

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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NAME: CARSTENSEN, LAURA L

eRA COMMONS USER NAME (credential, e.g., agency login): LAURACAR

POSITION TITLE: Professor of Psychology

EDUCATION/TRAINING (*Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.*)

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
University of Rochester, Rochester, NY	BS	06/1978	Psychology
West Virginia U., Morgantown, WV	MA	05/1980	Psychology
West Virginia U., Morgantown, WV	PHD	05/1983	Psychology
University of Mississippi Medical Center	N/A	08/1983	Clinical Internship

A. Personal Statement

The theoretical foundation for the proposed research is socioemotional selectivity theory (SST), which my students, colleagues, and I developed, empirically tested, and refined throughout grant RO1-8816. This grant is in its 34th year, with a second MERIT awarded after my last competing renewal. SST maintains that time horizons influence goals and, because aging is associated with systematic changes in perceived time horizons, reliable age differences in goals can be anticipated. Throughout the grant, we have examined social preferences, decisions, and emotional experiences and applied theoretical tenets to behavior change studies. We also identified and elaborated on the age-related positivity effect in cognitive processing. My research team has considerable experience conducting laboratory experiments, observational studies, web-based surveys, experience sampling, neuroimaging, actigraphy, and natural experiments. Although the RO1 is not a training grant per se, the grant has supported several post-doctoral fellows who are now productive, independent researchers. I have received mentoring awards from the American Psychological Association and the Gerontological Society of America. The present application would continue to support advanced trainees embedded in the proposed research program. As director of the Stanford Center on Longevity, I am also fortunate to direct a multidisciplinary post-doctoral training program and interact with faculty and trainees across all seven schools at the university who contribute to the richness of the environment.

Ongoing and recently completed projects that I would like to highlight include:

Citations:

1. Pot, A., & Carstensen, L. L. (2025). A generated image repository of aging faces. *Scientific Data*, 12(1), 1610. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41597-025-05909-6>
2. Growney, C.M., Zaloom, C.M., & Carstensen, L.L. (2025). The human geography of care. *Daedalus*, 154(1), 98–116. https://doi.org/10.1162/daed_a_02126, PMID: PMC Journal - In Process
3. The Stanford Center on Longevity. (2021). The new map of life: 100 years to thrive. Stanford, CA: The Stanford Center on Longevity. Retrieved from <https://longevity.stanford.edu/the-new-map-of-life-report/>.
4. Chapel, J., Tysinger, B., Goldman, D. & Rowe, J., and the Research Network on an Aging Society (2023). The forgotten middle: Worsening health and economic trends extend to Americans with modest resources nearing retirement. *Health Affairs*, 42(9) 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2023.00134> (LLC is a member of the Network)

B. Positions, Scientific Appointments, and Honors

Positions and Scientific Appointments

2021 – Present	Member, International Advisory Panel: Health District, Singapore
2008 – Present	Member, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education Advisory Committee, National Academy of Sciences
1998 –Present	Professor, Department of Psychology, Stanford University
2019 – 2022	Member, NIA Data Monitoring Committee (Understanding America Study)
2019 – 2022	Member, Governor Newsome’s California Master Plan on Aging Commission
2018 – 2022	Member, National Academy of Medicine, International Commission for Global Roadmap for Healthy Longevity
2015 – 2019	Member, National Research Council, Board of Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences
2012 – 2015	Member, National Advisory Council on Aging (NACA). NIH
2007 – 2017	Member, MacArthur Foundation Network on Aging Societies
2004 – 2006	Chair, Department of Psychology, Stanford University
1997 – 2001	The Barbara D. Finberg Director, Institute for Research on Women and Gender, Stanford University
1997 – 1999	Vice-chair, Department of Psychology, Stanford University
1994 – 1998	Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Stanford University
1987 – 1994	Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Stanford University
1986 – 1987	Visiting Research Associate, Institute for Human Development, University of California - Berkeley
1983 – 1987	Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Indiana University
2010 – 2014	Member, Global Agenda Council on Ageing Societies, World Economic Forum
2009	Member, Global Agenda Council on Demographic Shifts, World Economic Forum
2005 – 2009	Member, External Scientific Advisory Board (Fachbeirat), Max Planck Institute on Human Development
2003 – 2005	Chair, Committee on Future Directions in Social Aging Research National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council
2003 – 2005	Chair, External Scientific Advisory Board (Fachbeirat), Max Planck Institute on Human Development
2002 – 2004	Member, Behavior and Social Science of Aging Review Committee, National Institute on Aging
1999 – 2003	Core Faculty Member, American Psychological Association Minority Fellowship Program: PI: James Jones
1999 – 2001	Core Faculty Member, NIMH, Bay Area University Consortium on Training in Affective Science: PI: Dacher Keltner
1996 – 1999	Grant Review Panel Member, Human Development and Aging Study Section, (HUD-2), National Institute on Aging
1996 – 1997	Chair, Behavioral and Social Sciences Section, Gerontological Society of America
1992 – 1995	Scientific Advisor, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin Aging Study, Berlin, Germany

