

Oxy Cognitive Science

Letter From the Chair

This past summer was an unprecedented one, leading the Cognitive Science Department to host several events to bring our community even closer together. Students past and present joined professors for virtual reunions, game nights, and Netflix parties where we watched *Brain on Fire*, *Black Mirror* and *Babies*. We also held several “journal clubs” in which students and professors facilitated discussions about challenging scientific articles.

For a bit of fun, check out our new Instagram page featuring our community members’ pets! Send an email to Liz Spiller (espiller@oxy.edu) to feature your pet!



Earlier this semester, we welcomed several Oxy Cog Sci alumni along with **Professors Carmel Levitan and Kathryn Leonard** for a panel discussion titled “Womxn in Cognitive Science.” If you missed the event but would like to view a recording, please contact Dr. Sasha Sherman.

Looking Ahead

- **October 15 @ 4:30 PM PST**

Advising discussion

Learn more about our course offerings for Spring 2021 semester, meet professors, and connect with the cognitive science community.

[Click here to register for this event](#)

- **November 6 @ 12:00 PM PST**

Dr. David Yaden

Johns Hopkins Medicine

Guest lecture: *The Renaissance of Psychedelic Research*

Presented by Oxy’s Students for Sensible Drug Policy Club

[Click here to register for this event](#)



- **November 10 @ 4:30 PM PST**

Dr. Dana Miller-Cotto

University of Delaware

Guest lecture: *The Development of Executive Functions and Mathematics: an Integrative Theory Perspective*

[Click here to register for this event](#)



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Sincerely,

Carmel Levitan (Chair, 2019 – 2020)
Sasha Sherman (Chair, 2020 – 2021)
Associate Professors
Cognitive Science Department

2020 Student Leadership Awards Honor Exemplary Undergrads

Three Cognitive Science students were honored this year for outstanding student leadership. Announced on April 30, 2020, the Student Leadership Awards are sponsored by the Division of Student Affairs, and recipients are nominated by faculty and staff across the college.



Liz Frissell '22

Cynthia Cox Memorial Award for outstanding sophomore students who exhibit high scholarship and moral character as well as contributions to student life and the general welfare of the College.

Liz is a double major in Philosophy and Cognitive Science. She is involved in many extracurricular activities at Oxy, including serving on the honor board (student government), working for the Neighborhood Partnership Program (a non-profit partnered with Oxy), and serving on the executive boards for Law Society, Kappa Alpha Theta (sorority), Greek Council, and Active Minds.

Divya "DJ" Prakash '23

Charles W. List Award, which recognizes first-year students in the top third of their class who have demonstrated leadership; character and personality; maturity of purpose; and high ideals.

DJ loves to read, write and wander around in new places. These interests coincide in her work for the school newspaper. DJ's academic interests at Oxy — Cognitive Science, Computer Science, CSLC — seem divergent from each other and from news reporting, but she's found that they all lend a compelling vantage point to journalism, a field that's built on Understanding systems, people, and the world.



Lijia Li '21

The Unsung Champion Award, which recognizes a student from any class level who may not be the face of an organization, project or program, but without whom success would not have been possible.

Lijia is an international student who is double majoring in Cognitive Science and Computer Science. She is passionate about promoting womxn's involvement in STEM fields as well as cultivating community within computer science. She is obsessed with the "a-ha moment" during teaching and would love to become a professor in the future. In her spare time, you can find her learning to snowboard and rock climbing.

Congratulations, Class of 2020!

We present our graduating class of 2020, along with the titles of their senior comprehensive projects. We are incredibly proud of all they've accomplished, not the least of which is persevering to complete their degrees through the spring pandemic semester. Congratulations, and we look forward to celebrating with you in person next summer!

