

# Limits of BOLD and Beyond: Hemodynamics to Neuronal Currents

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Laboratory of Brain and Cognition, NIMH  
&  
Functional MRI Facility  
National Institutes of Health

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Paula Rowser



The people who did all the work...

Rasmus Birn   Ziad Saad   Patrick Bellgowan



Natalia Petridou



Jerzy Bodurka



# Hemodynamics

- quick overview

- linearity (steady state)

- linearity (dynamic)

- baseline signal

- latency

- width

# Neuronal Currents

- model

- approaches

- current phantom*
- cell cultures*
- human studies*

- why there is hope

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# Alternating Left and Right Finger Tapping



~ 1992

**Neuronal  
Activation**



?

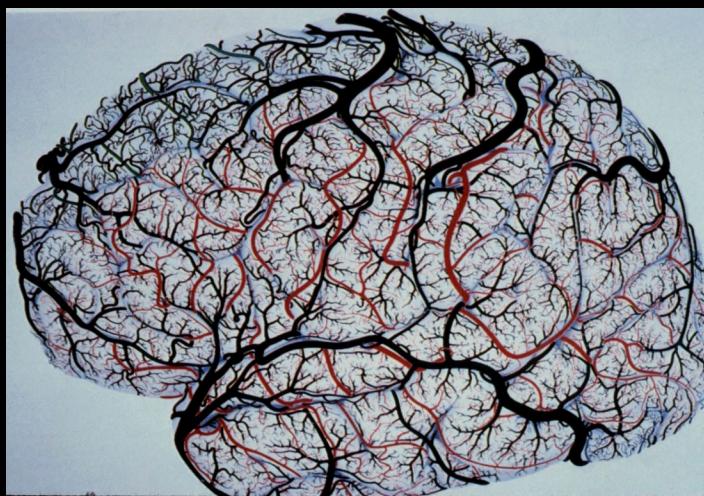
**Hemodynamics**

**Measured  
Signal**

?

?

**Noise**



# $\Delta$ Neuronal Activity

Number of Neurons  
Local Field Potential  
Spiking Coherence  
Spiking Rate

# $\Delta$ Metabolism

Aerobic Metabolism

Anaerobic Metabolism

# $\Delta$ Hemodynamics

Blood Volume

Deoxygenated Blood

Flow Velocity

Oxygenated Blood

Perfusion

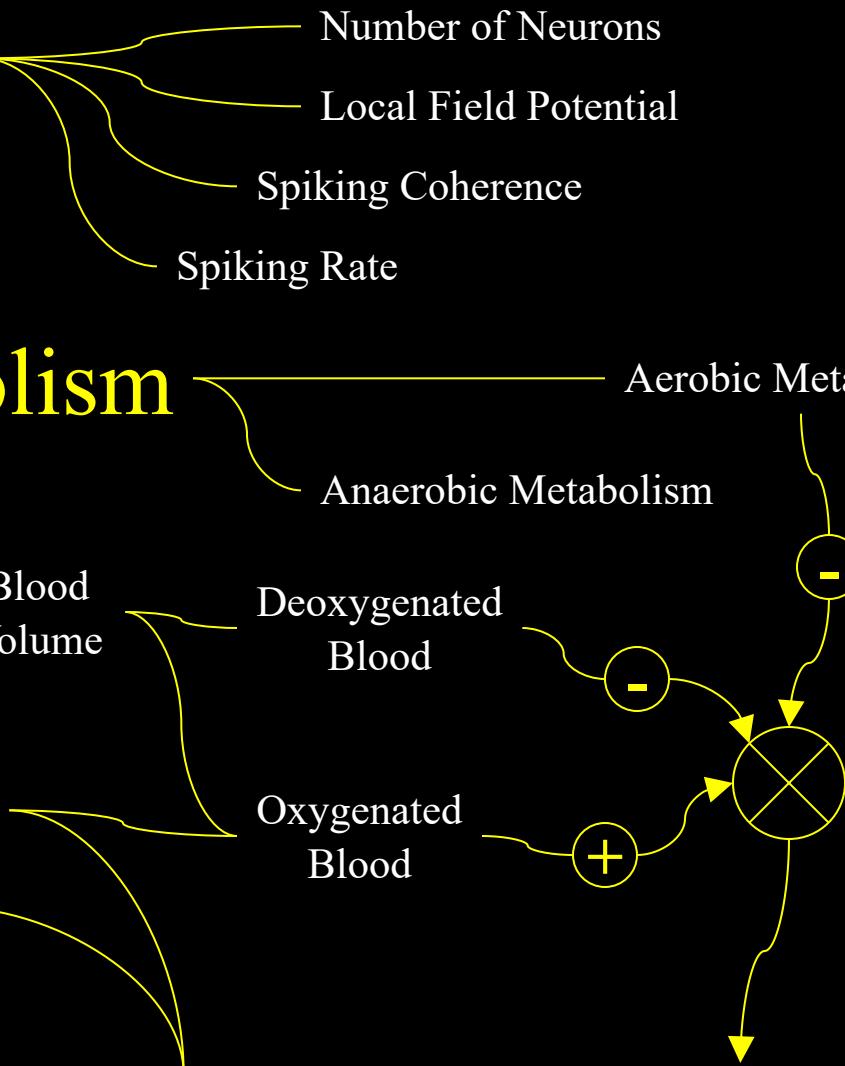
$\Delta$  BOLD Contrast

$\Delta$  Perfusion Contrast

$\Delta$  Inflow Contrast

MRI Pulse Sequence

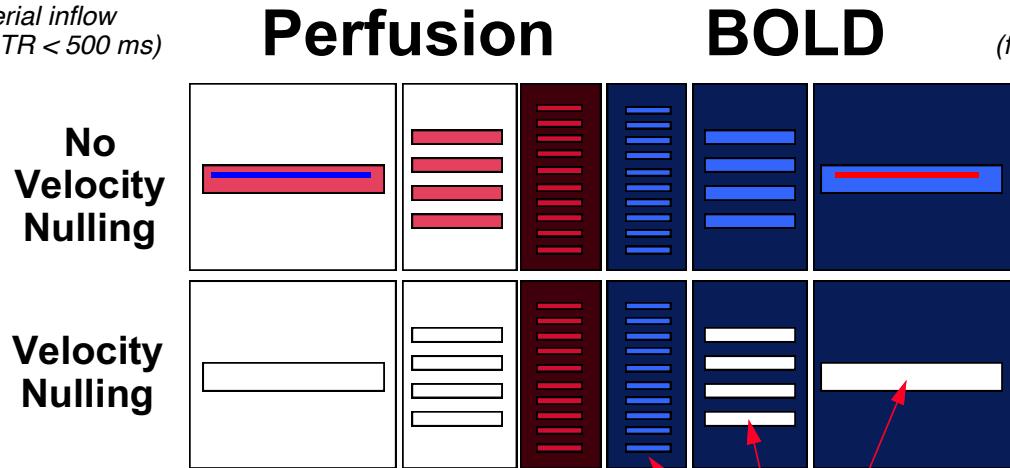
$\Delta$  Deoxy-Hb



# BOLD Contrast: A Few Strategies for Better Interpretation

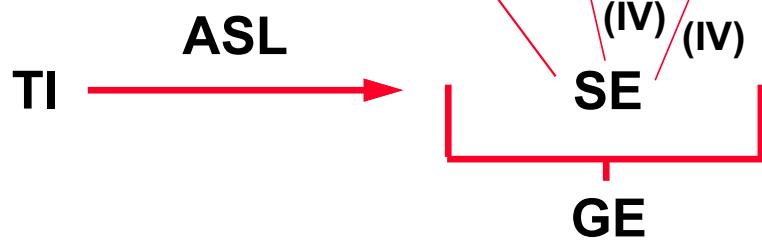
- Pulse sequence modulation
- Neuronal activation modulation
- Alternative measurement comparison

*Arterial inflow*  
(*BOLD TR < 500 ms*)

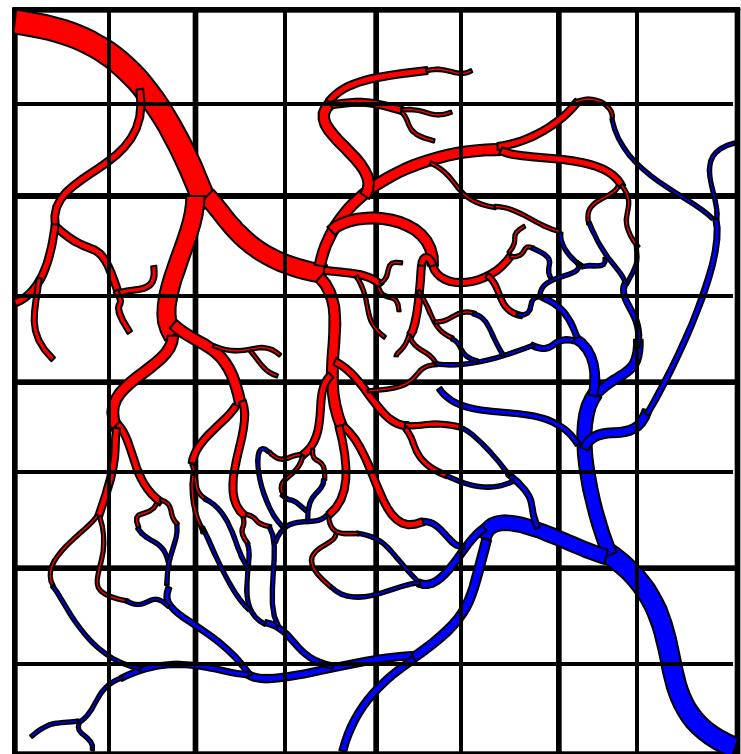


*Venous inflow*  
(for ASL, w/ no VN)

Pulse Sequence  
Sensitivity



Spatial  
Heterogeneity



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# Neuronal Currents

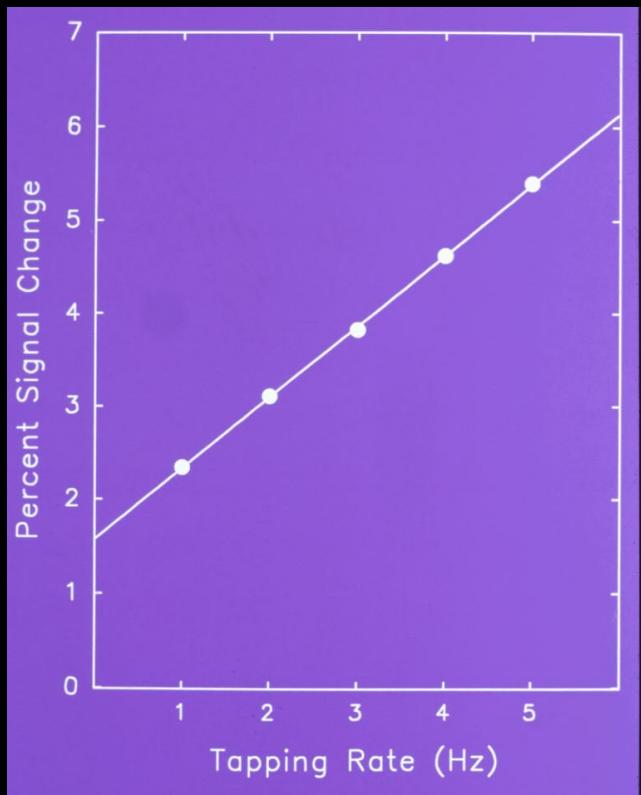
- model

- approaches

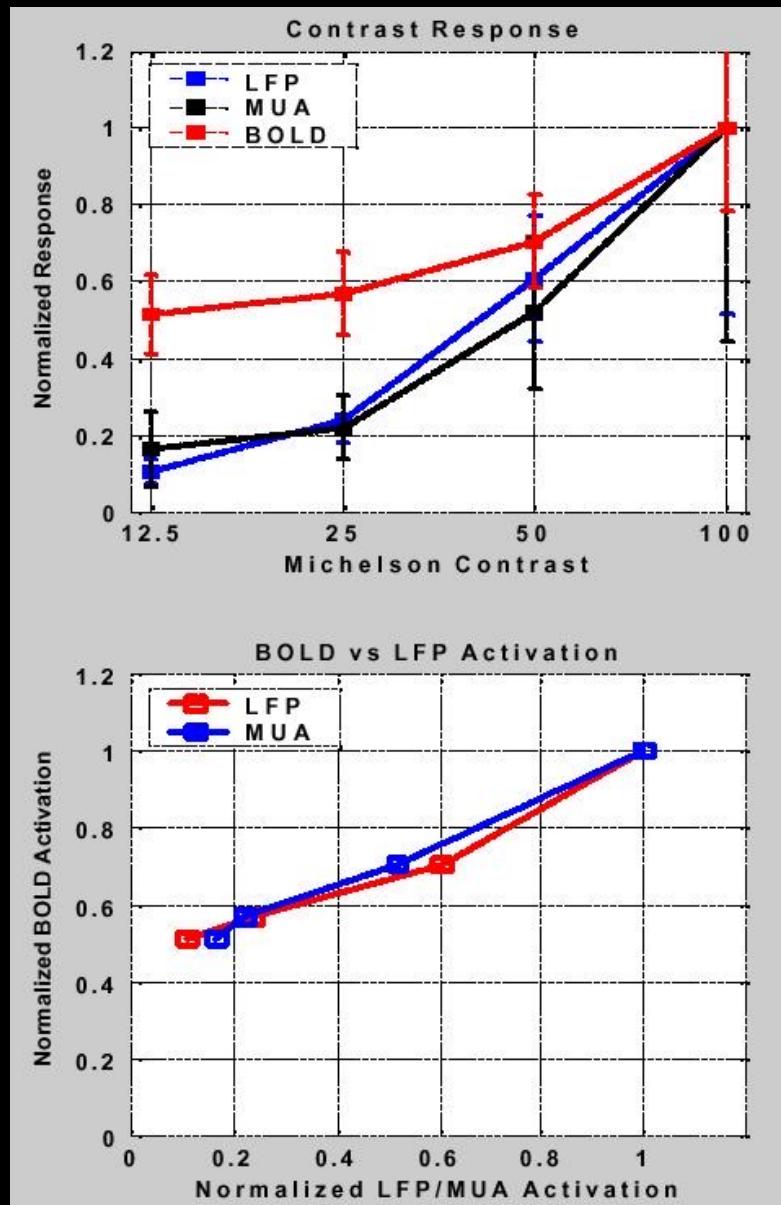
- current phantom*
- cell cultures*
- human studies*

- why there is hope

Logothetis et al. (2001) "Neurophysiological investigation of the basis of the fMRI signal" Nature, 412, 150-157



S. M. Rao et al, (1996) "Relationship between finger movement rate and functional magnetic resonance signal change in human primary motor cortex." *J. Cereb. Blood Flow and Met.* 16, 1250-1254.



# Hemodynamics

- quick overview

- linearity (steady state)

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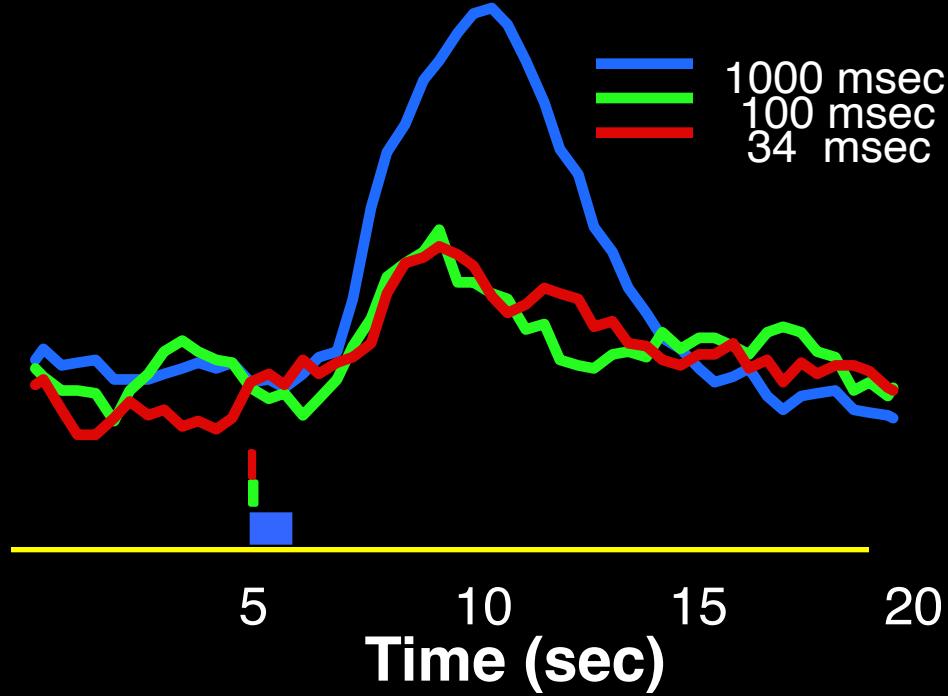
# Neuronal Currents

- model

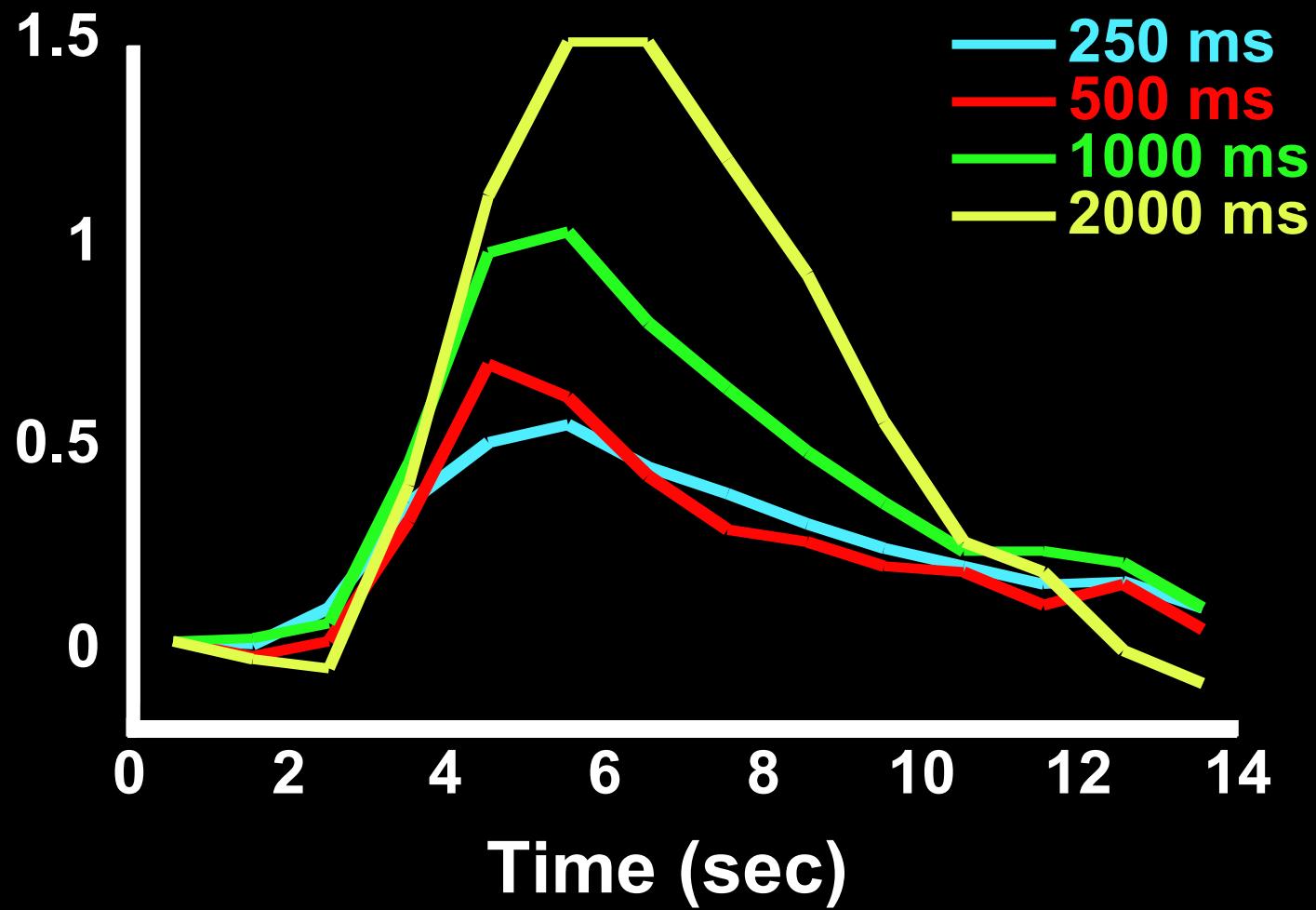
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- cell cultures*
- human studies*

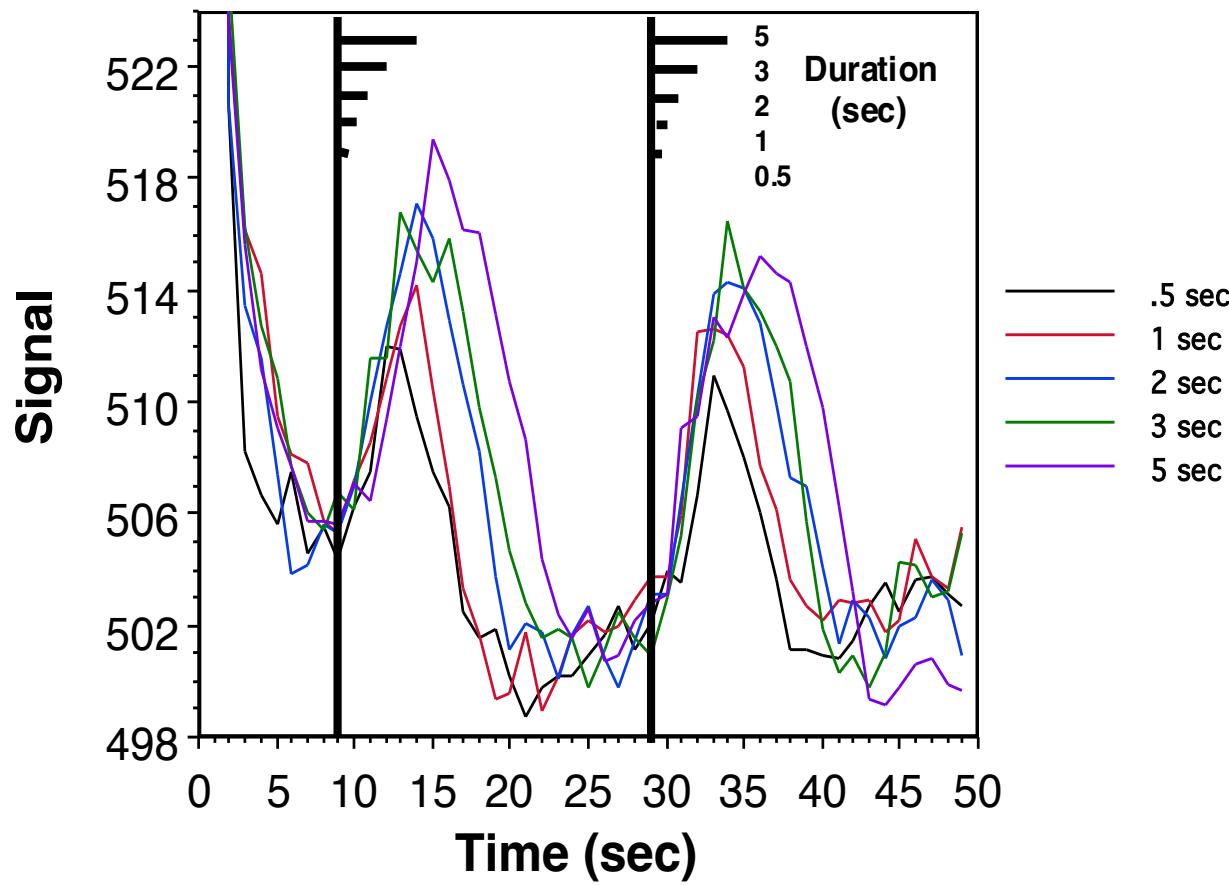
- why there is hope



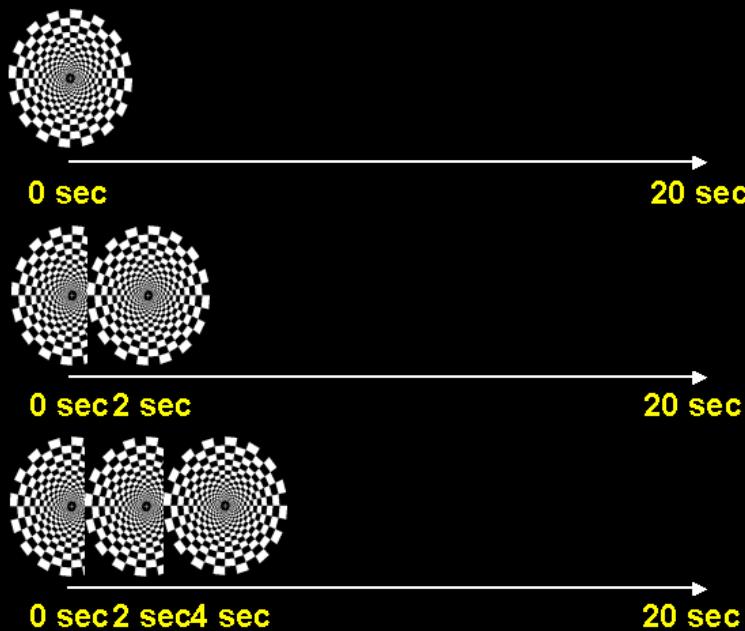
R. L. Savoy, et al., Pushing the temporal resolution of fMRI: studies of very brief visual stimuli, onset variability and asynchrony, and stimulus-correlated changes in noise [oral], 3'rd Proc. Soc. Magn. Reson., Nice, p. 450. (1995).



## Motor Cortex



Bandettini, et al., The functional dynamics of blood oxygenation level contrast in the motor cortex, 12'th Proc. Soc. Magn. Reson. Med., New York, p. 1382. (1993).

