Society for Experimental Psychology & Cognitive Science

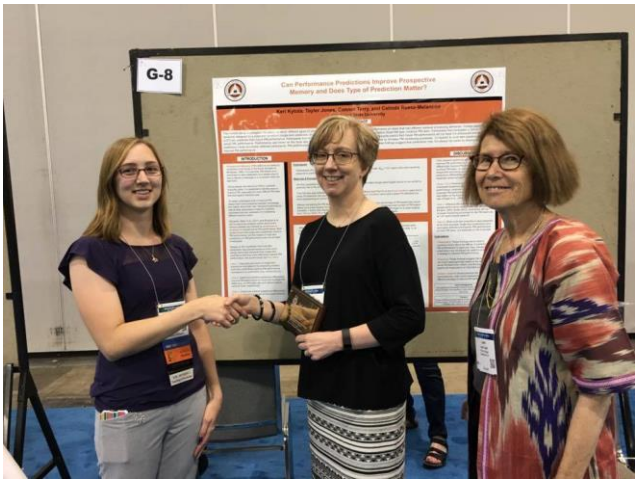
Highlights from the 2016 Denver Convention

Program Chairs: Anne Cleary & Matt Rhodes

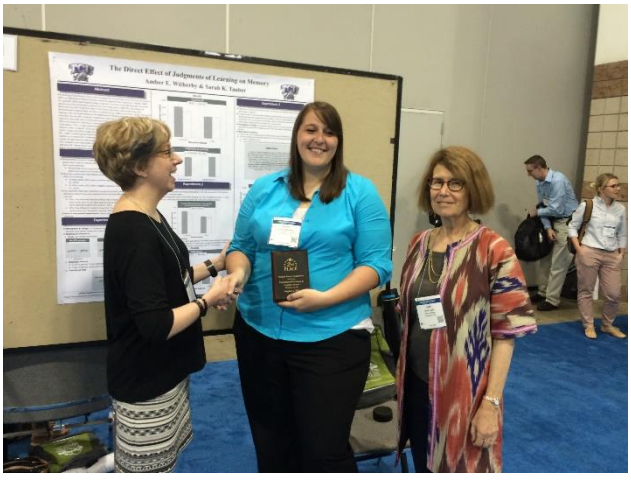
We are excited to report that the Division 3 Program at the APA Convention in Denver this year was chock full of excellent sessions that were well-attended. Some sessions even had full rooms! We are grateful to everyone who came to give invited talks, participate in symposia, and attend the various programming events. Thank you for helping to make this a wonderful opportunity for all who came. We are especially grateful to everyone who lent a hand in getting everything off without a hitch!

And the Winners Are . . .

Winners of the Division 3 Graduate Student Poster Competition



1st Place Winner Keri Kytola, Oklahoma State University (left) with Awards Chair Janine Jennings and Division President Leah Light



2nd Place Winner Amber Witherby, Texas Christian Universsity (middle) between Awards Chair Janine Jennings and Division President Leah Light

Lifetime Achievement Recognition

This year, Division 3 took an unconventional approach to its Lifetime Achievement Awards. First of all, two members were presented with Lifetime Achievement Awards. Second of all, both awards were presented in a unique, non-traditional manner, described below.

So Together We Might Learn . .

Symposium in Honor of Duane M. Rumbaugh





Left to right: David A. Washburn, Michael J. Beran, Division 3 President Leah Light, Steven J. Suomi, James L. Pate

Colleagues of Duane M. Rumbaugh gathered to honor him in a symposium dedicated to his lifetime achievements & to receive his Division 3 Lifetime Achievement Award on his behalf. David A. Washburn, Michael J. Beran, Steven J. Suomi and James L. Pate all gave inspiring talks on Dr. Rumbaugh's incredible impact on the field and his legacy. Free copies of Dr. Rumbaugh's book, "With Apes in Mind" were offered to audience members following the symposium.

