Peter Lakatos (1972-2021)
An Outstanding Scientist, Gone Too Soon

Jonas Obleser’s excellent tribute to Peter Lakatos in *Nature Neuroscience* said a great deal about Peter and his contributions to science. It was, if anything, understated. I won’t try to add to it here. Rather, I’ll speak on a more personal level.

I met Peter when he was still a PhD student in the lab of Professor Gyorgy (George) Karmos at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. One of my first recollections of Peter was during the 1999 meeting of the international Conference of Cognitive Neuroscience (ICON), Budapest, in June 1999. Among other things that occurred at that memorable meeting, Peter was assigned to be the DJ for the dance party at the end of the conference. He tried “Techno-Music,” with moderate success, but fortunately he was also a big fan of Bruce Springsteen, The Eagles, and Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, so we did indeed dance the night away.

Peter came to work with us in 2002, and with the exception of a short break to return to Budapest to defend his PhD thesis, he lived on City Island in the Bronx and worked at NKI for the rest of his life. He started at NKI as a post-doc but worked his way rapidly through the Research Scientist ranks to the highest level, RS-VI. Peter also met his wife Noelle at NKI and they worked closely together from then on. This is a tribute to both of them. I don’t know many married couples who could pull that off. Noelle and Peter became permanent residents in the US and eventually US citizens. During this same time two wonderful daughters – Lili (now 10 years old) and Nora (now 7 years old) – were born into their family.

Peter was remarkable for his impact on science, but he was even more remarkable for the joyful way he pursued life and for his impact on a wide circle of friends. Peter lived on City Island for almost 20 years. In that time, he made countless friends, many of whom none of us at NKI knew at all. Peter’s memorial service was held at a place where many City Islanders end up when they die (Schuyler Hill on Tremont Avenue in the Bronx). Half of the people there were Peter’s friends from outside of his professional life … the owner of the wine store, the owner of the photo gallery, the parents of his daughters’ friends, the people on Bay Street, where Peter lived, the members of the beach club at the end of Bay Street where Peter was the chairman of the beach maintenance committee. At NKI, Peter was the perennial organizer of “team building”
efforts of all sorts, but especially happy-hour excursions to Bailey’s and other local watering holes (always after NKI work hours). The thousands of pictures Peter took at these and other occasions including his travels with his friends and family will bring us smiles for many years to come. Peter taught me and others how to pronounce many (basically unpronounceable) words and phrases in Hungarian, such as his mentor’s name (hint – Gyorgy is pronounced nothing like it reads). He also taught us how to give well wishes in Hungarian – e.g., “egeszsegedre” (to your health) – without making the slight mispronunciation that would make it mean “up your you-know-what.” Thinking of these things brings to me the sound of Peter’s deep melodious voice, vibrant with humor.

Upon hearing of Peter’s passing, his good friend and colleague Gyorgy Buzsaki said to me: “How tragic it is to lose a young and prosperous life. If we (older people) die it’s one thing but young people should be enjoying life.” I could not agree more. I will miss Peter. We will all miss Peter.

Charles E. Schroeder, Ph.D.

FROM AROUND THE INSTITUTE

NKI recently got a major aesthetic upgrade with the installation of new artwork created from scientific images. Numerous stunning images are now displayed in the main lobby, the center hallway on the second floor of building 35, and the executive conference room. Many of these images were provided by NKI researchers, while some were obtained from other sources.

This project was spearheaded by NKI Community Building Committee members Melissa Aldred, Brian Russ, and Emily Stern, along with project manager Stuart Linder and Deputy Director Antonio Convit. Funding for the project was provided by NYS OMH Capital Operations.

The wall art project coincides with other building improvements that have gradually been taking place around the Institute. Painting and wall treatment upgrades are being completed step by step, and now the beautiful neuroimages add a very suitable finishing touch to some of the key spaces at NKI.

Peter (right) with fellow Research Scientist Sam Neymotin at NKI Science Day in 2019

“Flower blossoms in brain of Alzheimer’s disease mouse model” by Dr. Ju-hyun Lee (Center for Dementia Research).
**Grants Received**

Dr. Jean-Pierre Lindenmayer (Manhattan Psychiatric Center) received a collaborative R01 with Dr. Ragy Girgis at NYSPI titled “Clozapine for the Prevention of Violence in Schizophrenia: a Randomized Clinical Trial”. NKI is one of seven sites participating in this clinical trial.

