This newsletter was created by Julia McDonald, Grace Clements, Katie Hoemann, Amanda Ferguson, Anna Finley, Iulia Banica, and Sarah Sass of the SPR Committee to Promote Student Interests. This newsletter is sent to current student and general members. Please forward to your students and any interested colleagues!

Upcoming Opportunities and Deadlines:

If you are a US resident and will be flying, you must have a Real ID compliant ID by **October 1st** to fly. More information can be found here.

SPR Call for Abstracts!

Are you excited about your latest research results and want to present them to the audience at the upcoming 60th annual SPR meeting in Vancouver? The submission portal for abstracts will be open **March 10 - April 10.** More information can be found on the SPR website. Also, if you are a current undergraduate or recent (2020) college graduate? The Late Breaking Student Poster submissions will be available from **May 1 – June 1**.

Family care grant

In order to improve support to SPR meeting attendees with significant family care responsibilities, SPR is once again providing small family care grants (up to $400 per family) for SPR members with dependents requiring childcare, elder care, or care due to disability. Applications are due **May 31.** For more information, go here or email Anna Weinberg (http://anna.weinberg@mcgill.ca/) (include "Family Care Grants in the subject line).

SPR Research Travel Award

The SPR Research Travel Award is specifically aimed to assist predoctoral student members who would not be able to attend the annual meeting without funding from the Travel Awards program. For more information and to apply, please visit the SPR Research Travel Award Page *(updated page for 2020 award applications is coming soon!).*

2019 Student Award Recipients

Congratulations to all of our 2019 Student Award Recipients!

2019 Poster Award Recipients:

- Maeve Boylan
- Torge Dellert
- Caroline Diehl
- Clara Freeman
- Anika Guha
- Kaylin Hill
- Katie Hoemann
- Zachary Levy
- James Yancey
- Sherry Zhou

2019 Travel Award Recipients:

- Whitney Allen
- Andreas Behrje
- Anthony Bocchine
- Kaylie Carbine
- Martina D'Agnostini
- Mara Demuth
- Marissa DiGirolamo
- Mona El-Hout
- Nieves Fuentes
- Katie Garrison
- Felicitas Huber
- Thayane Lemos
- Amanda Levinson
- Yuri Pavlov
- Matthias Sperl
- Anna-Lena Tebbe
- Noah Wolkowicz
- Xiaoquan Yu
- Philipp Ziebell

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2019 Research Fellowship Training Grant Recipients:

- Enes Avcu – *University of Delaware, USA*
- David Cole – *Utah State University, USA*
- Michelle Thai – *University of Minnesota, USA*
- Yuri Pavlov – *University of Tubingen, Germany*

The Upcoming 60th Annual SPR Conference in Vancouver, B.C.

This year's SPR Annual Meeting will be October 7 to 11 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, and promises many exciting speakers and events! In this section, you can find information on some highlights of the upcoming 60th anniversary meeting.

Invited Speakers:



- **Roshan Cools** (Radboud University, Netherlands)
- **John Foxe** (University of Rochester)
- **David Amodio** (New York University)

Pre-Conference Workshops:

- **Mini ERP Boot Camp:** organized by Dr. Steven Luck. This is a two-day workshop taking place on Tuesday, Oct. 6 and Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020.
- **Digital Signal Processing:** organized by Drs. J. Christopher Edgar and Gregory A. Miller. This two-day workshop is also scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 6 and Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020.
- **Power Analysis for Psychophysiology Research:** organized by Drs. Erin P. Hennes and Sean P. Lane. This one-day workshop will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2020.

Big Ideas symposia:

This year, Big Idea symposia speakers will discuss the following topics:

- Psychophysiology and health
- Psychophysiology across the lifespan
- Interpersonal psychophysiology

Roundtable Discussions:

Organized by the Education and Training Committee, this event offers an opportunity to talk about important issues in a small group format.

Student Social:

Every year, the Committee to Promote Student Interests organizes the student social, which offers a great opportunity to get to know your fellow SPR student members. The event typically includes free food and a free drink ticket for the first 100 students to arrive. We hope to see you there!

Saturday Night Social:

This event, featuring a performance from the SPR Blues Band, is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with SPR members of all levels!

