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HDSI Appoints Bradley Voytek to Faculty Fellowship

Neuroscientist Brings Leadership in Multidisciplinary Science Outreach

The Halıcıoğlu Data Science Institute (HDSI) at UC-San Diego has announced the appointment of Bradley Voytek, a Cognitive Science associate professor in the UC San Diego Division of Social Sciences, as a Faculty Fellow of the pioneering institute.

Voytek works with students in Cognitive Science, Neuroscience and Data Science, has a strong following in science-related social media, and is a leader of the neuroscience graduate program as well as the HDSI undergraduate fellowship program. He assumes the HDSI post Nov. 1, 2018, to serve with Ilkay Altintas, chief data science officer at the San Diego Supercomputer Center.

Neuroscientist Bradley Voytek named HDSI Fellow

"Having Brad leading programs and instructing students adds great strength to our interdisciplinary mission," said Rajesh Gupta, Ph.D., co-founder and director of Halıcıoğlu Data Science Institute. "Having his experience and his passion will make a help build our program."

Voytek's research focuses on what he calls "the human side of data science." The promise of neuroscientific advancement, in his view, is the reduction of suffering. He specializes in automated science, aging, attention, working memory, oscillatory network communication, and the interactions between the brain, cognition and society. His research program is focused on

combining large scale data-mining and machine-learning techniques with hypothesis-driven experimental research to understand the relationships between neural oscillations, cognition and disease.

His goal is to construct an understanding of cognition built on the first principles of neurophysiology: How can neural systems interact to give rise to cognitive phenomena normally equated with "attention" and "working memory," and what are the behavioral and cognitive limitations and consequences of these biological constraints?

Voytek earned his bachelor's in psychology from University of Southern California and his Ph.D. in neuroscience from UC Berkeley. He served as a Berkeley postdoctoral fellow in neuroscience, the recipient of the Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship.

He is a longtime advocate for promoting stronger communications in science, and volunteers extensively to talk to students at all grade levels about science. He is active in popular media with his science-related writing and blogging. In addition to his academic publications, his work has been published and quoted in such well-known forums as *Wired*, *Scientific American,* San Diego Comic-Con and the *New York Times*. He's been invited to give multiple TED-style talks on his scientific achievements, featured on YouTube. And his science-themed communications have attracted some 12,000 Twitter followers (@BradleyVoytek).

As a neuroscientist as well as a fan of pop culture, he has a fascination with zombies, the centuries-old myths of the undead re-animating among the living. He is co-author of a nonfiction title in that arena: "Do Zombies Dream of Undead Sheep?: A Neuroscientific View of the Zombie Brain." (Complete with expert escape advice in case of attack.)

As an HDSI Fellow, he will continue his faculty role within Cognitive Science and Data Science working with faculty and students, to forge stronger connections to the integration of data science innovation.

"I look forward to bringing data science tools to the widest reach possible," said Voytek. "I love my job and I can't sing its praises any more highly, and want to share with others my enthusiasm for the wonder of scientific discovery."

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