Affect & Emotion
Newsletter of the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences

RESERCH FOCUS

Knowledge Transfer
Dr. Marcello Mortillaro

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Let me start by warmly congratulating the researchers who have been awarded an SNSF Agora project this year. Their projects greatly put forward the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences (CISA) with respect to our links with society at large.

The first project, entitled « Odeurs et Sentiments », is an important exhibition on the science of olfaction to take place at the Musée de la Main in Lausanne. The exhibition will run from February 2019 to March 2020. This project is led by Dr Sylvain Delplanque and Dr Géraldine Coppin.

The second project entitled “Your skin is my skin” already took place in May 2018 during the “Mapping Festival” in Geneva. It was an event and live performance concerning a model of human consciousness developed by Prof David Rudrauf.

The third project, entitled “Exposure Science Film Hackathon”, proposes a Swiss-wide event to train young scientists and filmmakers in science communication through film. It also aims to create a dialogue between scientists and people of all ages from the general public. It will take place from November 2018 until April 2019 in several Swiss cities. This project is led by Prof Kerstin Preuschoff.

Numerous scientific events are also coming up in the next months led by other researchers in the Affective Sciences network. For example, do not miss the symposium on “Philanthropy, Emotion and Empathy” organized in collaboration with the Geneva Centre of Philanthropy and the newspaper “Le Temps”, to take place on 10th December 2018 at Campus Biotech.

You are also cordially invited to the Alpine Brain Imaging Meeting (ABIM) 2019, which will take place from January 6 to 10 in Champéry. The Center will also organize its next Annual Research Forum (ARF 2019) on February 7, at the Campus Biotech, in Geneva. At this last event, researchers in the affective sciences will be able to present their latest research projects and discuss them with their peers. As usual, it will be a unique opportunity to get an update on the current research carried out on emotion at the Center.

I am looking forward to meeting many of you on these occasions.

Last but not least, I am pleased to announce the launch of the new graphic line and content of our website (www.affective-sciences.org), which will give you the latest information about the scientific research, publications, education and knowledge-transfer activities of the Center.

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue of our Newsletter, in which you will learn more about our research focus on “Knowledge Transfer” and discover some news, publications, events, and more!

David Sander
The Affective Sciences have such a potential for societal applications that it is surprising how little applied research is done within our field. One of the missions of the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences is to translate scientific knowledge and technology in order to benefit society at large. With this goal in mind, in 2012 we created the Applied Affective Sciences Research Focus. This unit brings together researchers who conduct scientific studies that are designed from the outset to generate evidence that can inform real-world applications.

Over the past years, we have conducted several applied research projects across different domains. We developed scientifically validated instruments to help assess consumers’ reactions to odors—instruments that have since become widely used both in the academic and in the industrial sphere. We have also conducted studies to investigate how values and emotions influence decision making in the context of consumption choices, especially with respect to sustainability and ethical choices. Notably, all these research projects were conducted in close collaboration with important industrial partners from all over the world and across sectors (from food to chemistry, from marketing research to public utility companies).

One particular topic has become very prominent for our applied research thanks to its clear and immediate relevance for society: emotional competences. Two aspects of this topic are currently being investigated at the Center: assessment and training.

Regarding the first, we recently developed a new instrument to assess emotional competences in the workplace. The Geneva Emotional Competence Test (GECO; Schlegel & Mortillaro, in press at the Journal of Applied Psychology) is a new ability measure of Emotional Intelligence that assesses 4 key competences: the ability to understand and predict somebody else’s emotion based on the situation, the ability to recognize emotions from the nonverbal behavior of others, the ability to regulate one’s own emotions, and the ability to manage situations in which somebody else is experiencing strong negative emotions. These abilities are measured by presenting participants with realistic work-related scenarios and assessing their behavior in those situations, and by asking them to indicate which emotion is expressed by another person or experienced in a certain situation.

In our research we showed that the GECO predicts academic success beyond personality and general intelligence, and that people with higher emotional competences (as measured by the GECO) report greater levels of wellbeing and professional satisfaction. From the very beginning of the project, we developed the instrument to be released in both academic and professional settings. The GECO is indeed already used by several companies in Switzerland for their Human Resources activities (from recruitment to assessment), and we expect significant international diffusion after the publication of the scientific paper. We are also about to start a longitudinal study in which we will use the GECO to assess prospective students at a prestigious Swiss professional university and follow their academic and professional careers for several years.

