IBANGS News

Winter 2022, Issue 18

Genes, Brain and Behavior, May 22-May 25, University of Galway, Galway, Ireland .

Annual Meeting Updates

Meet the organizers

The annual meeting is shaping up to be a fantastic event with the guidance, supervision and planning of the local organizers and the PC.

Derek Morris (Chair), Ethan Brennan, Dara Cannon, Gary Donohoe, Michelle Roche, Declan Mc Kernan (left to right)

Presidential Speaker confirmed

Dr Nwanaji-Enwerem, Emory University will deliver the Presidential Lecture. Dr Nwanaji-Enwerem's work relevant to behavior genetics, is concerned with epigenetic and behavioral consequences of systemic environmental impacts associated with poverty and adversity. Publications

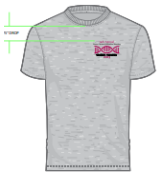
Workshops

Two workshops will be offered at the annual meeting with themes on the functional interpretation of GWAS/analysis methods and a Trainee/Mentoring event.

Banquet Gala

The banquet will be held at the luxurious Dean Hotel. The local organizers have communicated that the gathering will be in the classic Irish tradition.
More details to follow.

Meeting T-shirts



A t-shirt logo has been designed for the upcoming meeting in Galway. T-shirts will be made available for purchase by pre-order after the holidays.

Committee News

Please join us in welcoming Professor Silvana Chiavegatto, University of São Paulo to the IBANGS team. Silvana has been appointed as the society's representative to the ALBA Network which is a FENS initiative to promote equity and diversity in brain research. Silvana has also joined the IBANGS D.E.I. Committee.

Virtual seminar series

Professor Judith Homberg from Radboud University will be presenting on February 15th, 2023 at 12:00 pm EDT. All are welcome to attend. Sign-up and access information will be circulated early February.

Virtual seminar series (Cont)

An **open slot is available** for a seminar speaker in April. The exact date is flexible. If you would like to be considered, please contact Chris Kliethermes [christopher.kliethermes@drake.edu]

SFN Breakfast Meetup


Great to see members catching up at the1st ever SFN meetup this year. This event is a keeper. Thank you everyone for attending the gathering. Shout out to Tariq Brown, Judy Grisel, Karla Kaun, Chris King, Nelson Le, Benoît Martin, Paul Meyer, Vinko Palada, Abe Palmer, Kristin Scaplen, and Hee-Sup-Shin. So nice to see you!

Halloween costume photo contest

THANK YOU to all contest participants and the Membership Committee!




Contest Results
(left to right)
1st place: Emily Petruccelli
2nd place: tie Zoe Donaldson and Team and Logan as Will Ferrell
(Submitted by Richard Radcliffe)

3rd place: Francesca Telese and family

Your Brain Has A “Holiday Center” & It Lights Up With Warm Holiday Memories

BMJ 2015; 351 doi: https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.h6266 (Published 16 December 2015)
Cite this as: BMJ 2015;351:h6266

Abstract

Objective To detect and localize the Christmas spirit in the human brain.

Design Single blinded, cross cultural group study with functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI).

Setting Functional imaging unit and department of clinical physiology, nuclear medicine and PET in Denmark.

Participants 10 healthy people from the Copenhagen area who routinely celebrate Christmas and 10 healthy people living in the same area who have no Christmas traditions.

Main outcome measures Brain activation unique to the group with Christmas traditions during visual stimulation with images with a Christmas theme.

Methods Functional brain scans optimised for detection of the blood oxygen level dependent (BOLD) response were performed while participants viewed a series of images with Christmas themes interleaved with neutral images having similar characteristics but containing nothing that symbolises Christmas. After scanning, participants answered a questionnaire about their Christmas traditions and the associations they have with Christmas. Brain activation maps from scanning were analysed for Christmas related activation in the “Christmas” and “non-Christmas” groups individually. Subsequently, differences between the two groups were calculated to determine Christmas specific brain activation.

Results Significant clusters of increased BOLD activation in the sensory motor cortex, the premotor and primary motor cortex, and the parietal lobule (inferior and superior) were found in

scans of people who celebrate Christmas with positive associations compared with scans in a group having no Christmas traditions and neutral associations. These cerebral areas have been associated with spirituality, somatic senses, and recognition of facial emotion among many other functions.

Conclusions There is a “Christmas spirit network” in the human brain comprising several cortical areas. This network had a significantly higher activation in people who celebrate Christmas with positive associations as opposed to people who have no Christmas traditions and neutral associations. Further research is necessary to understand this and other potential holiday circuits in the brain. Although merry and intriguing, these findings should be interpreted with caution.

OM for the holidays

10 Min Holiday Yoga Flow
Full Body Strength & Stretch
Accessible for all levels
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pj2n1uq6Tk