

BPPS NEWS

The Newsletter of the British Psychophysiological Society

Issue 2: Autumn / Winter 2003

CONTENTS

A word from the President	.....	2
Conference details	.....	3
Conference reports 2003	.....	5
Bursary information	.....	6
Membership information	.....	7
Members' notice board	.....	8



A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY:

Next year's annual scientific meeting of the BPPS will be held from 13-15th September in the University of Manchester, Dalton-Ellis Halls of Residence,

- More details – pages ?????

The meeting will last 2.5 days, starting at lunchtime on the Monday.

MANCHESTER 2004



At present we have two confirmed symposia:

- TMS
- Cross-modal Interactions

With top-notch keynote speakers including John Rothwell & Charles Spence. There will also be plenty of opportunity for free platform presentations and we particularly encourage the participation of post-graduates, here and through poster presentations.

The deadline for the submission of abstracts is June 1st 2004.

.....

The BPPS Committee would also like to take this opportunity to wish all the members and affiliates of the society a

**A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS
& A SUCCESSFUL &
HAPPY NEW YEAR**

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Manchester next year to continue our tradition of friendly, enlightening and challenging conferences.

MANCHESTER 2004

Symposia topics will include Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS), and Crossmodal Interactions.

TMS symposium:

Convenor: Dr Vince Walsh (Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, UCL).

Keynote lecture: Prof. John Rothwell (Sobell Department of Motor Neuroscience and Movement Disorders, Institute of Neurology, London), "Rapid adaptive plasticity of the brain explored with TMS"

Symposium speakers:

Dr Sven Bestmann (Sobell Department of Motor Neuroscience and Movement Disorders, Institute of Neurology, London), "Combining TMS and fMRI in behavioural experiments".

Dr Matthew Rushworth (Experimental Psychology, Oxford), "Magnetic stimulation studies of attention and action".

Prof. Stephen Jackson (School of Psychology, University of Nottingham), "Remapping of space in the parietal cortex"

Dr Shaheen Hamdy (Dept. of Gastrointestinal Sciences, Hope Hospital, Salford), "Gut and the human motor cortex: studies with TMS"

Crossmodal symposium

"Crossmodal Interactions: Evidence from human behavioural and imaging studies"

Convenor: Dr Donna Lloyd (University of Liverpool).

Keynote lecture: Dr Charles Spence (Dept of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford), "Crossmodal attention and multisensory integration".

Symposium speakers:

Dr Salvatore Soto-Faraco (University of Barcelona), "Eye-gaze orienting to auditory and tactile targets".

Dr India Morisson (University of North Wales, Bangor), "The role of crossmodal processing in intersubjective pain perception".

Dr Donna Lloyd (University of Liverpool), "Visuo-tactile Multisensory Interactions and fMRI".

Dr Jose Van Velzen (Birkbeck College, London), "ERP Studies of Crossmodal Attention".

Two other symposia are yet to be announced. We also are calling for abstracts for the free platform presentation – deadline June 1st 2004.

STUDENT REPORTS FROM THE PORTSMOUTH CONFERENCE 2003

The BPPS conference this year in Portsmouth covered a broad spectrum of posters, symposiums and key speakers on MEG, fMRI and ERP research. Being a researcher in cardiovascular psychophysiology, I took the opportunity to learn more about this area; Jiri Vbra's keynote address was particularly enlightening for me as it introduced the fundamentals behind MEG. He mentioned problems with noise and source localisation with this method and also ways in which these problems can be reduced. For instance noise can be reduced via shielding and MEG source localisation done via multiple channels. He also concluded that while about 100 to 200 channels was sufficient for dipoles, as the distance between two dipoles increases, more channels led to better detection. I was also glad to see that there was one poster that investigated the role of stress on cortisol and Monoamines Inhibitors (MAO-AI) submitted by Sara Sen. This poster showed how perceived stress was positively associated with salivary cortisol and negatively associated with MAO-AI. MAO-AI was seen as part of a feedback system that responded to levels of cortisol.