- **Devoney Amberg:** *The Overlap Between Specific Language Impairment and Bilingualism: Enhancing Our Understanding of Language Processing*
- **Erin Ball:** *Moral Decision-Making in the Brain*
- **Isaiah Bird:** *An Analysis on Mirror Neurons*
- **Michael Caballero:** *The Limitations of Language's Reach in Cognition*
- **Annalie Virginia Dern:** *Memory in Dissociative Identity Disorder: The Impacts of Trauma on Explicit Recall*
- **Isabel Geddes:** *Reflecting on the Limitations of the Cognitive Reflection Test*
- **Alexis Hale:** *Supporting Students with ADHD in the Classroom: Evaluating Existing Services and Suggesting Improvements*
- **Cassia Harrison:** *Audio-Visual Illusory Susceptibility: Cognitive Differences and Modulatory Effects*
- **Sarah Hofmann:** *Contextualizing Evidence for Plant Intelligence*
- **Jessamine Cerina Jeter:** *Metaphor Comprehension: Impact of Sign Language, Language Impairments, and Multilingualism Research*
- **Neeharika S. Kadavakolanu:** *Behavioral Biometrics: Uniquely Identifying Users for Fraud Prevention*
- **Betsy Li:** *Street Drug to Antidepressant: Ketamine's Mechanism and Potential Long-Term Effects*
- **Ellen McDermott:** *Virtual Reality: Long-Term Behavioral Effects*
- **Perrin Shyne:** *Discovering the Mental Network of Narrative Comprehension*
- **Peri Wallent:** *How Does Social Media Impact News Consumption?*
- **Sally Xinle Zhou:** *Cognitive Impact of Bilingualism on Arithmetic Operations*

Meet Our Faculty



Carolyn Brighthouse

Associate Dean for Student Academic Affairs; Professor, Cognitive Science, Philosophy
Caro Brighthouse's interests include philosophy of science, philosophy of space and time, and philosophy of physics.



Michael Shelton

Associate Professor, Cognitive Science, Spanish and French Studies; Affiliated Faculty, Linguistics, Latino/a and Latin American Studies; Advisory Committee, Group Language
Michael Shelton is a linguist, specializing in phonology and psycholinguistics.



Alan Knoerr

Associate Professor, Cognitive Science, Mathematics (Emeritus)
Alan Knoerr is an applied mathematician who teaches in the cognitive science and computer science programs.



Aleksandra Sherman

Associate Professor, Cognitive Science; Advisory Committee, Neuroscience
Aleksandra Sherman studies how our senses, emotions, and cognitive capabilities integrate to influence our perceptions and social interactions.



Carmel Levitan

Associate Professor, Cognitive Science; Advisory Committee, Neuroscience
Carmel Levitan studies multisensory interactions, researching how the different senses integrate information.



Andrew Shtulman

Professor, Cognitive Science, Psychology
Andrew Shtulman is a cognitive developmental psychologist who studies conceptual development and conceptual change, particularly as they relate to science education.



Justin Li

Assistant Professor, Cognitive Science, Computer Science
Justin Li teaches in cognitive science and computer science and is interested in how people and artificial agents perform knowledge search.



Saul Traiger

Professor, Cognitive Science, Philosophy
Saul Traiger teaches courses in 17th- and 18th-century philosophy, the foundations of cognitive science, contemporary epistemology, and the philosophy of mind.



Dylan Sabo

Non-Tenure Track Associate Professor, Cognitive Science, Philosophy
Dylan Sabo's areas of philosophical interest include philosophy of mind, philosophy of psychology, and philosophy of language.



Kevin Urstadt

Non-Tenure Track Assistant Professor, Cognitive Science
Kevin Urstadt's research interests include functional neuroanatomy, neuroscience of addiction, and neurocircuitry of hunger.

Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Aleksandra Sherman Promoted to Associate Professor

Congratulations to **Dr. Aleksandra Sherman** for receiving tenure through the 2019-2020 promotion and tenure process at Oxy. Dr. Sherman has been promoted to associate professor, effective in the 2020-2021 academic year.