Drs. Michael Milham and Stan Colcombe (Center for Biomedical Imaging & Neuromodulation) received an R01 for their project titled “The NKI Rockland Sample II: An Open Resource of Multimodal Brain, Physiology & Behavior Data from a Community Lifespan Sample”.

Dr. Mariko Saito (Neurochemistry) in collaboration with Dr. Bhaskar Das at Long Island University received an Administrative Supplement for the R01 titled “Development of Novel MetAP2 inhibitors as potential therapeutics for Microsporidiosis”.

Dr. Stephen Ginsberg (Dementia Research) in collaboration with Dr. Gabriela Chiosis at Sloan Kettering Institute for Cancer Research received a one-year R56 titled “Selective interactome vulnerability across the Alzheimer’s disease spectrum”.

Dr. Arnaud Falchier (Translational Neuroscience Laboratories, Center for Biomedical Imaging & Neuromodulation) received a two-year R34 grant from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, with Charles Schroeder as co-principal investigator. The title is “Changing the neuromodulation game: ultrasound fenestration of the blood brain barrier for noninvasive viral transfection of primate CNS neurons”.

Dr. Nunzio Pomara (Geriatric Psychiatry) received a grant from Rockland County to continue “The Memory Education and Research Initiative (MERI)”.
**BON VOYAGE!**

To mark Gail Silipo’s recent retirement, Dr. Dan Javitt sent this tribute.

Gail Silipo began her research career working with Dr. Bert Winsberg on attention deficit disorders in children before starting a research collaboration with me at Bronx Psychiatric Center in the late 1990’s. In 1995, Gail moved with me to the Nathan Kline Institute to help found the newly formed Schizophrenia Research Division. Following a short stint in the since-demolished building 37, she moved into her new offices in building 35, where she remained until July 2021 as the guiding force of our Division. She ended her research career with over 50 publications, and fond memories of her colleagues and of the Institute. Ultimately, it came down to a choice between the advancement of science versus travelling with her husband and spending time with family. Science lost, but her family won. The Division and the Institute wish her well!

**DEPARTMENT OF VERSE**

Until recently, Rebecca Zaritsky was a research assistant in the labs of Drs. Efrat Levy and Mariko Saito. Rebecca is currently an MD/PhD student at New Jersey Medical School and is volunteering on a NYS Psychiatric Institute project. Her poem below was published in the June issue of *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

**To Alois Alzheimer, From Auguste Deter**

I cannot remember if you had loved me. Somebody must have, once—must have held me and stroked my hair. I think I remember his hands the most, stained with oil.

I remember his shouting, but not his name.

You only remember the sprouting applause inside my head when you opened me.

You see, good sir, I have lost myself, so to say.

Where am I? You tell me I am in a castle, of sorts. But I have lost myself.

Where might my bed be?

Did you love me, sir? I cannot remember, so I will believe anything.

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The Rise of Ransomware

By Des Moloney
Director of Information Technology

Ransomware is a type of malware, or computer virus, that encrypts the data on your computer and makes it inaccessible to everyone. To regain access to your data, a monetary ransom needs to be paid to the perpetrator(s). If a ransom is not paid, your data will be permanently deleted. You may have heard of recent ransomware attacks, such as the Colonial Pipeline being brought down. Other lesser-known attacks have also occurred in school districts, local governments, private corporations, and public utilities.

There are two main reasons for the rise of ransomware:

1) **It pays:** According to information security vendor Tripwire, the average payout in 2020 was $300,000. The highest ransom paid was $10 million.

2) **It’s easy:** Hackers don’t have to worry about firewalls, VPNs and other security technologies. 99% of ransomware is spread through email so we are all susceptible to ransomware.

NKI IT is taking the following proactive measures to guard against ransomware:

- Assessing permissions to ensure that in the event of an outbreak, the damage would be limited.
- Installing Windows Security Updates on computer and servers at NKI.

What you can do to prevent Ransomware:

- **Don’t click on links in emails:** Although this cannot be completely avoided, it should be avoided as much as possible. Links in spam emails typically lead to websites that download and install software that would spread ransomware.