Honors

2024	Honorary doctorate, University of Rochester
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2023	Member (elected) American Academy of Arts and Sciences
2016	Member (elected), National Academy of Medicine
2016 - 2025	MERIT Award, National Institute of Aging
2005 - 2015	MERIT Award, National Institute on Aging
2014	Kleemeier Award, Gerontological Society of America
2014	Distinguished Mentor Award, Gerontological Society of America
2009-2010	Fellow, Center for the Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences
2006	Distinguished Career Contributions Award (Behavioral and Social Sciences Section), Gerontological Society of America
2003	Guggenheim Fellowship
2012	Honorary Doctorate, University of Leuven, Belgium
2010	Master Mentorship Award, American Psychological Association (Division 20)

C. Contributions to Science

1. In socioemotional selectivity theory, I offered the field a novel and falsifiable account of motivational changes with age. The theory has since gained substantial empirical support and has been influential in research on social and cognitive aging and health psychology.
 - a. **Carstensen, L.L.**, Chu, L., Matteson, T., & Growney, C.M. (2024). What's time got to do with it? Appreciation of time influences social goals and emotional well-being. *Psychology and Aging*, 39(8), 833–853. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pag0000856>, NIHMSID: NIHMS2056762
 - b. **Carstensen, L. L.**, & Reynolds, M. E. (2023). Age differences in preferences through the lens of socioemotional selectivity theory. *The Journal of the Economics of Ageing*, 24, 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeoa.2022.100440>, PMCID: PMC Journal - In Process
 - c. **Carstensen, L. L.** (2021). Socioemotional selectivity theory: The role of perceived endings in human motivation. *The Gerontologist*, 61(8), 1188–1196. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnab116>, PMCID: PMC8599276
 - d. **Carstensen, L. L.** (2006). The influence of a sense of time on human development. *Science*, 312(5782), 1913–1915. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1127488>, PMCID: PMC2790864

2. My research group has documented increases in prosocial behavior as people age.
 - a. Chi, K., Ram, N., & **Carstensen, L. L.** (2023). Age differences in emotional experiences associated with helping and learning at work. *Psychology and Aging*, 38(5), 389–400. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pag0000756>, PMCID: PMC10524355
 - b. Shavit, Y.Z., Chi K., **Carstensen, LL.** (2022). Age and time horizons are associated with preferences for helping colleagues. *Work, Aging and Retirement*, 9(3), 280–290. <https://doi.org/10.1093/workar/waac024>, PMCID: PMC10276127
 - c. **Carstensen, L. L.**, & Chi, K. (2021). Emotion and prosocial giving in older adults. *Nature Aging*, 1(10), 866–867. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43587-021-00126-3>, PMCID: PMC8813056
 - d. Raposo, S., Hogan, C. L., Barnes, J. T., Chemudupati, T., & **Carstensen, L. L.** (2021). Leveraging goals to incentivize healthful behaviors across adulthood. *Psychology and Aging*, 36(1), 57–68. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pag0000428>, PMCID: PMC7785661