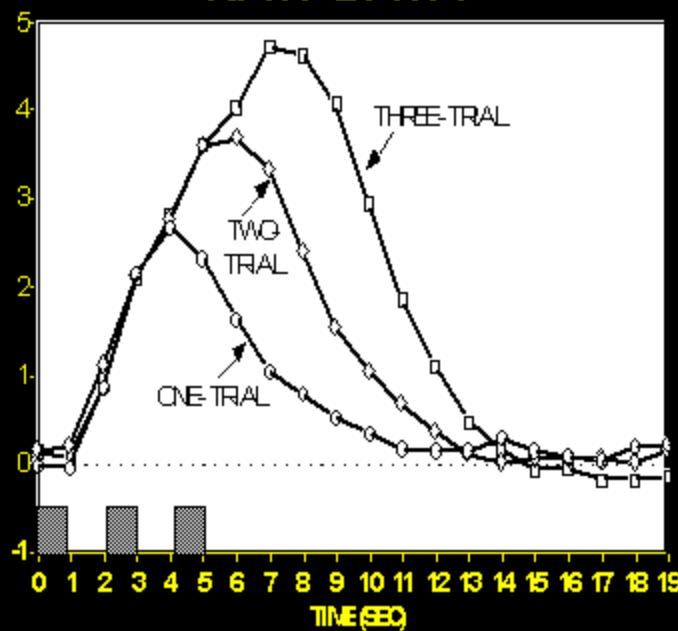


♦ Human Brain Mapping 5:329–340(1997) \*

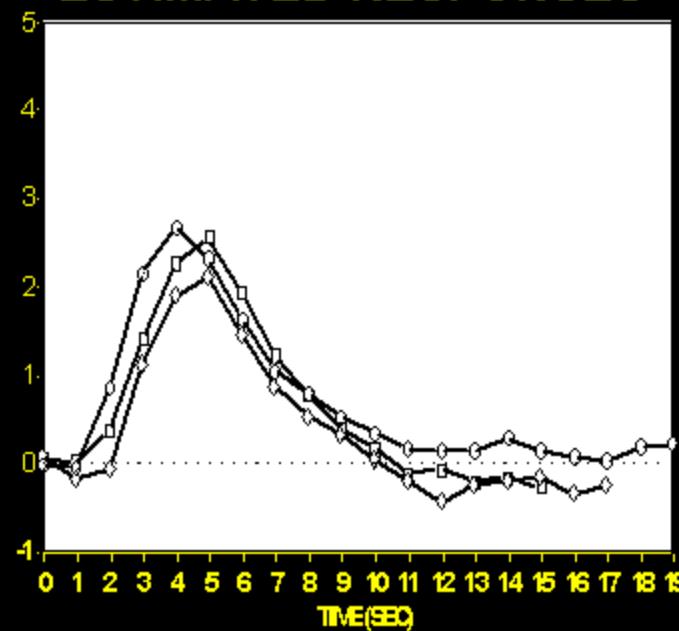
## Selective Averaging of Rapidly Presented Individual Trials Using fMRI

Anders M. Dale\* and Randy L. Buckner

### RAW DATA

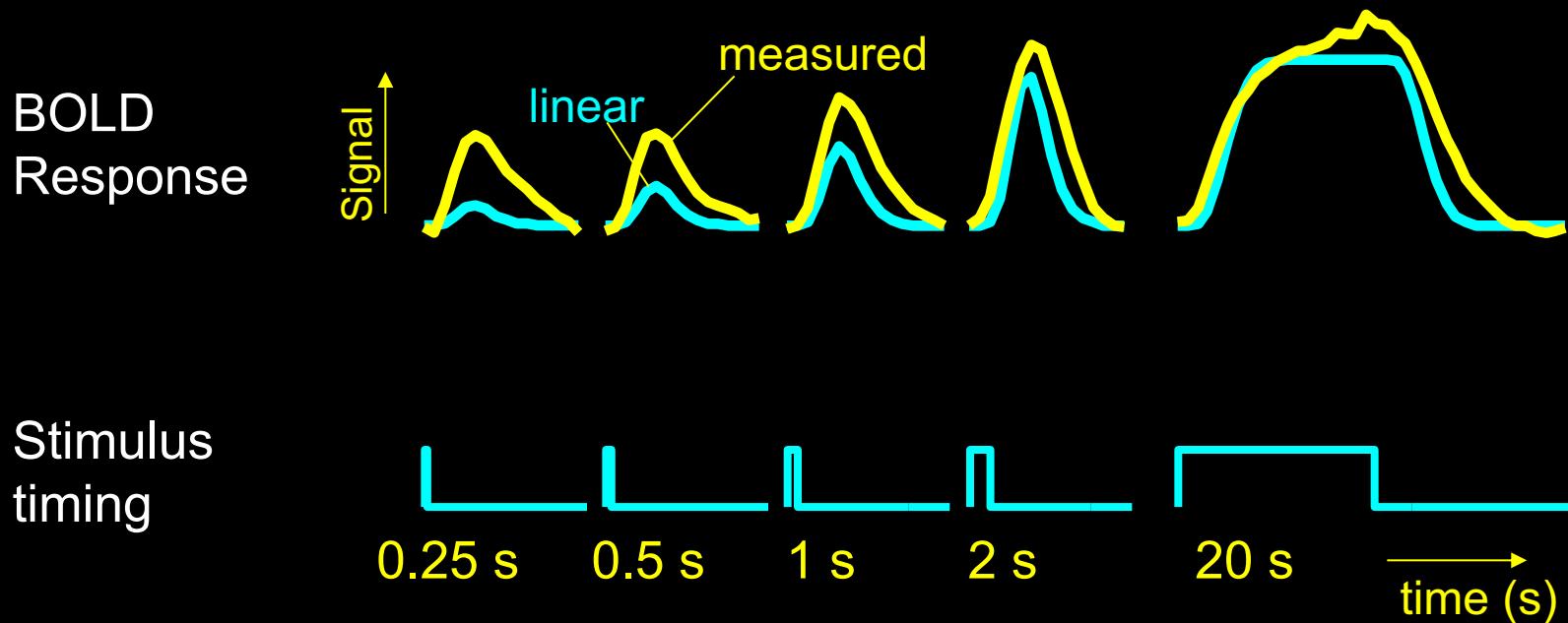


### ESTIMATED RESPONSES



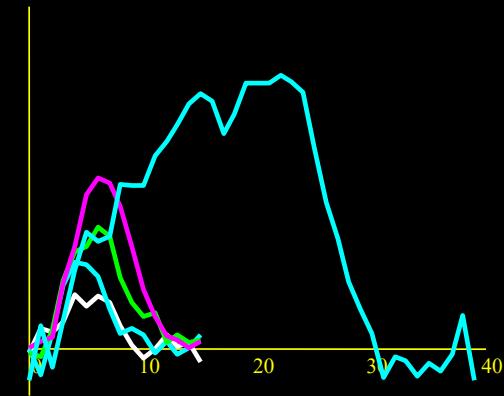
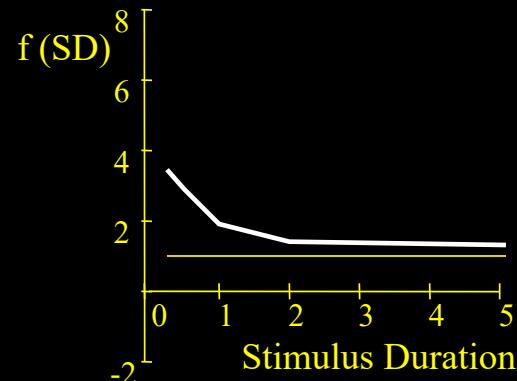
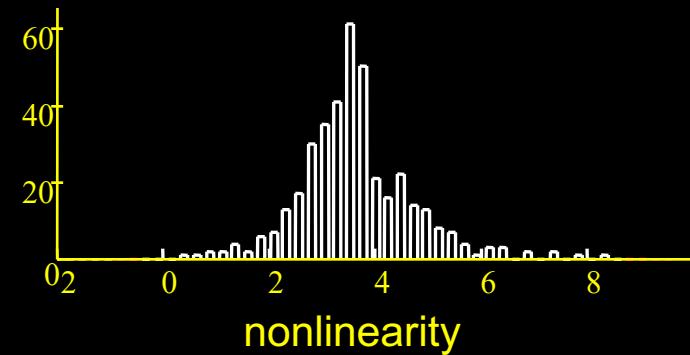
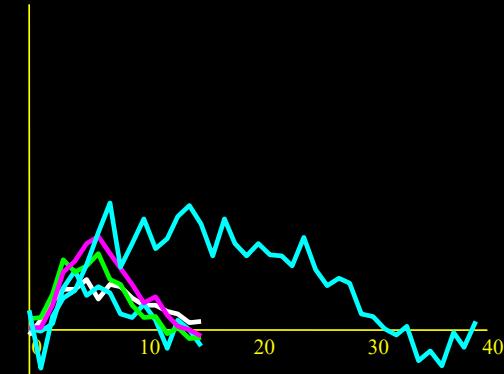
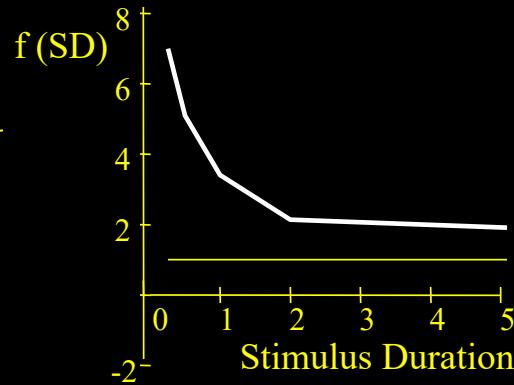
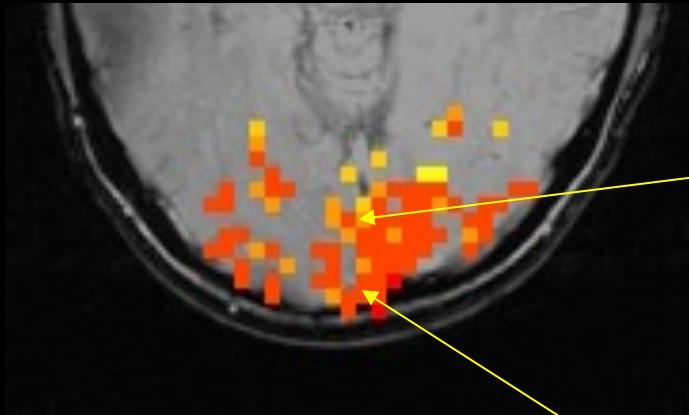
# Dynamic Nonlinearity Assessment

Different stimulus “ON” periods



*Brief stimuli produce larger responses than expected*

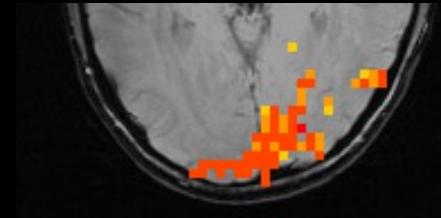
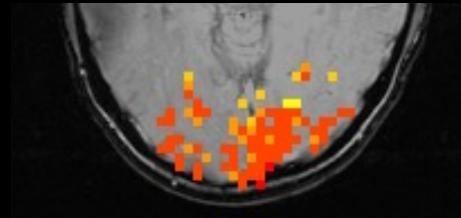
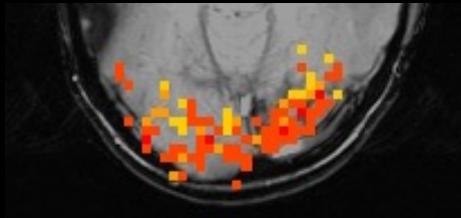
# Spatial Heterogeneity of BOLD Nonlinearity



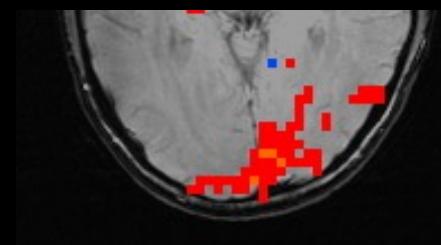
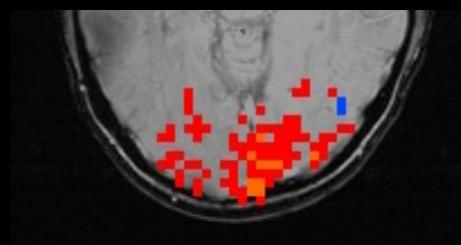
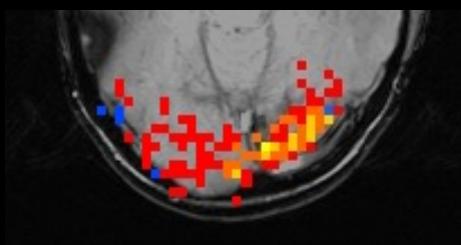
R. M. Birn, Z. Saad, P. A. Bandettini, (2001) “Spatial heterogeneity of the nonlinear dynamics in the fMRI BOLD response.” *NeuroImage*, 14: 817-826.

# Results – visual task

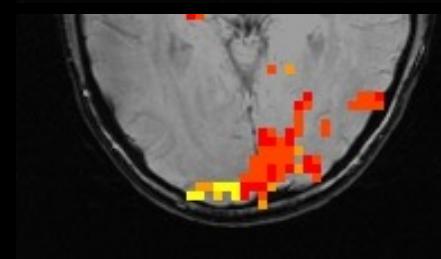
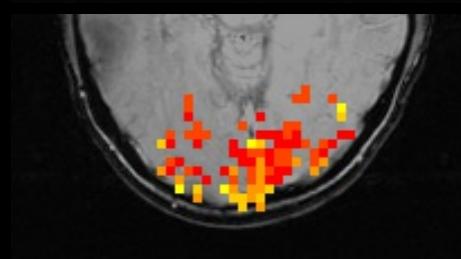
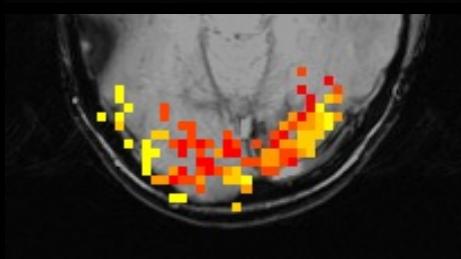
Nonlinearity



Magnitude

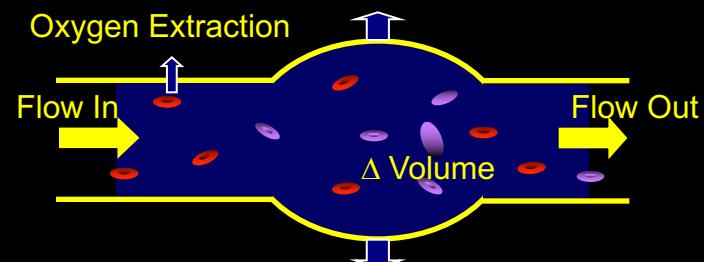
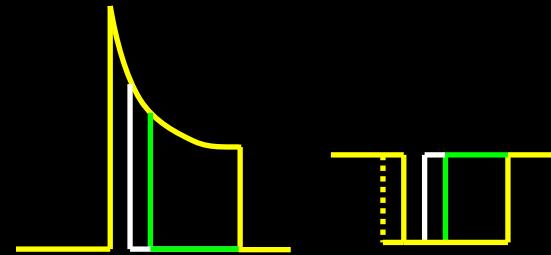
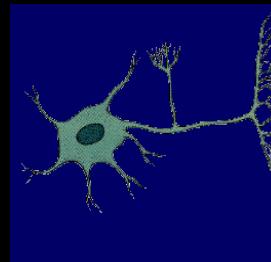


Latency



# Sources of this Nonlinearity

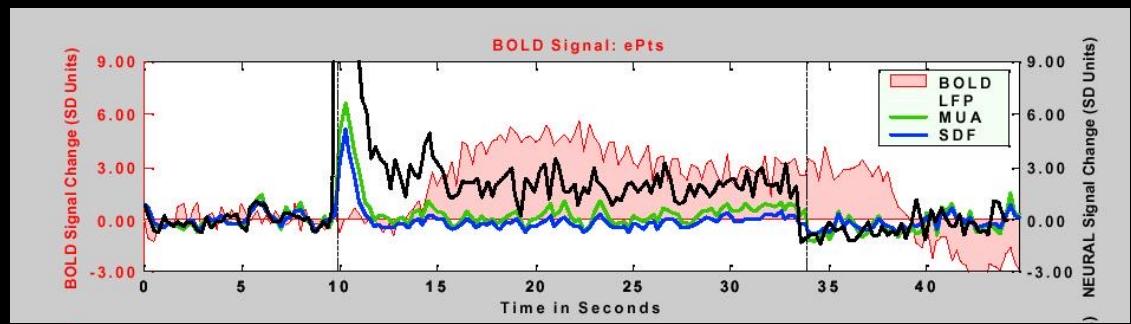
- Neuronal
- Hemodynamic
  - Oxygen extraction
  - Blood volume dynamics



# BOLD Correlation with Neuronal Activity

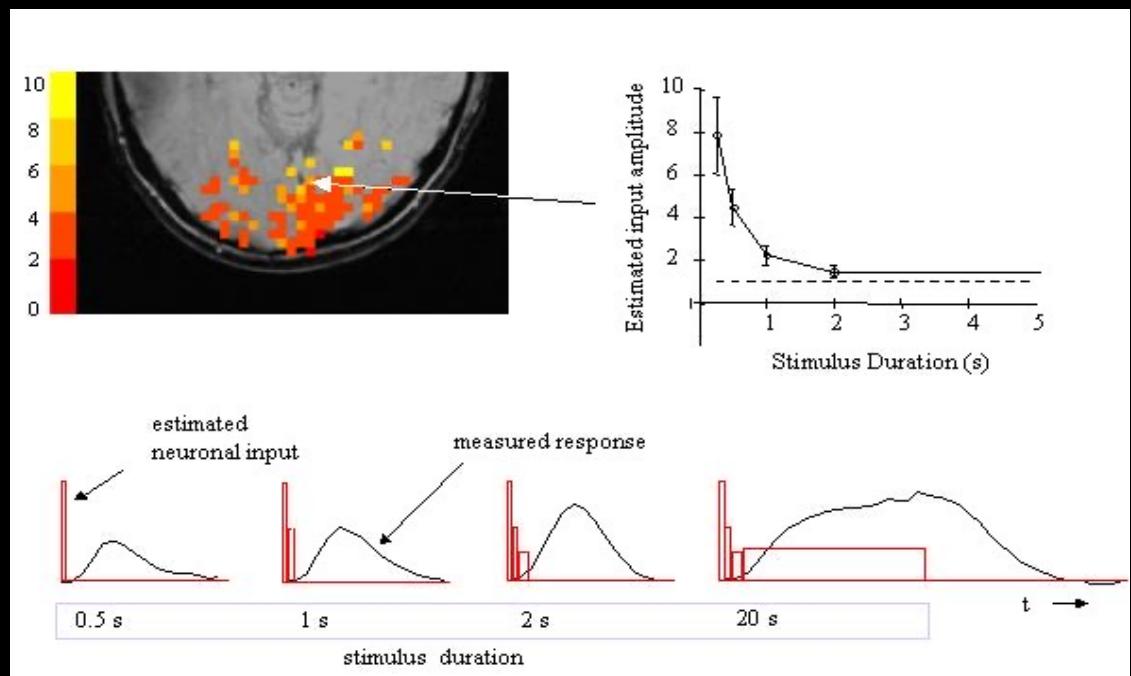
Logothetis et al. (2001)

“Neurophysiological investigation  
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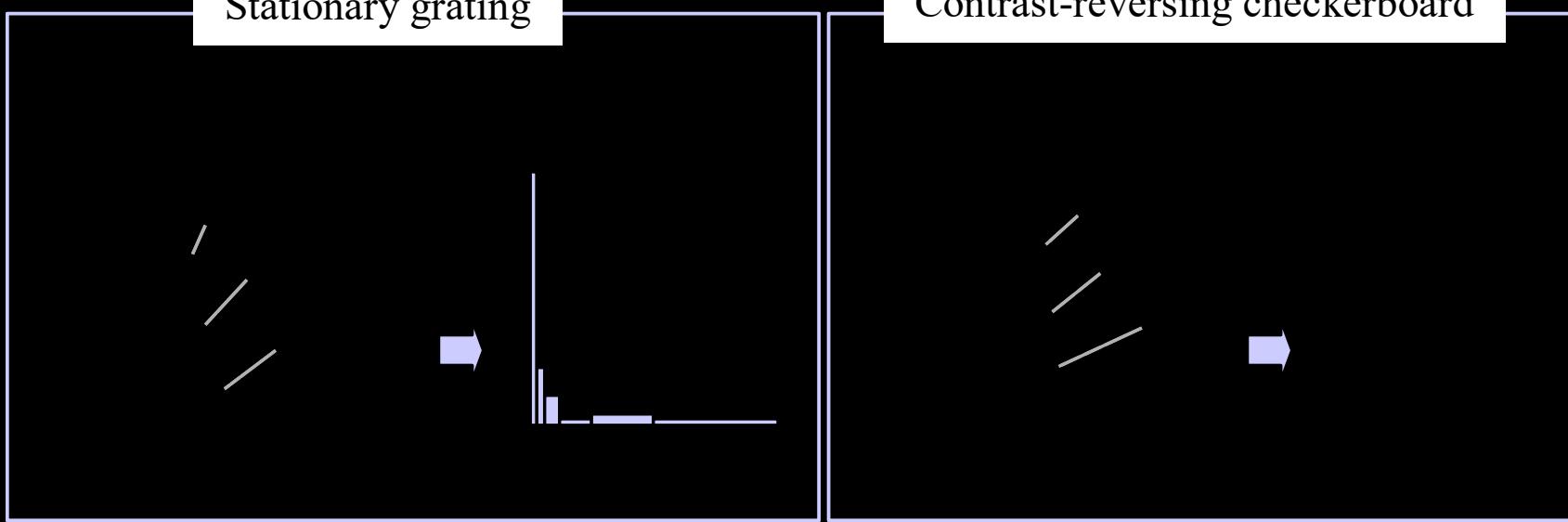
P. A. Bandettini and L. G.

Ungerleider, (2001) “From neuron  
to BOLD: new connections.”  
Nature Neuroscience, 4: 864-866.

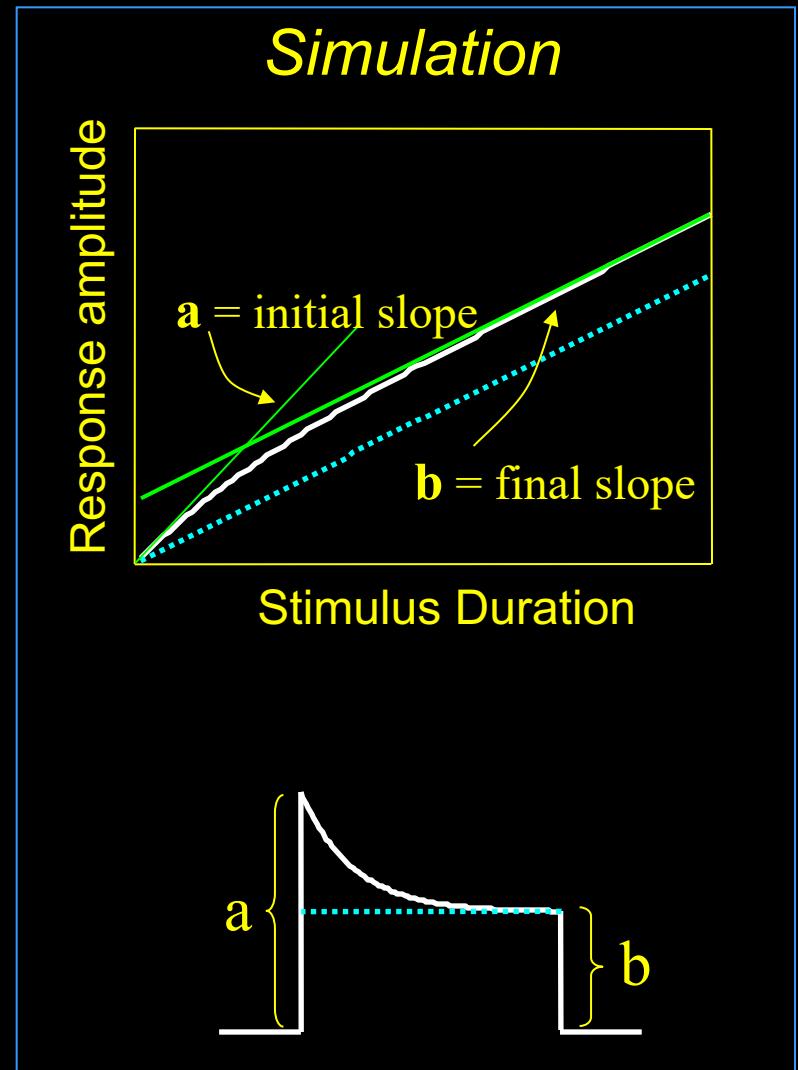
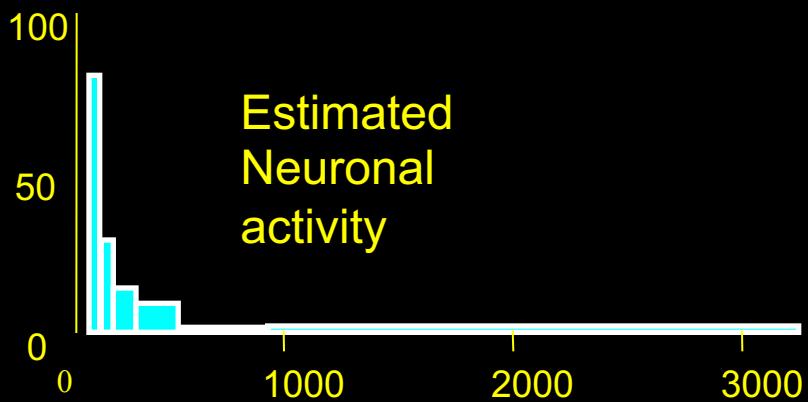
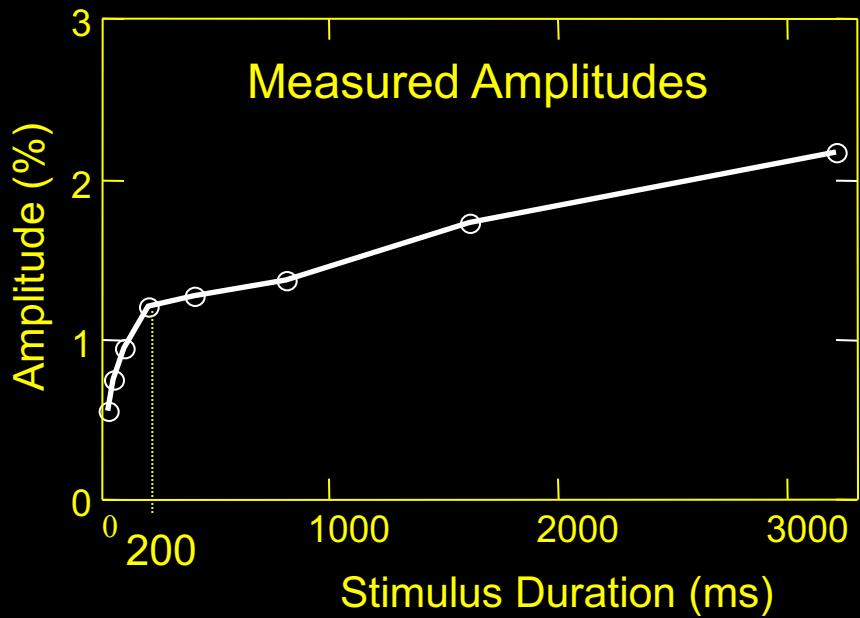