APA Plenary Address

Varieties of Superior Memory:

The Study of People who Deliberately Memorize

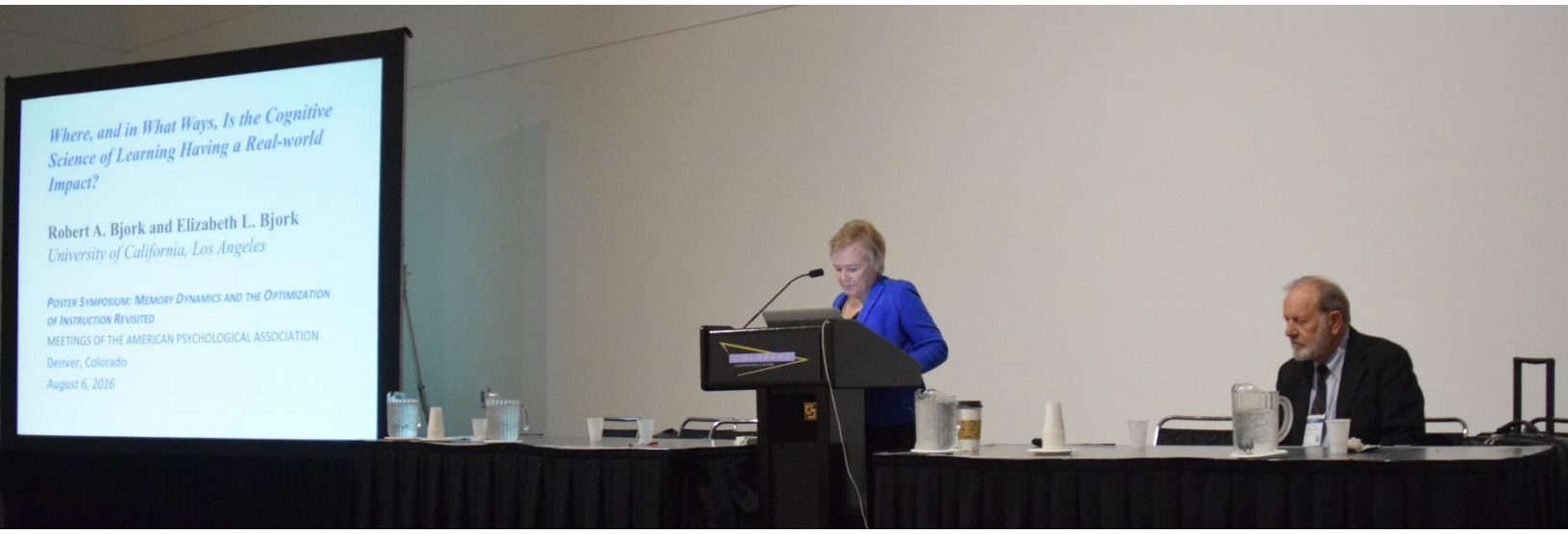
Roddy Roediger was awarded the Division 3 Lifetime Achievement Award at the beginning of his APA Plenary Address. Division 3 President Leah Light made introductory remarks on some of the highlights of Roddy's highly influential and extraordinarily productive career before turning it over to Roddy, who delivered his invited address on competitive memorizers to a fully packed ballroom.





Invited Poster Symposium:

Memory Dynamics and the Optimization of Instruction Revisited



The Session began with opening remarks by Elizabeth & Bob Bjork, who reviewed the state of the field in terms of the known impact that science of learning research has had in educational practice thus far, particularly since the previous 2007 invited poster symposium in San Francisco. Though there is much left to do, it is clear that we have come a long way!



Above: Veronica Dark, Anne Cleary & John Wixted

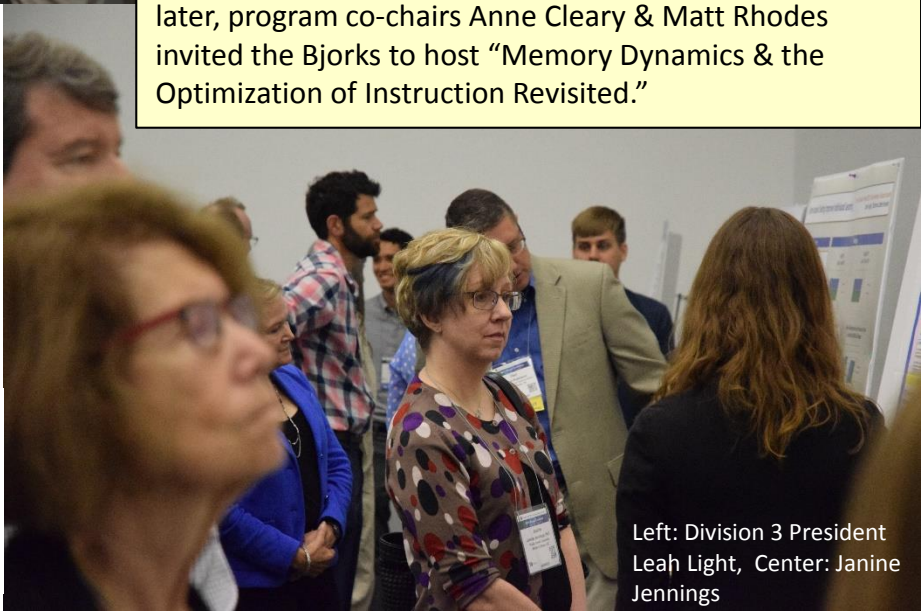
A Bit of History . . .

