AWARDS 2020

ASSOCIATION FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE
APS AWARDS
2020
2020 APS William James Fellows
Neil Burgess, University College London
Carol S. Dweck, Stanford University
Susan A. Gelman, University of Michigan
Andrew N. Meltzoff, University of Washington

2020 APS James McKeen Cattell Fellows
Thomas E. Joiner, Florida State University
Richard M. Lerner, Tufts University

2020 APS Mentor Award
Toni C. Antonucci, University of Michigan
Elizabeth Ligon Bjork & Robert A. Bjork, University of California, Los Angeles
E. Tory Higgins, Columbia University

2020 APS Janet Taylor Spence Award for Transformative Early-Career Contributions
Dylan G. Gee, Yale University
Samuel Gershman, Harvard University
Hyowon Gweon, Stanford University
Kathryn L. Humphreys, Vanderbilt University
Luke W. Hyde, University of Michigan
Nour Kteily, Northwestern University
Amitai Shenhav, Brown University
Jennifer S. Trueblood, Vanderbilt University
The APS William James Fellow Award honors APS Members for their lifetime of significant intellectual contributions to the basic science of psychology.
Neil Burgess
University College London

Over the last quarter century, Neil Burgess has made important and strikingly original contributions to our scientific understanding of spatial and episodic memory. His contributions have been key to successfully bridging the gap between brain science and observed behavior. Using single-cell recordings in rodents, as well as neuroimaging experiments with both healthy human participants and human neuropsychological patients, he has discovered mechanisms of spatial cognition that connect animal and human neuroscience.

A central focus of his work is the nature and function of spatial representations in the hippocampal formation. Burgess pioneered the use of virtual reality with functional neuroimaging, enabling the use of novel experimental manipulations and analyses to explore spatial memory, navigation, episodic memory, and imagery. These innovations enabled Burgess and colleagues to identify many of the neural representations and computations supporting spatial cognition in humans, often complementing and extending related findings in rodents. Burgess complemented his diverse and innovative empirical work by employing his background in math and physics to develop computational models that provide a quantitative understanding of spatial representations in the brain, these representations’ role in memory function and dysfunction, and their manifestation in brain activity. These influential models combine insights from the full range of experimental approaches, generating novel predictions that have helped drive an increasingly complete understanding of special cognition.

Burgess is a Fellow of the British Royal Society and a Wellcome Trust Principal Research Fellow.
At Carol Dweck’s New York City elementary school, her class was seated in order of IQ. The experience launched a lifetime of scientific discovery—a quest to understand the implicit assumptions embedded in our culture, practices, and selves that constrain human development and growth. In her work, Dweck distinguishes between the belief that intelligence is fixed more or less at birth and the view that intelligence can grow “like a muscle” with effort, good strategies, and help from others.

Together with her students and collaborators, Dweck has shown the negative consequences of fixed-mindset beliefs for children’s persistence, learning, resilience, and ultimately their achievement. She has also shown how fixed-mindset beliefs are conveyed through common phrases like “You’re so smart” and through organizational cultures focused on “genius.” In groundbreaking field experiments, Dweck has demonstrated the power of a growth mindset to enhance learning, especially for struggling students. Further, she has explored fundamental questions about the malleability of human qualities to understand other diverse problems, including intergroup conflict and school bullying. Carol Dweck’s scholarship has reshaped social, developmental, personality, and educational psychology. Moreover, the rapid uptake of her work in education and elsewhere has improved programs and policies to the benefit of millions. A beloved mentor and collaborator, Dweck has challenged people to let go of the fears that hold them back and to see challenges as opportunities for learning and growth.

Dweck is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences. She is a recipient of the APS James McKeen Cattell Fellow Award and the APS Mentor Award.

Carol S. Dweck
Stanford University
Susan A. Gelman
University of Michigan

Susan Gelman has achieved international renown for her work on essentialism, the theory that people categorize objects and ideas on the basis of underlying essential features that are not obvious on the surface. Crows and flamingos, for example, are both birds; however, they do not look at all alike. On the other hand, crows and bats resemble each other in many ways even though they do not share membership in the same essential category that crows and flamingos do.

In Gelman’s influential book *The Essential Child*, she asserts that a cognitive bias favoring essentialist thinking profoundly influences human behavior, including that of children. For example, Gelman has shown that children have an early, powerful tendency to search for hidden, non-obvious features of objects when they are learning words, generalizing knowledge to new category members, reasoning about the insides of things, and constructing causal explanations.