Jaak Panksepp's keynote address was also intriguing as he highlighted the relationship between the cortical regions and the limbic system in emotional generation, maintenance and suppression. He also presented research evidence for affective neuroscience that showed the central role of subcortical regions of the brain in emotions. This is compared to the Cognitive Neuroscientific approach that emphasises the role of

the neocortical regions in emotions.

The conference is not all about academic presentations and symposiums. The harbour boat trip organised by the conference committee took some of us round Portsmouth Harbour to view warships, a submarine and a diver training tower. The conference dinner at Tallulah's wine-bar and brasserie was a 3-course meal with an almost endless supply of side dishes and wine. Fortunately, the 3-day BPPS conference was also blessed with fine, sunny weather throughout.

Yong-Peng Why,
University of St Andrews, Fife.

.....

Firstly I would like to thank the BPPS for their kind travel bursary allowing me to present data from the 1st year of my PhD at the 31st Annual meeting. I would also like to thank the BPPS for awarding my presentation the poster prize of a year's free membership. As I was presenting I did not get the opportunity to discuss any of the other posters with their presenters, but I did find the whole session very helpful. Thankfully I got some very good feedback from my work and I would like to thank every one who spoke to me and for their words of encouragement.

I attended my first BPPS meeting last year in Glasgow. At which point I had only been a PhD student for two weeks and therefore I was a little daunted by the thought of attending a meeting so early in my studies. However, my mind was soon put at ease with the friendly atmosphere and the well-structured presentations. So this year there was no

surprise that it would be just as good (if not better than last year), made evident by the mad scrawling of notes in my proceedings book.

I would like to address the second symposium “Brain regulation” of which I found most interesting and the highlight of the conference for me. This symposium had me on the edge of my seat! The symposium included discussion of the use of EEG neurofeedback to train musicians to improve their performance and the use of a Thought-Translation-Device (TTD) for the paralyzed with Locked-In- Syndrome. Also in this session, Herta Flor discussed neural plasticity in pain. I personally found this talk fantastic, especially her comments about the over exaggeration of pain response with the presence of an attentive spouse. Herta Flor also gave the Keynote. Here she discussed abnormal fronto-limbic circuitry in psychopaths, posttraumatic stress disorder patients and drug addict relapse patients. There was discussion during the question time about how psychopaths use the law enforcement system to their own advantage by altering their behaviour to aid their release so they can re-offend, whilst inside they have no remorse for their actions, and in fact blame their victims for their crime.

The other main symposia where “New developments in MEG research”, which unfortunately I missed due to train problems and “Multimodal imaging of language” these were addressed in the keynote by Cathy Price where she discussed the un-specific neural systems of spoken and written word processing. This keynote was followed by descriptions of studies of language using fMRI, MEG, EEG and TMS.

My Thanks to Hannie and Sharon for organising a fantastic meeting (even if I did miss the harbour boat tour), I just hope that the 2004 meeting in Manchester lives up to our high expectations.

Yvonne Boyle, Human Pain Research Group, University of Manchester.

BPPS MEMBERSHIP

As is the want of societies such as ours, we are always on the hunt for new members – so please do your best to encourage those of your colleagues who are not members, but would benefit both themselves and us from being so, to join up and come along to Manchester next year. The details are as follows:

Full membership	£ 35
Affiliate membership	£ 15
Subscribers	£ 15
Student membership	£ 25

Full and student membership includes the subscription to the Journal of Psychophysiology.

For more details or any other membership enquiries please contact:

Caroline Brown
(caroline.brown@bris.ac.uk)

MEMBERS NOTICEBOARD

I plan to embark on a series of studies in the field of experimental gut psychophysiology. The 2 main strands to this I would envisage as firstly the development of simple experimental psychophysical models with a gut specific pain or motility element to it and secondly the development of gut psychophysiological profile clusters in both healthy subjects and patients with chronic gut disease (IBS, IBD, NCCP etc) incorporating psychological parameters such as coping styles and anxiety traits with autonomic, hypothalamic pituitary axis measures and a gut specific measure adopted from my experimental model.

