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BIOLOGICAL CORRELATES OF PRIMATE PERSONALITY AND TEMPERAMENT

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Research on human personality has shown that dimensions describing stable individual differences in affect, behavior, and thought are powerful predictors of several important outcomes, including, among others, lifespan, health, behavior, well-being, and mating success. Similar personality dimensions have been found in a variety of species, including nonhuman primates such as chimpanzees, orangutans, rhesus macaques, and vervet monkeys. This symposium will present new research which describes biological and environmental correlates of individual differences in nonhuman primate personality dimensions. Participants will thus discuss their work on how temperament or personality are influenced by genes, environment, and gene x environment interactions, the neuroanatomical bases of personality or temperament, and how personality or temperament impact quality of life and immune system functioning. While these areas of research are often guided by theory derived from human studies, they also yield insights into human personality and are relevant to furthering the goals of comparative psychology, ethology, and primatology.

Keywords: personality, gene x environment, immune system, brain imaging