The Cognitive Science Department was thrilled with the announcement but not surprised, having this to say:

Aleksandra Sherman is a compassionate teacher, a rigorous researcher, and an active member of the Oxy community, working hard to uphold the mission of the College by developing and sharing inclusive pedagogies and mentoring practices. Her scholarship breaks new ground in the study of perception through its integration with neuroscience and aesthetics, and over the past five years, she has extended the traditional boundaries of teaching and scholarship into new, cross-disciplinary terrain. Since joining the department, she has significantly increased the rigor of the entire Cognitive Science academic program; students are able to pursue many more opportunities

through Dr. Sherman's innovations—new kinds of research, new kinds of coursework, new community-based projects. The department's average number of majors has substantially increased over the period since her arrival, and students consistently praise her clarity, her enthusiasm, and her support.

In short: Dr. Sherman's presence at Occidental has been transformative not only for the department but the College as a whole. Our curriculum is stronger, our research opportunities are broader, and our connections to the community are tighter.

[Click here](#) to read what Oxy students have to say about Dr. Sherman.

Dr. Saul Traiger Bids Farewell to the Classroom

After 35 years in the Oxy classrooms, **Dr. Saul Traiger** officially taught his last Oxy class on Monday, April 27, 2020. Dr. Traiger will remain at Oxy for one more year doing research, with a special event to happen afterward to celebrate his official retirement. Watch for an announcement!

Faculty Research

- Over the last few years, **Dr. Andrew Shtulman** and his former postdoc Dr. Andrew Young (now faculty at Northeastern Illinois University) developed and tested a measure of children's cognitive reflection with the help of many CogSci student research assistants. This measure, dubbed the CRT-D (D for developmental), will be published in *Psychological Science*. The forthcoming paper shows that children's CRT-D scores predict their understanding of counterintuitive science and math concepts. Another paper, accepted for publication in *Frontiers in Psychology*, shows that children's CRT-D scores also predict their ability to learn such concepts from instruction.
- **Dr. Kevin Urstadt** had two papers published this year:
 - Co-authorship on a study identifying new potential "disgust generators" in the rat brain, with commentary about analogous regions and connections in the human brain. Paper info: *Mapping Excessive "Disgust" in the Brain: Ventral Pallidum Inactivation Recruits Distributed Circuitry to Make Sweetness "Disgusting,"* Published in Feb. 2020, <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13415-019-00758-4>

- Lead author on a study to identify loci within the hypothalamus that are responsible not only for feeding and self-stimulation, but also avoidance behaviors. This builds on old electrical stimulation studies with modern "affected volume" mapping techniques and exclusion of fibers of passage. Paper info: *Optogenetic Mapping of Feeding and Self-Stimulation Within the Lateral Hypothalamus of the Rat*, Published in Jan. 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0224301>
- Dr. Urstadt's ongoing research at Oxy involves developing a low-hazard version of the Nissl stain, a quintessential method used by many neuroscience labs for discerning brain region boundaries. This low-hazard version would be less costly and more accessible for student lab exercises in many departments that do not directly possess a full chemistry lab setup.

Alumni Updates

2019

Hannah Q. Glover

I have been running a content creation business with my partner that we started during my junior year at Oxy. We create digital marketing assets using digital photography/videography and Adobe Suite, and we use social media and our website as both a platform and a portfolio! Up until COVID, I lived in downtown Pasadena, but we recently moved out to the desert so we could afford our own house and yard. Now, I feel lucky to have had both the quaintly urban experience of living in Pasadena and the vaguely cottage-core lifestyle of being in an actual house.

Eleanor Goulden

I have a post-bac research fellowship at the NIH in Bethesda, MD. My lab studies the neuropsychology of chronic pain and tested conditions. I'm currently working on a study related to psychological dysfunction, provider trust, and diagnostic delay in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

2018

Lani Cupo

I am pursuing a PhD in the Integrated Program in Neuroscience at McGill University, where I use magnetic resonance imaging and other complementary techniques in mouse models to understand how environmental risk factors contribute to the emergence of neurodevelopmental disorders like Autism Spectrum Disorders and schizophrenia. [During the pandemic] besides work, I have been reconnecting with some college friends, including new games of Dungeons & Dragons with four other Cognitive Science majors!

