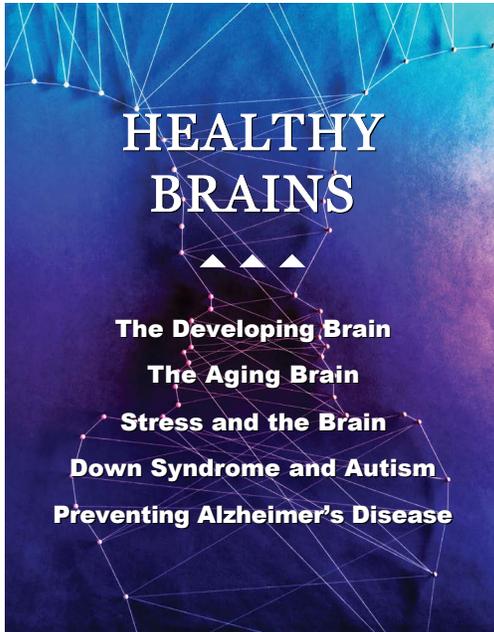


# HEALTHY MINDS



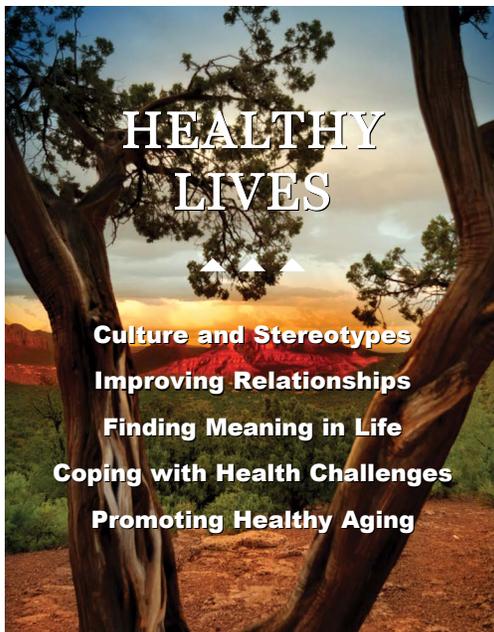
- Perceiving our World
- Learning about the World
- Making Decisions
- Enhancing Memory
- Improving Emotional Health



# HEALTHY BRAINS



- The Developing Brain
- The Aging Brain
- Stress and the Brain
- Down Syndrome and Autism
- Preventing Alzheimer's Disease



# HEALTHY LIVES



- Culture and Stereotypes
- Improving Relationships
- Finding Meaning in Life
- Coping with Health Challenges
- Promoting Healthy Aging

# PSYCHOLOGY

Advancing the Science of Psychology  
from Infancy to Old Age



Fall 2016

# NEWSLETTER

Looking toward the future....

Last year, we began an ambitious five-year program of building excellence in research, teaching, and community connections. In just one year, we've made amazing progress. Increased resources from research, donors, and the College of Science have allowed us to expand our staff, increase salaries for faculty, staff, and graduate students, create a new website, and make improvements to meeting spaces and laboratories. This semester, I'm delighted to welcome FOUR new talented faculty to our ranks!

Much of our efforts last year were focused on revitalizing our undergraduate teaching programs. A new major – the **Bachelor of Science in Psychological Science** – will provide students with intensive research training and experience to prepare them for postgraduate degrees in psychology, medicine, and other science fields. We're also strengthening our BA in Psychology by expanding the opportunities for students to engage in community internships. And our new **UA Online BA in Psychology** offers students an outstanding educational experience through interactive learning technologies. In just one year, we are already the largest online major at UA.

Of course, there's always more to do. In the coming year, we'll continue building on our successes with new academic initiatives, connecting with alumni, and partnering with community organizations. We'll also focus on the incredibly important task of expanding **diversity within Psychology**, using our unique expertise to ensure that our department is a welcoming and nurturing place for everyone.

I'm looking forward to continuing our work together to build a bright future for Psychology.

Lee Ryan  
Department Head

[WWW.PSYCHOLOGY.ARIZONA.EDU](http://WWW.PSYCHOLOGY.ARIZONA.EDU)

**We've redesigned our website!** Our development efforts were focused on aesthetics, simplifying our content and increasing the visibility of our research. Explore the site and read about our **Faculty**, **Undergraduate** and **Graduate** Programs, **News** and **Events**. Learn about our **Research Areas** and how you can **be part of a research study**.