Stationary grating

Contrast-reversing checkerboard



# Results – constant gratings



# Varying “ON” and “OFF” periods

- *Rapid event-related design with varying ISI*



8% ON



25% ON

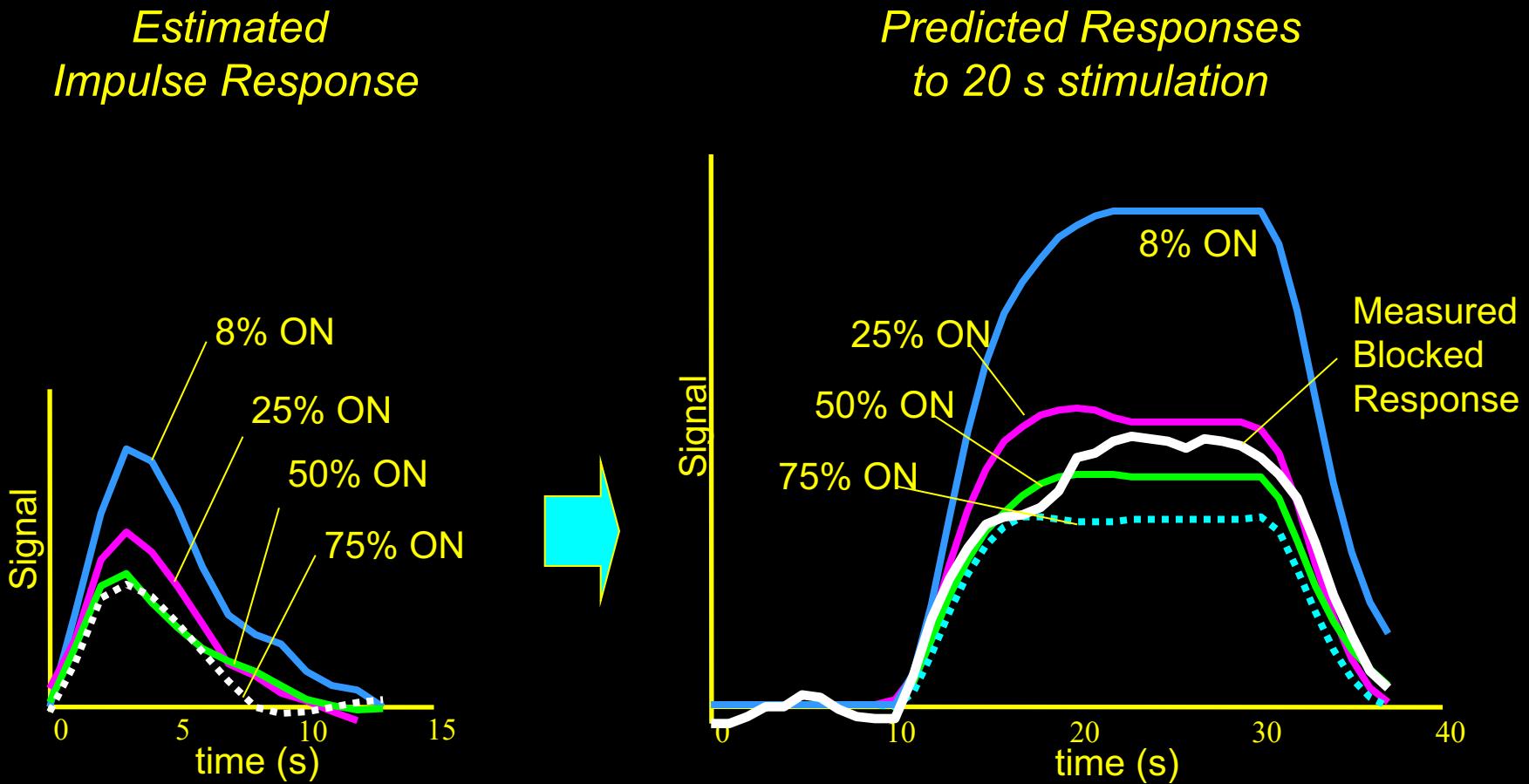


50% ON



75% ON

# Varying “ON” and “OFF” periods



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# Neuronal Currents

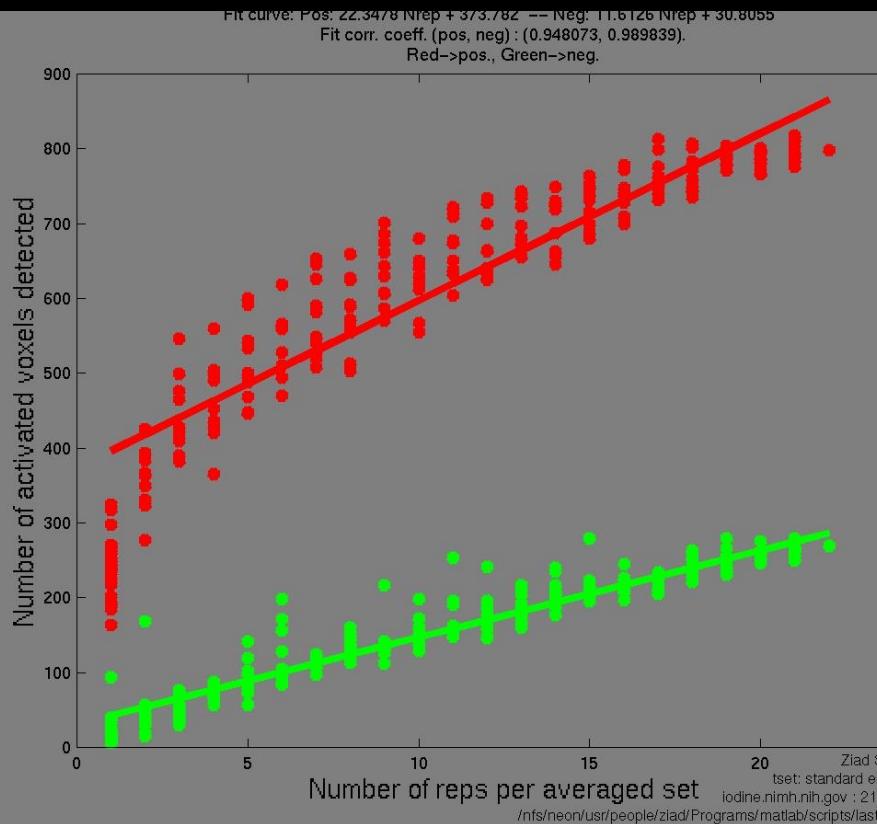
- model

- approaches

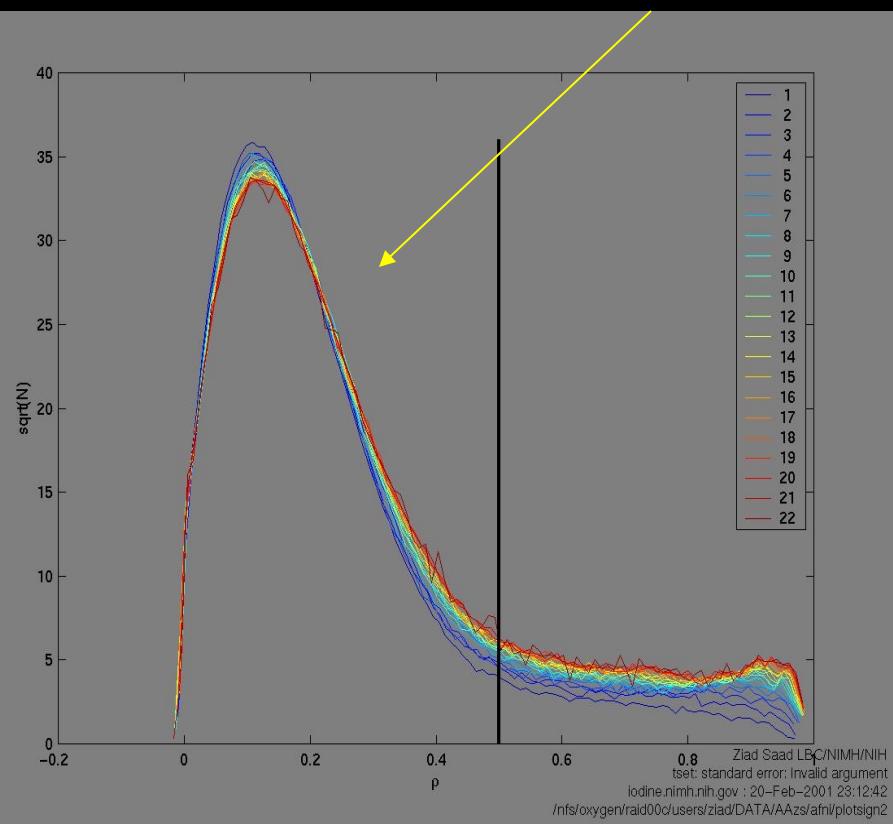
- current phantom*
- cell cultures*
- human studies*

- why there is hope

# Continuously Growing Activation Area

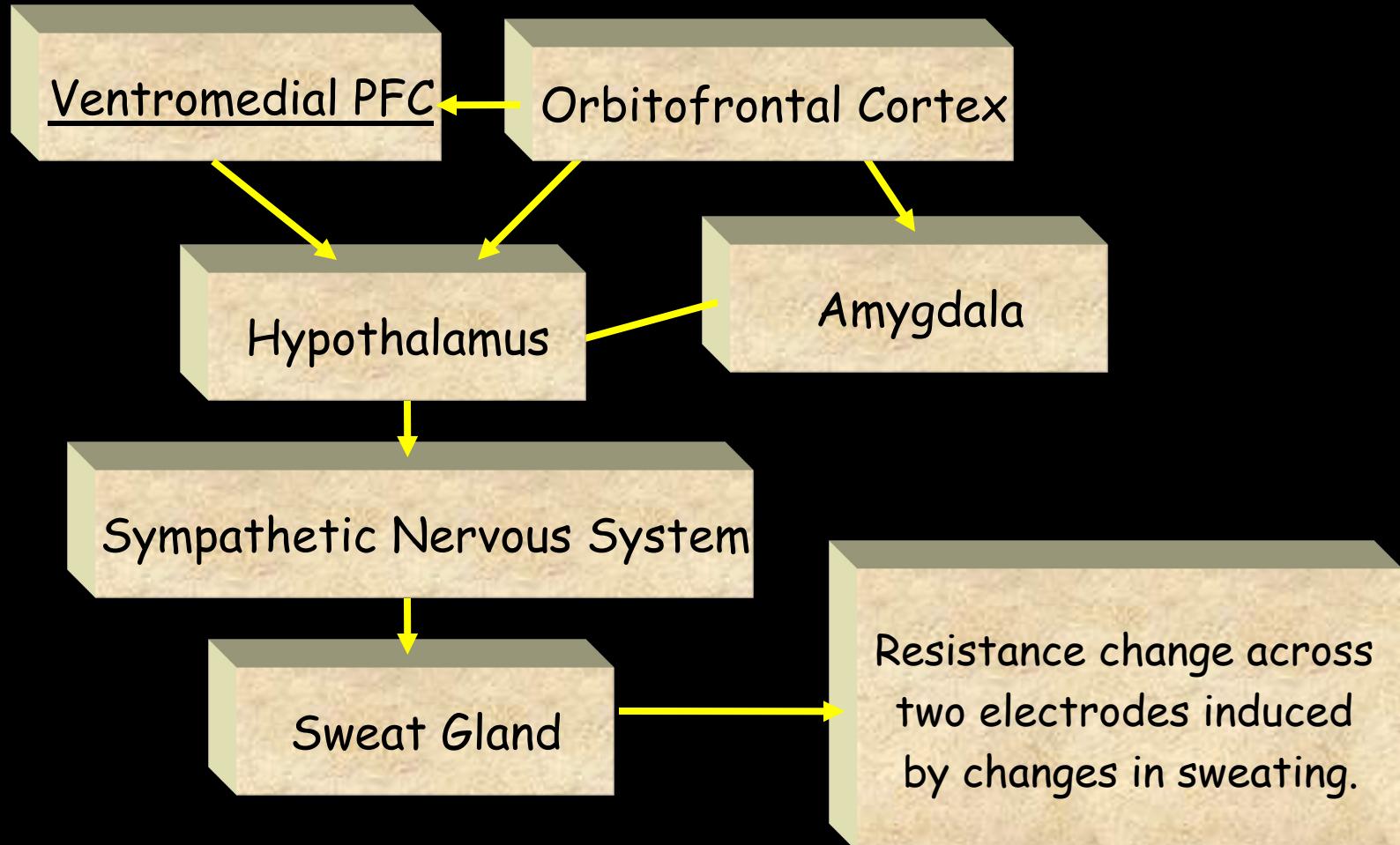


# CC Histogram Inflection Point



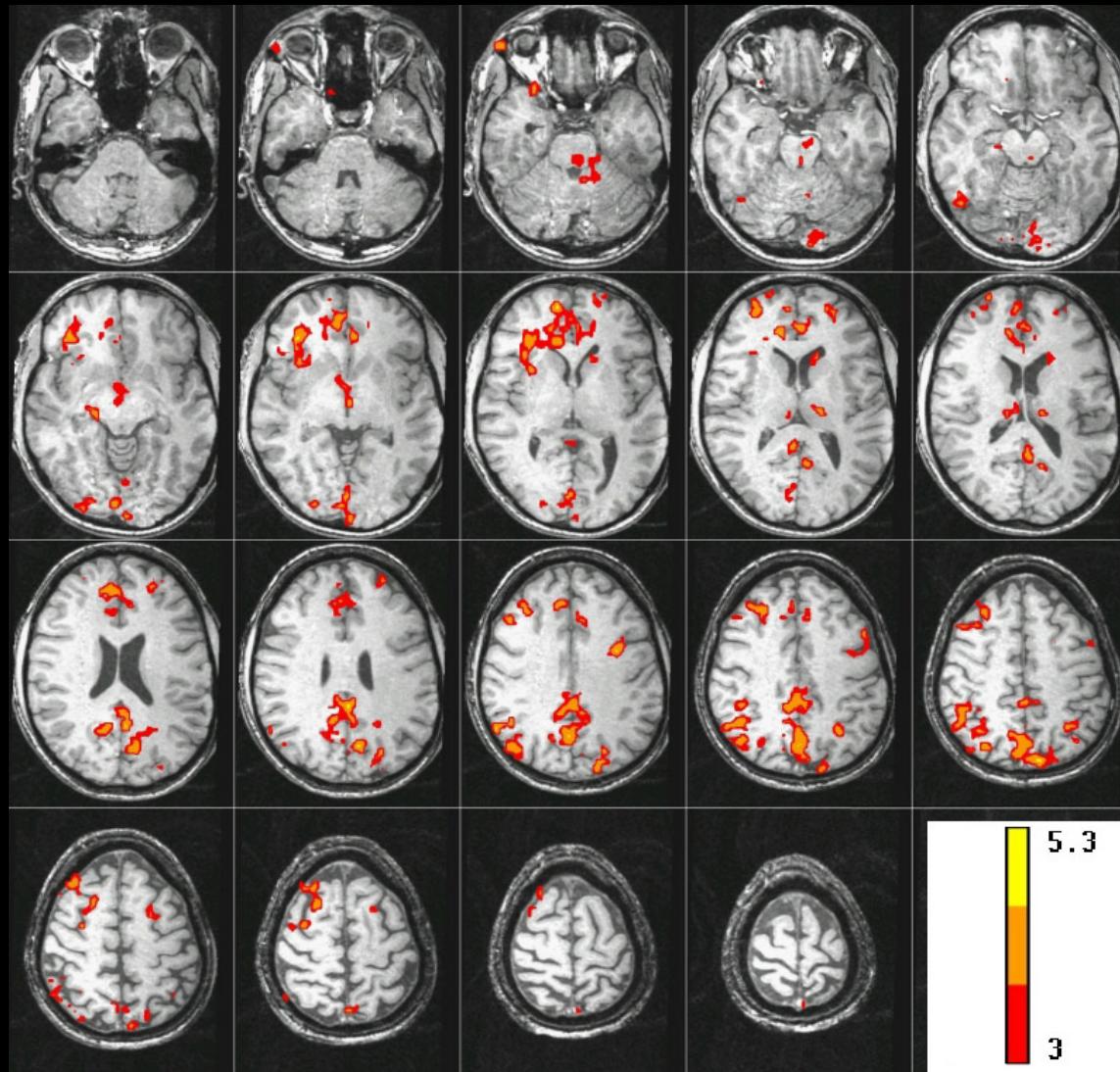
Ziad Saad, Z. S. Saad, K. M. Ropella, E. A. DeYoe, P. A. Bandettini,  
The spatial extent of the BOLD response. *NeuroImage*, (in press).

# The Skin Conductance Response (SCR)



J. C. Patterson II, L. G. Ungerleider, and P. A. Bandettini, Task - independent functional brain activity correlation with skin conductance changes: an fMRI study. *NeuroImage* 17:1787-1806, (2002).

# Brain activity correlated with SCR during “Rest”



J. C. Patterson II, L. G. Ungerleider, and P. A. Bandettini, Task - independent functional brain activity correlation with skin conductance changes: an fMRI study. *NeuroImage* 17:1787-1806, (2002).

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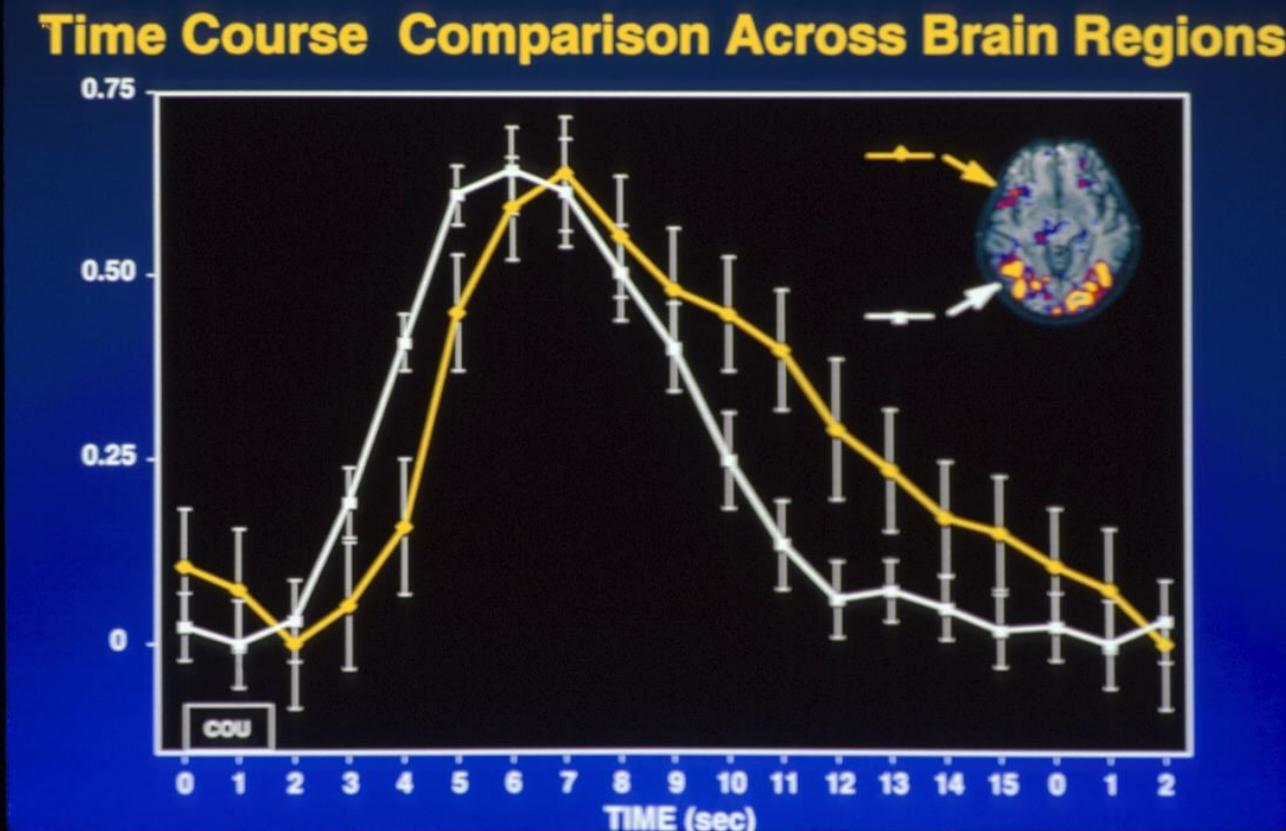
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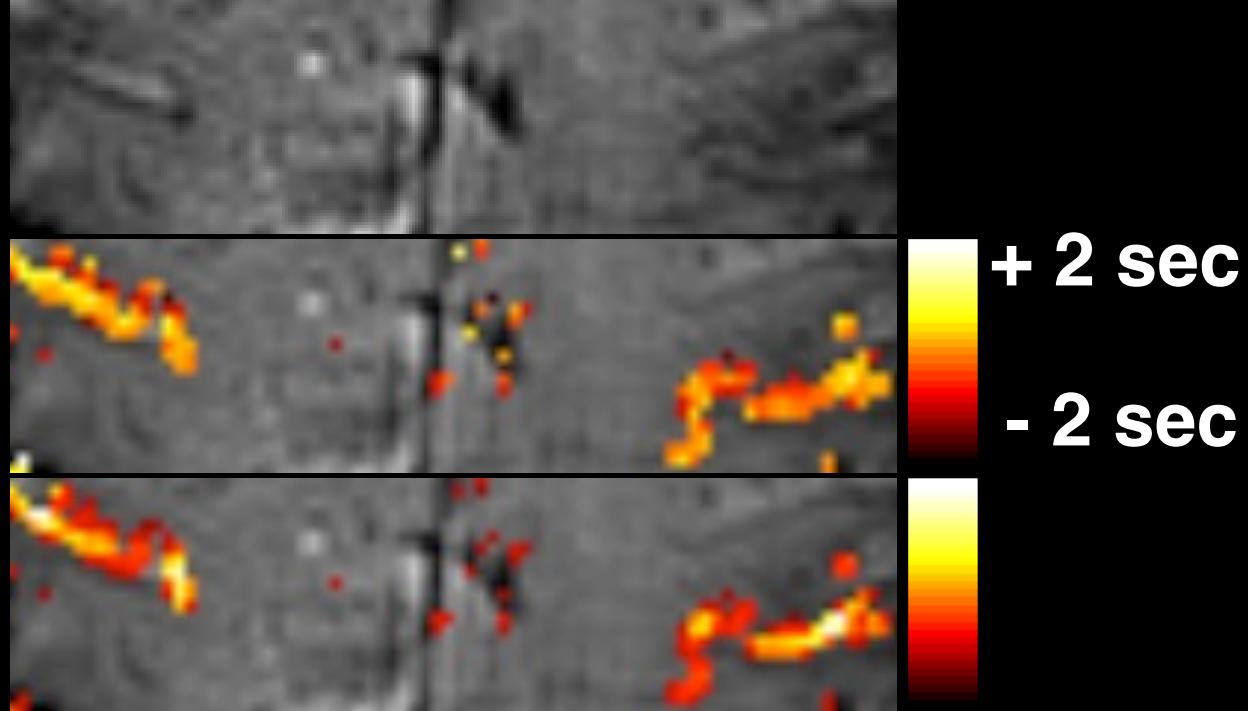
## Detection of cortical activation during averaged single trials of a cognitive task using functional magnetic resonance imaging

(neuroimaging/single trial/language/prefrontal)