I would be grateful for any ideas/suggestions/guidance in these matters from anyone in the BPS who embarked on anything remotely similar, even if in just one element.

Dr Peter Paine
Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Fellow and SpR in Gastroenterology
Clinical Sciences Building, Hope Hospital
Salford
M6 8HD
Tel 0161 787 1510

CONGRATULATIONS

This year's conference saw a wide selection of high calibre posters from many avenues of psychophysiological research.

The winner of 2003 BPPS Conference poster competition was Yvonne Boyle from the Human Pain Research Group, University of Manchester.

Honourable mentions were also made to Arjan Hillebrand and Michael Simpson from Aston for their poster contributions.

STUDENT BURSARIES

Bursaries are available from the society for post-graduates to attend conferences both in the UK and abroad. The maximum amount per person is £200. They are typically available to help students with the costs associated with presenting at a conference.

Details of how to apply for these bursaries are available from the society president:

a.burgess@imperial.ac.uk

Information should include name, institution, purpose of funding and associated work (e.g. an abstract).

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE FOR BIOLOGICAL CYBERNETICS TUEBINGEN

Research Positions in combined Monkey & Human MRI

A Postdoctoral fellow and a PhD student position are available to work with Zoe Kourtzi at the Max Planck Institute for Biological Cybernetics in Tuebingen. The research focuses on comparative human and monkey studies of visual perception and will be conducted in collaboration with Prof. Nikos Logothetis.

The human studies will use psychophysics and neuroimaging. The monkey studies will employ combined electrophysiological and MRI techniques. The research aims to investigate the neural basis and the development of visual functions in the primate brain.

Applicants are expected to have a background in Neuroscience, Cognitive Psychology, Physics or a related Field. Programming skills and experience with neurophysiological or imaging techniques are desirable but not necessary.

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Zoe Kourtzi

Max Planck Institute for Biological Cybernetics

Postfach 21 69

72012 Tuebingen, Germany

Tel: ++49 (0)7071 601-603

Fax: ++49 (0)7071 601-616

e-mail: zoe.kourtzi@tuebingen.mpg.de

<http://vbilab.kyb.tuebingen.mpg.de>

SUGGESTIONS

If you have any suggestions for things to include in forthcoming editions of the BPPS newsletter, or if you have any comments, criticisms or messages, please feel free to contact:

Nick Cooper (Newsletter Editor)

n.cooper@imperial.ac.uk

I look forward to hearing from you.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

Institute of Child Health and Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust

Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience Unit

Lecturer in Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience

The Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience Unit at the Institute of Child Health, University College London, is seeking a cognitive neuroscientist to carry out research on the contributions of the medial temporal and the frontal/neostriatal systems in auditory memory. The aim is to dissociate, through the comparison of two patient groups, the contributions made by the two implicated brain systems to auditory memory generally, and, more specifically, to cognitive-based vs habit-based memory for speech and language. The work will involve designing and administering a wide variety of memory and speech and language tests, carrying out structural and functional brain imaging with magnetic resonance techniques, measuring electrophysiological event-related potentials, and analysing and correlating the behavioural and neurobiological results. The appointment will be at the Lecturer level for a period of four years fixed term. Applicants must have a Ph.D. or an M.D. and should already have had two to four years of relevant postdoctoral experience, although an applicant with less experience will be considered if uniquely qualified.

The starting salary for this post will be £26,270, plus £2,134 London Weighting per annum.

The job description (which includes details on how to apply for the post) can be obtained from

<http://www.ich.ucl.ac.uk/ich/> or by sending a stamped addressed envelope to: Human Resources, ICH, 30 Guilford Street, London, WC1N 1EH. Please quote reference /03/XX. Alternatively you may email us for an electronic version of the job description at s.pawar@ich.ucl.ac.uk

For general enquiries about the position please contact

Faraneh Vargha-Khadem: Tel: +44 (0)207 837 7618 or e-mail: fkhadem@ich.ucl.ac.uk

Closing date for applications is 9th January 2004.

NOT ALL HARDWORK ...



More photographs from the Portsmouth conference can be seen in the accompanying .png file.