This session duplicated the format of a symposium from the 2007 APA Convention in San Francisco, in which Bob & Elizabeth Bjork were invited to organize their own poster symposium. Though those of us involved in both favorably remembered the earlier symposium, none of us could quite recall how exactly it came to be. According to our division archives, the idea to invite an established set of researchers to host their own invited poster symposium was 1st suggested by Nelson Cowan & carried out by co-chairs Veronica Dark & Anne Cleary during the Division Presidency of Howard Egeth, with Bob & Elizabeth Bjork as the invitees. The approach was never duplicated again until this year., when nearly a decade later, program co-chairs Anne Cleary & Matt Rhodes invited the Bjorks to host "Memory Dynamics & the Optimization of Instruction Revisited."



Left: Jason Finley Nate Kornell & Matt Hays

Following the opening remarks, the audience was invited to visit the posters around the perimeter of the room—there were 19 altogether in the program! We started with the right side then switched to the left side of the ballroom.

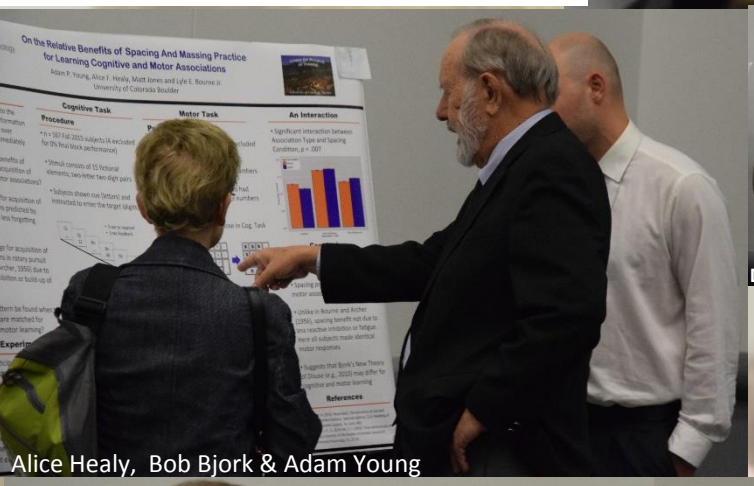


Left: Division 3 President Leah Light, Center: Janine Jennings

Scenes from Around the Invited Poster Presentations

The invited poster session was a huge success. Researchers, including established & early-career, students & post-docs, got to showcase their latest science of learning work to others in the science of learning community, & in a more intimate setting than standard conferences allow.