Visit our newly added Alumni & Friends pages. **Update Us** on what you've been doing since graduating or help support Psychology through our **Giving Opportunities**.

## IN THE NEWS

### UA Partners on Study to Improve Cognition in Older Adults



Cognitive decline is a normal part of aging, but as the world's population of older adults grows, researchers are looking at ways to prevent it. The University of Arizona, the University of Florida and the University of Miami have been awarded a five-year, \$5.7 million grant from the National Institute on Aging to study whether a combination of computer-based cognitive training exercises and direct electrical stimulation to the brain can help improve cognitive functioning in older adults. Dr. Gene Alexander, professor of psychology, neuroscience and physiological sciences, and a member of the UA's Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute will lead the research in collaboration with colleague Dr. John Allen, University Distinguished Professor of psychology.

[Read the full article at UA News](#)

### New Book Explores Love's Many Layers



Dr. Dave Sbarra has spent most of his career studying love and relationships. He shares some of his insights in a new e-book, titled "Love, Loss and the Space Between: The Relationship Expert Essays". It's a self-published collection of 37 essays, culling from scientific research and Sbarra's personal experiences.

[Read the full article at UA News](#)

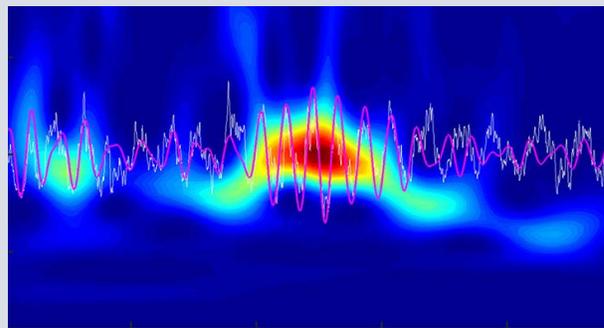
### Learning with the Lights Out



Researchers are uncovering the link between sleep and learning and how it changes throughout our lives. Drs. Rebecca Gómez and Jamie Edgin study sleep and memory formation in children of different ages. Gómez finds that naps are crucial for infants to retain a memory a day later. Edgin, who specializes in learning disorders, finds that children with better long-term sleep have enhanced learning outcomes. Edgin and her former graduate student Dina Spanò are investigating sleep and memory formation in children with Down syndrome.

[Read the full article at The Scientist](#)

### UA Researchers Develop New Way to Look Deep Inside the Brain



Researchers at the University of Arizona may be on the cusp of a breakthrough when it comes to examining the deepest parts of the brain. Their new technology, similar to an ultrasound, has the potential to measure electrical activity deep inside the brain. They have dubbed the project Acoustoelectric Brain Imaging, or ABI. Stephen Cowen, assistant professor of psychology, believes ABI has much to offer the world of psychological research as well in the areas of diagnosis and treatment. The extra resolution ABI produces may help psychologists better understand spectrum disorders such as schizophrenia and autism.

[Read the full article at Cronkite News](#)

**For Upcoming Events visit: [WWW.PSYCHOLOGY.ARIZONA.EDU/EVENTS](http://WWW.PSYCHOLOGY.ARIZONA.EDU/EVENTS)**

## ACHIEVEMENTS

### **Lynn Nadel Receives 2016 Norman Anderson Lifetime Achievement Award**

Lynn Nadel has been awarded the prestigious Norman Anderson Lifetime Achievement Award by the Society of Experimental Psychologists. The Society is the oldest in the field of Psychology, established over a hundred years ago by Edward B. Titchener, the British psychologist who studied under Wilhelm Wundt. We congratulate Dr. Nadel on receiving this much-deserved award for his lifetime contributions to the field of psychology, and thank him for his many years of exceptional service and commitment to our department, the University of Arizona, and the scientific community.

### **Lauren Nguyen Awarded 2016-17 Theodore H. Koff Scholarship**

Graduate student Lauren Nguyen who has been awarded the prestigious Theodore H. Koff Scholarship. The scholarship is awarded annually to outstanding UA graduate students who are pursuing studies in Aging and Gerontology. Lauren is in the Clinical Psychology program conducting research on various factors affecting healthy aging.