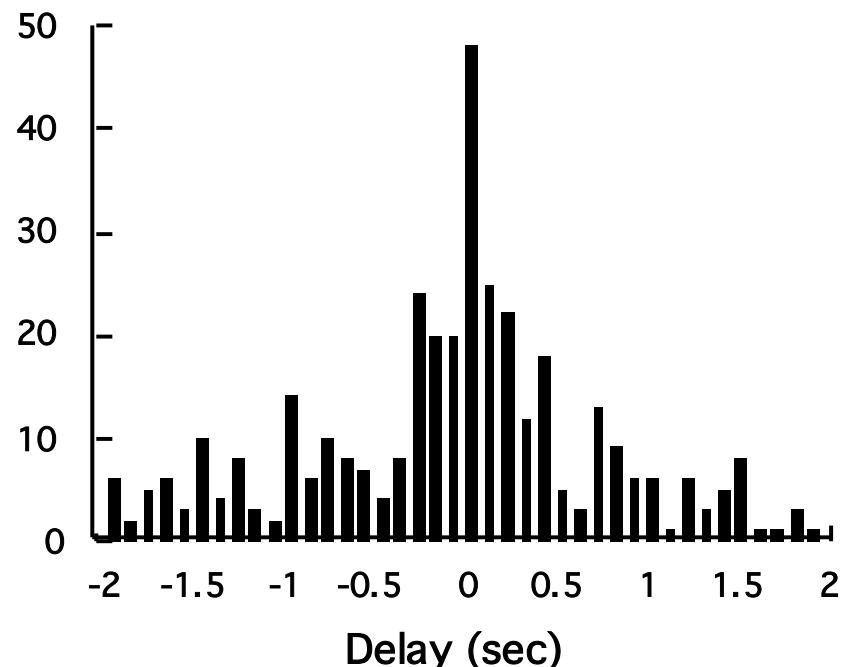
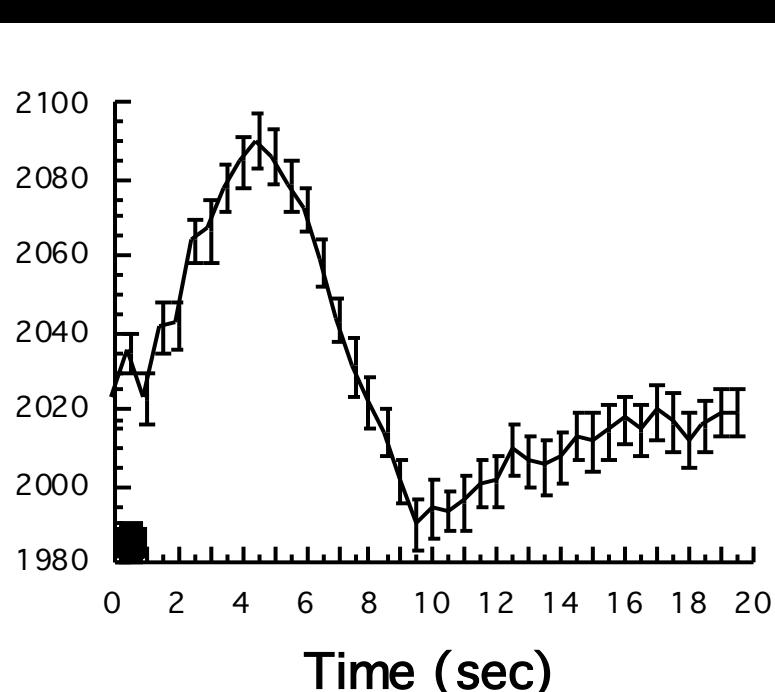
RANDY L. BUCKNER<sup>†‡§¶||</sup>, PETER A. BANDETTINI<sup>†‡</sup>, KATHLEEN M. O'CRAVEN<sup>†||</sup>, ROBERT L. SAVOY<sup>†||</sup>,  
STEVEN E. PETERSEN<sup>\*++††</sup>, MARCUS E. RAICHLE<sup>§++††</sup>, AND BRUCE R. ROSEN<sup>†‡</sup>



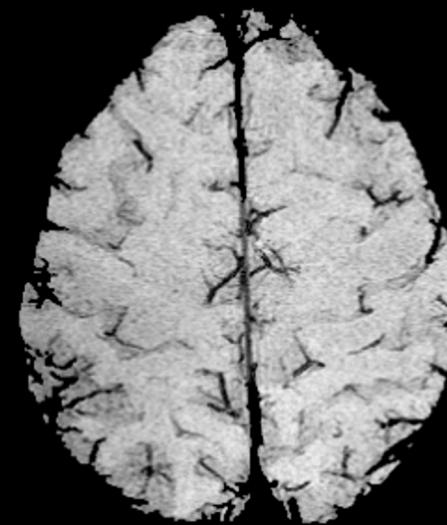
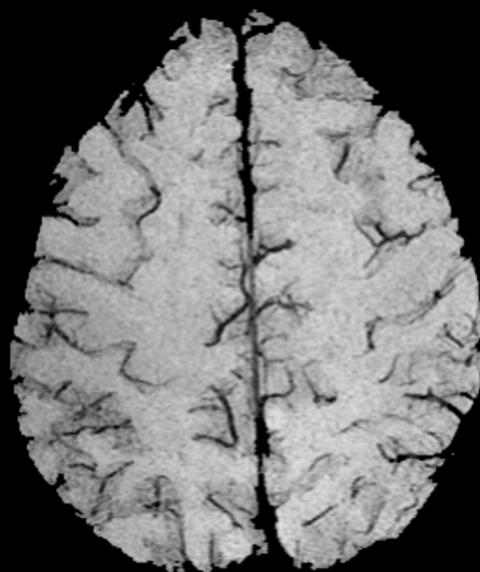
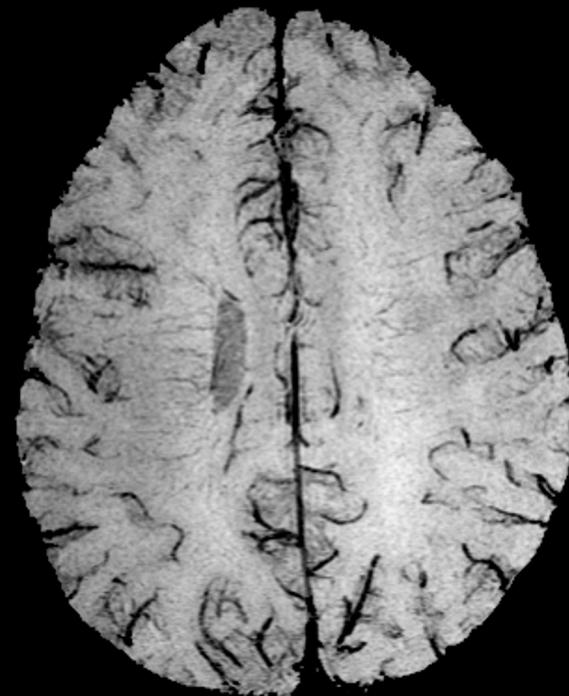
# Latency

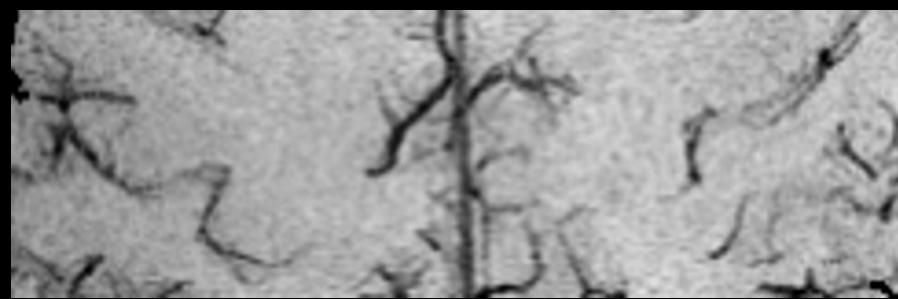
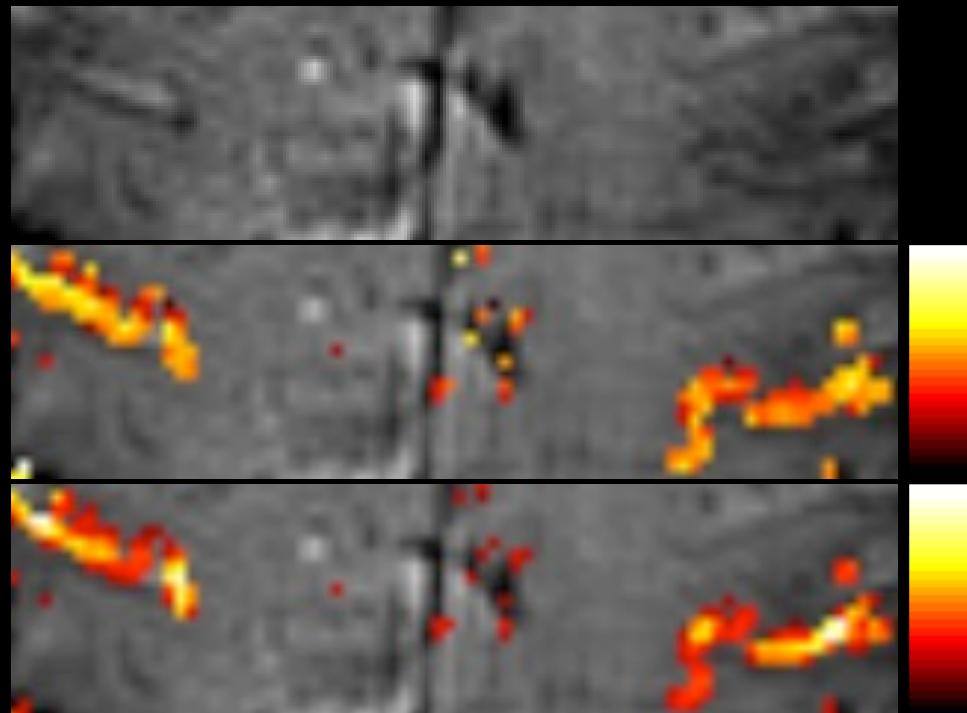


# Magnitude



# Venograms (3T)

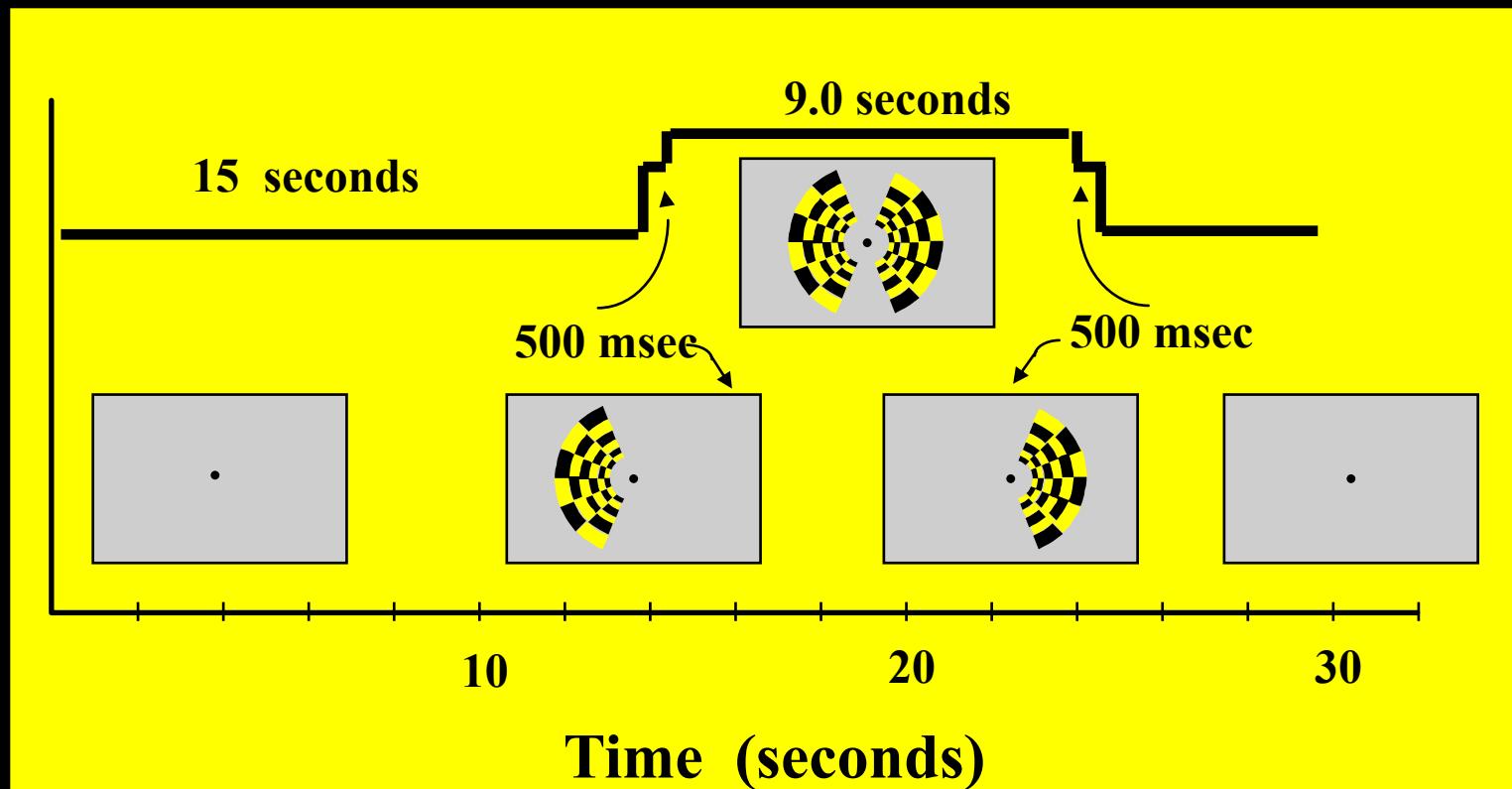


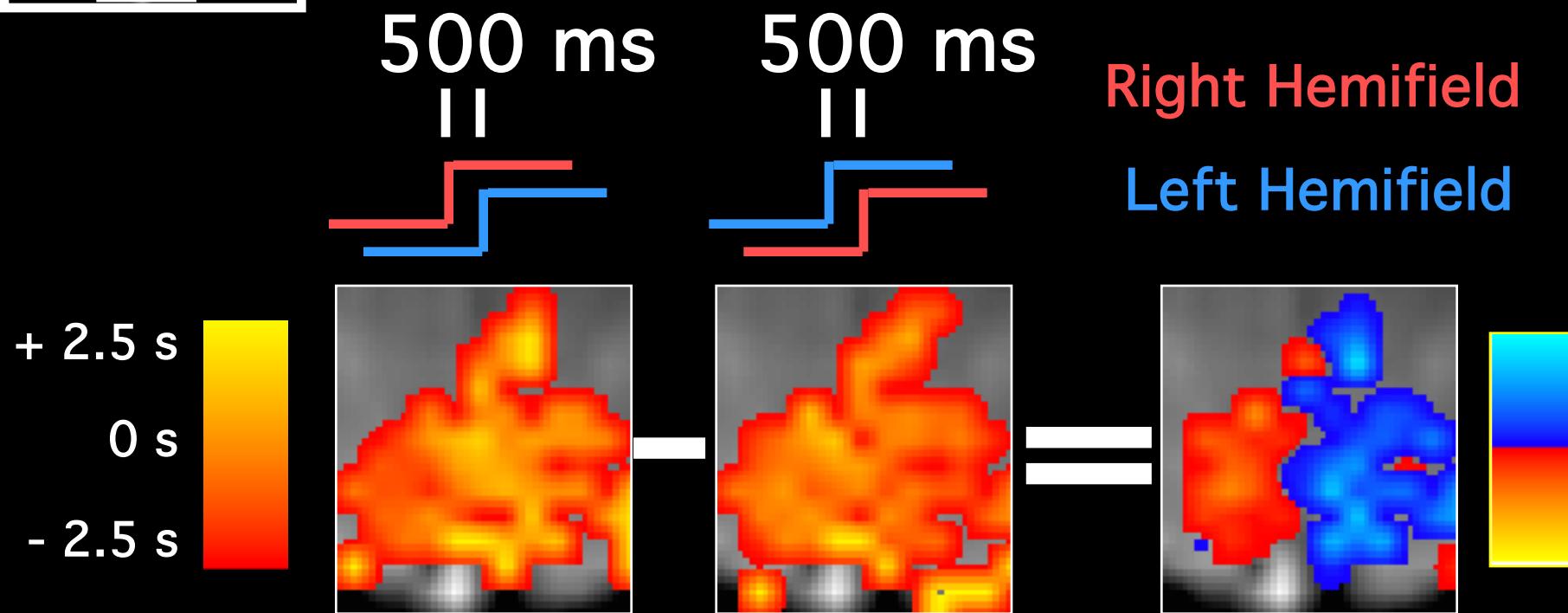
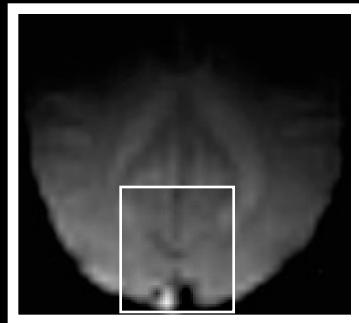


# Hemi-Field Experiment

**Left  
Hemisphere**

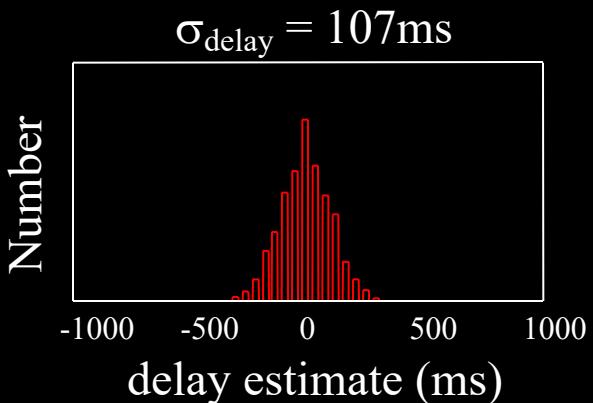
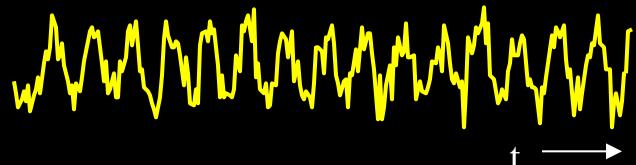
**Right  
Hemisphere**



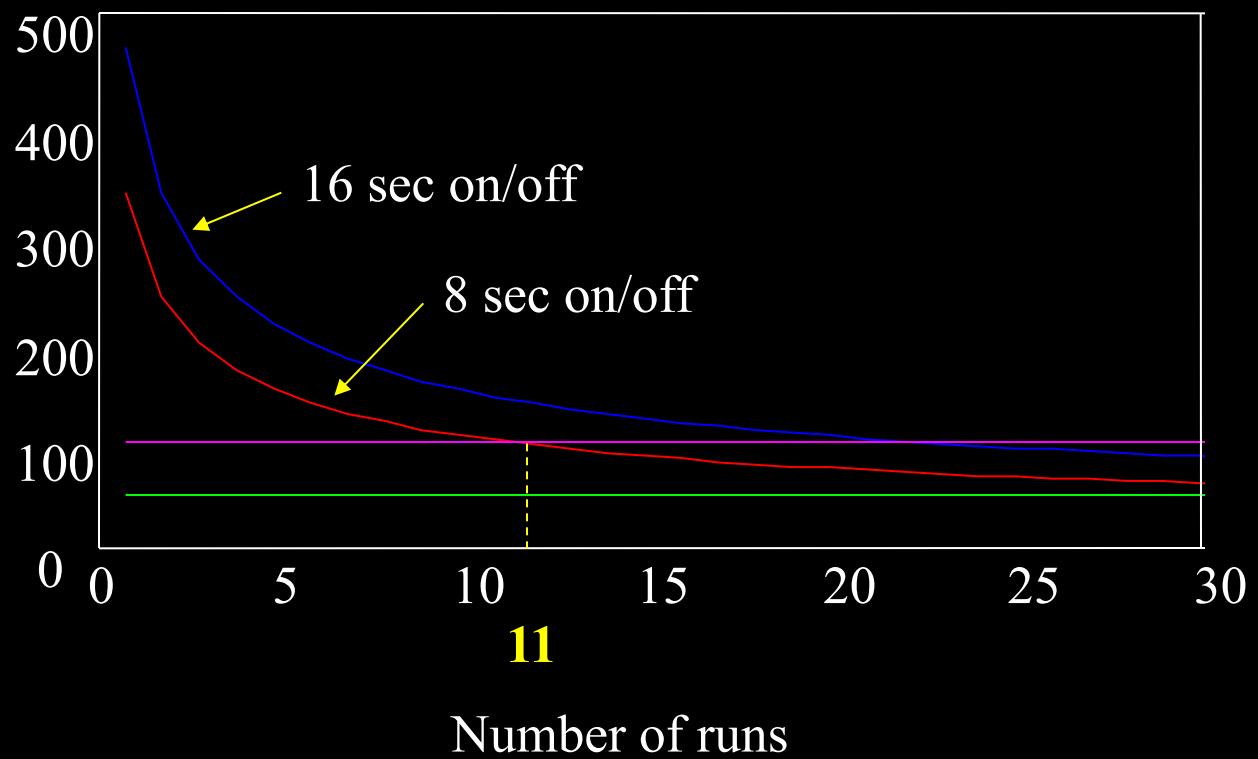


1 run:

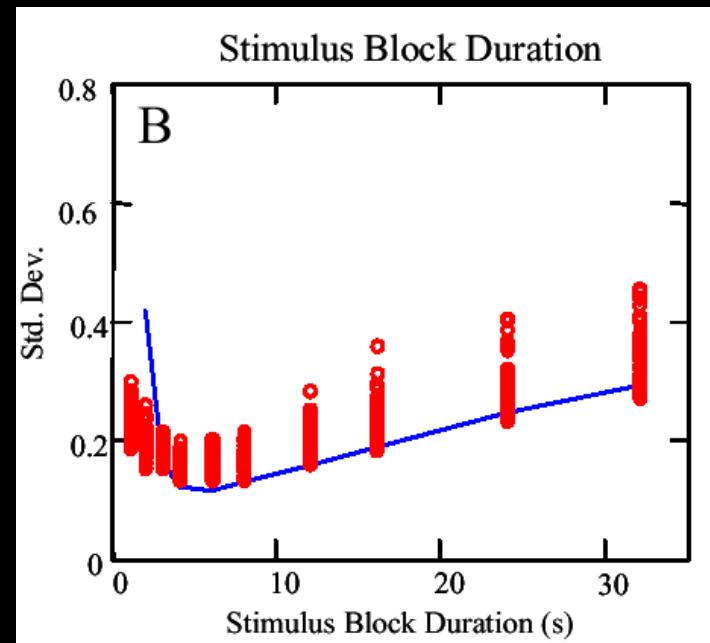
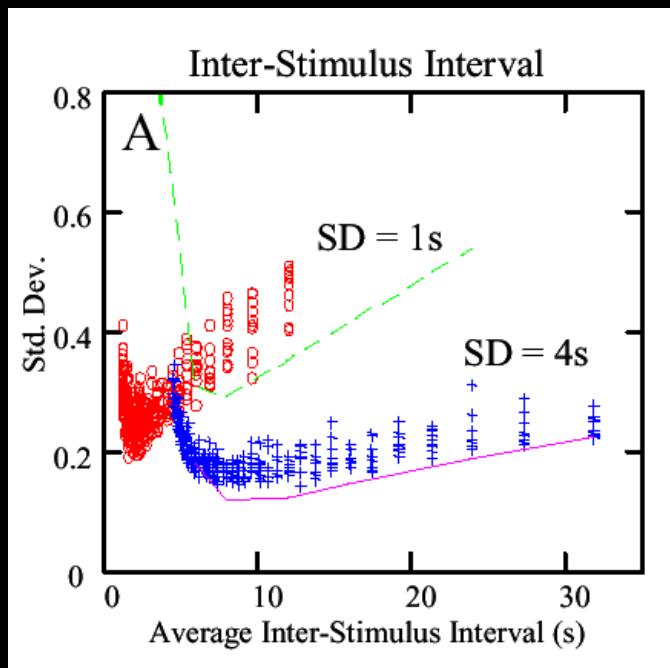
1% Noise  
4% BOLD  
256 time pts /run  
1 second TR



Smallest latency  
Variation Detectable  
(ms) ( $p < 0.001$ )



# Optimal Detection of Hemodynamic Latency



# Hemodynamics

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# Neuronal Currents

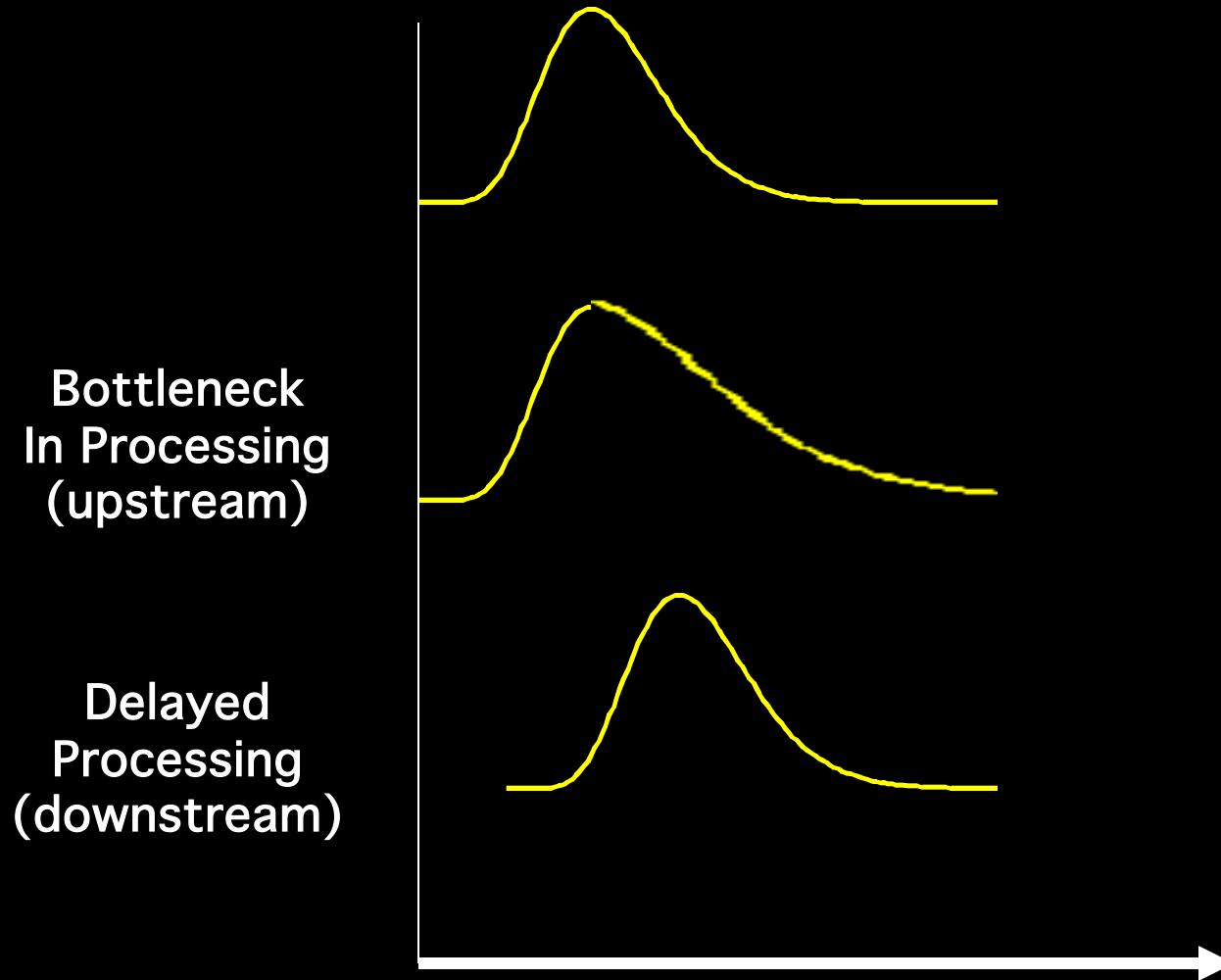
- model

- approaches

- current phantom*
- cell cultures*
- human studies*

- why there is hope

## Hemodynamic Response Modulation



*Our first attempt to apply this strategy..*

P.S.F. Bellgowan, Z. S. Saad, P. A. Bandettini, Understanding neural system dynamics through task modulation and measurement of BOLD amplitude, latency, and width. *Proc. Nat'l. Acad. Sci. USA (in press)*.