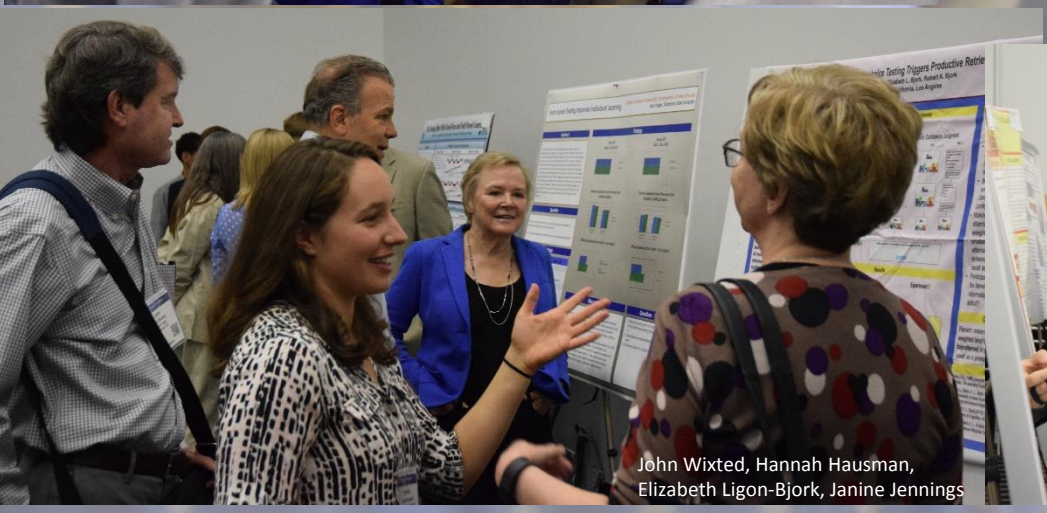

Matt Rhodes



Alice Healy, Bob Bjork & Adam Young


Dan Robinson & John Wixted




John Wixted, Hannah Hausman, Elizabeth Ligon-Bjork, Janine Jennings


Ed DeLosh & Bob Bjork



Presenter Jason Finley sports a wearable camera during his talk on wearable cameras as tools for research on and improvement of auto-biographical memory.

Psychology's New Frontier

The Advent of Wearable Technology in Psychological Research & Practice

Four early-career-stage scientists presented their cutting-edge work with wearables at an edgy interdisciplinary symposium on the topic. Each had a different research domain & a different wearable (or potentially wearable) tool, yet all were united in painting a glimpse of the future of psychology, its intersection with other fields, & the issues that we will likely face. The audience was full of great questions, ranging from ethical concerns to data processing issues. One member of the audience pointed out the timeliness of these scientists' work in terms of a new funding opportunity that the speakers might consider pursuing. What a great way to wrap up a panel discussion among early-career-stage scientists! Funding opportunities!

Alexandra Paxton: Capitalizing on Google Glass for Naturalistic Interaction Research
Jason R. Finley: Wearable Cameras as Tools for Research and for Improving Autobiographical Memory
Rachel G. Lucas-Thompson: Using i-EAR Technology to Study Relationship Quality in Vivo
Jeremey Hogeveen: Accelerated Stopping: Using Noninvasive Brain Stimulation to Facilitate Inhibitory Control

Other Highlights . . .

Reports from Our Other Symposia:

From Jessi Witt, Chair of the The Perception, Action, & Embodiment symposium I & II.
The Perception, Action, & Embodiment Symposium was an intimate affair with hotly contested debates about both historical precedents and current trends. We had a good mix of early, mid, and established career speakers who focused on research ranging from hand proximity effects on visual sensitivity and memory to perception-action systems in a wide range of species. We had talks on the relationship between skateboarders and naive physics, mirror neurons and embodiment, and perception and reasoning of 2D images versus real objects. Many of the talks referenced the research of our dear colleague, the late Bruce Bridgeman, and the symposium started off with a beautiful eulogy by Fred Owens in which he recounted Bruce's spontaneous recovery from stereoblindness after seeing the 3D movie Hugo. The participants in this symposium have indicated a desire to do this again at a future APA convention!

From Matthew Rhodes, Chair of the The Understanding and Reducing Biases Symposium:
The Understanding and Reducing Biases symposium featured an outstanding set of speakers, from social psychology, I/O psychology, clinical psychology, and cognitive psychology discussing perspectives on bias and possibilities for remediation. The diversity of perspectives and approaches was a hit and contributed to a lively symposium in a packed room.

Invited Talks

Our invited talks were well-attended, thought-provoking, and elicited many questions from attendees. John Wixted gave a provocative talk on confidence, memory accuracy, and implications for the legal system. We are not sure how long it took him to make it out of the area, there were so many questions for him afterwards! His talk was followed by an invited talk by Kathleen McDermott on super-memorizers and some of the ways in which they seem to differ from the rest of us. On Saturday, Shana Carpenter, Nate Kornell, and Paul Merritt all gave invited talks on research related to the science of learning as applied to educational settings. These talks were great preludes to the big Bjork Invited Poster Symposium to follow later that afternoon.