretical and research efforts if we are realistically to expect greater notice and integration of our approaches and findings into psychology and psychiatry at large.

It might be helpful for us to remember that circumplexes, transaction cycles, indexes of complementarity, sum vector points, "flux, pulse and spin," and other interpersonal conundrums can often be daunting, even to us. Whatever we can do to make our whole area more inviting and more easily traversed by interested extramural researchers is likely not only to enlarge our ranks but also ensure more assimilable interpersonal contributions to psychology and psychiatry at large.

President's Message (cont.)

creativity, sexual behavior, and marital and premarital relationships. His classic book on the *Psychobiology of Personality* has recently been updated and published in its second edition.

Professor Sigal is an organizational behavior researcher who is an expert in the study of emotions. She has written about emotion in groups, the influence of affective power, affective diversity in top management teams, the influence of affect on creativity in project teams, the influence of dispositional affect on managerial decision making, and the fit between individuals' personalities, their work teams, and organizational culture. She is currently an associate professor at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

It is shaping up to be an exciting and stimulating meeting. Come share your recent findings. Come for the congeniality. Come to discuss new ideas and your work in progress.

See you in Philadelphia.



Introducing the Guest Speakers for SITAR's 9th Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Marvin Zuckerman

Marvin Zuckerman is a retired professor emeritus from the University of Delaware where he taught and conducted research between 1969 and 2004. He received his PhD from New York University in clinical psychology and worked for several years as a clinical psychologist in state hospitals before accepting a research position at the Institute of

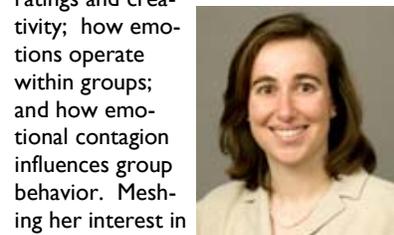
Psychiatry in the Indiana University Medical Center in Indianapolis. His research there included issues in mood and personality assessment and development of the first trait-state measure of affect. While there he began his experimental studies on sensory deprivation which continued for the next 11 years at Brooklyn College, Adelphi University, and the Endocrinology Research Labs at Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia. Curiosity about individual differences in reactions to sensory deprivation resulted in the development of the first sensation seeking scale. With the move to the University of Delaware in 1969 his research was concentrated on the correlated life phenomena and theory of sensation seeking. He published two books on this subject: *Sensation Seeking: Beyond the optimal level of arousal* (1979) and *Behavioral Expressions and Biosocial Bases of Sensation Seeking* (1994). A new book, *Sensation Seeking and Risky Behavior*, is now in press. A special interest in the biological bases of sensation seeking broadened to a general interest in the "Psychobiology of Personality" (1991). A revised and updated second edition of this book has been recently published (2005). He has published a total of 7 books and well over 200 articles.

He is one of the founders and a past president of the International Society for the Study of Individual Differences.



Sigal Barsade

Sigal Barsade is an associate professor at the Wharton School, and prior to that she was a member of the Yale School of Management faculty. Professor Barsade takes a psychological approach to the study of management – with a particular interest in how emotions operate within the workplace, how groups function, and the role of organizational culture on performance. More specifically she has examined how emotions influence a variety of organizational outcomes, such as managerial decision-making, leadership ratings and creativity; how emotions operate within groups; and how emotional contagion influences group behavior. Meshing her interest in organizational



culture and emotions, she is currently finishing a 3 year longitudinal study on the influence of a health care agencies affective culture on staff and patient outcomes. Professor Barsade also has a particular interest in senior management teams, and along with her colleagues, published a paper examining CEOs and senior management teams of top NASDAQ and NYSE companies showing that similarity in affective personality on those teams led to better team process (e.g. more cooperation, less conflict, greater participative vs. autocratic decision-making on the part of the CEO), and greater financial performance of publically traded companies. She is also currently examining questions such as when it is helpful to express versus suppress anger in organizational settings, how propensity toward emotional contagion influences initial evaluations, such as hiring decisions, and how emotional and cognitive transparency influences negotiations.



Society for Interpersonal Theory and Research

2020 Fremont Avenue
P.O. Box 608
South Pasadena, CA 91031-0608

Phone/FAX: 626-441-0614

Newsletter e-mail: psadler@wlu.ca

SITAR

Listserve:
sitar-l@venus.vcu.edu

Web Site:
www.sitarsociety.org

SITAR: Mission, Aims, and Activities

The Society is an international, multidisciplinary, scientific association devoted to interpersonal theory and research. By encouraging systematic theory and empirical research, it seeks to clarify the processes and mechanisms of interpersonal interactions that explain interpersonal and intrapersonal phenomena of normal and abnormal psychology.

The goals of the Society are (1) to encourage the development of this research, (2) to foster the communication, understanding, and application of research findings, and (3) to enhance the scientific and social value of this research.

The activities of the Society include: (1) regular meetings for the communication of current research ideas, methods, and findings; (2) discussion of work in progress; (3) maintenance of an inventory of data and data-gathering resources available for use by members of the Society; and (4) facilitation of collaborative research.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICER WANTED—Steve Strack has notified the Executive Council of his desire to step down from the job of Executive Officer (EO) as soon as a replacement can be found. As outlined in the By Laws, the EO serves in a number of important roles. Among these are: (1) Serve as the Secretary-Treasurer General of the Society; (2) serve as member of the Executive Council; (3) supervise the timely collection and circulation of minutes of the annual session of the Convention and of Executive Council meetings; (4) maintain the official records of the Society; (5) receive, manage, and disburse the funds of the Society; and (6) handle legal correspondence concerning SITAR's incorporation and tax exempt status.

Interested persons are encouraged to contact Steve Strack as soon as possible to discuss the position and their qualifications. Steve may be reached at senstrack@aol.com

Greetings from Your Graduate Student Representative, Lindsay Ayearst



Hi again everyone! I hope you all had a good break over the holiday. Although I didn't get much of a response from my first message in the newsletter, I thought I'd try again. In the last newsletter I encouraged

people to contact me if they had any ideas about what kinds of pieces they'd like to see included in future SITAR newsletters that might appeal to graduate students. I only received one suggestion, but luckily it was a good one!

One idea, offered by Pam Sadler, the newsletter's editor, was to highlight a particular university in each newsletter, and have a little summary of the graduate students who are doing interpersonal related research there. Who are they? What program are they taking? What year are they in? Who are their supervisors? Are they planning to attend the upcoming conference? Are they on internship, and if so where? What do

they want to do when they graduate? Students could also include a sentence about what they like to do in their free time, if they wanted to. Each student could include a photo, too, so that we could actually recognize them at upcoming SITAR conferences.

If you'd be interested in putting something together please get in touch with me (layearst@yorku.ca). I would need one student from the site to be willing to coordinate the effort. Perhaps you could write the piece, or the first part of it, and then ask your peers to submit a short paragraph about themselves to be weaved into the overall piece.

I thought this was a great idea. I think grad students would find it interesting to read about each other this way and I think the faculty would be interested to hear from us too. I think it could really help the interpersonal researchers get to know us grad students and our work a little better. After all, we are their future colleagues!

I also wanted to take this opportunity to mention that I will be coordinating efforts to pair up people for lodgings, if needed, at the upcoming conference. If you would like to keep costs down by sharing a room with someone but have no one to share with, simply send me an email and I will try to connect you with someone else looking to save a little money by sharing a room.

That's all for now. Looking forward to seeing you all in Philadelphia.