Hiipoi Lee

In 2018, I started teacher training with Teach For America in Tulsa, OK. At the end of the summer, I returned home to Oahu, HI, and immediately began to prepare for the new school year. In August, I started teaching at Leihoku Elementary School in Waianae, Oahu, a low socioeconomic, predominantly Native Hawaiian community. On May 29, I completed my second year of teaching and promoted my second group of sixth graders to intermediate school. I will be returning to teach sixth grade for a third year (hopefully, pending the pandemic). This year my partner and I also welcomed our first child at the end of April, our daughter, Oanianiku, Aniku for short. We have been enjoying working from home, learning

from home (I'm finishing up online classes to earn my master's degree), and our new roles as parents.

2017

Ohona Chowdhury

Immediately after graduating from Oxy I wanted to have a "fun" summer in L.A. while applying for long-term jobs. I stayed in Eagle Rock for 3 months and worked as a photographer for The Price is Right and Let's Make a Deal. Honestly, it was a really fun job and given that photography has always been a hobby of mine and I'm almost always full of energy, it was a good temporary one. During the 3 months I was still in Eagle Rock, I found myself applying for just "any" jobs that I felt qualified for, but I wasn't actually interested in any of them, and it really hit me that I needed to use the degree I'd worked so hard for at a job I actually cared about. After talking to a TON of people, I ended up reconnecting with a family friend who'd studied neuroscience and was working in market research. Her route seemed to make the most sense for me because it connected all of the "soft skills" I'd felt that I had developed over the years with my background in research from Oxy. I worked for a company in Santa Monica, focusing on consumer packaged goods research (brands like Gatorade, Tropicana, Hershey's, Chicken of the Sea –super random, etc.). After about a year and a half, I felt like I wanted to work for a bigger company with more opportunities to grow, so I moved to an office in Studio City called Added Value, a section of Kantar Research. I'm currently a Project Manager there and it's an amazing company. I work for companies like Warner Bros and Hulu so I'm actually excited about the things I get to help evaluate.

Anna de Groot

Since Oxy, I have been pursuing my interest for being involved in the field of artificial intelligence. Upon graduating, I spent my summer doing some research work at the Mihajlo Pupin Institute of Robotics in Belgrade, Serbia. I then returned home to California for a year, where I prepared myself for a MSc AI program in Amsterdam at the Vrije Universiteit. During that year, I also worked as a barista (got decent at latte art ;)) and a Data Collection Researcher at AmazonLabs126. Now I am in my second year of my master's program in Amsterdam, working on my thesis on knowledge representation and ontology engineering for robots. What I love about my thesis is that I get to apply some of my cognitive science knowledge :)

Phillip Liu

I volunteered for one year with City Year at an underserved high school in the West Side of San Antonio, mentoring and tutoring and creating after school programs. In 2018, I joined Teach for America and started teaching geometry and AP psychology at the same school. Next school year, I will be going to the University of Texas at San Antonio for my Master's Degree in School Counseling and a license for Mental Health Counseling! Moving to San Antonio and joining Teach for America has been a blessing (though filled with many challenges). I feel like I am really hitting my stride as far as finding a fulfilling career.

Will Nahmens

Since graduation, I've been playing baseball professionally in the Netherlands, coaching youth baseball, and working as a freelance Web Developer. [During the quarantine period] I've been working on a website for an American school in Salzburg, as well as a database of college baseball programs built for high school prospects trying to find a program that fits them best. I've also been training to get ready for the Dutch Major League season whenever that may start.

Onyekachi Nwabueze

I'm working as a special education paraeducator and behavior therapist for children with special needs and cognitive disabilities. As a behavior therapist and analyst I use [my knowledge of cognitive science] constantly and as a special education worker I'm teaching my workmates some cognitive science nuggets/gems.