- **Don’t install unknown software:** NKI IT recognizes the fact that there is a myriad of free and open-source software to aid in your research. Don’t install software from unknown sources. If there is an open-source tool you are looking to use, NKI IT is happy to help you evaluate it to ensure it is legitimate software.

- **Don’t give out your information:** Some spam emails will ask you for your username and password. The NKI Helpdesk will not ask for your password, particularly over email.

If you suspect that may have installed ransomware, do the following:

- Unplug the network connection and call the NKI Helpdesk (845-398-6521).
- If you are on a laptop, disable the network connection by doing the following:
  - Windows: Click the Start Menu -> Settings -> Network & Internet -> Airplane Mode and enable Airplane Mode.
  - Mac: Click the Apple Menu -> System Preferences -> Network -> Wi-Fi -> Turn Wi-Fi off.
- Worst case, unplug the PC or hold the power button down on the laptop.
**PUBLICATIONS OF NOTE**

**BIOMARKERS IN NEUROPSYCHIATRY**

Henry Sershen (first author) and Robert Smith (corresponding author) are the principal authors of this open access paper in *Biomarkers in Neuropsychiatry*. The data for this study were collected and analyzed at NKI.


**Brain Topography**

John Orczyk and Yoshinao Kajikawa (Translational Neuroscience, C-BIN) published their latest work in *Brain Topography*.


**NEUROSCIENCE**

Christos Lisgaras (Scharffman Lab, Center for Dementia Research) coauthored this paper published recently in *Neuroscience*.


**Science**

Panos Roussos (Dementia Research) is a coauthor of this paper appearing in *Science*. The paper is accompanied by a Perspective piece titled “*White matter and human behavior*”.


**Biological Psychiatry**

Dr. Roussos is also a principal author of this new publication in *Biological Psychiatry*.


**Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews**

This review by Catia Teixeira, Edenia Menezes, and former EBI member Emmanuelle Courtiol (Emotional Brain Institute) appears in *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*.

Melissa Alldred (Dementia Research), Stephen Ginsberg (Dementia Research), and Sang Han Lee (Biomedical Imaging & Neuromodulation) recently published this paper in the open access Journal of Clinical Medicine. The article is part of a special issue on "Aging in Down Syndrome: Latest Clinical Advances and Prospects" for which Dr. Alldred was a co-guest editor.


Stephen Ginsberg (Dementia Research) is the first author of this Emerging Methods and Technologies paper published in The FEBS Journal.


Joshua Kantrowitz (Schizophrenia Research) contributed this editorial to Expert Opinion on Pharmacotherapy.


Brian Russ (Biomedical Imaging & Neuromodulation) is the first author of this new open access publication in NeuroImage.


John and Diana Sidtis (Brain and Behavior Laboratory, Geriatric Psychiatry) are the lead authors of this paper recently published in the open access journal Frontiers in Neurology.


Mohammed Milad (Clinical Research) is co-senior author of this article in the open access journal Translational Psychiatry.

This paper by Babak Tofighi, Crystal Lewis, and colleagues in the Social Solutions & Services Research group appears in the *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*.


Vilma Gabbay (Clinical Research) coauthored of this Preview piece in the open access journal *Cell Reports Medicine*.


This new paper from the lab of Mariko Saito (Neurochemistry) was published in *Neurochemical Research*.


INFO UPDATE

NKI employees are eligible to register with the New York State Library in order to access the Library’s substantial electronic resources. (Note that all New York residents can register, but NYS government employees have access to a lot more.) Instructions to register are here:

http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/apply.htm

(If you need assistance verifying your agency employment while at home, the NKI librarian can do that for you.)

The *Journal of Neuroscience* was launched in 1981 and to celebrate its 40th anniversary, the journal is publishing a series of articles by authors who published papers in the journal’s inaugural year. You can find these reflections on 40 years of progress in neuroscience here.

The NKI librarian is always available to assist with literature searching, citation searching (Web of Science, Scopus), bibliographic reference management, and the like. When you have any information needs, or questions about available resources, don’t hesitate to turn to us.