The other side of our research on emotional competences focuses on the training and teaching of these competences. We believe that emotional competences are key skills for kids and adults, since they make us more confident, flexible, empathic, and resilient. Yet, traditional curricula do not pay attention to this important set of abilities and kids never receive any specific education to help them develop these skills. Happily, things are rapidly changing and there is a constantly increasing awareness about the importance of emotional competences. Thus, we have started some collaborations with public and private schools in the Geneva area to develop and carry out emotion-focused interventions and trainings with kids and teachers. We are doing the same in the context of sport practice, through the collaboration with major local institutions and their trainers. The objective is to promote emotional competences in the youth and, at the same time, carry out scientifically rigorous studies. In these studies we plan to objectively assess the impact and the benefits of these trainings that would, then, be published and released to academics, practitioners, and everybody interested in using our programs to improve kids’ emotional competences.

The goal of implementing the highest standards of scientific research to study and address real world problems is very prominent for the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences. We strongly believe that advancements in scientific understanding should be put to use and benefit society at large.
**Completed PhDs**

Argyro-Despoina Antypa successfully defended her PhD thesis on the “Modulation of emotional memories upon formation, retrieval, and reconsolidation”, on June 20, 2018, under the direction of Prof. Patrik Vuilleumier.

Tiffany Baer successfully defended her PhD thesis on “The role of service interaction in the evaluation of luxury goods” on March 16, 2018, under the direction of Prof. David Sander.

Gilles Châtélain successfully defended his PhD thesis on “Leveraging mental accounting mechanisms to promote energy conservation” on August 27, 2018, under the direction of Prof. Tobias Brosch.

Chiara Chilla successfully defended her PhD thesis on “The gloss of olfactory pleasure” on May 29, 2018, under the direction of Prof. David Sander.

Raphaël Guex successfully defended his PhD thesis on the “Temporal modulation of amygdala activity by emotion, task relevance, emotion regulation and stimulus-awareness” on June 21, 2018, under the direction of Prof. Patrik Vuilleumier.

Matthieu Ischer successfully defended his PhD thesis entitled “Orientation de l’attention visuelle par des stimulations chémosensorielles intra-nasales” on February 21, 2018, under the direction of Prof. David Sander.

Leyla Loued-Khenissi successfully defended her PhD thesis “Belief as a wise wager: The neural representation of uncertainty, surprise and confidence across cognitive and perceptual domains” under the direction of Prof. Kerstin Preuschoff (UniGe) and Prof. Carmen Sandi (EPFL).

Ryan James Murray successfully defended his PhD thesis entitled “Parsing the emotional brain: Investigating the neural correlates of appraisal processes” on March 26, 2018, under the direction of Prof. David Sander.

Athina Zafeiriou successfully defended her PhD thesis on “The influence of implicit age stereotype primes on mental effort and cardiovascular reactivity” on January 24, 2018, under the direction of Prof. Guido Gendolla.

**New books /Special Issues**

https://www.ithaque-editions.fr/sm007-valeurs


Prodigy Gold Books
**NEWS**

**Awards and grants**

**Tobias Brosch & Stephanie Mertens** were granted a Geneva/Princeton collaborative research seed funding grant for a joint project entitled “Behavioral interventions to promote energy efficiency”, with Prof. Elke Weber at Princeton University.

**Géraldine Coppin** obtained a four year SNSF Eccellenza Grants entitled “The impact of altered cognitive and affective abilities on food intake and obesity: An online health intervention”.

**Corrado Corradi-Dell’Acqua** received an extension SNSF grant for his project “Cognitive and neural systems for understanding others and their somatic states” until August 2021.

**Florian Cova** was granted a five year (2019-2024) SNSF Eccellenza Professorial Fellowships entitled “Eudaimonic emotions and the (meta)philosophy of well-being”.

**Douglas Cairns**, associate member of the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences and renowned specialist on the emotions in the classical world, was elected on July 2018 as Fellow of the British Academy.