### **UA Psych Alum, Maureen O'Connor is New President of Palo Alto University**

One of our former Psychology graduate students, Dr. Maureen O'Connor (Ph.D., JD, Bruce Sales), has been named president of Palo Alto University. She will be joining another of our grad alums, Dr. Amanda Faniff (Ph.D., Judith Becker), who is on faculty at Palo Alto and is going up for tenure this year. Another example of the excellence of our graduate program and the success of our alums.

### **Jessica Payne Awarded with Early Career Award**

Friend, colleague, and advisory board member Jessica Payne, was awarded the 2016 Psychonomic Society's Early Career Award. Jessica is a former graduate student and received her PhD in the CNS program with Lynn Nadel as her supervisor. Jessica is currently an assistant professor at Notre Dame University.

### **First Alfred W. Kaszniak Graduate Fellowship**

Congratulations to graduate student Aubrey Wank. She is the first recipient of the fellowship established in honor of Dr. Al Kaszniak, to support first-year graduate students with research interests in the neuropsychology of emotion and aging. **Donate Now if you would like to help support the Kaszniak Graduate Fellowship**

### **Jamie Edgin Awarded 5 Year Grant from National Institute of Child Health and Human Development**

The goal of the multi-site study (with UC Davis and Drexel University) is to develop valid and sensitive measures of cognitive functioning in individuals with fragile X syndrome and Down Syndrome that can be used as primary outcome measures in clinical trials.

## SUPPORT UA PSYCHOLOGY

**Help us build a strong future for Psychology. Your contribution will provide scholarships for promising undergraduate and graduate students, attract and retain top faculty members, and provide resources and facilities for research and teaching. Your gift can be directed to a specific area or program, or consider making an unrestricted gift that the Department can use for its greatest needs. Contact our Development Coordinator, Dale Schoonover at [dschoonover@email.arizona.edu](mailto:dschoonover@email.arizona.edu) or (520) 621-1477 with any questions.**

**DONATE ONLINE or BY MAIL to give your support!**

## WELCOME NEW FACULTY



**Ying-hui Chou**, Assistant Professor  
I am very excited to join the Department of Psychology. I appreciate the warm welcome everyone has given me. For therapist

few years, I have been applying resting-state fMRI technologies to study brain functional organization and assess the therapeutic effects of repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS) in neurodegenerative disorders at the Duke Brain Imaging and Analysis Center. The current focus of my research program is to establish an evidence-based strategy that combines diffusion tensor imaging, resting-state fMRI, and rTMS to guide, document, and predict therapeutic effects of rTMS in Parkinson's diseases. I am looking forward to collaborating with my colleagues!



**Cynthia Erickson**, Teaching Faculty  
I earned my Ph.D. in Psychology and Neuroscience here at the University of Arizona in 1993. Since then I have been doing research and teaching from coast-to-coast. My research focuses on visual memory and perception. I enjoy working with

students in the classroom and in the laboratory. My many research students have presented numerous posters at international, regional and local conferences. When I am not thinking about psychology, I might be spending time with my family and two dogs, Zara and Kosmos. My hobbies are skiing, hiking and horses. My favorite book is "Thinking Fast and Slow" by Daniel Kahneman.



**Alyssa Croft**, Assistant Professor  
I earned my B.A. in psychology at UA in 2008 (#wildcatforlife!) and my Ph.D. in social/personality psychology at the University of British Columbia this summer. My research focuses on prejudice and stereotypes – I aim to understand how group membership shapes the

way we think, feel, behave, and interact with others. Lately I've been examining male/female under-representation in traditional gender roles and its consequences (e.g., young girls have less female-stereotypic career expectations when their dads do more housework/childcare). Outside of work, I enjoy hanging out with my dogs, playing board/video games, gardening, general socializing (especially when it involves good food and wine), and actively searching for the world's best ice cream.



**Vicky Tzuyin Lai**, Assistant Professor

I am originally from Taiwan, and my doctoral training was in the areas of Psycholinguistics and Cognitive Science at the University of Colorado Boulder. During my postdoctoral years, I worked in the Neurobiology of Language department at the

Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics first, and then in the Language, Concepts, and the Brain laboratory at the University of South Carolina. I am excited to join Psychology and the Cognitive Science community at the University of Arizona, where I will continue research in language using neuroscience and behavioural methods. I love swimming, hiking, sampling good food, and chatting with my two-year-old!