The library offers a comfortable, quiet space for reading, work, and small meetings. To use the library’s Wi-Fi network, ask the library staff for the password.

You can link to the NKI Library’s website from myNKI. The Library site includes quick links to the NYU Health Sciences Library and to the New York State Library, as well as links to NKI’s own library resources (journal finder, online catalog, etc.).
The gene editing technology known as CRISPR has received a lot of attention in recent years for its potential to revolutionize medicine, and there have been some early clinical successes in helping people with sickle cell disease and some other disorders. Now a new report describes another striking success in which patients with amyloidosis improved after receiving an infusion of gene-editing cells. You can read (or listen to) the story on NPR.

There is no doubt that heat waves, wildfires, and other devastating results of climate change are becoming more and more commonplace. But if you have ever wondered just how much hotter it has gotten where you live, The New York Times has the answer on this interactive website.

DEPARTMENT OF WONDER

EVENTS AND SEMINARS

NKI All Career Trajectories (ACT) Series

The NKI All Career Trajectories (ACT) Series continues on Monday, August 9th at 12pm. Our next presenter is Dr. Brett East. Dr. East received his PhD in Neuroscience from Tulane University where he studied memory and aging. Following a postdoctoral fellowship at the Nathan Kline Institute and NYU, Dr. East transitioned to his current position as a Scientific Associate with VMLY&R. Dr. East will discuss his recent decision to move from academia to industry and how his new position is going. We look forward to seeing you on August 9th.

The series takes place on the following zoom channel: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89540284886

Center for Biomedical Imaging and Neuromodulation Works in Progress (WIP)

Please join us for the Works in Progress (WIP) seminar series. These seminars, originally the in-person C-BIN Science Series at the Nathan Kline Institute, have been converted to an online "Works in Progress" format, where researchers may discuss data sets from ongoing experiments and get feedback, as well as give finished presentations. WIP are held via Zoom on Mondays from 11am – 12pm (Eastern time).

Upcoming schedule:

Aug. 9: Karl-Heinz Nenning, NKI
Aug. 16: Serdar Akkol, Northwell
Aug. 23: Owen Muir
Aug. 30: [available]
Sept. 6: NKI Holiday
Sept. 13: Kristina Teresa Johnson, MIT
Sept. 20: Khena Marie Iyer Swallow, Cornell
Sept. 27: [available]
Oct. 4: [available]
Oct. 11: NKI Holiday
Oct. 18: [available]
Oct. 25: [available]
Nov. 1: [available]
Nov. 8: [available]
Nov. 15: Arish Alreja, CMU
Nov. 22: [available]
Nov. 29: [available]

To join a meeting, go to zoom.us and enter Meeting ID: 919 544 345
If you can only join by phone, call: +1 646-558-8656, then enter the zoom meeting ID above.

The New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) regularly hosts an interactive video broadcast covering the latest research, technology, and treatment implementation in the fields of psychiatry and psychology. These programs are recorded, and the archived Statewide Grand Rounds programs can be viewed on the OMH website.
Dr. Jean-Pierre Lindenmayer (Manhattan Psychiatric Center) presented the NYU Department of Psychiatry Grand Rounds on June 17. His topic was “Updates in Treatment-Resistant Schizophrenia”.

Dr. Robert Smith (Neurochemistry) co-chaired a symposium panel on “Sulforaphane as a Potential Add-On Treatment Strategy for Schizophrenia and Autism: Basic and Clinical Experimental Findings” at the Schizophrenia International Research Society virtual meeting in April.

Dr. Smith also chaired a symposium panel on the same topic at the American Society for Clinical Psychopharmacology virtual annual meeting in June.

In both cases, Dr. Smith’s own panel presentation was titled “Sulforaphane as a Treatment for Autism: Report of a Randomized Double-Blind Study in Subjects with and without Severe Cognitive Impairment”.

Below is a list of references that have been added to the NKI publications database since the previous update. The full database contains over 6,600 items dating back to 1995 and can be searched from the myNKI website.


23rd Annual Conference of the International Society for Bipolar Disorders, May 2021


Basavaraj BS. ENDOCANNABINOID SIGNALING IN ALCOHOL-INDUCED NEUROEPIGENETIC ABNORMALITIES. Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research 45[S1], 19A. 2021.