Across human languages, Gelman has identified generic noun phrases (e.g., “bats fly at night”) as building-blocks of essentialism. Children, she has shown, readily commit such phrases to memory. Gelman’s research and theories on essentialist thinking have spurred a revolution in developmental psychology, which previously had been dominated by the view that children primarily notice concrete, surface-level features of the objects around them.

A past Member of the APS Board of Directors, Gelman is known not only for her extraordinary research but also for her contributions to the field through service and mentoring. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences.
Andrew Meltzoff’s landmark studies in infant development helped reconfigure our understanding of preverbal cognition.

Meltzoff demonstrated imitation in early infancy and proposed it as a powerful social learning mechanism by which infants begin to acquire the behaviors, skills, and norms of their culture. Through a set of classic studies, Meltzoff made key discoveries concerning the nature and functions of imitation in childhood. He used these findings to develop an influential theory of infant development, which described an intrinsic linkage between the perception and production of human action. Meltzoff’s “like-me” framework, which holds that human infants gain a foothold in the social world through perceived similarity between the bodily acts of self and others, led to further advances. He leveraged “like me” to connect infant social understanding to broad social phenomena such as the development of in-group biases and stereotyping in children.

Recently, Meltzoff has used neuroscience methods to investigate the neural representation of the developing body schema and the neurobiological bases of perception–action coupling in infancy. Meltzoff’s pivotal findings have transformed theories in developmental psychology. The “like-me” framework has become a powerful tool for addressing questions about children’s development and learning. Furthermore, Meltzoff’s innovative experiments have influenced scholars in diverse disciplines including evolutionary biology, robotics, philosophy of mind, and clinical science research on autism.

Meltzoff is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.
The APS James McKeen Cattell Fellow Award honors APS Members for their lifetime of significant intellectual achievements in applied psychological research and their impact on a critical problem in society at large.
Thomas E. Joiner
Florida State University

Thomas Joiner is a leading authority on suicidal behavior and its prevention. Joiner’s influential *interpersonal theory of suicide* refutes the public’s tendency to equate suicide with weakness and cowardice. His model holds that suicide risk begins with a sense of feeling disconnected from and burdensome to others, along with a decreased fear of pain and death and the technical competence to kill oneself.

To test and refine the interpersonal theory of suicide, Joiner has worked closely with the US Armed Forces, the Department of Veterans Affairs, firefighters, and other first responders. Further studies in a variety of clinical settings have generated additional support for his theory. Importantly, most of the more than 100 studies published to date on the theory were conducted by teams other than Joiner’s. This body of work speaks to the immense influence of Joiner’s scholarship. It also suggests that his work is inspiring new generations of scientists to study suicide.

Joiner’s work has resonated not only among scholars but also among members of the public. Indeed, Joiner strives to include those bereaved by suicide and those who have survived suicide attempts in research and prevention efforts. Each year, he holds dozens of workshops where community members learn about current suicide research and are empowered by empirically rooted strategies for helping people in crisis.

Joiner’s research has dramatically improved the way suicide risk assessment and intervention is conducted in day-to-day clinical practice, and it has saved lives.

Joiner is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
Richard M. Lerner
Tufts University

Richard Lerner is one of the world’s leading developmental psychologists. His basic scientific contributions are surpassed only by his commitment to applying science to the real lives of children, families, and communities.

Lerner’s scholarly work (including over 80 authored and edited books) has largely focused on youth, a topic where he has offered a new vision of positive developmental processes—and a distinct departure from notions of adolescents as inherently difficult or deficient. His paradigm-shifting relational developmental systems theory holds that children, through their plastic developmental processes, have the capacity for positive growth. Incorporating biology, sociology, public policy, and psychological science, Lerner has spearheaded groundbreaking longitudinal mixed-methods research on the characteristics of families, communities, and institutions that contribute to positive youth development. His years of research show adolescents’ capacity for personal strengths, good family relationships, and positive social contributions.

In addition to conducting research, Lerner has served on dozens of national and international boards and committees where he applies his knowledge of human development to the work of government agencies and nonprofit organizations tasked with addressing social issues. Lerner’s legacy—one that includes both innovative research and outstanding leadership in social policy—has shaped a new wave of youth programs that focus not just on specific skill building, but also on opportunities for youth participation and leadership in their communities.

Lerner is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
The APS Mentor Award recognizes APS Members who have significantly fostered the careers of others, honoring those who masterfully help students and others find their own voices and discover their own research and career goals.

Toni C. Antonucci
Elizabeth Ligon Bjork
& Robert A. Bjork
E. Tory Higgins
Toni C. Antonucci
University of Michigan

Toni Antonucci is a premiere scientist working at the nexus of life-span developmental psychology and survey research. She has been at the forefront of large-scale, longitudinal research on how relationships and health change across the life-span. To meet the challenges inherent in such complex investigations, Antonucci has brought together colleagues from psychology, anthropology, neuroscience, medicine, public health, gerontology, sociology, and social work.