60th-Anniversary-Themed Events:

Keep your eye out throughout the conference for various events celebrating SPR's 60th anniversary! The meeting will open with an anniversary-themed reception.

Things to do in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

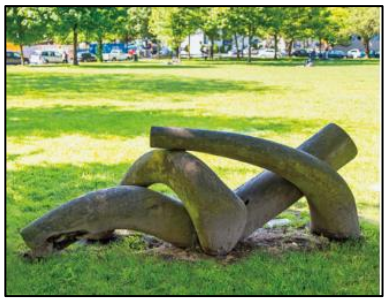
**Special thanks to Katie Hoemann for sharing her suggestions for things to do!*

Vancouver is, without a doubt, a phenomenally beautiful city. It boasts ocean, mountain, and green space – the outdoor lover's dream. But don't worry, there are also treats for the indoor kids, and for those of us who want a nice mix of both. Here are a few top spots to consider:

Outdoors: So, while Whistler and the Sunshine Coast are incredibly attractive destinations, they likely fall outside the radius (and budget?) of what's feasible during a conference. Luckily, Stanley Park (right) tops nearly every Vancouver to-do list – so let's follow suit. It's not "just a park": there are forests, historical villages, and the seawall – the world's longest uninterrupted waterfront path. Stroll, hike, jog, or bike on over. If you're hankering for a bit more tranquility, check out the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Chinese Garden – the first "scholars garden" built outside of China. For a little bit more adventure, try to find the secret Cambie Climbing Tree – a massive evergreen outfitted with a hammock, tire swing, and amazing vista of the city.

Indoors: If you do one indoorsy thing while you're in Vancouver (apart from the conference itself!) it needs to be the Museum of Anthropology (below). Seriously, though.

Housed in an iconic building, the MOA covers the rich history and cultures of indigenous peoples from Canada and around the world. For a bit of local, modern history, check out the "Neon Vancouver | Ugly Vancouver" exhibit at the Museum of Vancouver – a tribute to the deep controversy stirred up by all the neon signs in the 1950s-70s. Find out more about the city's slightly darker history at the Vancouver Police Museum.



Around Town: It's almost certain you're going to end up walking around downtown Vancouver in the conference off-hours. When you do, be sure to keep an eye out for the Gastown steam clock and statue of namesake 'Gassy Jack', the Marine Building of comic book fame, and the amazing chocolates at Thierry. Head up to the West End for some beach action at English Bay – there's an 'a-maze-ing' statue there, too. Further inland, there's the Shameful Tiki Room, and the beloved Dude Chilling Park (right).

Further Afield: Of course, there are many (MANY) other sites to see beyond the conference environs. If you find yourself with an afternoon off, or a spare day in the area,

consider heading up to North Vancouver to test your mettle on Grouse Grind and the Capilano suspension bridge (left). While you're in the area, be sure to stop by Mr. Bannock for some authentic indigenous cuisine. Though not totally out of your way, Granville Island is a kind of world unto itself. Take the Aquabus there and get lost at the Public Market, but make sure to find the 'Giants' before you leave for the day.

Looking for more? Check out these great lists by Atlas Obscura, Time Out, and Thrillist.

Vancouver Transportation Tips

- Vancouver Bike Share is one option for getting around.

Buses regularly stop by the hotel and points on the Robson St–Granville St–Davie St–Denman St loop from 5:00 to 1:00 a.m. Some lines run on a more restricted schedule; however, there is also a limited Night Bus service.