## SPOTLIGHTS



**Roberta Diaz Brinton, PhD** has been appointed inaugural director of the UA Center for Innovation in Brain Science at the University of Arizona Health Sciences. The Center for Innovation in Brain Science will accelerate the advancement of evidence-based clinical care of brain disorders caused by disease, genetics or trauma.

Dr. Brinton is a leading neuroscientist in the field of Alzheimer's, the aging female brain and regenerative therapeutics. She is a Psychology Department alum, having earned her bachelor's degree in psychology and her master's degree in neuropsychology. She went on to complete her doctorate in neuropharmacology and psychobiology as a National Institutes of Health Predoctoral fellow at the University of Arizona.



**Matthew Grilli**, *Assistant Professor & Director of Neuropsychology of Memory & Self Laboratory*

One year ago I joined UA Psychology as an assistant professor, returning to the department in which I completed my PhD in 2013. Prior to calling Tucson home (again), I was a postdoctoral fellow at VA Boston Healthcare System, where I was a proud member of a contingent of UA Psychology alumni including Sue McGlynn, Jasmeet Hayes, and Scott Hayes.

Here at UA I have initiated a program of research focused on autobiographical memory, which refers to memories that capture personal experiences. On a daily basis, we draw on autobiographical memories to help us manage day-to-day responsibilities, to share stories with others and relate to their experiences, and plan for the future. Autobiographical memory helps us live independently, connect with others, and in essence know oneself.

My lab is focused on understanding what leads to autobiographical memory impairment, and how we can treat it. Thanks to financial support from the Arizona Alzheimer's Disease Core Center and UA Psychology's incredible resources for studies on aging, we are investigating whether subtle changes to autobiographical memory crop up before we can detect memory decline on standard neuropsychological tests.

We also are developing new cognitive interventions that may ameliorate the impact of autobiographical memory difficulties on activities that are central to daily living. UA is a unique place to pursue such research. I am very excited to be a part of the exceptional research, education, and clinical science training here at UA – and to be back home!

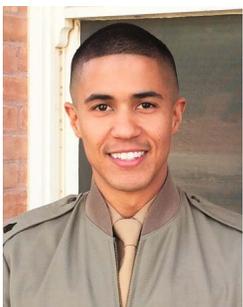


**Kyle Bourassa** *PhD Student in Clinical Psychology*

My research interests focus on close relationships and the impact of relationships on our psychological wellbeing and physical health. I am particularly interested in life transitions including the process of aging, divorce, and widowhood. In a recent paper with my advisor, Dr. David Sbarra, and two graduate students, Cindy Woolverton and Molly Memel, we found that quality of life for older adults depended on their spouses physical health and cognition. In another study with Dr. Mary-Frances O'Connor and graduate student Lindsey Knowles, I extended this work and found that aging couples' quality of life was still linked, even after one member of a couple passed away.

Currently, I am focusing on how our close relationships might affect physical health. For example, what happens to our cardiovascular system when close relationships end? It turns out that the amount a person's blood pressure increases when thinking about their "ex" depends both on how people report they are doing after the divorce as well as their body's self-regulatory capacity.

In the future, I am excited to try to extend this work and explore how romantic partners might provide social support to each other, even when they aren't physically present.



**Efrain Melecio**, *Honors Psychology major*

During my second enlistment in the Marines, I was selected for a military program that allowed me to return to college as a full time student and commission as an Officer. I moved to Tucson soon after getting accepted into this program. I chose to major in psychology at the University of Arizona because I wanted to start working towards becoming a military psychologist. My time in the Marines has definitely provided me with all of the tools that I've needed to successfully transition back into the college environment. I'm also much more appreciative of this educational opportunity now that I've spent so much time away on deployments. As a member of the College of Science and the Honors College, I feel a huge sense of pride to be part of such an incredible group of students and professors.

I'm currently working in Dr. Ruiz's research laboratory. With his help, I have designed a study that will examine if an individual's status as a combat-veteran is correlated to having higher blood pressure and social vigilance than the rest of the student population. I'm very excited about the opportunity to conduct research as an undergraduate student, as well as the honor of working with military veterans. This research will allow me to gain insight into the effects of combat on military veterans' heart health.

My long term goal is to become a psychologist. I know it will be difficult to balance a career as a Marine Corps Officer along with graduate level coursework, but I am committed to accomplishing both of these goals. I am also very passionate about working with veterans, so I am looking forward to the day that I will be able to assist service members as a military psychologist.