

#ubcpsyc325  
PSYC 325 with Dr. Rawn  
Psychology of Self in Social Media

Please have a copy of today's article  
ready.

Syllabus: <http://blogs.ubc.ca/psychsocialmedia>

Meetings: Tuesday & Thursday 11-12:20, BUCH A201



# Reminders

- 1. By Thursday March 24**, submit a copy of the feedback you are creating for others **to me and to the person** whose work you are reviewing
  - Interested in exceeding expectations? Submit a thorough self-review too.
- 2. In preparation for class on Thursday, please post a question for our guest speakers!**
  - *Skim the reading to get the idea but we won't be focusing on it (e.g., Table 1 is interesting: list of likelihood of posting various types of things online, ranging from nude selfie to birthdate etc etc)*
  - **Bonnie Vockeroth, Communications Specialist for our UBC Psychology Department**  
(<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bonnievockeroth> <https://twitter.com/thevoxen>)
  - **Kimberly Jang, Program Manager Higher Education for Hootsuite** (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kimberlyjang> <https://twitter.com/kimhoots>)
  - Social media is embedded in their job descriptions in very different ways and to different extents. I've invited them to speak about social media and careers, including potential career paths as well as leveraging social media in your career searches and other related topics.

# Readings: Personality

- Buckels, E. E., Trapnell, P. D., & Paulhus, D. L. (2014). Trolls just want to have fun. *Personality and individual Differences, 67*, 97-102.
- Back, M. D., Stopfer, J. M., Vazire, S., Gaddis, S., Schmukle, S. C., Egloff, B., & Gosling, S. D. (2010). Facebook profiles reflect actual personality, not self-idealization. *Psychological science, 21*, 372-374.
- Chapter 8 from *Tell Everyone (#Truths, Lies and Rumours)*

## Today

- **Gosling, S. D., Augustine, A. A., Vazire, S., Holtzman, N., & Gaddis, S. (2011). Manifestations of personality in online social networks: Self-reported Facebook-related behaviors and observable profile information. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking, 14*, 483-488.**
- Optional: Park, G., Schwartz, H. A., Eichstaedt, J. C., Kern, M. L., Kosinski, M., Stillwell, D. J., ... & Seligman, M. E. (2015). Automatic personality assessment through social media language. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 108*(6), 934-952.

# Summarizing the study and contrasting with last week's...

- “In the previous study (Back et al) it was found that **observer ratings correlated with actual self-reported and friend-rated personality rather than ideal-self ratings**. In this study, Gosling et al looked at how **Facebook-related behaviors** (eg frequency of checking Facebook, number of friends, number of groups) **correlated with self-reported Big Five personality traits**. Gosling et al also replicated Back et al’s study in the sense that observer ratings were compared with self-report+friend ratings.” – Hui X. C.
- In the previous study from Back et al. (2010), they found that **extraversion was the strongest in accuracy** for the effect of personality on online social networking sites. The current study (Gosling et al., 2011) looked specifically into the effect of extraversion on social media use. For example, they found that **extroverts have more activity on Facebook and that they seek out virtual social engagement**. -- Kim G.

# Proposed two hypotheses

## The rich-get-richer hypothesis

- individuals with pre-existing social structures and socially adaptive personalities will reap larger social benefits from Internet use and will use the Internet more for social communication than will individuals who are less socially adept



## The social-compensation hypothesis

- individuals who struggle to make social connections in face-to-face interactions will use the Internet as a place to enhance their interpersonal lives by forging social relationships online

# How is this hypothesis supported by the evidence?

## The rich-get-richer hypothesis

- individuals with pre-existing social structures and socially adaptive personalities will reap larger social benefits from Internet use and will use the Internet more for social communication than will individuals who are less socially adept



# How would you classify this research?

- **Translational:** Take “traditional methods” and put them online (e.g., surveys)
- **Phenomenological:** “focuses on issues or topics that would not exist if it were not for the Internet. An example that Gosling gives us is cyberbullying. Cyberbullying would not exist without the existence of the Internet or social media which allows the bullying to be ‘cyber’” (Melody, via Piazza).
- **Novel:** “Novel research are ways to study topics of fields that already exist such as interpersonal relationships and communication (i.e. sharing information, impression management, jealousy within relationships)” (Melody, via Piazza).

This study was published in 2011 (which actually wasn't that long ago, by research standards...)

A. How has knowledge advanced since then?  
**What is known *now* about how personality is manifested online?**

- *Optional reading: Park et al. (2015)*
  - “they assessed personality using an open vocabulary analysis of language in Facebook. Language is a medium through which individuals can freely express their attitudes, values, and identity (which is typically consistent with the actual self, as we have learned).” -- Olivia
  - “much much bigger sample size (n= 66732 to develop the model, and n = 4824 to test the model). In the older study, the first portion had n = 159 and the second, n = 133.” – Siana

# Conclusion from optional reading (Park et al., 2015)

- “In this article, we provided evidence that **the language in social media can be harnessed to create a valid and reliable measure of personality**. This approach is just one example of how **social media can extend assessment** to many more people—quickly, cheaply, and with low participant burden. Moreover, this illustrates how **computational techniques can reveal new layers of psychological richness in language**. Combining these techniques with psychological theory may **complement existing measures**, as argued here. But even more generally, using these techniques to study the words and phrases through which people express themselves, as well as their change over time, **may provide us with a clearer portrait of their unfolding mental life.**”  
– p. 13