Antonucci’s visionary interdisciplinary work gives her mentees access to a wealth of perspectives—and potential collaborators. She is known for using the many resources at her disposal—especially through her leadership in interdisciplinary professional organizations—to help mentees develop critical skills and connections. Former students say she models intellectual openness and helps them develop critical methodological, publishing, leadership, and communication skills. At conferences, she introduces her students to senior researchers and shows young colleagues the benefits of getting involved in professional societies. Even after students have left her lab, Antonucci frequently contacts them to share promising professional opportunities suited to their interests. Former mentees remember her lab as a welcoming environment where scholarly and personal milestones alike were celebrated with enthusiasm—and where everyone’s contributions were recognized. A strong advocate of diversity and inclusion, Antonucci seeks out mentees from many backgrounds. She has fostered relationships with graduate students from around the world, focusing her attention particularly on advanced training opportunities in developing countries.

Antonucci is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She is a past president of several societies dedicated to the study of life-span development.
Elizabeth Bjork and APS Past President Robert Bjork are pillars of cognitive research whose work on subjects such as desirable difficulties in learning has left a profound impact on psychological science. In addition to these research contributions, the Bjorks are revered mentors who have inspired the values, practices, skills, and personal traits in their mentees that encourage a lifelong love of science.

Since arriving at UCLA 45 years ago, Elizabeth and Robert have codirected a lab for the study of learning and memory, where they nearly always supervise students together. Despite being accomplished scientists and leaders in their field, the Bjorks exude a disarming warmth and openness, their students say. Their egalitarianism and respect enable mentees to comfortably share ideas. The Bjorks treat research as a team effort, modelling and rewarding cooperation among their students; this approach brings out the best in their mentees and encourages young scientists to engage with others’ ideas vigorously. Through modesty and a focus on the collective good, the Bjorks instill a love of science in their students. Elizabeth and Robert Bjork’s impact on psychology cannot be overstated. Of the more than 80—and growing—number of honors, graduate, and postdoctoral students and scholars the Bjorks have co-mentored at UCLA, a staggering 57 (70 percent) have had successful academic careers in areas related to learning and memory. The Bjorks are a special pair, who together provide an atmosphere of support in which scientific achievement thrives.

The Bjorks have been co-recipients of the APS James McKeen Cattell Fellow Award. Robert Bjork is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.
Tory Higgins has won many of the highest awards in psychological science for his work on knowledge activation and self-regulation. Beyond these accomplishments, what truly excites Higgins is developing and sharing research ideas with his students. This devotion to both ideas and people makes him an outstanding mentor.

More than 35 of Higgins’s former students have themselves ascended to academic positions. It is no wonder given the universal fondness with which these students remember their time in his lab. Higgins’s students are inundated with his boundless enthusiasm for ideas and his contagious joy in helping them find their own “burning issue” to pursue; they are unfailingly supported in their academic journey, treated as full partners in the research process, and genuinely credited with its success (even when they often know that the best ideas along the way were probably Tory’s). Most importantly, they join a larger intellectual family that Higgins actively nurtures for them even after they have left his lab.

Indeed, perhaps the primary reflection of the deep impact Higgins has on his students is that they never cease wanting to return “home.” For the past decade, his mentees have flocked to a bi-annual “Labfest” conference that brings together both current and former students, fostering even further opportunities for collaboration and enrichment. Having joined the Higgins Lab, former students never want to leave. Thanks to his ongoing dedication to both them and the field, they never have to.

Higgins is an APS William James Fellow and a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.
The APS Janet Taylor Spence Award recognizes transformative early-career contributions to psychological science. Award recipients are APS Members who are among our most creative and promising investigators.
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APS honors Members in the earliest stages of their careers as well as accomplished leaders with the field’s most prestigious awards and recognitions. This recognition is a critical part of supporting and encouraging scientific advances in our field. The dramatic advances in psychological science over the past three decades reflect the outstanding accomplishments of APS Members and Fellows.

**APS Fellows**

Fellow status is awarded to APS Members who have made sustained outstanding contributions to the science of psychology in the areas of research, teaching, service, and/or application. This important honor recognizes the field’s most distinguished scientists.

For a roster of current APS Fellows please visit www.psychologicalscience.org/current-fellows.

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For a roster of current APS Rising Stars please visit www.psychologicalscience.org/current-rising-stars.

To submit APS Fellow or Rising Star nominations, please visit www.psychologicalscience.org/awards.