Global Personality and Specific Daily Behavior: Validity of Trait Judgments by Source

Andrew Beer
University of South Carolina Upstate

Background

- The validity of trait judgments by source has been a topic of empirical interest for at least 60 years
- Recently, Vazire put forth a model that posits differential predictive validity of trait judgments as a function of source and trait properties:
    - Observability: others know more than the self about highly observable traits
    - Evaluativeness: others know more than the self about traits which are highly evaluative
- There has also been a push towards moving personality psychology out of the laboratory, or at least connecting laboratory measurements to real-world behavior and/or outcomes
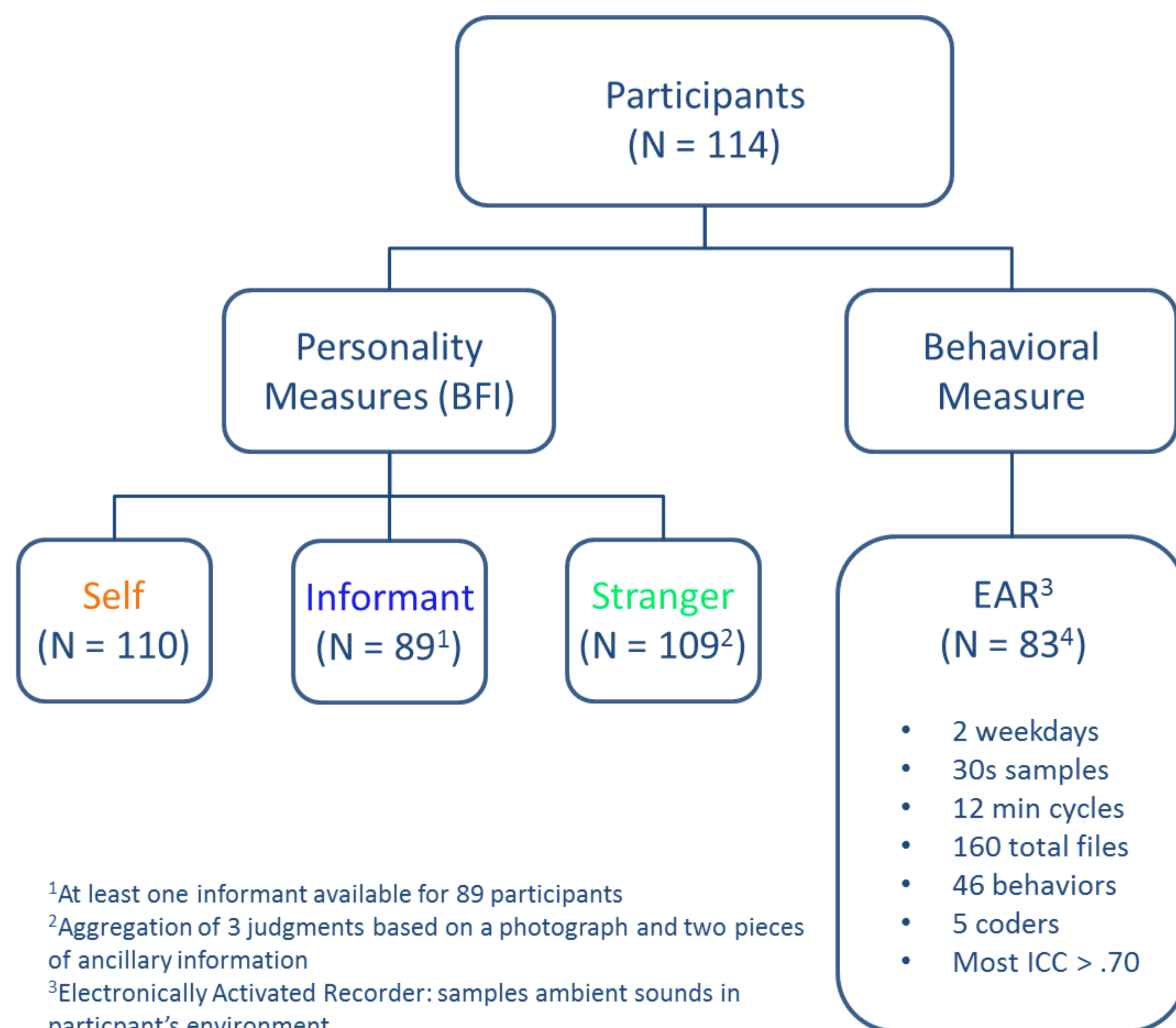
Purpose