- The conference hotel is next to the Burrard **SkyTrain** station:
  - The **Expo Line** runs south-east from downtown Vancouver, out to Burnaby, New Westminster and Surrey. There are four downtown stations – Waterfront, **Burrard**, Granville and Stadium-Chinatown. Take one of these trains to visit Science World, get to Pacific Central Station, visit the Commercial Drive neighbourhood, or head out to Metrotown shopping mall in Burnaby or the River Market at New Westminster Quay. Trains run every 2-5 minutes.
  - The **Canada Line** runs from downtown Vancouver, before splitting with one extension going to **Vancouver International Airport** (YVR) and the other heading further south into Richmond. There are three downtown stations – Waterfront, Vancouver City Centre and Yaletown. Along with getting to the airport, take this line to visit the Olympic Village neighbourhood, Queen Elizabeth Park, River Rock Casino Resort, and Aberdeen Centre shopping mall, and the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet centre. During peak hours, it runs every 3-6 minutes, and less frequently during other times.
  - The **SeaBus** is a unique, passenger-only, wheelchair-accessible ferry service that connects downtown Vancouver's Waterfront Station to Lonsdale Quay on the North Shore. The scenic crossing of Burrard Inlet takes 12 minutes and offers a breathtaking perspective of the city, sea and mountains. It departs every 15 minutes during the day, and every 30 minutes at night, with the final sailing leaving Lonsdale Quay at 1:00 a.m. (11:00 p.m. on Sundays)
- Translink tickets are valid for up to 90 minutes with free transfers across buses, Skytrains, and SeaBus. Fares can be paid with Refillable Compass Cards (2.40 CAD + 6.00 CAD refundable deposit for the card) or on buses with cash or credit card but no transfer privileges (3.00 CAD). Compass Cards can be purchased at vending machines at SkyTrain, SeaBus, and West Coast Express (commuter train service) stations, as well as select London Drugs locations. If you only travel within the City of Vancouver (Zone 1), you can ignore the transit zones. If you travel beyond

downtown during peak hours, you may need to purchase premium tickets valid for Zones 2 and/or 3.

- Vancouver recently reopened to **Uber and Lyft**. Prices are regulated so they may cost similarly to taxis. Note, however, that taxis unreliably show up when scheduled.

Transportation information was partly cribbed from https://www.tourismvancouver.com. Here is information on airport transportation.

Spotlight Interview with Michael X Cohen

Associate Professor at Radboud University Medical Centre, Nijmegen, Netherlands, and Donders Centre for Neuroscience

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1. Can you talk a little bit about your career trajectory? How have your experiences (e.g., starting as a music student; moving through your PhD, post doc, and research positions) shaped your career path? Who has most influenced your research or academic trajectory?

My post-high-school educational adventure had a strong Brownian-motion-like progression. I started studying classical music but spending 8 hours a day in a tiny sound-attenuated practice room gave me headaches, misery, and diarrhea (one or two of these is possibly an exaggeration). I then bounced around to English literature, philosophy, and photography, and I finally graduated in psychology. After taking a year off to smoke pot and drive motorcycles in Santa Barbara, I started my PhD at UC Davis studying personality psychology. I found the topic interesting but wanted to dig deeper into the brain and into data. I am grateful that the psychology department allowed—and even encouraged—me to change labs, topics, and methods multiple times, including spending my last three years of PhD working at an epilepsy clinic in Germany to collect intracranial EEG data. I've continued to bounce around topics and methods since then, although the common thread has always been rigorous and focused analysis of multi-dimensional datasets. On the other hand, as a complex system, I am prone to large-scale disruptions from time to time.

2. What drew you to the field of psychophysiology?

Honestly, I don't think anything "drew" me into it; it's more accurate to say that my wobbly and haphazardly careening career path stumbled into it. It was a product of the papers I was reading and researchers I was talking to at the time. But I do like the field and the approaches, which is why I was happy to have found and been warmly welcomed into the SPR community.

3. What about midfrontal theta first piqued your interest, and what have you learned since then that continues to motivate your research in that area?

More brutal honesty here: I started studying midfrontal theta because it was a low-hanging fruit. In 2006, there was only a small handful of publications on the topic, most of which were methodological rather than topical. I wrote a grant proposal in the Netherlands

where I explained that this was an interesting and important topic with almost nothing known. I proposed to spend 5 years and two PhD dissertations studying the shit of out midfrontal theta — its statistical and anatomical characteristics, its relationship to executive functioning (mostly response conflict and errors), and its correlation with individual differences. The grant was funded and the rest is history. I was also fortunate around that time to have met Jim Cavanagh, John Allen, and Michael Frank while doing a postdoc stint at the University of Arizona; they were also interested in midfrontal theta and that really helped kickstart the research.