Kylie Teller

Since graduating, I worked at the Mayor's Fund for Los Angeles and am currently with the World Resources Institute. Since moving from L.A., I now live in D.C. and work on international projects promoting the economic benefits of low carbon development. I'm passionate about sustainable development and plan to begin a graduate program focusing on these studies at the London School of Economics this fall. Even though the world and this program will definitely look differently than what I imagined when I first applied, I'm trying to remain optimistic about the possibilities and how things will go!

2015

Camilla Bennett

- Moved to San Francisco
- Started getting really into running—I've run 3 marathons since my time at Oxy, which I didn't think

would ever be possible! (I didn't run my first full mile until my sophomore year at Oxy.)

- Still ride my horse, Player, regularly :)
- My first job after Oxy was helping a start-up CEO build a theory of knowledge representation and decision making. This framework was used to help guide people in a start-up boot camp through career transitions. This was a role that was offered to me specifically because I had a CogSci degree!
- I then pivoted into tech startup sales, first selling a communication platform for mobile workers, and now I work at a selling an easy-to-install thermal foot traffic counting device at a company called Dor. I'm obviously not on the technical team, but we do use machine learning to improve our algorithms for different door types, so my CogSci degree has definitely helped me engage cross-functionally.

Kirsten Laursen

I just completed a post-baccalaureate at the University of Texas at Austin for Speech Pathology. I am starting graduate school in the Fall at UT for my master's in Speech Path! Cog sci is relevant to speech path in a lot of ways. Applying for my MA as a cog sci major gave me a huge advantage compared to other post-bac applicants. I had lots of research experience from working with Prof. Levitan that made me stand out and gave me the opportunity to work in an EEG lab with aphasia patients. Cog sci has given me a unique perspective in my current field and a head start on the neuroscience we need to know.

Columbia Shafer

I worked at Oxy in the Admission office for a few years and then made the move to work for an art school. I now work for California College of the Arts, still in admission. [During the pandemic, I'm] still working thankfully and cooking lots of long involved things like homemade pasta, pickles and ramen. Plenty of daily walks and a little bit of painting keep me busy. But my favorite quarantine activity has been hosting weekly virtual trivia nights!

2014

Anisha Narayan

I received my Master of Science at USC in Neuroimaging & Informatics, where I applied much of my cog sci knowledge. I then got into medical school at Tulane University, where I am beginning my third year rotations, after taking a gap year to conduct neuroimaging research on sensory processing disorders at UCSF.

Kelsey (Palghat) Perrykkad

When I graduated from Oxy, I moved to Brisbane, Australia. I started work there at the Queensland Brain Institute, where I did cognitive neuroscience work primarily on the intersection between neuroscience in education (measuring physiological signals in primary school classrooms) but also running the EEG lab there and doing some projects on action (e.g., EEG during dart throwing!). As time went on, I found I quite liked research but was missing my philosophical side (I was a double major in college). So a PhD project started brewing in mind and I kept an eye out for someone in Australia (where my family still is) to help bring the idea to fruition.

In 2017, right before my boyfriend Andrew and I were set to move to Melbourne so that I could start my PhD in the Cognition and Philosophy Lab (seriously, could there be a better lab for me?), he proposed. So my birthday/going away party that year became a triple celebration.

Later that year, we adopted our wolfhound ridgeback cross named Apollo, who is a big black sweetheart of a dog. We got married in late 2018, with a few Oxy friends making the long journey down under! It was quite special to have family and friends come all that way.

Now, besides being stuck at home, I'm due to finish my PhD toward the end of this year. My PhD topic is about self-cognition and agency in autism using the ever more popular predictive processing framework. I've even gotten to write a fun philosophical paper about why we fidget! The PhD combines many of my interests from my Oxy days—my comps project was about agency and prediction, and I ran Delevan Drive, which was a club connecting Oxy students to the local special needs classrooms to do arts and crafts, including an autistic kindergarten class. My time at Oxy surely shaped where I have ended up today, and I value it immensely.