# Use of Task Timing Modulation to Extract Processing Streams

Stimuli - Six-letter English words and pronounceable non-words.

Each word or non-word was rotated either 0, 60, or 120 degrees

Task - Lexical Decision (word / non-word).

Dependent Measures - Percent Correct and Reaction Time.

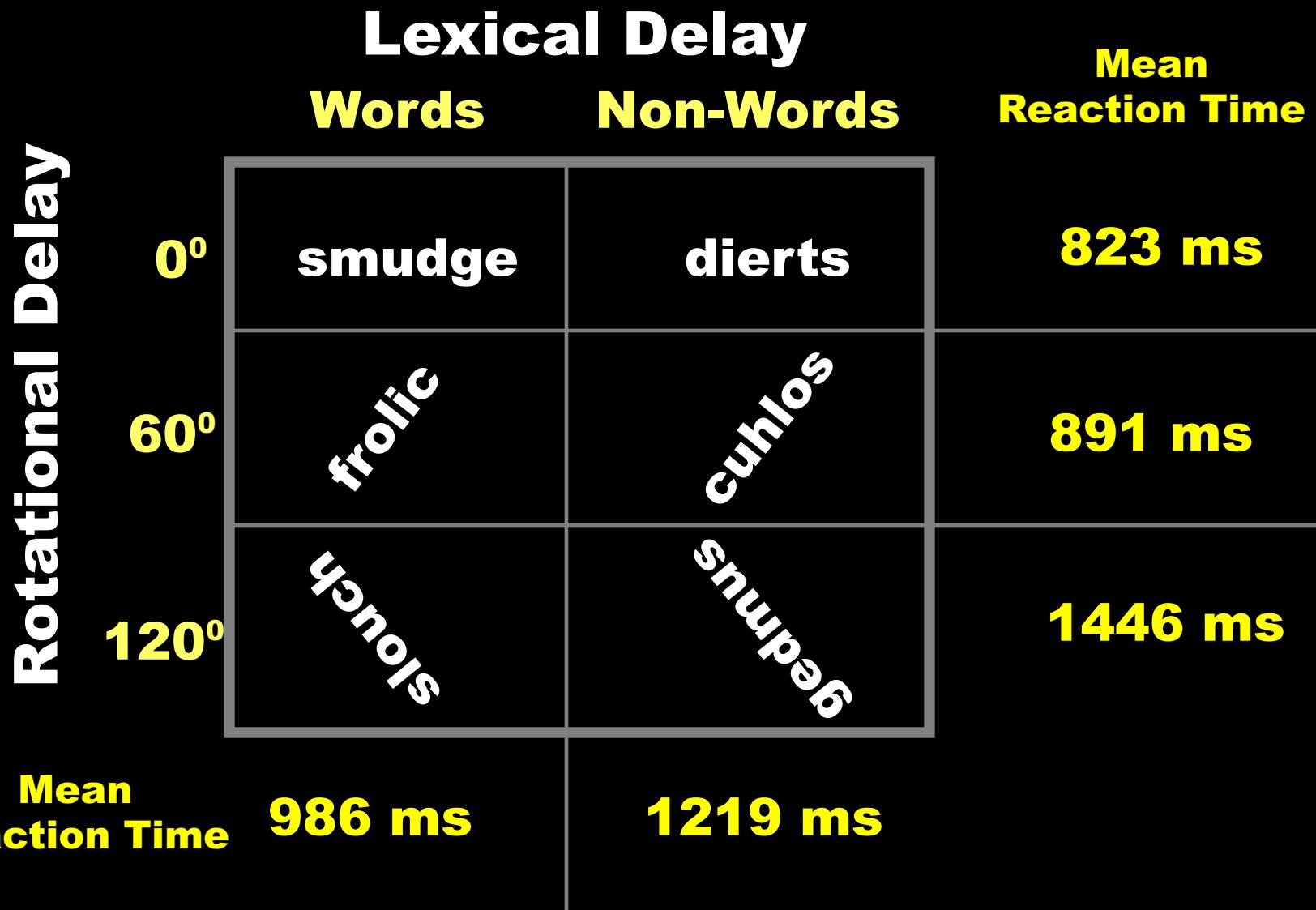
Hypotheses :

1) **Stimulus rotation of 120 degrees will result in:**

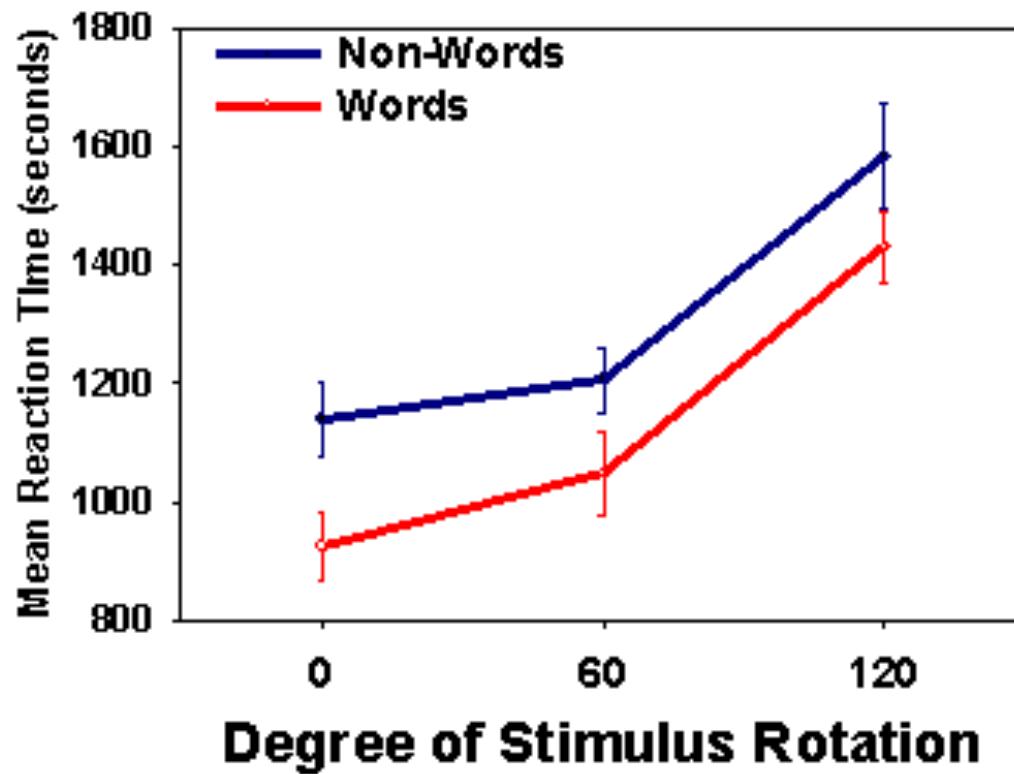
- a) Longer Reaction Times
- b) Stimulus rotation demands a change in perceptual perspective prior to linguistic processing, resulting in a delayed IRF onset in areas involved in Lexical and Pre-Lexical processing.

2) **Lexical discrimination will result in :**

- a) Longer Reaction Times for non-words due to increased Pre-Lexical processing demands.
- b) Wider IRF in Inferior Frontal cortex for non-words
- c) Delayed IRF onset in Left Middle Frontal Cortex

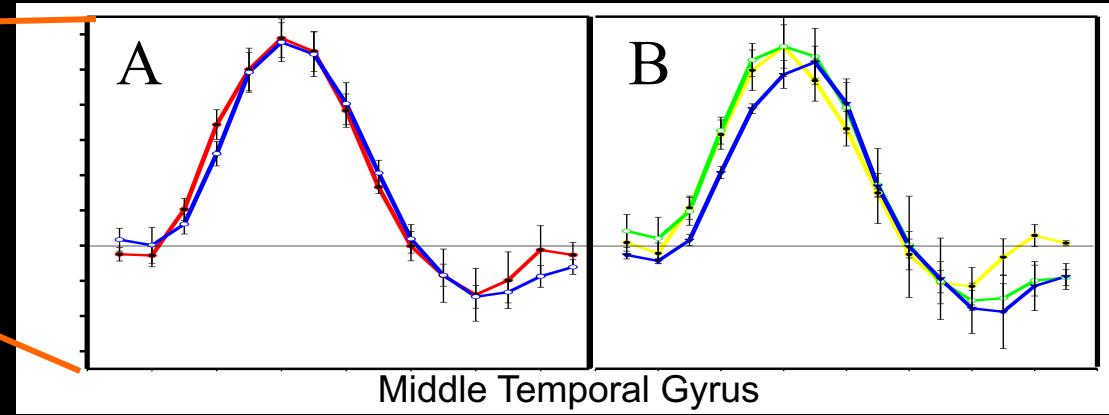
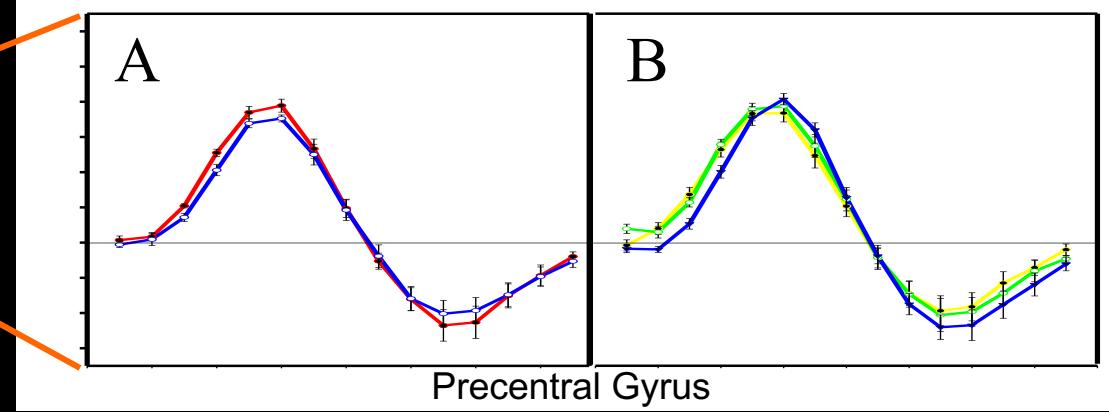
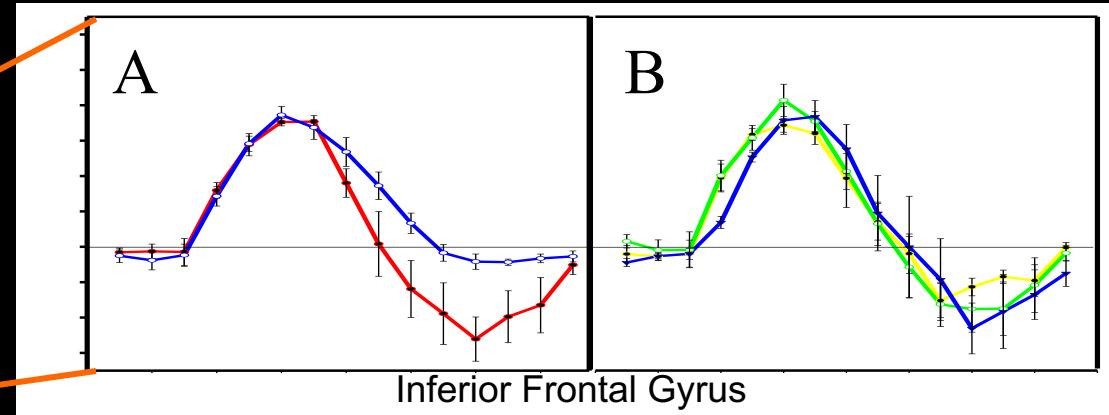
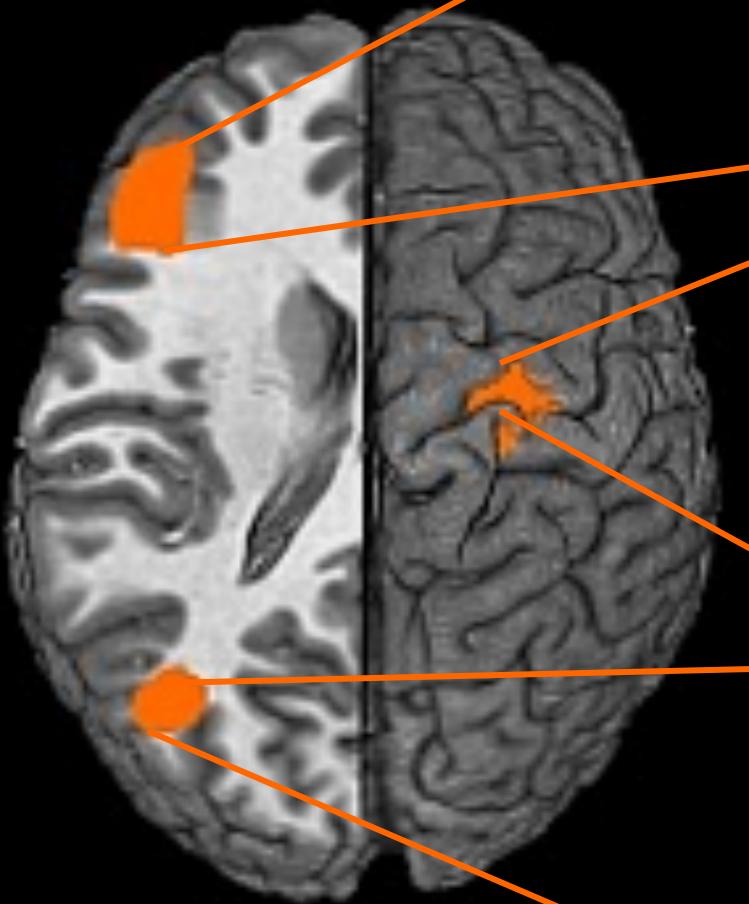


**Response Times for each Stimulus Type**

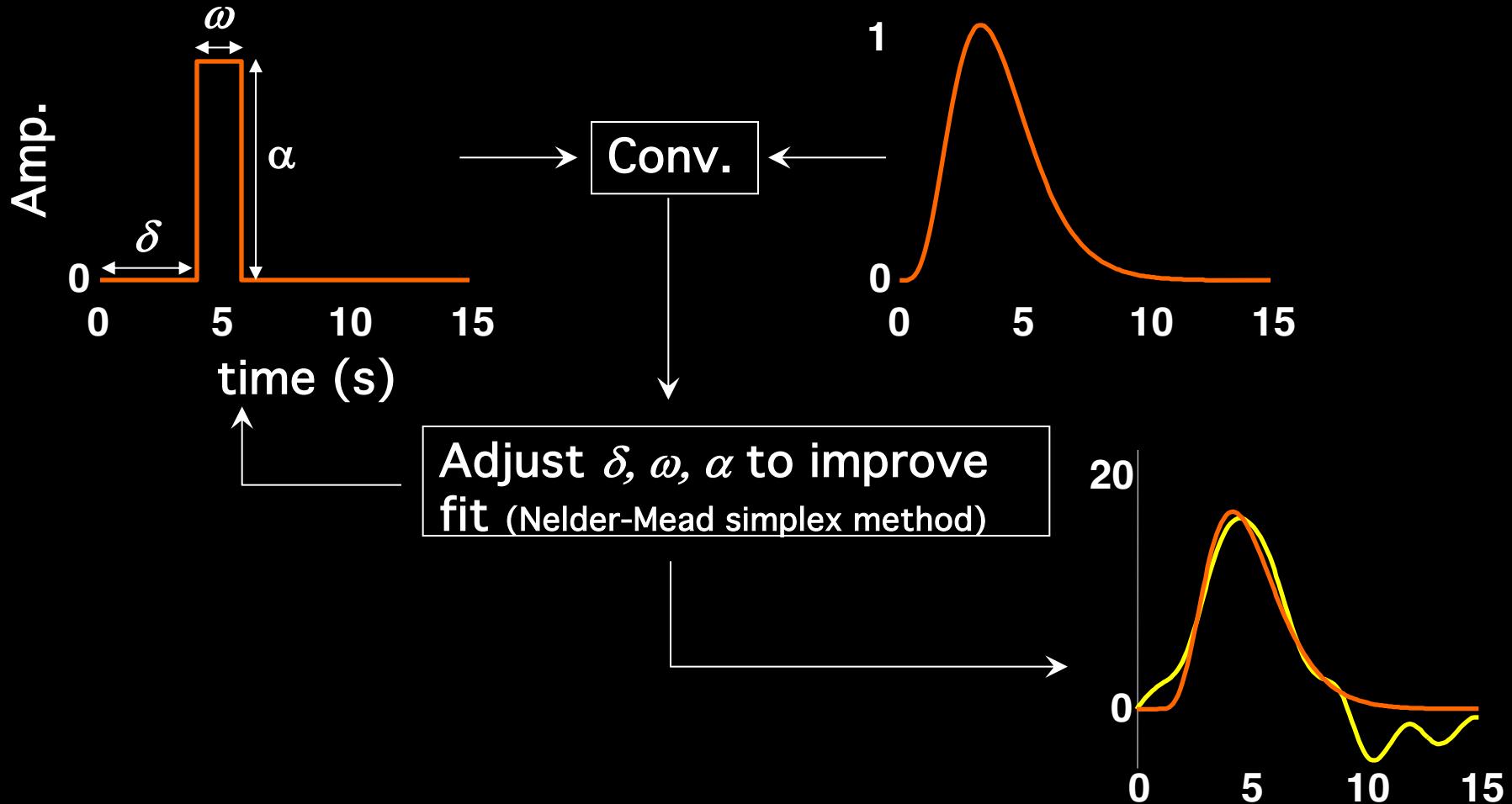


**Word vs. Non-word    0°, 60°, 120° Rotation**

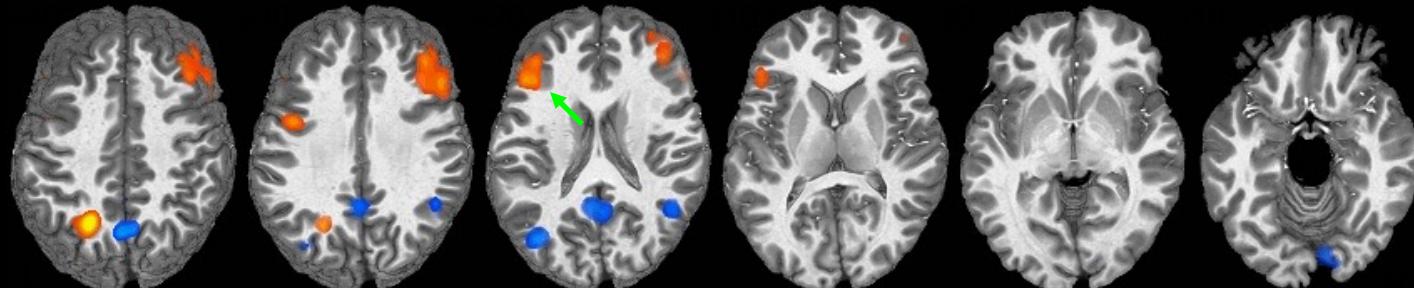
**Regions of Interest**



# Estimation of Delay, Width & Amplitude

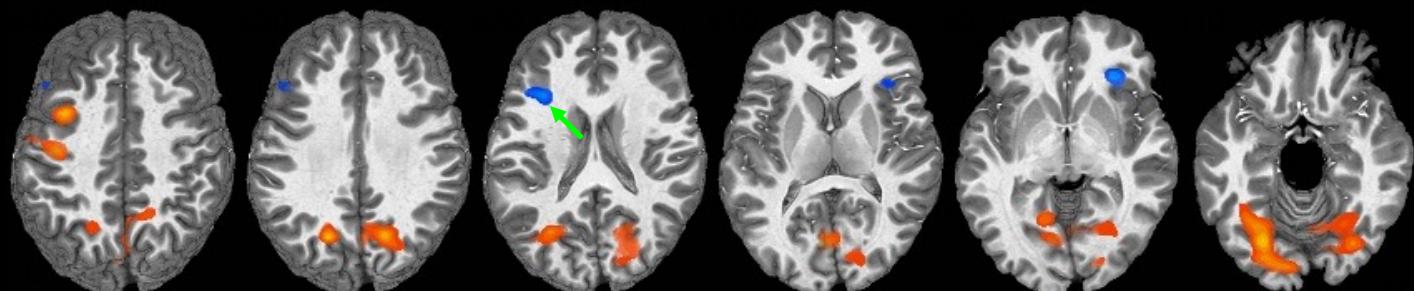


# Lexical effect maps



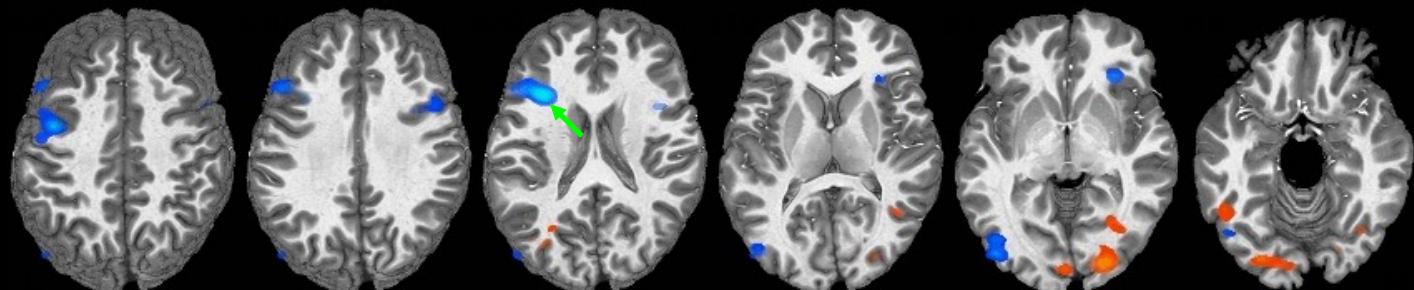
p < 10 <sup>-6</sup>
p < 10 <sup>-5</sup>
p < 10 <sup>-4</sup>
p < 10 <sup>-3</sup>
p < 10 <sup>-2</sup>

Magnitude



Time Difference In msec
> 300
250 to 300
200 to 250
150 to 200
100 to 150

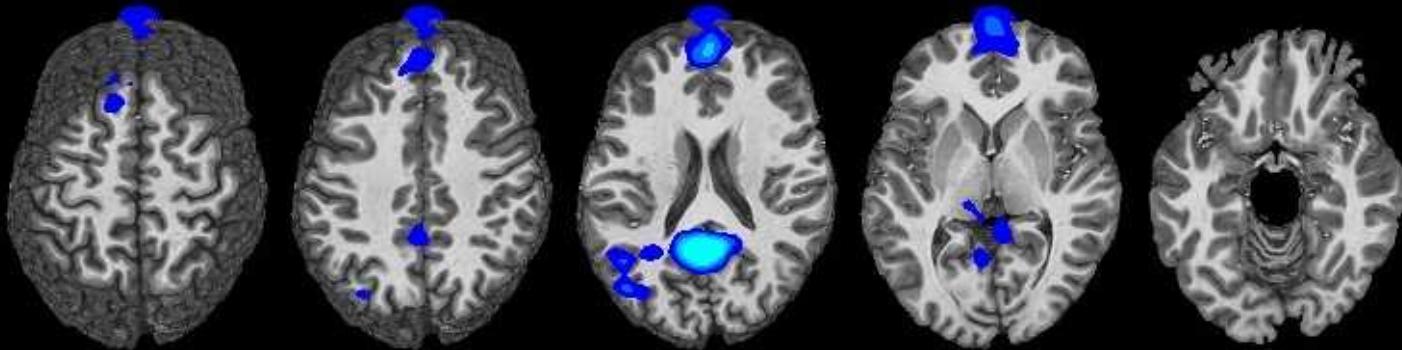
Delay



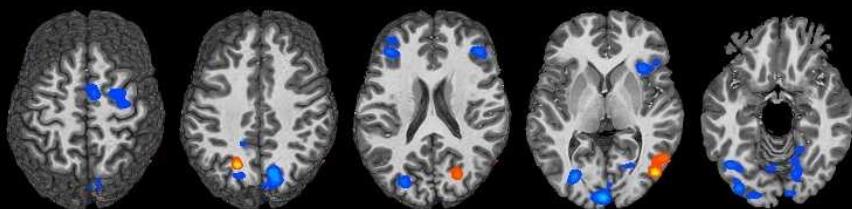
Width

Warm colors are areas where Words > Non-words. Cool colors (blues) are areas where Non-words > words. The Left hemisphere is toward the left margin. The green arrows highlight the inferior frontal gyrus.