From optional reading (Park et al., 2015) (Appendices have word use correlates for all Big Five)

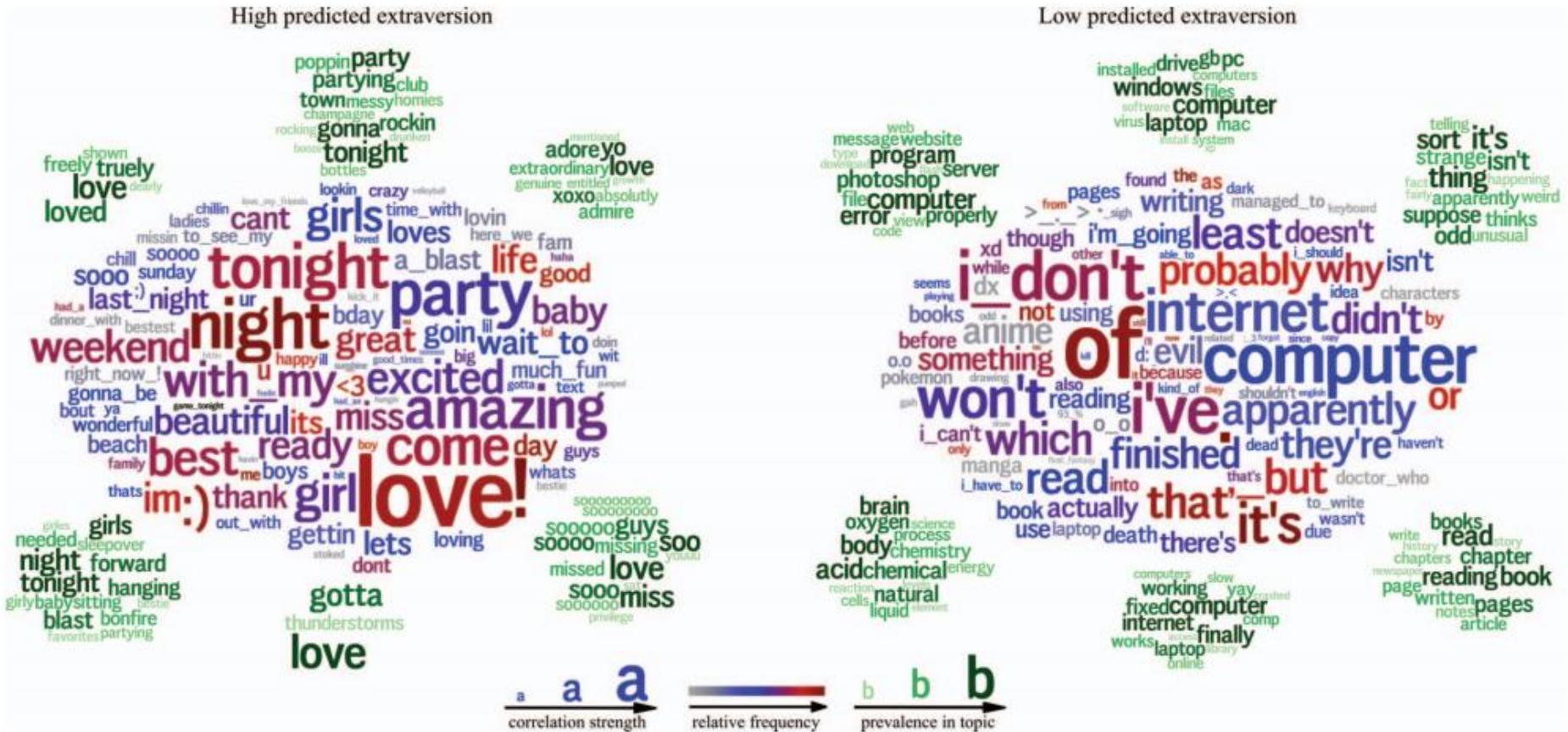


Figure 3. Words, phrases, and topics with the strongest correlations to extraversion, as predicted by language ( $N = 4,824$ ). Large central word clouds (red, blue, and gray) contain the 100 words and phrases with highest correlations with high and low predicted extraversion. Word size is proportional to correlation size; color indicates word frequency. Underscores (   ) are used to connect words within phrases and do not occur in the original text. The smaller surrounding word clouds (green) are the six most highly correlated topics, or clusters of semantically related words. Within topics, word size and color indicate word prevalence. All correlations are significant ( $p < .001$ ).

This study was published in 2011 (which actually wasn't that long ago, by research standards...)

A. How has knowledge advanced since then?

**What is known *now* about how personality is manifested online?**

B. How has this research been used in the service of **understanding other phenomena?**

- *Cited Reference Search*
- Web of Science (Social Science)
  - Find this article
  - Examine the **articles** that have cited it since then (limit to articles only)
  - Summarize what you find [C: make new Piazza thread]
  - If you were interested in doing further research in this area, which article would you want to read first?