**Géraldine Coppin & Sylvain Delplanque** were granted a one-year (2018-2019) Agora project by the SNSF entitled “Humans’ bad sense of smell: Story of a nonscent”, to develop an exhibition on the science of olfaction in close collaboration with the Musée de la Main in Lausanne. The exhibition will run from February 2019 to March 2020.

**Adria LeBoeuf** received a PRIMA grant for her project “Collective control of development through socially exchanged fluids” to be conducted at the University of Fribourg.

**Alain Pé-Curto & François Jaquet** were awarded the Prix Adolphe Neuman 2018, which rewards a work (thesis, dissertation, etc.) devoted to ethics, aesthetics and the interdependence of these disciplines.

**Andrea Samson** was granted an SNSF professorship at the University of Fribourg to examine socio-emotional processes in individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Williams Syndrome (2018-2022).

**Marianne Schmid Mast** has been named one of the 50 most influential living psychologists https://thebestschools.org/features/most-influential-psychologists-world/.

**Marianne Schmid Mast** with Daniel Gatica-Perez (IDIAP) and Vima Link SA were granted a 24 month project entitled RISE: Rich Interpersonal Skill analytics for rEruitment, from CTI.

**Marianne Schmid Mast** as the principal investigator, together with Carmen Sandi (EPFL), were granted a 12 month CROSS project entitled Self-Imitation: How Imitating the Virtual Self Can Overcome Social Anxiety and Accelerate Interpersonal Skills Development.

**Kerstin Preuschoff** was granted a one year (2018-2019) Agora project by the SNSF entitled “Exposure Science Film Hackathon”.

**David Rudrauf** was granted an Agora project by the SNSF entitled “Your skin is my skin”. The output of the project was already presented last May 2018 during the “Mapping Festival” in Geneva. It comprised an event and live performance concerning a new model of human consciousness.

**Patrik Vuilleumier** with Patrizia Lombardo and Klaus Scherer were granted a three year SNSF Synergia project (2018-2022) entitled “Charting emotion components and dynamics in the human brain using virtual reality and cinema”.

**Sophie Schwartz and Corrado Corradi-Dell’Acqua** were granted a four years (2018-2022) SNSF project entitled “Deciphering the neural impact of sleep loss on metacognition and empathic judgments for pain”.

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Upcoming events

Symposium “Philanthropie, émotion et empathie : quels liens ?”
(December 10, 2018, University of Geneva). This event will take place at the Campus Biotech, Geneva. Dr Jean-Claude Amesein (physician, immunologist, researcher in biology and director of the Center for Life Studies at Paris Diderot University) and Prof. Metin Arditi (engineer in atomic engineering, professor at the EPFL Lausanne and president of the Arditi Foundation) are the two keynote speakers. To attend, registration is required on https://www.affective-sciences.org/news/news/philanthropie-emotions-et-empathie/.

Alpine Brain Imaging Meeting (ABIM) 2019
(January 6 to 10, 2019). The 14th edition of ABIM will take place in Champéry (Switzerland). The program and details for registration are available at https://www.unige.ch/ABIM/

Annual Research Forum (ARF) 2019.
The next edition of the Annual Research Forum will take place on 7th & 8th February 2018 at the Campus Biotech in Geneva. The ARF offers the opportunity for members of the Center to meet peers (old and new) and get an update on the fascinating research carried out at CISA, and our last logistic developments.

Exposure Science Film Hackathon (2018-2019).
Swiss-wide event to train young scientists and filmmakers in science communication through film, and to create a dialogue between scientists and people of all ages from the general public. It will happen from 30th November 2018 to 13th April 2019 in several Swiss cities. For more details on the specific events, please visit http://www.exposurehackathon.com/.

On our website www.affective-sciences.org


Online Platform on Emotional Competence at http://www.affective-sciences.org/ec, including the major contributions and debates in the literature on emotional intelligence, potential applications, as well as results of the most recent research.

Other websites of interest

XPhi Replicability: https://sites.google.com/site/thexphireplicabilityproject/ The XPhi Replicability project, coordinated by Dr Florian Cova, seeks to reach a reliable estimate of the replicability of empirical results in experiment philosophy.
Publications


Publications


Affect & Emotion

is the newsletter of the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences, a research centre for the interdisciplinary study of human emotion

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