# Rotational effect maps



Non-rotated vs. 120° rotated



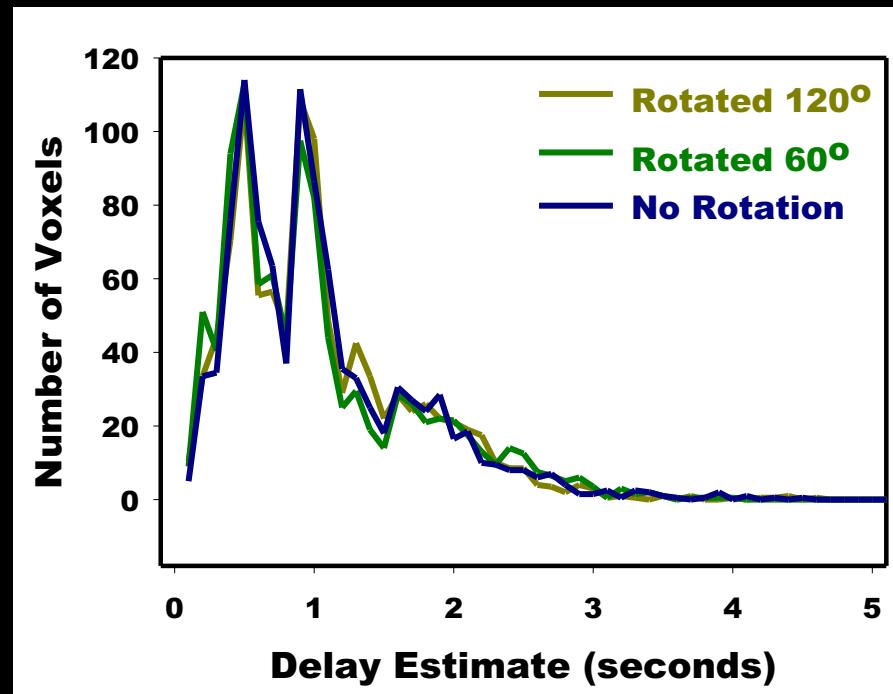
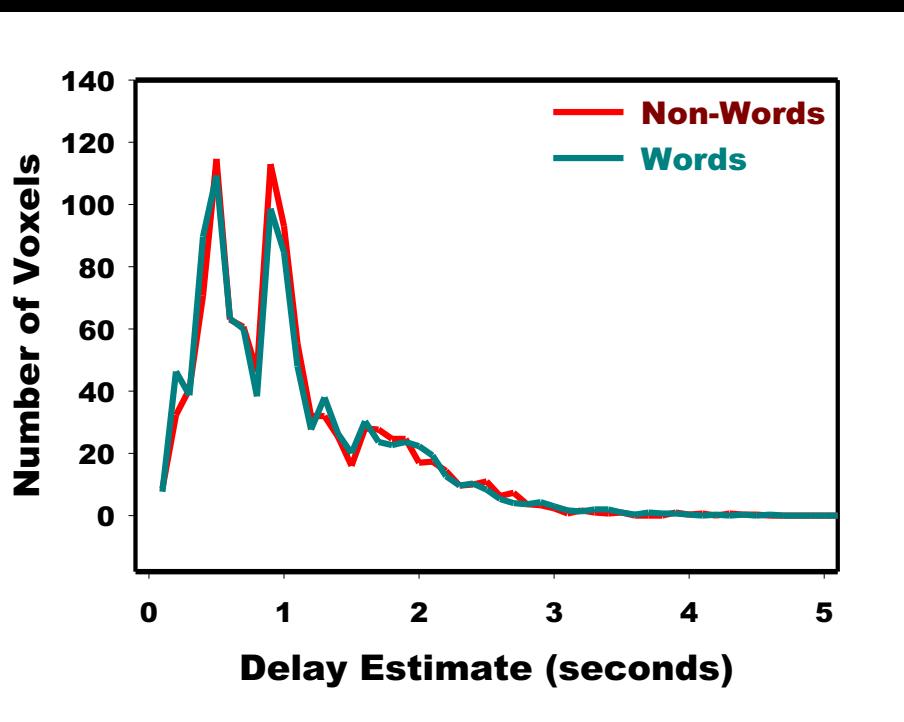
Delay



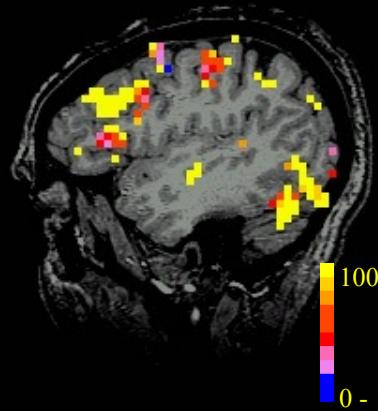
Width



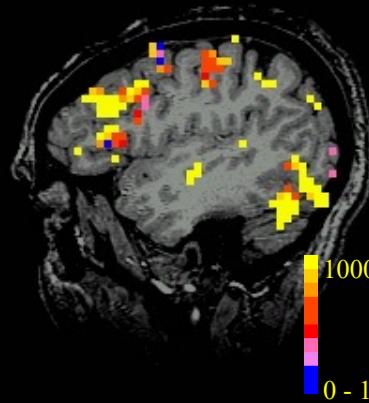
## Distribution of Delay Estimates for Subject BP



# Delay Maps

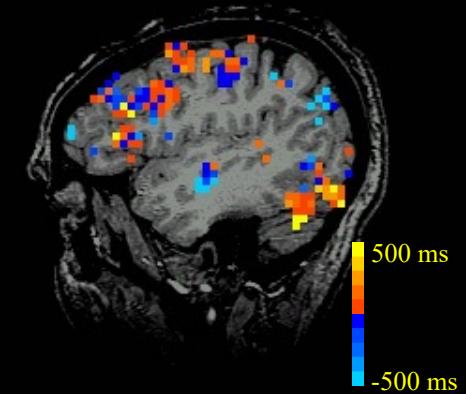


minus



# Delay Difference Map

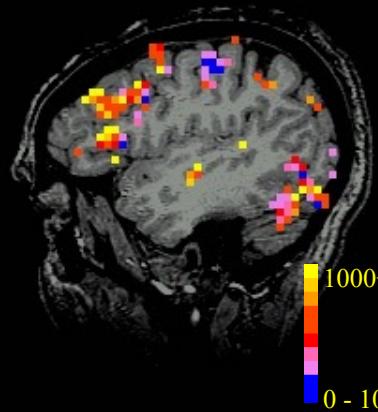
=



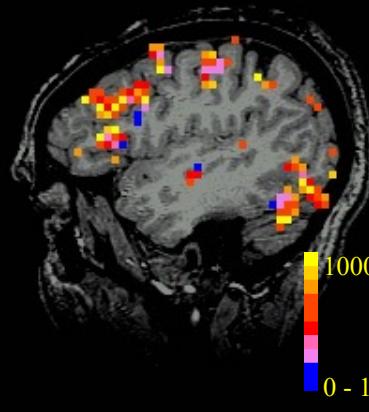
**Not Rotated**

**Rotated 120°**

# Width Maps

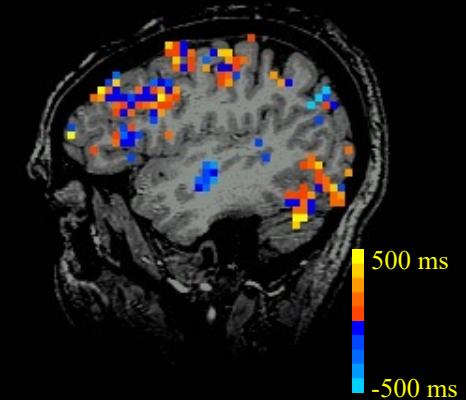


minus



**Width Difference Map**

=



# Hemodynamics

- quick overview

- linearity (steady state)

- linearity (dynamic)

- baseline signal

- latency

- width

# Neuronal Currents

- model

- approaches

- current phantom*
- cell cultures*
- human studies*

- why there is hope

# Toward direct mapping of neuronal activity: MRI detection of ultra weak and transient magnetic field changes.

**Jerzy Bodurka**

**Natalia Petridou**

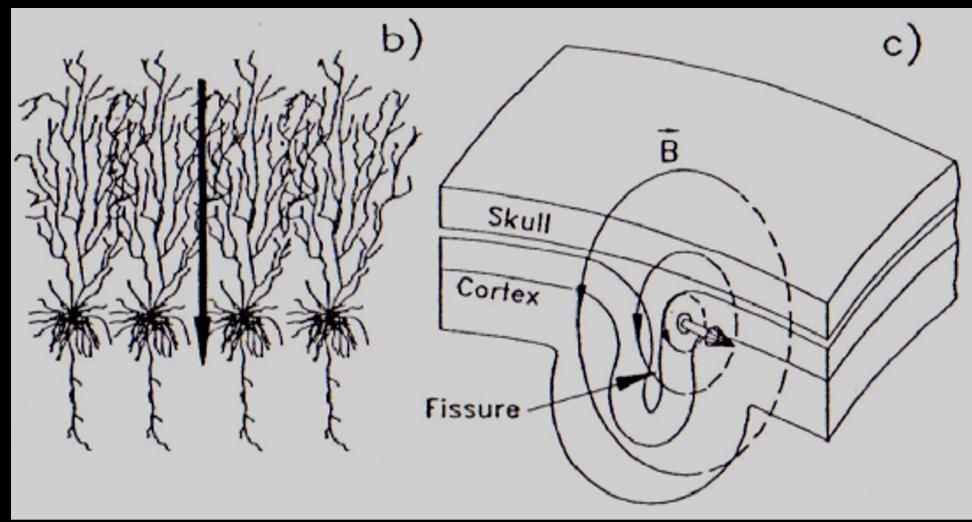
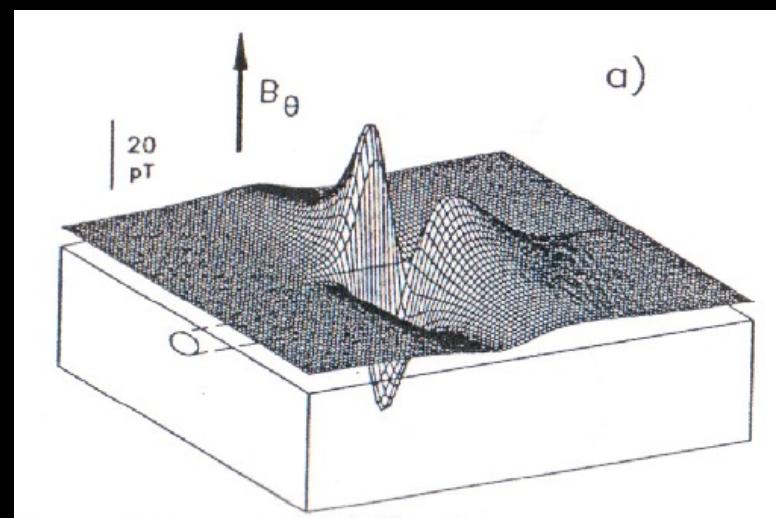
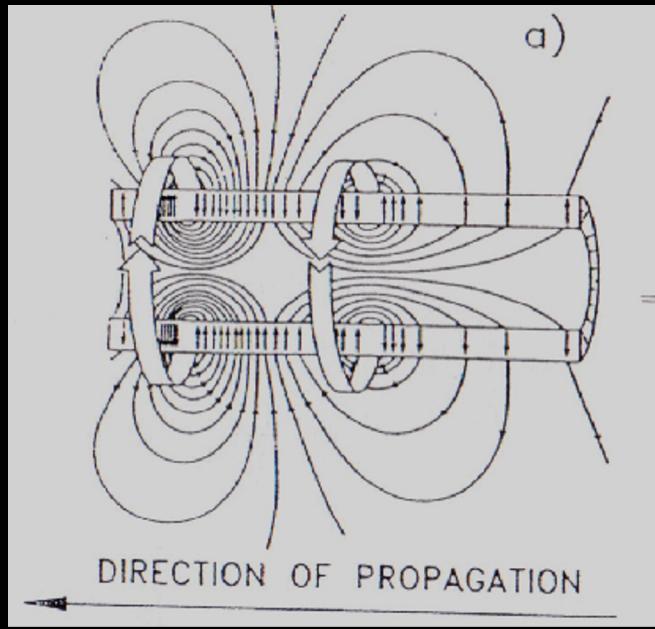
**Peter A. Bandettini**

# Introduction

- Neuronal activity is directly associated with ionic currents.
- These bio-currents induce **spatially distributed and transient** magnetic flux density ( $B_c$ ) changes and magnetic field gradients ( $dB_c/dr$ ).
- In the context of MRI, these currents therefore alter **the magnetic phase** ( $\Delta\phi$ ) of surrounding water protons.

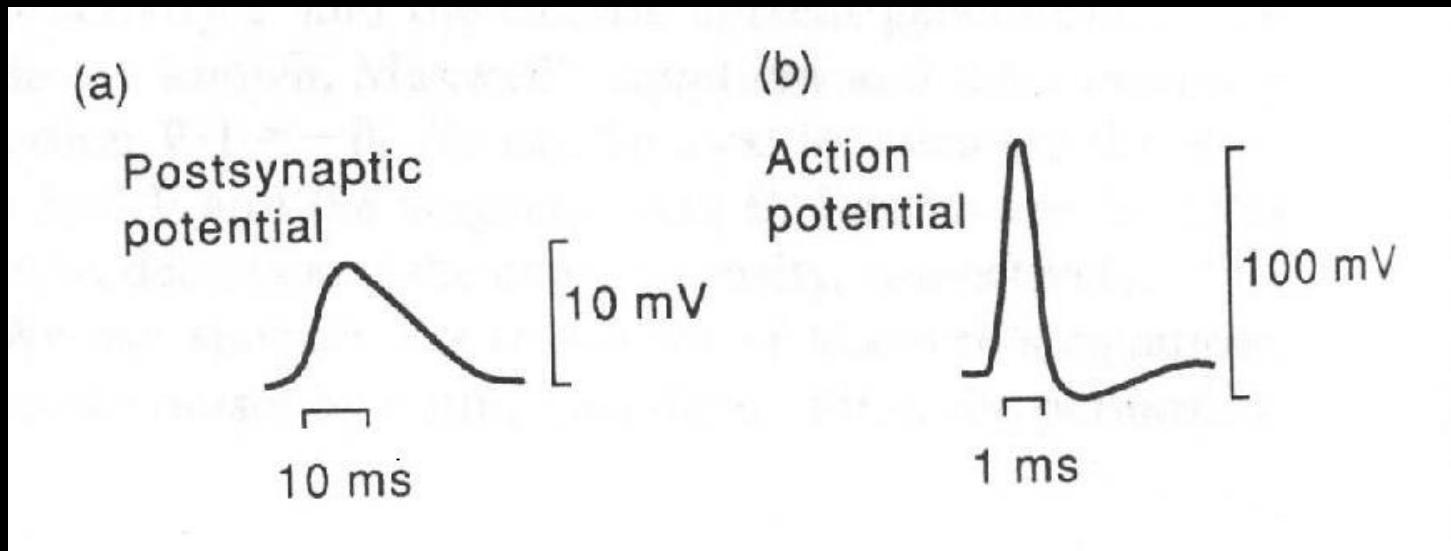
# Introduction

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J.P. Wikswo Jr et al. *J Clin Neuronphy* 8(2): 170-188, 1991

Synchronous activity among large neuronal populations produce **small transient** magnetic field changes which are typically detected on the scalp with Magnetoencephalography (MEG).



Schematic representation of (a) a postsynaptic potential and (b) an action potential as a function of time.

The post synaptic potential lasts for 10ms or more, allowing integration of individual fields to create

MEG detectable > 100 fT field on surface of skull

# Introduction

- Neuronal activity is directly associated with ionic currents.
- These bio-currents induce **spatially distributed and transient** magnetic flux density ( $B_c$ ) changes and magnetic field gradients ( $dB_c/dr$ ).
- In the context of MRI, these currents therefore alter **the magnetic phase** ( $\Delta\phi$ ) of surrounding water protons.

# Derivation of B field generated in an MRI voxel by a current dipole

Single dendritic tree having a diameter d, and length L behaves like a conductor with conductivity  $\sigma$ . Resistance is  $R=V/I$ , where  $R=4L/(\pi d^2 \sigma)$ . From Biot-Savart:

$$B = \frac{\mu_0}{4\pi} \frac{Q}{r^2} = \frac{\mu_0}{16} \frac{d^2 \sigma V}{r^2}$$

by substituting  $d = 4\mu\text{m}$ ,  $\sigma \approx 0.25 \Omega^{-1} \text{ m}^{-1}$ ,  $V = 10\text{mV}$  and

$r = 4\text{cm}$  ( measurement distance when using MEG) the resulting value is:  **$B \approx 0.002 \text{ fT}$**

Because  **$B_{MEG}=100\text{fT}$**  (or more) is measured by MEG on the scalp, a large number of neurons, ( $0.002 \text{ fT} \times 50,000 = 100 \text{ fT}$ ), must coherently act to generate such field. These bundles of neurons produce, within a typical voxel,  $1 \text{ mm} \times 1 \text{ mm} \times 1 \text{ mm}$ , a field of order:

$$B_{MRI} = B_{MEG} \left( \frac{r_{MEG}}{r_{MRI}} \right)^2 = B_{MEG} \left( \frac{4 \text{ cm}}{0.1 \text{ cm}} \right)^2 = 1600 B_{MEG}$$

**$B_{MRI} \approx 0.2 \text{nT}$**

**Can MRI Detect transient  $B_0$  changes  
On the order of 0.2 nT?**

# Introduction

- Neuronal activity is directly associated with ionic currents.
- These bio-currents induce **spatially distributed and transient** magnetic flux density ( $B_c$ ) changes and magnetic field gradients ( $dB_c/dr$ ).
- In the context of MRI, these currents therefore alter **the magnetic phase** ( $\Delta\phi$ ) of surrounding water protons.

Frequency shift associated with 0.2 nT field shift = 0.01 Hz.  
At TE = 30 ms,  $\Delta\phi$  = 0.09 deg.

# Hemodynamics

- quick overview

- linearity (steady state)

- linearity (dynamic)

- baseline signal

- latency

- width

# Neuronal Currents

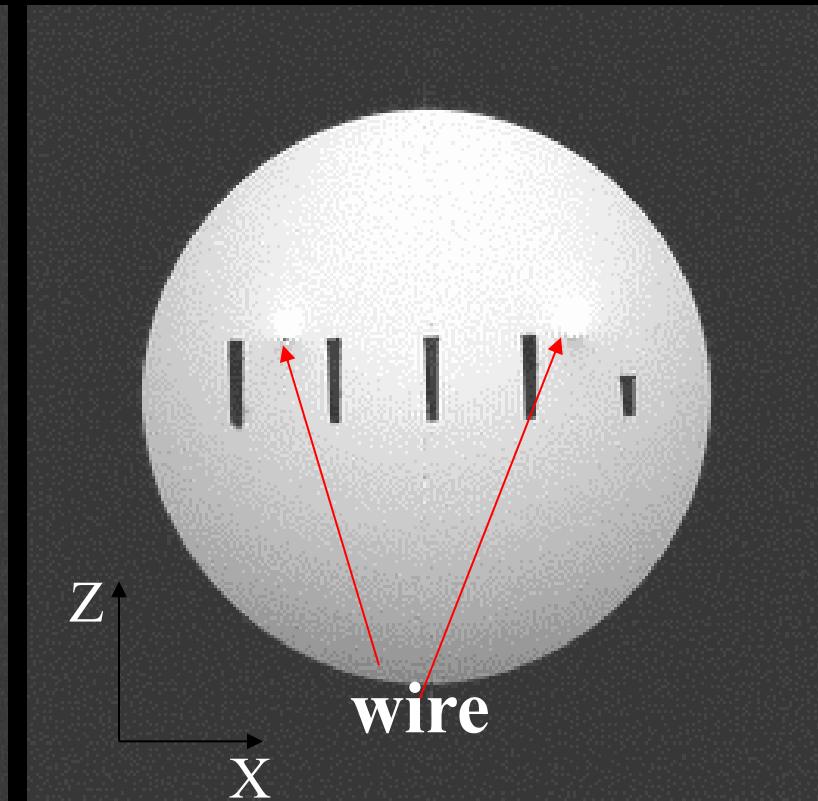
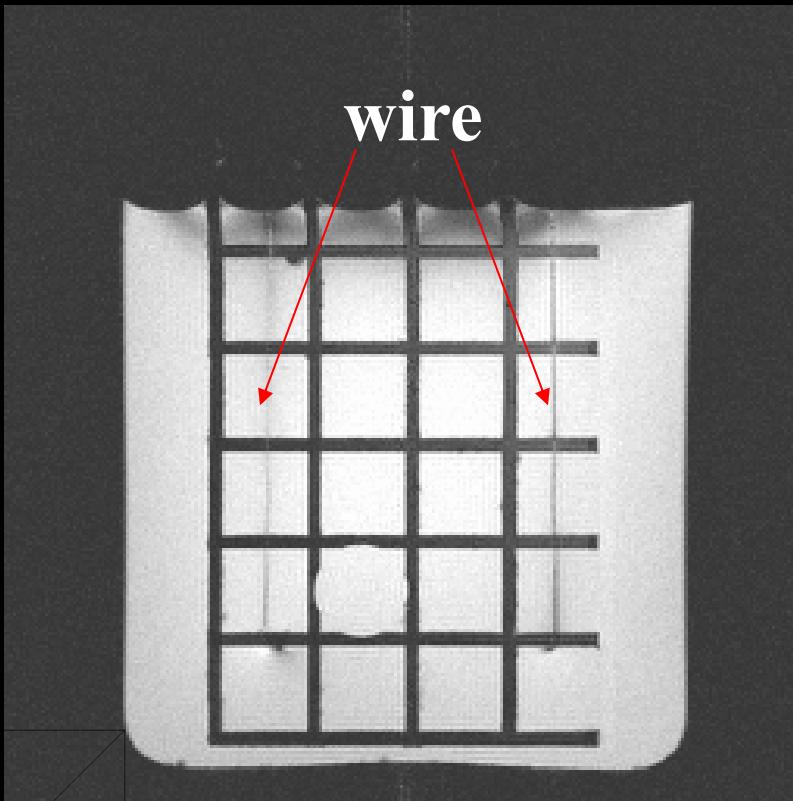
- model

- approaches

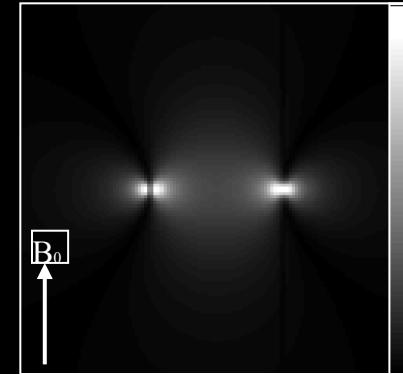
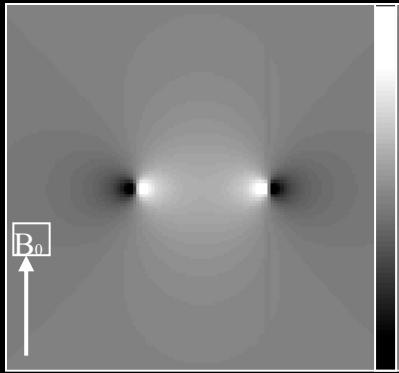
- current phantom*
- cell cultures*
- human studies*

- why there is hope

# Current Phantom Experiment



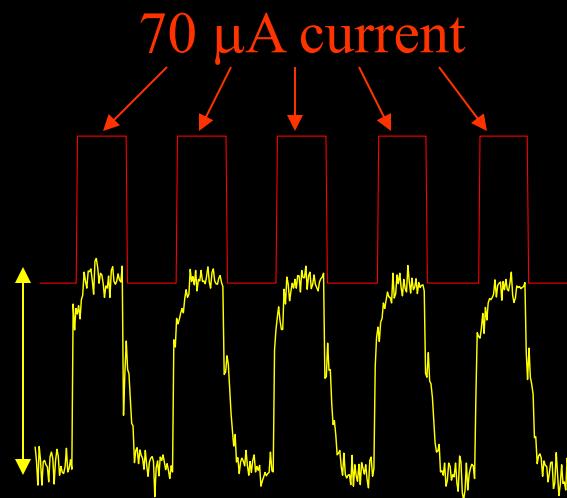
# Simulation



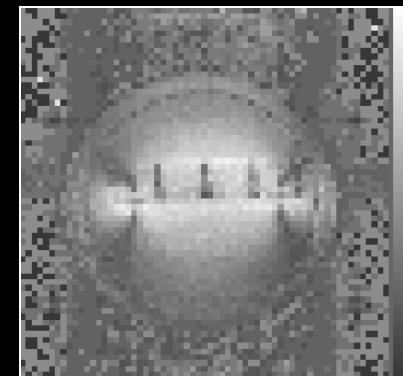
$\Delta\phi \approx 20^\circ$



# Measurement



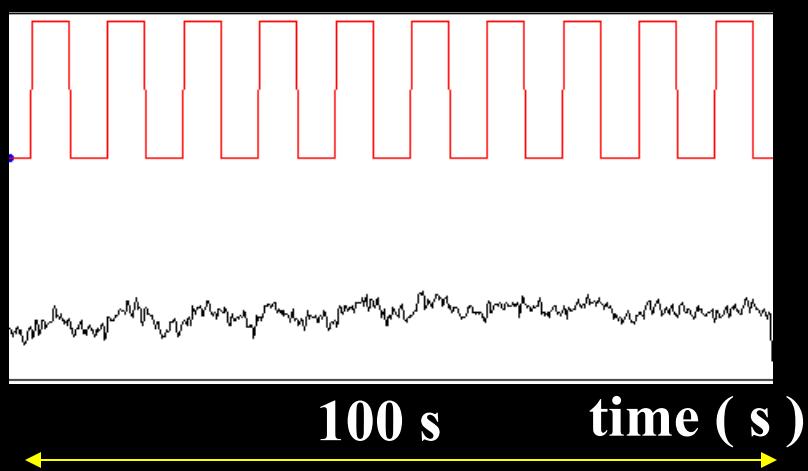
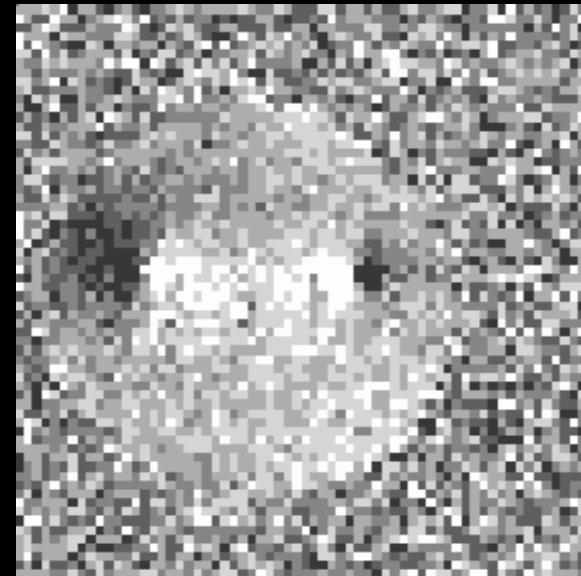
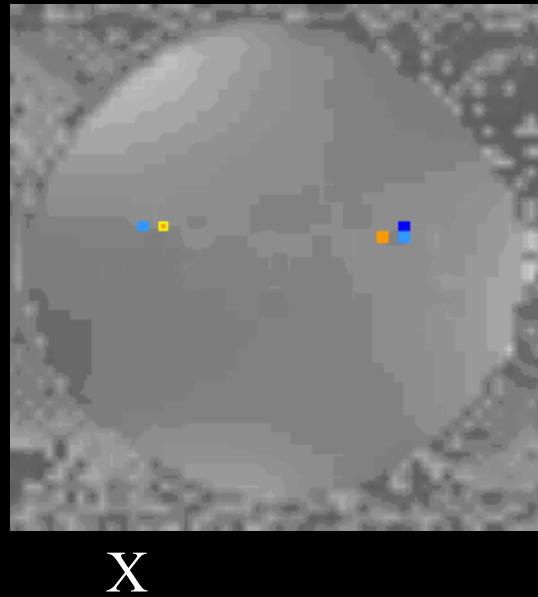
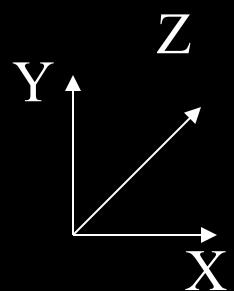
Correlation image