- Extend Vazire's (2010) findings to natural behavior data
- Expand on Vazire & Mehl's (2008) finding that different sources of trait judgments can predict behaviors in a complimentary fashion via the inclusion of stranger ratings in addition to self and informant ratings for FFM traits

Predictions

Trait	Observability	Evaluativeness	Predictive Validity		
			Self	Informant	Stranger
Extraversion	High	Low	Good	Good	Good
Neuroticism	Low	High	Medium	Poor	Poor
Agreeableness	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Poor
Conscientiousness	Medium	Medium	Good	Good	Poor
Openness	Medium	Medium	Good	Good	Poor

Method

- Participants (N = 114)
    - Personality Measures (BFI)
        - Self (N = 110)
        - Informant (N = 89[1])
        - Stranger (N = 109[2])
    - Behavioral Measure
        - EAR[3] (N = 83[4])
            - 2 weekdays
            - 30s samples
            - 12 min cycles
            - 160 total files
            - 46 behaviors
            - 5 coders
            - Most ICC > .70

[1]At least one informant available for 89 participants
[2]Aggregation of 3 judgments based on a photograph and two pieces of ancillary information
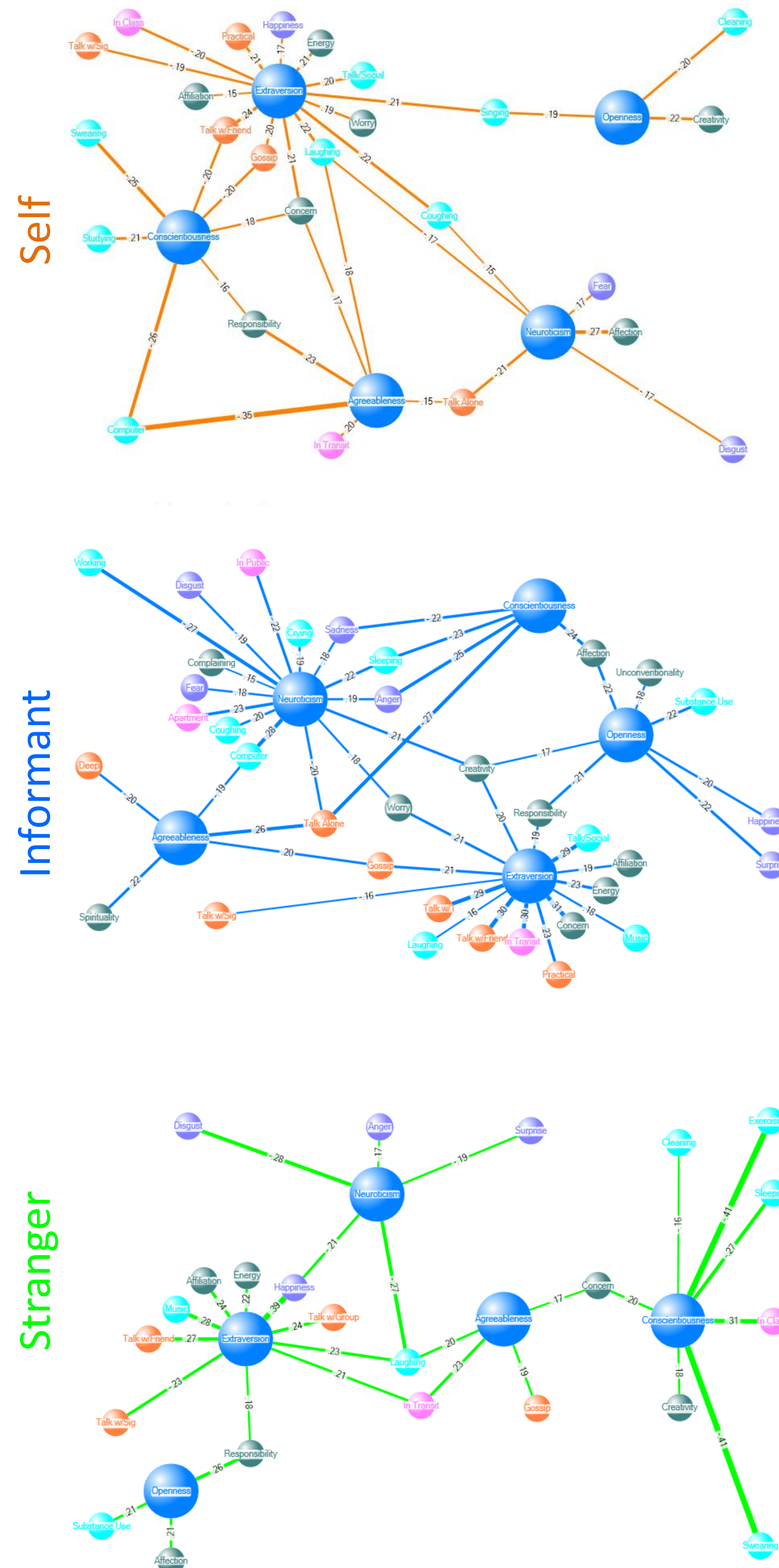[3]Electronically Activated Recorder: samples ambient sounds in participant's environment
[4]83 of the 114 had more than 150 usable files (of a possible 160)

