increased than in the control group (P = 0.010), so it may was a LOAD risk factor (OR = 1.851). In LOAD patients and controls AA genotype had significant difference (P = 0.023), so it may increased the risk of LOAD (OR = 3.370). In LOAD patients frequencies of AT genotype was higher than one in the control group, the difference was not statistically significant (P>0.05) .(2) In IL-8 gene781 C/T, the difference of genotype frequencies and allele frequencies between LOAD group and normal controls were not statistically significant (P>0.05). (3) In IL-8 gene1633 C/T, the difference of genotype frequencies and allele frequencies between LOAD group and normal controls were not statistically significant (P > 0.05). Conclusion IL-8 gene(-251A/T) polymorphism has some relation with risk of LOAD,the Polymorphism of 781C/T and 1633 C/T probably has no relation with risk of LOAD.

IS ALZHEIMER DISEASE-LIKE CNS DEGENERATION UNIQUE TO HUMANS?

S.N. Austad[1], C. Finch[2], *1. Cellular & Structural Biology, University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio, San Antonio, Texas, 2. University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California*

Recent studies suggest that great apes have minimal brain atrophy during normal aging and no neurodegenerative changes that would qualify as the earliest stages of Alzheimer disease (AD). In contrast, brain atrophy is definitive in humans by age 40, followed by a near-universal progressive increase in neurons with neurofibrils. AD increases exponentially after age 60 and may afflict up to 50% by age 90. Curiously prosimians and monkeys show more substantial brain aging changes than the great apes, but no primate has shown the drastic level of neuron loss present in early stages of AD. This extreme heterogeneity in brain aging will be discussed in terms of primate genome evolution and life history, from prosimian ancestors which were likely to have had short life expectancies, but which share identical amyloid beta-peptide sequence with humans. We acknowledge NIH grants: SA, R24 RR023344; CEF< P01 AG-026572 (R Brinton, PI), R21 AG-040683, and R21 AG-040753.

DYSFUNCTIONAL CORTICOSTRIATAL COMMUNICATION IN A TRANSGENIC MOUSE MODEL OF AGE-RELATED NEURODEGENERATION

S.L. Hong, S.J. Barton, G.V. Rebec, *Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana*

A hallmark of both normal and pathological aging as well as neurodegeneration is an increase in random brain activity known as "neural noise," which leads to a contaminated and unpredictable brain signals. We tested the hypothesis that dysfunctional transmission of neural information is responsible for behavioral deficits prior to the onset of rapid neurodegeneration. We measured cortical and striatal local field potentials (LFPs) in actively behaving transgenic R6/2 mice, which model Huntington's disease (HD), an age-related neurodegenerative condition, and wildtype (WT) controls. Our data showed that HD resulted in increased striatal LFP signal unpredictability, which in turn resulted in predictable and repetitive patterns of behavior. Across both cortex and striatum, HD resulted in an increased presence of 25-40Hz oscillations when the animals were resting. HD also completely altered the direction of corticostriatal synchrony as behavior increased from rest to grooming to exploration. While the WT mice exhibited spreading of corticostriatal synchrony to higher frequency ranges from rest to exploration, corticostriatal synchrony in HD mice became restricted to the lower frequencies. Our findings are evidence that aberrant patterns of communication that precede rapid neuron loss and could be an important diagnostic marker of pathological brain states prior to neuron loss.

SESSION 1535 (SYMPOSIUM)

CREATIVE APPROACHES TO INTEGRATING IDIOGRAPHIC AND NOMOTHETIC METHODS TO STUDY THE LIVED LIFE

Chair: *J. Lodi-Smith, Canisius College, Buffalo, New York*
Co-Chair: *S.K. Whitbourne, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, Massachusetts*

Understanding the lived life is historically grounded in idiographic approaches within social-psychological gerontology. Classic studies of life course trajectories focused on individual adaptation in relation to social-personal influences. Currently, the field of gerontology builds our understanding of aging through advances in statistical and quantitative techniques. Our symposium explores the reciprocal relationship between the historical idiographic approach with modern quantitative methods to suggest innovative approaches to a variety of types of data ranging from individual life stories to self-report inventories. Lodi-Smith uses computer text analysis to examine the relationship of word use in self-defining memories to healthy aging in a life span sample. Bauer shows how older adults emphasize personal growth in their life stories, with implications for eudaimonia across the life course. Whitbourne illustrates methods of using life history data combined with narrative analysis to track longitudinal growth of personality from college to midlife. All speakers specifically address the central theme of integrating idiographic techniques with quantitative sophistication. Through this symposium, attendees will gain insight into and practical knowledge of creative methodologies to enhance their own programs of research. Secondly, this symposium hopes to catalyze a resurgence of engagement in a method that has provided some of the most lasting contributions to social-psychological gerontology.

WORD USE IN SELF-DEFINING MEMORIES PREDICTS HEALTHY AGING

J. Lodi-Smith[1], B.W. Roberts[2], *1. Psychology, Canisius College, Buffalo, New York, 2. University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, Illinois*

Self-defining memories are vivid memories central to individual identity (Singer & Moffitt, 1991). The present research addresses how self-defining memories relate to healthy aging in a life span sample. The research analyzes word use patterns in self-defining memories of 140 healthy adults ages 21 – 85 (M = 49.49, SD = 15.57) using the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count Program (Pennebaker, Francis, & Booth, 2001). The current study addressed how patterns of emotion words, cognitive words, and words associated with time related to healthy aging across both physical and psychosocial definitions of healthy aging. Results suggest that individuals who narrate self-defining memories using positive emotion words and less time-related words report healthier aging. The present study examines the extent to which these effects are moderated by age and sets the findings in a context of theoretical frameworks for healthy aging while providing an innovative approach to qualitative data on aging.

COMBINING NARRATIVE ANALYSIS WITH MODELING OF LONGITUDINAL DATA: YIN AND YANG IN THE STUDY OF LIVES

S.K. Whitbourne, *Psychology, Univ. of Mass. Amherst, Amherst, Massachusetts*

Longitudinal researchers face a number of challenges in trying to capture the complexity of the life patterns they investigate. In the present paper, quantitative data from a 40-year (and counting) sequential study are integrated with life history information obtained from a sample of 180 adults ranging from college through late midlife. Adding to previous longitudinal analyses from the present sample will be new results from younger cohorts who were followed at a later time point