Spectral image

Single shot GE EPI

$B_0 \parallel Z$



Single shot GE EPI,  
TR=54ms, TE=27ms,  
FOV=12cm, 64x64

$$\Delta B = \Delta\phi / (\gamma \text{ TE})$$

*SD of phase noise  
was  $\sigma_\phi = 0.016 \text{ rad}$*

$$\Delta B_\phi = 2.2 \text{ nT}$$

*Sensitivity:*

$$\Delta B = (1.7 \pm 0.3) \text{ nT}$$

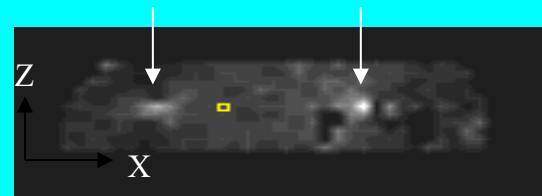
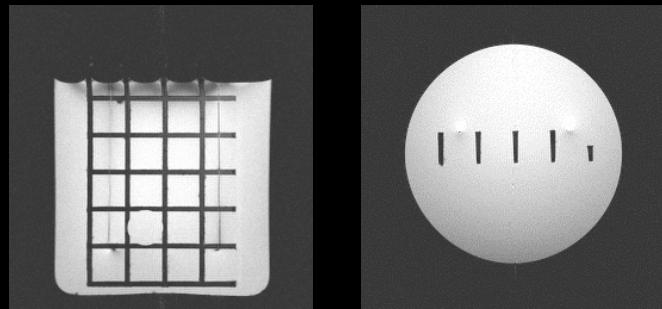
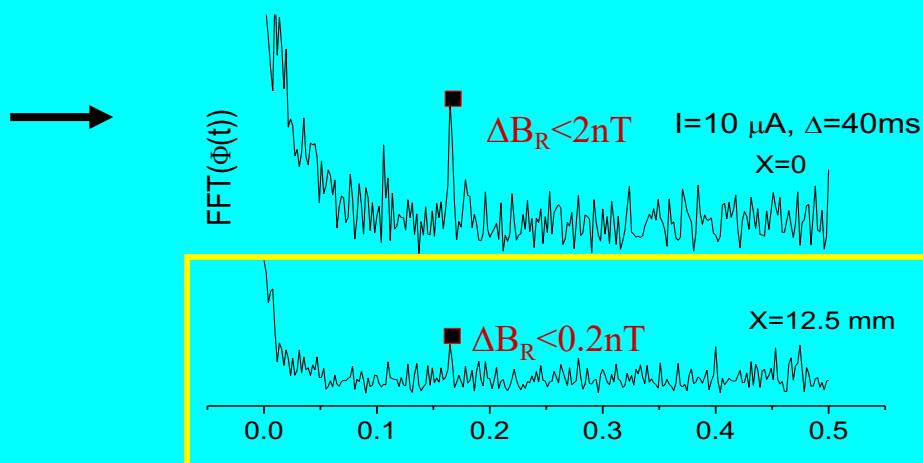


Figure 1



## Conclusions of phantom studies:

While many unknowns about neuronal-induced current magnitudes and spatial scales remain, the combination of a SE EPI sequence with precisely synchronized stimulation protocol optimizes the ability to detect small and transient magnetic field changes.

Transient or periodic flux density changes as small as 200 pT can be detected using MRI.

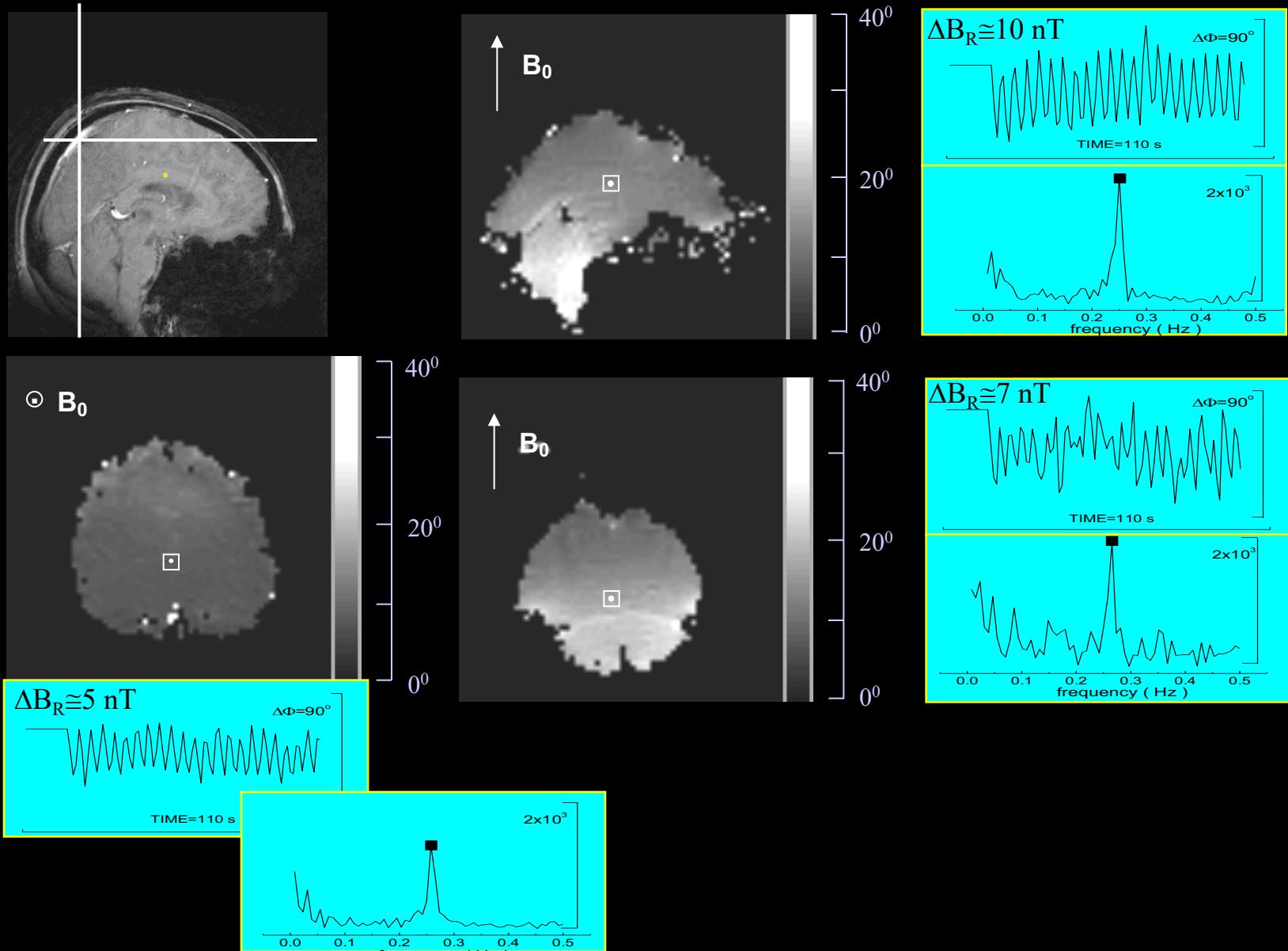
# Optimization of Phase Detection

1. Increase image S/N
2. Reduce Temporal Phase Noise
3. Selectively tune sequence to frequency of NMR phase change

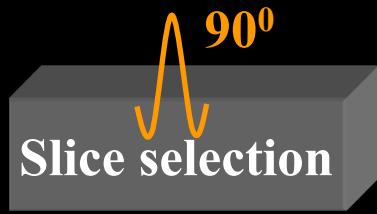
# Sources of Phase Noise

- Respiration (chest wall movement)
- cardiac pulsation
- eye movement
- system instabilities (including eddy currents)

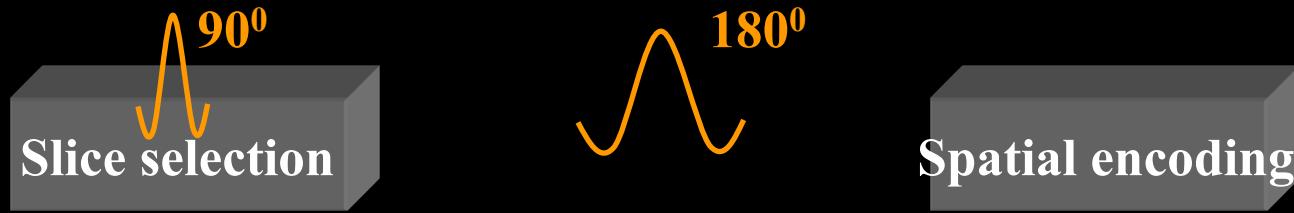
# Experiment (human respiration)



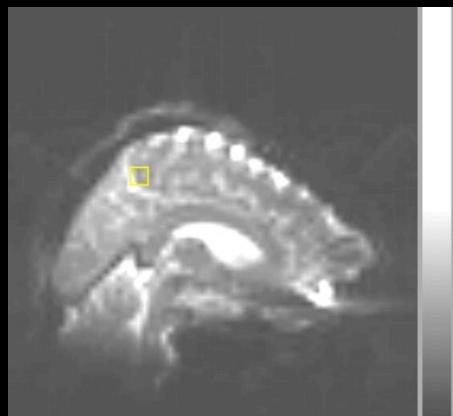
GE



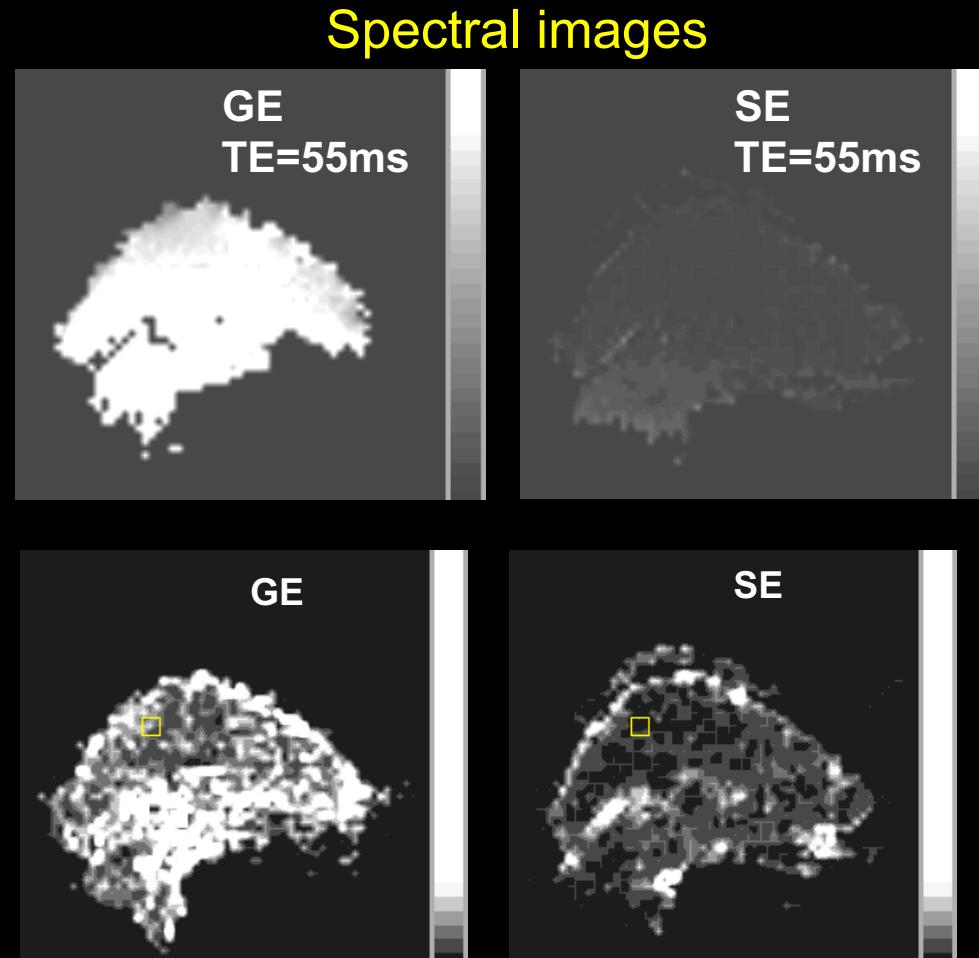
SE



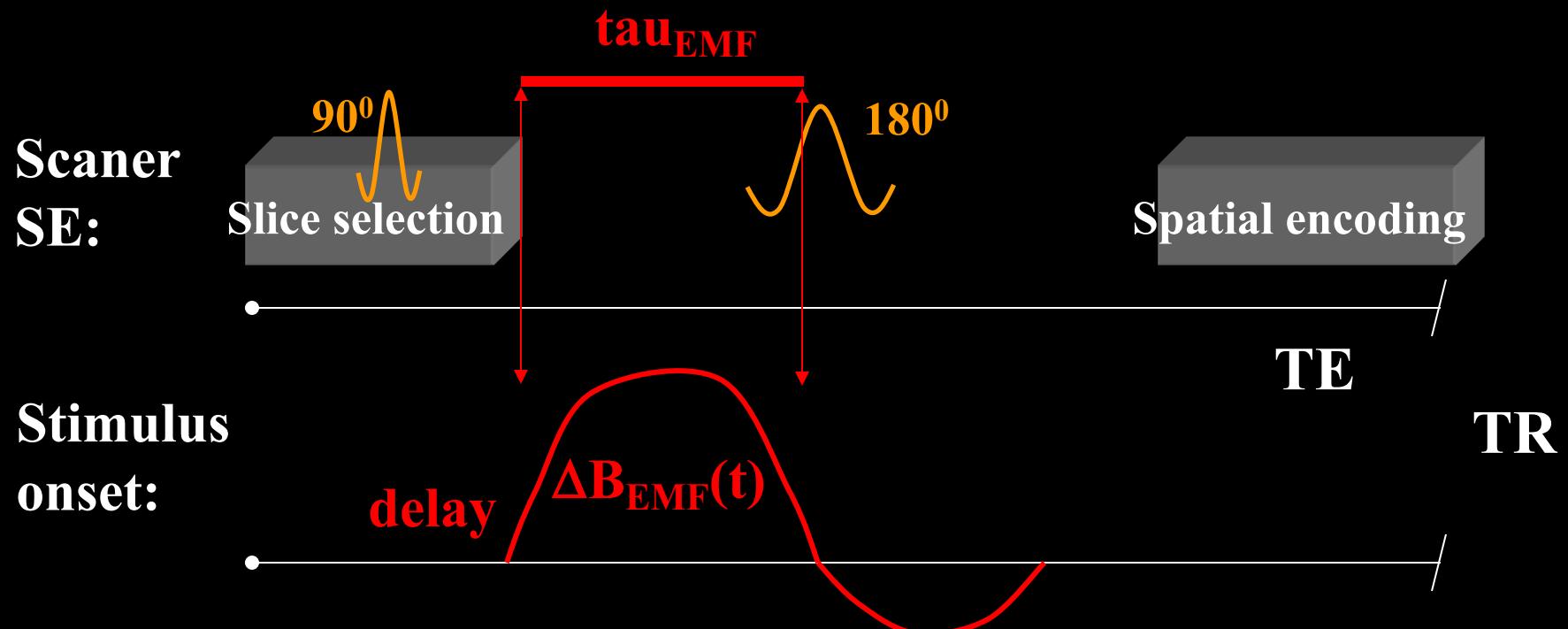
# Experiment (human respiration)



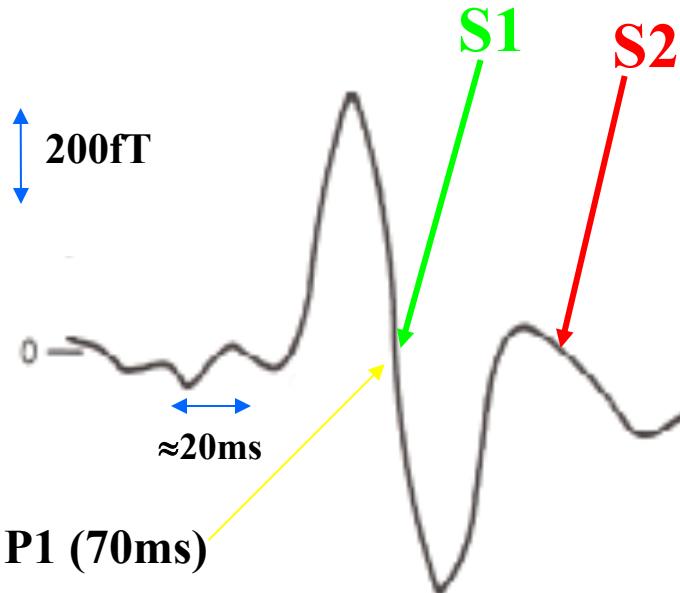
TR = 1.0 sec



## Spin-echo sequence advantages:



$\Delta B_{\text{EMF}}(t)$



**S1:** Optimal temporal position for 180 pulse;  
net phase shift induce by EMF>0

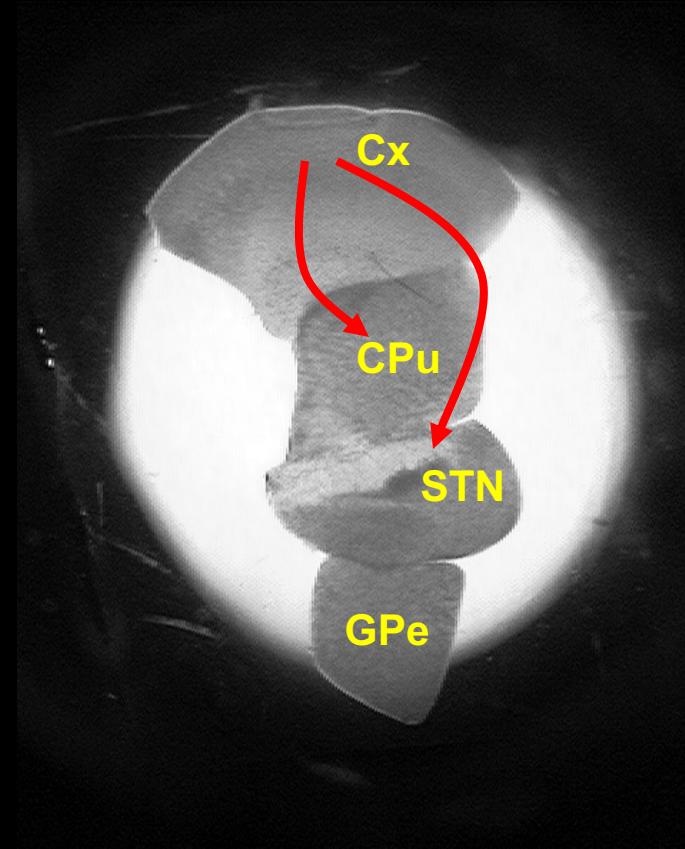
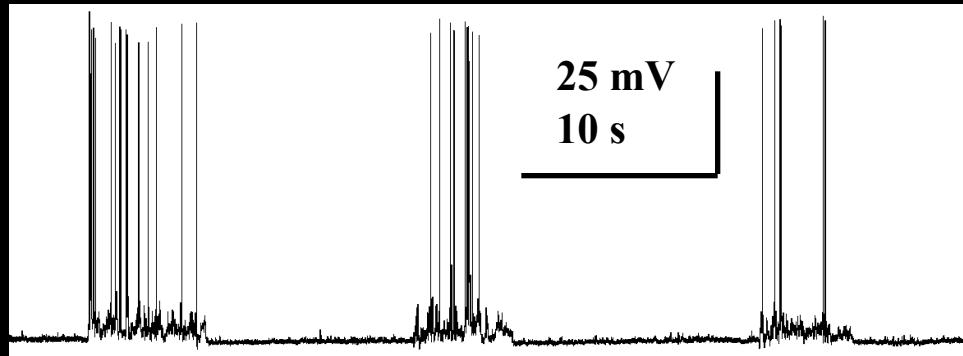
**S1:** For this 180 pulse temporal position net  
phase shift induce by EMF is close to zero

# detection of neuronal currents *in vitro*

## physiological model

### *Tissue Cultures*

- Coronal sections of newborn-rat brains (in-plane: 0.3-1mm<sup>2</sup> thickness: ~60μm)



# **detection of neuronal currents in vitro**

---

## **methods**

### *Setup*

- 10cm diameter CSF-filled glass container
- 3T GE scanner (Milwaukee, WI)
- 10" surface coil (Nova Medical Inc)

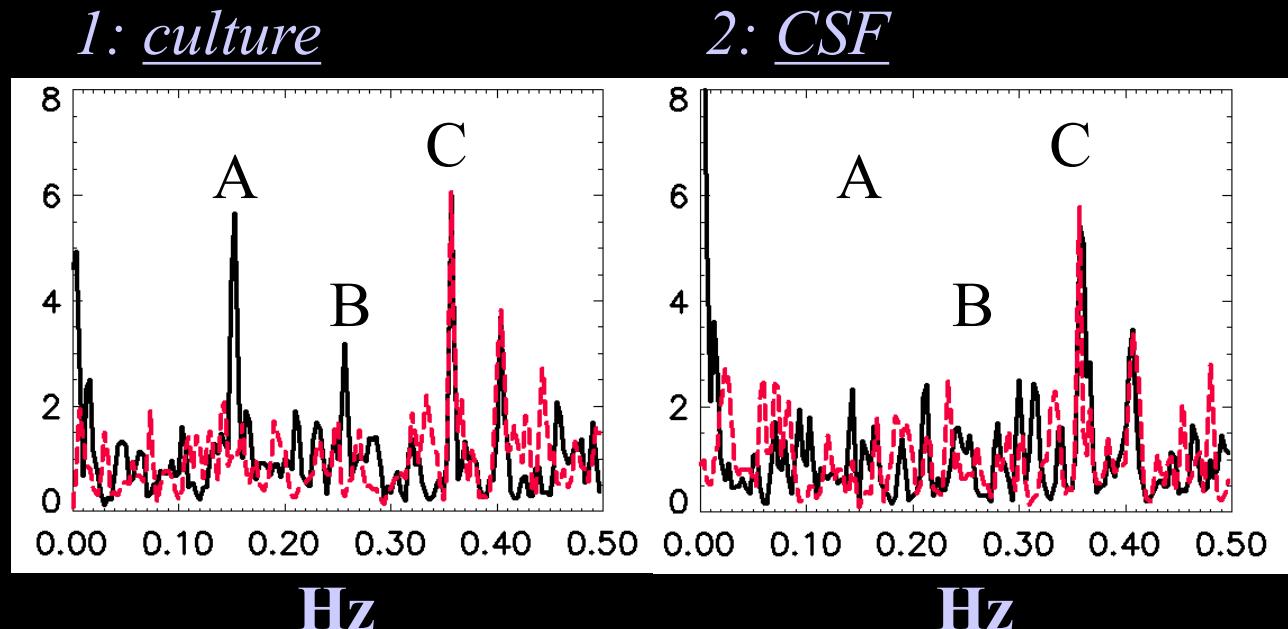
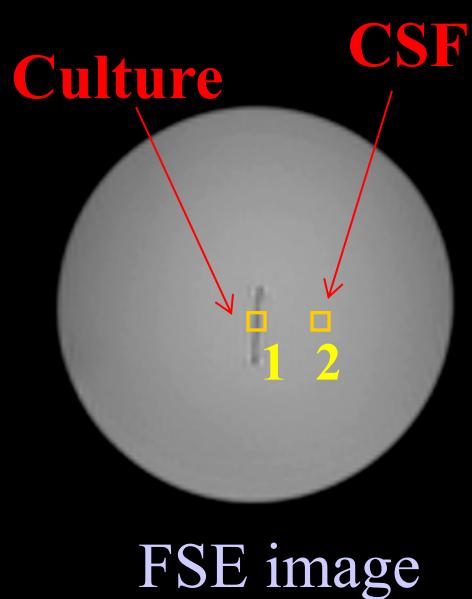
### *Imaging*

- FSE structural images (256x256)
- SE EPI single shot, TE: 60ms, TR:1s, flip angle: 90°,  
FOV: 18cm, 64x64, 4 slices (3mm). Images: 1200 (20 min)