Evan Thomas

[After Oxy, I embarked on] a happy mix of work and travel. I've worked at a water conservation startup, a social science research firm, a private mortgage insurance company, Google, and a Walmart eCommerce company. I'm a user experience researcher, for which my CogSci background nicely prepared me. The methodological considerations are second nature for me, and the balance between scientific rigor and industry's need for speed keeps the work fun.

2013

Lily Berrin

After graduating, I worked as a camp counselor for the summer while I was looking for a job in science

communication. I then got an entry-level job as a publications assistant at PLOS (an open-access science journal) working for the Pathogens journal. I worked there for 3.5 years, working my way up to a publications manager position at PLOS Pathogens. I then changed course dramatically, went to Bryn Mawr College for a one-year pre-medical post-baccalaureate program, and then directly applied to medical school at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, where I have been for almost two years!

Mandy Perez

After graduating from Oxy, I received a scholarship to complete an xMBA program in Boston with the Fullbridge Program. This was an excellent complement to my Oxy liberal arts education because it allowed me to gain business skills like reading profit and loss statements and analyzing company valuations. While at Oxy, I completed my CogSci Senior Thesis on Neuromarketing and the intersection of neuroscience and business. Despite a double degree in Cognitive Science and Diplomacy and World Affairs, the two post-Oxy corporate jobs I took were marketing positions. Using my love of scientific methodology and experimentation that I learned from Oxy, I approached marketing and business from a totally different perspective than my peers. This eventually led me to start my own strategic design creative consulting company, which I have been leading for three years.

Alyssa Sanchez

Since graduating, I took a gap year as a behavioral therapist working with children on the autism spectrum. As of 2018, I have joined the UC Davis Neuroscience Graduate Group and have just advanced to candidacy. I specialize in systems neuroscience, studying the electrophysiological and neuroanatomical properties of thalamocortical interactions of the visual system. Outside of academia, I spend my time hiking and backpacking in NorCal, visiting breweries, aquascaping, and spending time with my green cheek conure Qivi!

2012

Maddy Rasch

After Oxy, I worked at the UCLA Child OCD, Anxiety and Tic Disorders program for three years, obtained an MSW from UCLA in 2018, and have been working at the L.A. County Department of Children and Family Services as a Children's Social Worker for the past two years.

2008

Elizabeth Wytychak

After graduating from Oxy, I did a Fulbright in Indonesia to teach English to high school students. When I returned, I went to Yale for a master's in nursing and became a family nurse practitioner. I completed a one-year residency program in Connecticut and then moved to Seattle, where I am still happily situated. I currently work at a community health center doing family practice and primary care. I live with my partner in a little house, and I love dancing, rock climbing, reading, yoga, and generally adventuring about.

2007

Christine (Wagner) Harvell

I went to law school after I graduated Oxy. I really wasn't sure what I wanted to do with my life and thought, "why not?" Unfortunately, after passing the Bar, and a few years working as an attorney, I knew exactly "why not." I was extremely unhappy in my career, but I was pretty sure it was the right thing for me to be doing—after all, I had no idea what else I might want to do. I decided maybe what I needed was a hobby, so I tried yoga, meditation, boxing, book clubs—anything I could think of, really—and I had always been interested in the neurobiology of emotions (which I did an independent study about at Oxy), so when I saw an ad for a local graduate school that taught counseling psychology offering night programs (with no intention of actually pursuing a degree), I enrolled. One thing led to another and, to make a long story short, I'm now really happy in my career as a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist.

