

Presented by the Department of Psychological Sciences in conjunction with the College of Arts and Science
and the Department of Educational, School, and Counseling Psychology

“Tracking People’s Lives Through Their Words and Stories”



Jamie W. Pennebaker, Regents Centennial Professor of Psychology
at University of Texas at Austin

September 20, 2018, 3:30–5:00
Monsanto Auditorium
Bond Life Sciences Center
Free and open to the public

Some of the smallest, most forgettable words that we use in everyday conversations can reveal our emotions, our thinking patterns, and how we connect with others. A revolution in computer-based text analysis has provided tools to analyze people’s use of pronouns, articles, and other function words that serve as clues to tracking deception, status, group formation, social skills, and personality. The analysis of language can serve as a parallel way to understand human thinking and behavior to complement self-reports. The psychological study of history, business, groups, culture, and entire civilizations is now possible as long as linguistic trails exist.

For more information, please visit
events.psych.missouri.edu/lecture-series/

Pennebaker’s earliest work examined the psychology of physical symptoms and led to his discovery that writing expressively about emotional upheavals improves physical health and immune function. His recent work explores natural language and suggests that everyday word use is related to personality, deception, status, group dynamics, and emotional states. He is now exploring how language analyses can be used to understand stories and social processes associated with education and learning. Author or editor of 10 books and more than 300 scientific articles, Pennebaker has received several university and international awards for his research and teaching. His most recent books are *The Secret Life of Pronouns: What Our Words Say About Us* (Bloomsbury, 2011) and *Opening Up by Writing it Down* (Guilford, 2016).



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