- Active: 10 min activity
- Inactive: 10 min after TTX administration

# detection of neuronal currents in vitro

## results



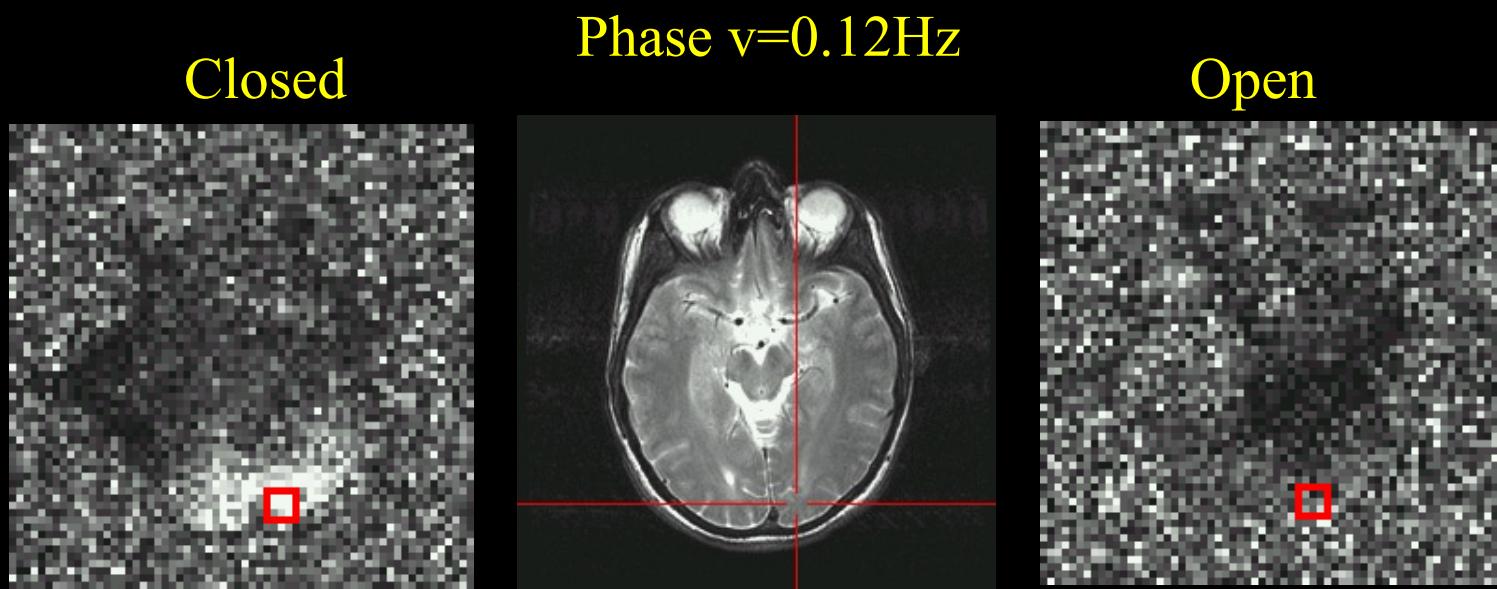
Active state: black line, Inactive state: red line

A: activity, on-off frequency (appx. 7 sec)

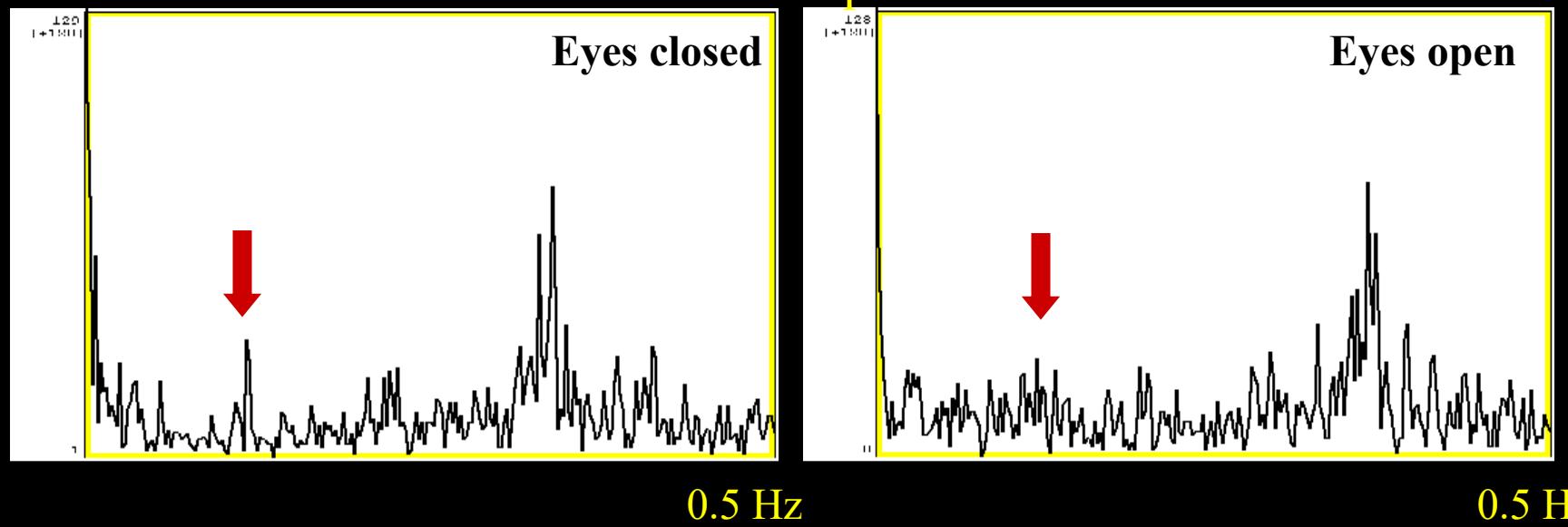
B: activity

C: scanner noise (cooling-pump)

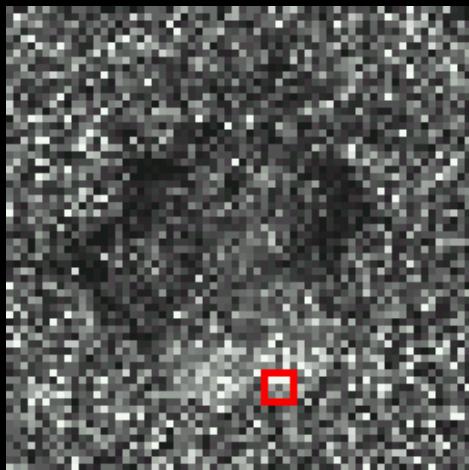
## Preliminary Human Studies



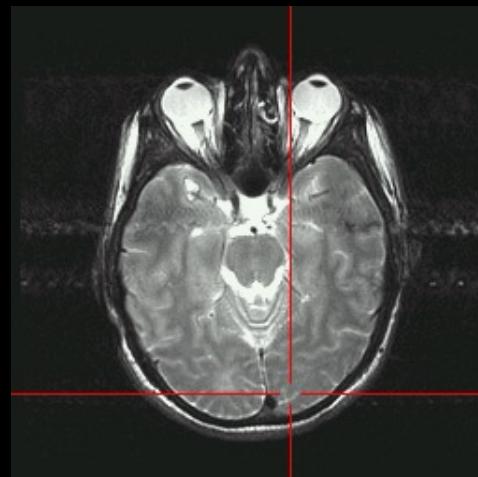
Power spectra



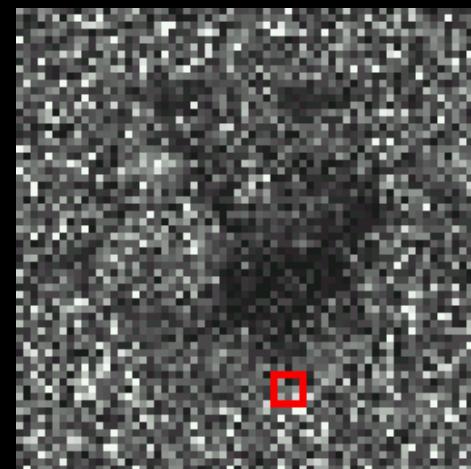
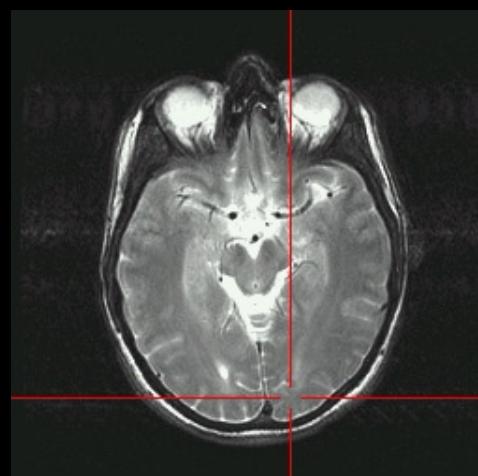
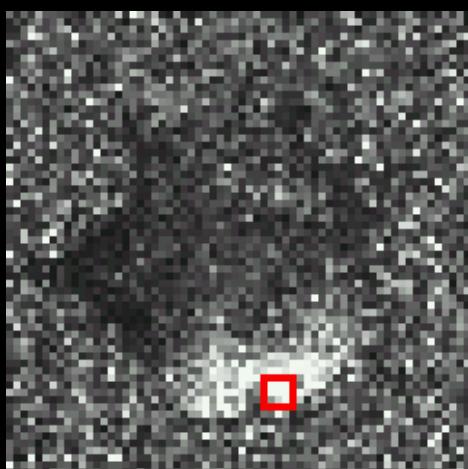
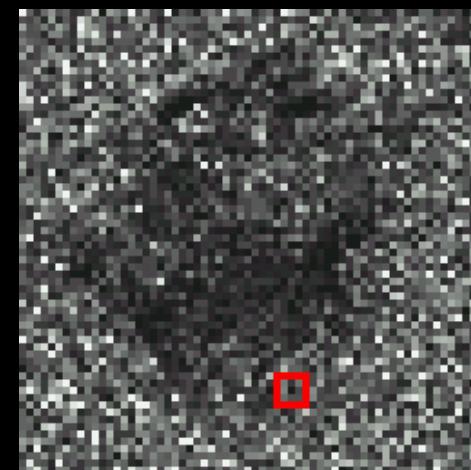
Closed



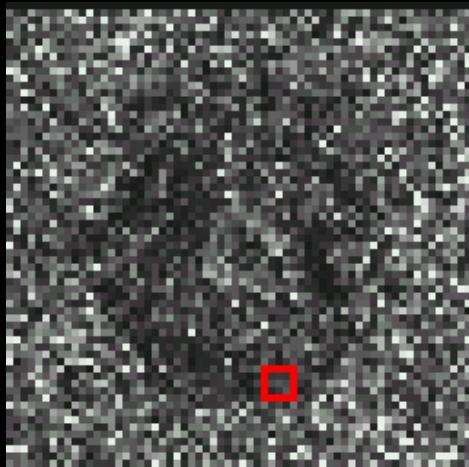
Phase v=0.12Hz



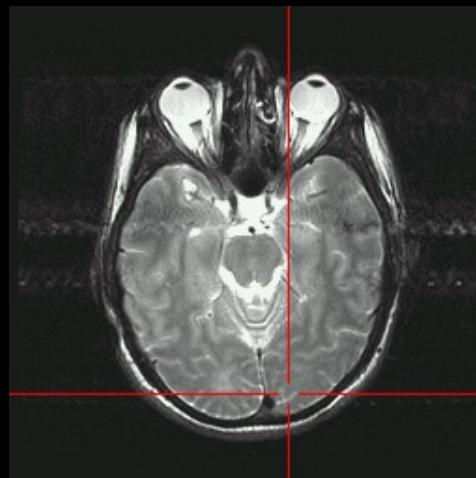
Open



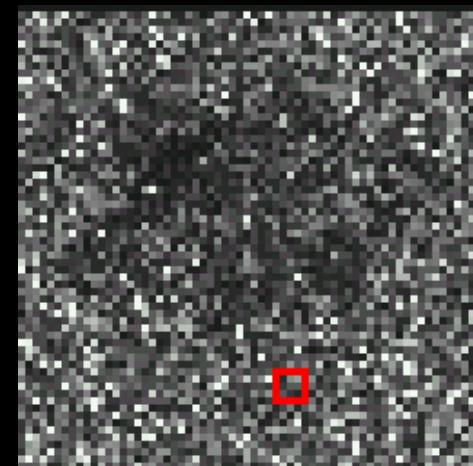
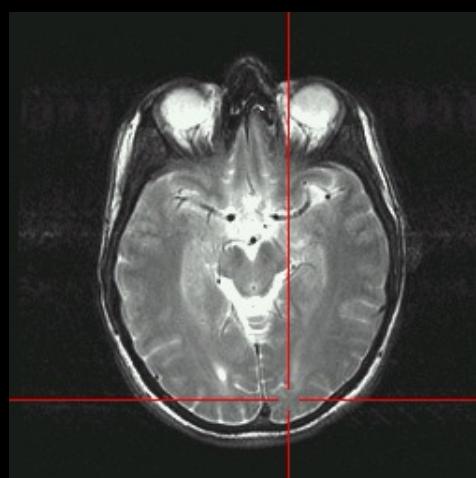
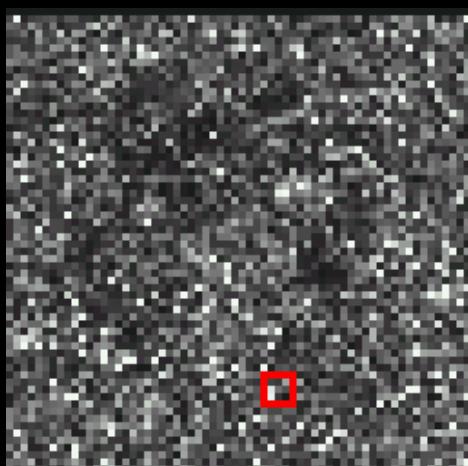
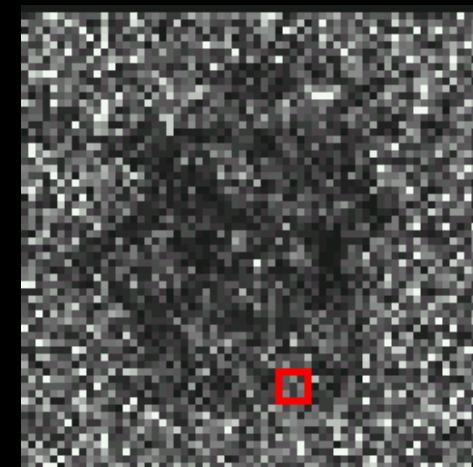
Closed



Magnitude v=0.12Hz



Open



# Hemodynamics

- quick overview

- linearity (steady state)

- linearity (dynamic)

- baseline signal

- latency

- width

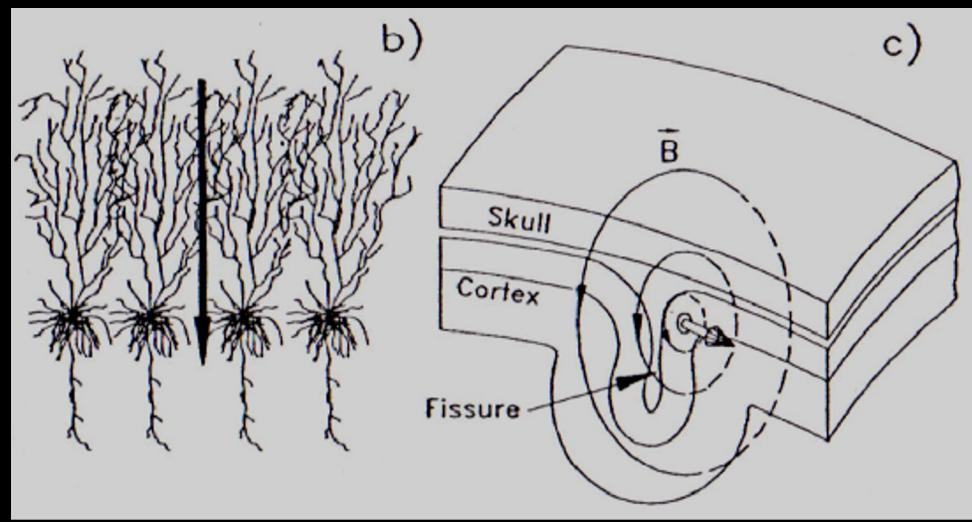
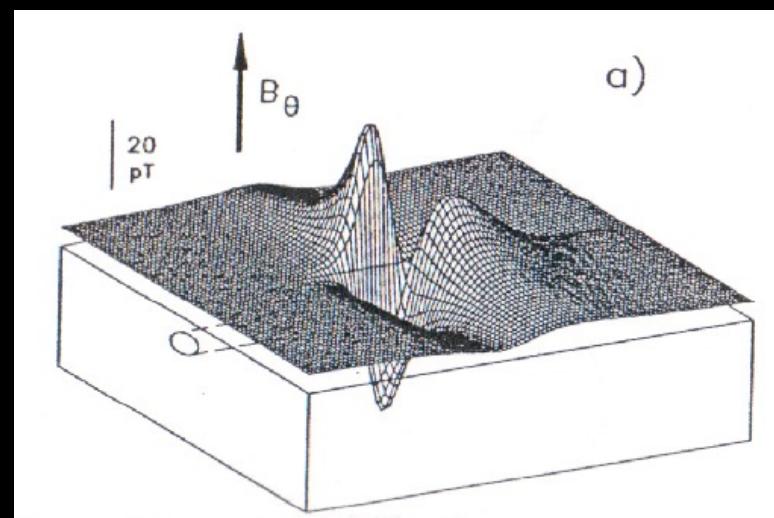
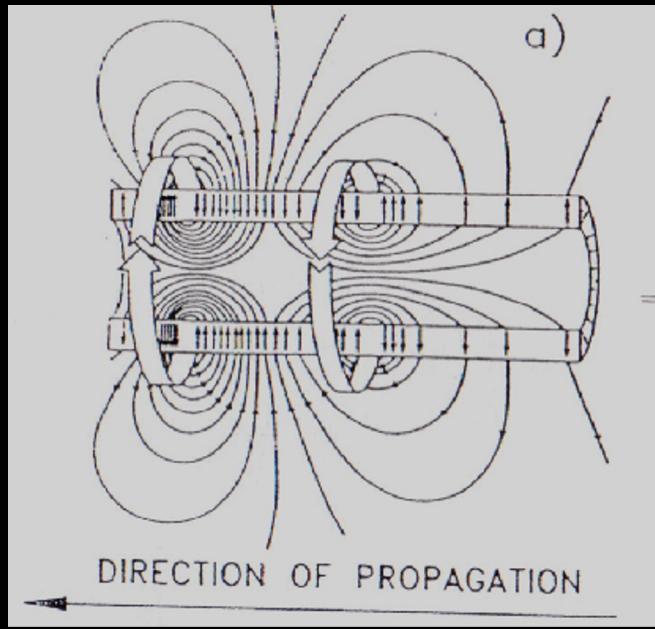
# Neuronal Currents

- model

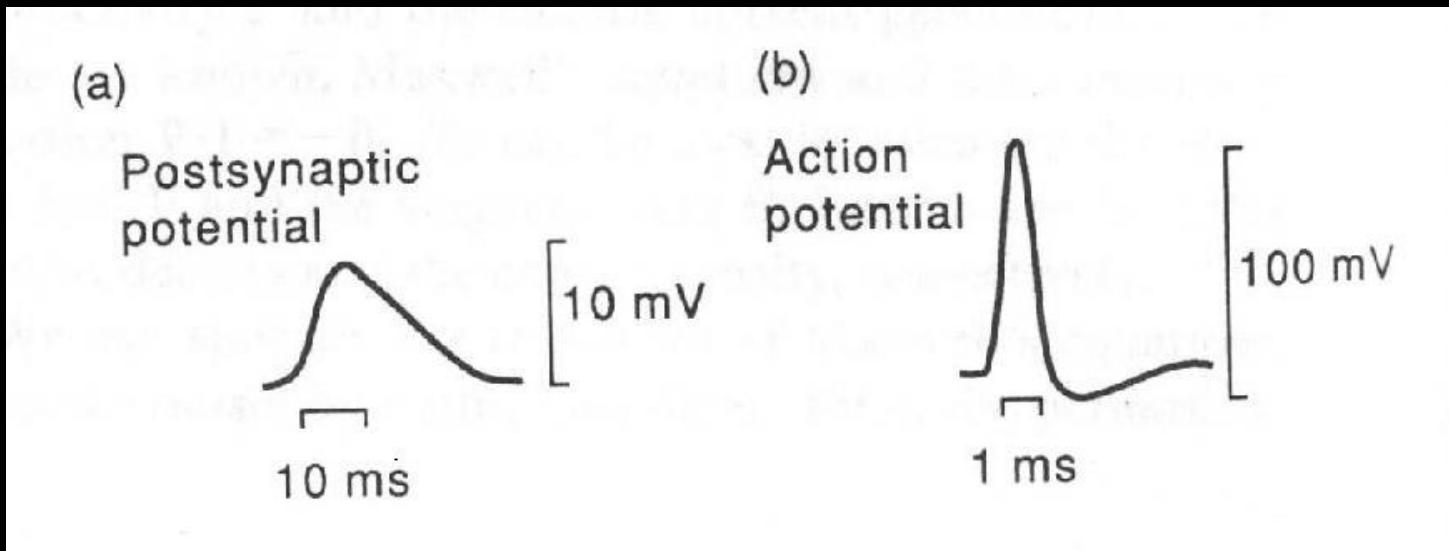
- approaches

- current phantom*
- cell cultures*
- human studies*

- why there is hope



J.P. Wikswo Jr et al. *J Clin Neurophys* 8(2): 170-188, 1991

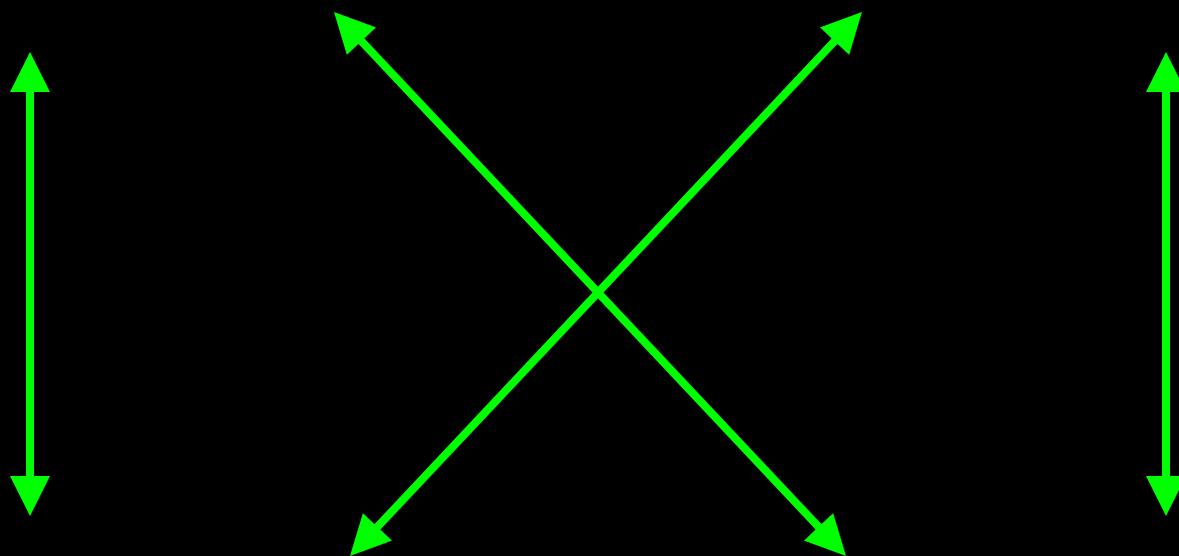


Schematic representation of (a) a postsynaptic potential and (b) an action potential as a function of time.

The post synaptic potential lasts for 10ms or more,  
allowing integration of individual fields to create

MEG detectable > 100 fT field on surface of skull

Technology      ↔      Methodology



Interpretation      ↔      Applications

Technology

Methodology

Engineers

Statisticians

Physicists

Mathematicians

Neuroscientists

Physiologists

Clinicians

Interpretation

Applications

# Technology

MRI	EPI	1.5T,3T, 4T	EPI on Clin. Syst.	Diff. tensor	Mg <sup>+</sup>	7T	>8 channels
		Local Human Head Gradient Coils	Nav. pulses	Real time fMRI	Venography	SENSE	
	ASL	Spiral EPI		Quant. ASL	Z-shim		
	BOLD		Multi-shot fMRI	Dynamic IV volume	Simultaneous ASL and BOLD	Baseline Susceptibility	
						Current Imaging?	

# Methodology

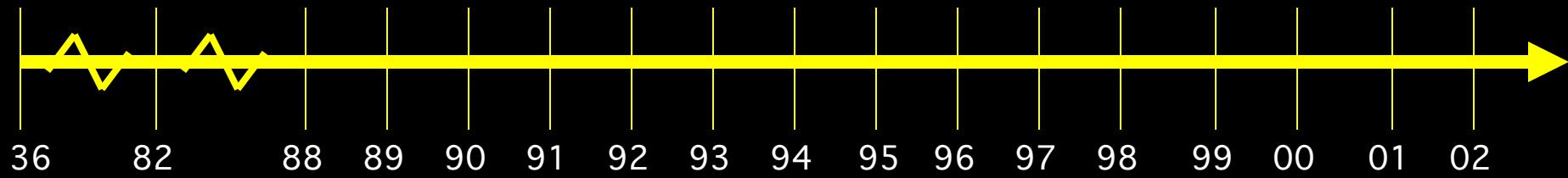
Baseline Volume	Correlation Analysis	CO <sub>2</sub> Calibration
	Motion Correction	Mixed ER and Blocked
	Parametric Design	Multi-Modal Mapping
IVIM	Surface Mapping	ICA
	Phase Mapping	Free-behavior Designs
Linear Regression	Mental Chronometry	
	Event-related	Deconvolution Fuzzy Clustering Multi-variate Mapping

# Interpretation

Blood T2	BOLD models	PET correlation	
	B <sub>0</sub> dep.	IV vs EV ASL vs. BOLD	
	TE dep	Pre-undershoot PSF of BOLD	Linearity mapping
	Resolution Dep.	Extended Stim.	
Hemoglobin	Post-undershoot	Linearity	Metab. Correlation
	SE vs. GE	CO <sub>2</sub> effect	
	NIRS Correlation	Fluctuations Optical Im. Correlation	
	Veins Inflow	Balloon Model Electrophys. correlation	

# Applications

Volume - Stroke	Complex motor			
	Language	Imagery	Memory	Emotion
	Motor learning	Children	Tumor vasc.	Drug effects
	BOLD -V1, M1, A1	Presurgical	Attention	Ocular Dominance
	V1, V2..mapping	Priming/Learning	Clinical Populations	
		Plasticity	Face recognition	Performance prediction



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