2006

Andrew M. Hallett, MD

After graduating, I spent several years saving and then traveling on an extended road trip through Central and South America. Upon returning to the U.S., I moved to Portland, OR, where I volunteered in various capacities within organizations dedicated to the performing arts and social services for the homeless before deciding to pursue a career in medicine. I completed 2.5 years of post-baccalaureate coursework at Portland State University then moved to New York City to complete medical school at NYU. I am now in my third clinical year of training in general surgery. I will be starting a two-year clinical research fellowship in solid organ transplantation at Johns Hopkins in July. I remain undecided about my future scope of practice but intend to pursue abdominal transplant, cardiothoracic, or pediatric surgery. During the pandemic, I have been working in the hospital handling

patients in need of urgent surgical intervention, assisting in the care of COVID+ patients in the ICU, and working on a manuscript reviewing the impact of COVID-19 on heart and lung transplantation in the U.S.

Matt Leonard

Right after Oxy, I went to UCSD for grad school in the Cog Sci department, where I worked to understand how the human brain understands language in a variety of contexts, like bilingualism, sign language (in hearing and deaf people), and in early development. I primarily used a method called magnetoencephalography to measure brain activity while people listened to speech, read text, and watched signs.

2005

Shana Khader

I was a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Jujuy, Argentina, before going to law school at Columbia in NY. Since then, I've been practicing law at nonprofits mostly doing workers' rights and immigrants' rights work. That brought me to Dallas from New York about four years ago—somewhere I never imagined living before. But life is unpredictable that way and I wouldn't change a thing.

Lauren Kozak

I have been working in digital marketing, particularly social media. I've run social media for everyone from the Los Angeles Times to Britney Spears, and now run my own successful consultancy, Emotional Experience Marketing.

2004

Sam Bergen

In 2004 I couldn't find many job opportunities related to Cog Sci. The people I know from the program went on to get advanced degrees, and I honestly was more excited to go work than go back to school. I assume today there are more entry level job opportunities for students graduating with a BA in Cog Sci than when I did. I found a career in media, specifically marketing and advertising, and have stayed there. I am also married with two daughters!

Mario Gabiati

I have built a consulting firm (mariogabiati.com) for education and maker spaces where we help create curriculum and design physical spaces and programs for them that foster creativity, community engagement and a pipeline that brings participants from service roles to roles of leadership and empowerment. I am looking forward to developing a special program for my first son, born in March.

2000

Alison (Couch) Wisdom

I spent the majority of my career in nonprofit organization leadership for organizations focused on equity in access to quality early literacy and STEM education. I've now launched a start-up company with my husband providing automated engineering design software.

1999

Jeremy Castro

After completing his MBA, majoring in Entrepreneurship, in 2006 at the University of British Columbia, Jeremy set sail in business. Success came early in the form of fashion brand UNDRCRWN of which Jeremy was a founder and instrumental in growing the business from fledgling t-shirt concept to global fashion brand worn by numerous celebrities and sports stars. While Castro sold out to pursue other business interests in 2010, namely Brand Marinade, UNDRCRWN continues to thrive, collaborating notably with Adidas and the Golden State Warriors.

Jeremy's business and personal philosophy is best described through the words of Oscar Wilde. For Jeremy Joseph Castro, Founder and Chief Catalyst of Brand Marinade, "Life imitates Art Shirts far more than Art Shirts imitate Life."

Jeremy's other interests include photography (he has taken over a million photos), working with USA Rugby on the broadcast of live international television matches and tournaments, animals (he has a number of dogs, cats, and chickens at his house), and adoring his partner Danielle.

Katie Kurutz-Ulloa

Professionally, I've committed my career to improving the lives of young children and their families in Los Angeles County. Starting off as a Case Manager for teen parents, I went on to work in communications for First 5 L.A., an early childhood advocacy organization. I'm going on my 15th year at First 5 L.A. My current title is Communication Specialist, and a majority of my work is curating and synthesizing media as it relates to young children and their families. Additionally, I support our social media strategies and proactive media pitching.

Gabe Niles

After Oxy, I taught science for two years at Pasadena High School. Then I went to USC Med school and then the Navy for four years doing general medicine. Then I completed a Family Medicine residency in Sacramento. After that I moved around a bit working as a Family Practitioner trying to find the best fit: Bay Area; back to Sacramento;

Newport Beach; Olympia, WA; then finally back to West L.A. During this time I got married, had two kids, got divorced, and now I'm living with my fiancée in Mar Vista, and we have the kids half time. I'm currently working for Providence as a Family Practitioner in Playa Vista.