Legend

Big Five Traits   Big Five Behaviors   General Behaviors   Talking   Location   Emotions

Bivariate Relations

Self

Informant

Stranger

Regression Analyses

Variable	Standardized Betas			
	Self	Informant	Stranger	R
Extraversion				
Laughing	.17	-.02	**.17†**	.46
Talk w/Friend	-.02	.23	**.30***	.42
In Transit	.02	.19	**.30***	.41
Happiness	.04	-.06	**.33*†**	.33
Talk w/Partner	-.20	.06	**-.23†**	.31
Talking/Socializing	-.05	**.41*†**	-.25	.31
Affiliation	.00	.11	**.26*†**	.31
Energy	.07	.11	.18	.29
Gossip	.22	.05	.00	.26
Practical	.15	-.09	-.05	.26
In Class	-.04	**-.20†**	-.03	.24
Talk w/1	-.23	**.50*†**	-.13	.18
Talk w/Group	.06	-.23	**.39*†**	.15
Neuroticism				
Disgust	-.05	-.11	**-.30*†**	.37
Worry	-.16	**.39**†**	-.13	.34
Sadness	.00	.24	**-.31***	.34
Computer	.20	.09	.14	.33
Sleep	**.30*†**	.04	-.04	.31
Anger	-.28	**.35***	.04	.31
Work	.00	**-.29†**	.07	.28
Crying	.16	.18	**-.26***	.28
Complaining	-.01	**.28†**	-.11	.27
Talk Alone	**-.24†**	-.07	.11	.27
In Apartment	.01	**.18†**	.13	.26
Laughing	-.11	.04	**-.20†**	.25
Coughing	.07	**.13†**	.05	.20
Happiness	-.01	.11	**-.18†**	.18
In Public	.08	**-.21†**	-.03	.18
Conscientiousness				
Exercise	.06	-.04	**-.39*†**	.39
Computer	**-.37*†**	.09	-.01	.36
Swearing	-.14	.09	**-.33*†**	.34
Sleep	.01	-.26	-.24	.32
In Class	.07	.01	**.28†**	.30
Anger	.12	**.24†**	.08	.30
Hygiene	.16	.14	.15	.28
Talk Alone	.06	**.25†**	.07	.27
Agreeableness				
In Transit	.16	.08	**.23†**	.35
Computer	**-.37*†**	.03	.05	.35
Laughing	.22	-.09	.15	.30
Talk Alone	.10	**.22†**	-.04	.26
Openness				
Creativity	**.20†**	.10	-.13	.26
Substance Use	-.09	.22	**.27***	.34
Happiness	.17	**-.34*†**	.11	.29
Singing	**.23†**	.04	-.13	.26
Unconventionality	.07	.14	.03	.19

N = 65
*p < .05
† completely dominant

Discussion

- Stranger judgments showed surprising predictive validity in some domains
    - these benefitted more from aggregation
    - also potentially share some method variance (coders are strangers)
- Self judgments underperformed relative to expectations
    - perhaps bandwidth mismatch is important-self judgments of specific behaviors tend to predict those behaviors (Vazire & Mehl, 2008)
- Little evidence of complementarity among predictors
    - different sources sometimes showed inverse relations with a behavior in a given domain
- Effect sizes were typically small
    - again, bandwidth mismatch
    - limited behavioral observation = unreliability in criterion variables