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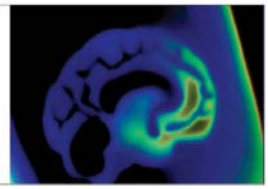
THE KAVLI Institute for Brain and Mind at UCSD



University of California, San Diego

Simon E. Fisher, D.Phil.

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Head of Molecular Neuroscience at the Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics
University of Oxford

"Molecular Windows into Speech and Language"

Genes that are implicated in speech and language disorders can provide novel insights into neural mechanisms contributing to human communication. We previously showed that people who have heterozygous mutations in the FOXP2 gene have problems with the learning and production of sequences of mouth movements needed for speech, along with deficits in many aspects of language. The gene encodes a conserved forkhead transcription factor that appears to help regulate development and/or function of subpopulations of neurons in a wide range of non-speaking vertebrates, although evidence suggests that its role may have been modified during human evolution. It is emphasized that FOXP2 is not the mythical "gene for speech", but instead represents one piece of a complex puzzle, involving multiple factors. My laboratory are using FOXP2 as a unique entry point for investigating neurogenetic pathways that contribute to speech and language development, by adopting a range of complementary functional genetic techniques, from cell-lines and mutant mice to studies of humans affected with speech/language disorders.

Wednesday, October 31, 2007
11:30 am
Leichtag Auditorium
School of Medicine
Light refreshments will be provided

To schedule a meeting with Dr. Fisher during his visit, Oct. 29-Nov. 2, please contact Kristen Michener at kmichener@ucsd.edu

Located in the Leichtag Family Biomedical Building, 804 on UCSD map
Map can be found at http://maps.ucsd.edu/Acrobat/MainCampus.pdf