4. What new area of research (your own or someone else's) are you most excited about right now?

Well, obviously I'm going to write that my lab's research is what I'm most excited about. EEG is a great tool, but it is fundamentally limited in circuit-level precision: Cognition does not come from the EEG voltage wobbling up and down; instead, cognition comes from the complex and dynamic interactions across populations of different types of cells in different cortical layers and fields, neurochemical modulations, etc. (In truth, no one has any idea where cognition comes from; I'm just riding the bandwagon of fashionable neuroscience thinking.) EEG is somehow a reflection of those dynamics, and I want to know the kinds of neural circuit configurations that can produce those wobbles. My lab is currently using combined electrophysiology, optogenetics, and electrical stimulation in rodents in order to get some reasonable approximation to an acceptable answer (though I fear we'll never know the whole truth).

Apart from SPR, what is your favorite academic conference and why?

I've grown fond of smaller, more topical, and often one-off conferences. They tend to be more amenable to meeting new people, diving deep into inspiring discussions, and sparking collaborations. The other "large" conference I like is ICON (International Conference for Cognitive Neuroscience). Each one is organized by a different team in a different city, and so each one has its own unique flavor. (Disclosure: I co-organized ICON in Amsterdam in 2017.)

What advice would you give to young researchers who are interested in learning new psychophysiological techniques?

Absorb anything and everything you can from your mentors and "the elders," but be critical and do what you think is right. Trust me, your supervisor isn't nearly the expert you think they are; they are most likely doing whatever their supervisor taught them. The "wisdom" people offer you is most likely based on something they tried that worked in one dataset 15 years ago. I don't mean to be demeaning or ageist (I am not ashamed to admit that I am old, i.e., >25); you should definitely seek out advice and take it seriously. Just realize that well-meaning advice-givers can tell you what's worked for them at the time they did it, but that is not necessarily the right thing for you right now. I think I just answered a question about life advice rather than new psychophysiological techniques, but I'm pretty sure it's still valid.

If someone gave you a magic wand with the goal of improving science, how would you use it?

Oh there are so many things I would like to see changed. But I'll proffer one as a thought experiment: A rule where a researcher can have maximum one first-author publication

each 5 years. Then each publication would contain multiple replications, control experiments, extensions, rigorous methods investigations, etc. This model would produce fewer papers to read and each paper would be higher quality and more trustworthy.

What has been the highlight of your career thus far? Is there anything you would have done differently?

The highlight of my career thus far has been the overflowing positive responses to my first book (ANTS) and then to my subsequent online videos and courses. I did not imagine that the ANTS book would have been so well received or widely used, and I feel humbled and grateful to have made a contribution to the field outside my own little topical pocket of midfrontal theta.

There are plenty of things I *could* have done differently, and perhaps my career or life would be different now if I had made different choices. When I was younger, I used to think "If only I had studied <whatever topic> earlier." But it's never too late to start learning something new. Really honestly truly. It does take more motivation to learn new skills as you get older, but if you want to do something else or learn something new, then do it. It sounds like a trite aphorism, but perseverance really is much more important than intelligence or luck.

Updates from the Committee to Promote Student Interests

Are your needs being met? Want to get involved? Please feel free to contact members of the committee with suggestions, questions, comments, or to bond with a fellow psychophysiologist (Contact information available on the SPR website).

Public Relations Subcommittee: The SPR Public Relations Subcommittee continues to update the SPR Facebook Page (like the page if you haven't!), highlighting various work published in *Psychophysiology* and providing updates for the upcoming conference in Vancouver. Continue to look for SPR across social media!

Post-Doc/ Early Career Subcommittee: This year's SPR will feature a designated Early Career coffee break. This informal meet-up will be a great opportunity for student and post-doc attendees to network, learn more about the society, and discuss early career issues. Please reach out to Anna (anna.j.finley@gmail.com) and Lauren (lbrowningneal@gmail.com) if you'd like to get involved!

International Students Subcommittee: Interested in working with psychophysiologists abroad? Check out the International Students Exchange Forum! Our forum includes SPR labs from the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and Switzerland. All labs are happy to host (international) students who want to learn new psychophysiological methods. Does your lab welcome (international) exchange students but is not yet on our list? Simply send us an e-mail (matthias.sperl@staff.uni-marburg.de) with your lab's information and we will create a subpage for you.

Have an exciting opportunity for our student members or a fun student event planned for the 60th Annual SPR Conference in Vancouver? We'd love to highlight it in our next newsletter! Contact Grace Clements at: gracemc2@illinois.edu