1994

Matt Gollub

I've studied, dated, become a husband and a father, worked, and am still waiting for the day when everyone finds out I'm a fraud who fell into life's achievements through some back door. I left academics and studied medicine and am now a pediatric critical care doctor, working in a pediatric ICU.

1993

Suzy Scherf

I went back to Oxy to do a master's degree in Psychology. I went to graduate school at the University of Pittsburgh and finished my PhD in Developmental Psychology. I did a post-doc in the Dept of Psychiatry at Pitt and then a second post-doc at Carnegie Mellon University. I started a faculty position in the Department of Psychology at Penn State University in 2011. I am currently an Associate Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience. Most of my time is spent doing research. I study the development of social information processing and also how the underlying neural networks supporting these behaviors change over time and as a function of puberty and social experiences. I also design intervention tools to help adolescents with autism improve the way they process social information.

I met my husband when I was in grad school in Pittsburgh. We were married after I graduated. We have two children, ages 13 and 10. Managing family life and a career is tough, but worth it.

1990

David Lamb

Tech support, video editing, then back to tech support.

Emeriti Updates

Elizabeth Wayland Barber

Prof. Emerita of Linguistics and Archaeology

Since retiring from Oxy in 2007, I've spent part of my time on the "archaeological" project of digging through the masses of stuff my parents and grandparents collected (in order to downsize); another part continuing to help run Oxy's Folk and Historical Dance Troupe that I founded in January 1971 (we were making plans for some nice dance events for next year to celebrate 50 years, but I doubt that Oxy will ever re-open the dance studio now); and part continuing my research and writing (three more books as author or co-author). Most of that has to do with archaeology, linguistics, and the prehistory of European traditional costume and dance, but cognitive science is never very far from my mind. (Did you ever wonder why people feel compelled to tap their toes? Some interesting cognitive wiring there, which I finally pulled together in *The Dancing Goddesses*.) The most recent article, co-authored with my husband of 55 years, Paul, and just sent off, was for the *Journal of Cognitive Historiography*: "Mythohistory in the Light of How Memory Works." This was an extension of our 2005 joint book, the subtitle of which is "How the Human Mind Shapes Myth." Oh, and also the result of studying how to bolster our own abilities to remember things as we hit 80!



Feb. 29, 2020, Viennese Waltz Night in the Tiger Cooler. Prof. Elizabeth Barber in blue, center back, dancing with Prof. Alan Knoerr (two Cog Sci profs with one shot!); a current student, Alana Pizarro, also in blue to the left, dancing with alum Steven Vershoor; to the right, alum Sharon Sprague Sheffield dancing with her husband Mike Sheffield.

Diana Linden

Prof. Emerita of Cognitive Science



I have been retired since August 2017. I am just finding out what it means to be retired, and I love it. With the COVID-19 distancing, all my outside-of-the-home activities have been curtailed and I really miss

them. Before COVID closed the Los Angeles Public Libraries I worked in the Adult Literacy Program teaching English for 12 hours/week to two students. One is an Iranian woman who is in her 60s and has been in this country for about 20 years but never learned English. The other student is a 29-year-old man who never learned to read in our Los Angeles public schools. This library volunteer opportunity is the most rewarding experience that I have ever had in my life.

I am involved in the San Fernando Valley Watercolor Society and two of my paintings were accepted for an exhibit in March (before COVID). One sold. I also have been creating ceramics at the local studio (Creative Ceramics) and really enjoy doing pottery wheel and handwork. I am highly involved in my garden and the lives of my dogs. I also have been knitting, doing Sashiko embroidery, and am spending a lot of time sorting through "stuff" in my home office. All of this in addition to playing iPad and PS4 games is keeping me saner.

