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# DAPHNE BAVELIER

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CV

PARTICIPANT AT:

## BRAIN HEALTH. FROM GENES TO BEHAVIOUR, IMPROVING OUR LIVES

**October, 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Barcelona**

**Daphne Bavelier**, Group Leader at University of Geneva, CH; and Research Professor, Rochester University, Rochester, USA

Daphne Bavelier is an internationally-recognized expert on how humans learn. In particular, she studies how the brain adapts to changes in experience, either by nature - for example, deafness - or by training - for example, playing video games. Initially trained in Biology at the 'Ecole Normale Supérieure de Paris', she then received a PhD in Brain and Cognitive Sciences from MIT and trained in human brain plasticity at the Salk Institute. Her work shows that playing fast-paced, action-packed entertainment video games typically thought to be mind-numbing actually benefits several aspects of behavior. Exploiting this counter-intuitive finding, her lab now investigates how new media, such as video games, can be leveraged to foster learning and brain plasticity.

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ABSTRACT

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### **Action Videogames as Exemplary Learning Tools**

Technology, from chatting on the internet to playing video games, has invaded all aspects of our lives and, for better or for worse, is changing who we are. Can we harness technology to effect more changes for the better? Yes we can, and not always in the way one might have expected. In a surprising twist, a mind-numbing activity such as playing action video games appears to lead to a variety of behavioral enhancements in young adults. Action video game players outperform their non-action-game playing peers on various sensory, attentional and cognitive tasks. A training regimen whose benefits are so broad is unprecedented and provides a unique opportunity to identify factors that underlie generalization of learning and principles of brain plasticity. We propose that a common mechanism is at the source of this wide range of skill improvement. In particular, improvement in performance following action video game play may result from greater attentional control with gamers focusing on signal and ignoring distraction more efficiently. Practical applications from education to rehabilitation will be discussed.

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