3. My research group has contributed to research revealing that emotional experience improves with age.
 - a. Growney, C. M., **Carstensen, L. L.**, & English, T. (2025). Momentary savoring in daily life in an adult life-span sample. *Emotion*, 25(1), 93–101. <https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0001423>, PMCID: PMC Journal - In Process
 - b. Chu, L., Shavit, Y. Z., Ram, N., & **Carstensen, L. L.** (2024). Age-related emotional advantages in encountering novel situations in daily life. *Psychology and Aging*, 39(2), 113–125.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/pag0000798>, PMID: PMC Journal - In Process

- c. Larsen, J.T., Hershfield, H., Cazares, J.L., Hogan, C.L., & **Carstensen, L.L.** (2021). Meaningful endings and mixed emotions: The double-edged sword of reminiscence on good times. *Emotion, 21*(8), 1650–1659. <https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0001011>, PMID: PMC8817627
 - d. **Carstensen, L. L.**, Shavit, Y. Z., & Barnes, J. T. (2020). Age advantages in emotional experience persist even under threat from the COVID-19 pandemic. *Psychological Science, 31* (11), 1374-1385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797620967261>, NIHMSID: NIHMS1633643
4. My research led to the discovery of the positivity effect, which refers to an age-related preference in attention and memory for positive over negative information.
- a. **Carstensen, L. L.**, & DeLiema, M. (2018). The positivity effect: A negativity bias in youth fades with age. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences, 19*, 7–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cobeha.2017.07.009>, PMID: PMC6186441
 - b. English, T., & **Carstensen, L. L.** (2015). Does positivity operate when the stakes are high? Health status and decision making among older adults. *Psychology and Aging, 30*(2), 348. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039121>, PMID: PMC4451383
 - c. Reed, A. E., & **Carstensen, L. L.** (2012). The theory behind the age-related positivity effect. *Frontiers in Emotion Science, 3*, 30180. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2012.00339>, PMID: PMC3459016
 - d. Larkin, G.R.S., Gibbs, S.E.B., Khanna, K., Nielsen, L., **Carstensen, L.L.**, Knutson, B. (2007). Anticipation of monetary gain but not loss in healthy older adults. *Nature Neuroscience, 10*, 787–791. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nn1894>, PMID: PMC2268869
5. Building on theoretical and empirical findings, my research team has applied research findings to improve health and well-being as we live longer lives.
- a. Sims, T., Raposo, S., Bailenson, J. N., & **Carstensen, L. L.** (2020). The future is now: Age-progressed images motivate community college students to prepare for their financial futures. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied, 26*(4), 593–603. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xap0000275>, PMID: PMC7899147
 - b. Raposo, S., Hogan, C.L., Barnes, J.T., Chemudupati, & **Carstensen, L.L.** (2021). Leveraging meaningful goals to incentivize healthful behaviors in younger and older people. *Psychology and Aging, 36*(1), 57–68. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pag0000428>, PMID: PMC7785661
 - c. Kircanski, K., Notthoff, N., DeLiema, M., Samanez-Larkin, G. R., Shadel, D., Mottola, G., **Carstensen, L. L.**, & Gotlib, I. H. (2018). Emotional arousal may increase susceptibility to fraud in older and younger adults. *Psychology and Aging, 33*(2), 325–337. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pag0000228>, PMID: PMC6005691
 - d. Scheibe, S., Notthoff, N., Menkin, J., Ross, L., Shadel, D., & **Carstensen, L.L.** (2014). Forewarning reduces fraud susceptibility in vulnerable consumers. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 36*(3), 272–279, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01973533.2014.903844>, PMID: PMC4199235

Complete List of Published Work in MyBibliography:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/myncbi/laura.carstensen.1/bibliography/public/>