

# Spencer Alan Hill, Ph.D.

Postdoctoral Research Fellow | Caltech GPS and UCLA EPSS

## Contact information

shill@gps.caltech.edu  
<https://www.its.caltech.edu/~shill>

UCLA Dept. of Earth, Planetary, and Space Sciences  
595 Charles E. Young Drive East  
Los Angeles, CA 90095

ORCID: 0000-0001-8672-0671  
Twitter: @spencerahill  
Github: <https://github.com/spencerahill>

## Current position

Foster and Coco Stanback Postdoctoral Research Fellow, California Institute of Technology Division of Geological and Planetary Sciences (GPS), and Visiting Assistant Project Scientist, UCLA Dept. of Earth, Planetary and Space Sciences (EPSS). Advisors Prof. Simona Bordini (Caltech GPS) and Prof. Jonathan Mitchell (UCLA EPSS). September 2018 — continuing.

Previously NSF Atmospheric and Geospace Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellow (NSF award #1624740), UCLA Dept. of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences (AOS) and Caltech GPS. September 2016 — August 2018.

## Education

Ph.D. | Princeton University | Program in Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences

Conferred September 2016 | Adviser Yi Ming | Committee members: Isaac Held, Leo Donner, Ming Zhao

B.S. | UCLA | Dept. of AOS and Dept. of Applied Mathematics

AOS/Applied Mathematics double major | Conferred June 2011 | Magna Cum Laude | Phi Beta Kappa | UCLA College Honors

## Publications

### In preparation

1. **Hill, Spencer A.**, Simona Bordini, and Jonathan L. Mitchell. "Meridional variations in radiative convective equilibrium tropopause height and their influence on axisymmetric Hadley cells." In preparation for submission to *Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences*.
2. **Hill, Spencer A.** and Natalie J. Burls. "Mechanisms of poleward energy transport changes under CO<sub>2</sub> forcing and in the Pliocene." In preparation for submission to *Journal of Advances in Modeling Earth Systems*.

## Submitted/under review/in revision

1. **Hill, Spencer A.** "CQE, MSE, ITCZ, or all three? On theories of monsoon rainfall and its response to climate change." In revision, *Current Climate Change Reports*.

## Peer-reviewed

1. (2019) **Hill, Spencer A.**, Simona Bordoni, and Jonathan L. Mitchell. "Axisymmetric constraints on cross-equatorial Hadley cell extent." Accepted, *Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences*.
2. (2018) **Hill, Spencer A.**, Juan M. Lora, Norris Khoo, Sean P. Faulk, and Jonathan M. Aurnou. "Affordable rotating fluid demonstrations for geoscience education: The *DIY*namics project." *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, **99**, 2529-2538. doi: 10.1175/BAMS-D-17-0215.1.
3. (2018) **Hill, Spencer A.**, Yi Ming, and Ming Zhao. "Robust responses of the Sahelian hydrological cycle to global warming." *Journal of Climate*, **31**, 9793-9814. doi: 10.1175/JCLI-D-18-0238.1.
4. (2018) Smyth, Jane, **Spencer A. Hill**, and Yi Ming. "Simulated responses of the West African monsoon and zonal-mean tropical precipitation to early Holocene orbital forcing." *Geophysical Research Letters*, **45**, 12,049-12,057. doi: 10.1029/2018GL080494.
5. (2017) **Hill, Spencer A.**, Yi Ming, Isaac M. Held, and Ming Zhao. "A moist static energy budget-based analysis of the Sahel rainfall response to uniform oceanic warming." *Journal of Climate*, **30**, 5637-5660. doi: 10.1175/JCLI-D-16-0785.1.
6. (2017) Brown, Patrick T., Yi Ming, Wenhong Li, and **Spencer A. Hill**. "Change in the magnitude and mechanisms of unforced low-frequency surface temperature variability in a warmer climate." *Nature Climate Change*, **7**, 743-748. doi: 10.1038/nclimate3381.
7. (2017) Jeevanjee, Nadir, Pedram Hassanzadeh, **Spencer A. Hill**, and Aditi Sheshadri. "A perspective on climate model hierarchies." *Journal of Advances in Modeling Earth Systems*, **9**, 1760-1771. doi: 10.1002/2017MS001038.
8. (2015) **Hill, Spencer A.**, Yi Ming, and Isaac M. Held. "Mechanisms of forced tropical meridional energy flux change." *Journal of Climate*, **28**, 1725-1742. doi: 10.1175/JCLI-D-14-00165.1.
  - Corrigendum: <https://dx.doi.org/10.1175/JCLI-D-16-0485.1>.
9. (2012) **Hill, Spencer A.** and Yi Ming. "Nonlinear climate response to regional brightening of tropical marine stratocumulus." *Geophysical Research Letters*, **39**, L15707, 5 pp. doi: 10.1029/2012GL052064.

## PhD thesis

(2016) **Hill, Spencer A.** "Energetic and hydrological responses of Hadley circulations and the African Sahel to sea surface temperature perturbations." PhD Thesis, Princeton University Program in Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences.

## Non peer-reviewed

1. (2017) **Hill, Spencer A.** and Spencer K. Clark. "What's needed for the Future of AOS Python? Tools for Automating AOS Data Analysis and Management." Invited guest blog post on "PyAOS" blog. URL: <http://pyaos.johnny-lin.com/?p=1546>.
2. (2012) **Hill, Spencer A.** "A head in the clouds elucidates climate" (book review of *Atmosphere, Clouds, and Climate* by David Randall). *Science*, **337**, 1 pp., doi: 10.1126/science.1225615.

## Software

1. (2018) **Hill, Spencer A.** and Spencer Clark. "aospy: automated climate data analysis and management." Version 0.3.1. <https://aospy.readthedocs.io>. doi: 10.5281/zenodo.1490928.
2. (2016) Hoyer, Stephan et al. "xarray: v0.8.0." doi: 10.5281/zenodo.59499.

## Research and Professional Experiences

- 2018 Dec Co-chair, "Monsoons: Observations, Subseasonal, Seasonal, and Interannual to Decadal Variability, Forecast, Climate Change, and Extremes" session, AGU Fall Meeting, Washington, D.C.
- 2018 Aug Participant, 17th Swiss Climate Summer School, "Earth system variability through time", Grindelwald, Switzerland
- 2017 June Chair, "Idealized approaches to the atmospheric and oceanic circulation, Part II" session, AMS 21st Conference on Atmospheric and Oceanic Fluid Dynamics, Portland, OR
- 2016 Dec Co-chair, "Tropical circulations and their sensitivities to changes in climate" session, AGU Fall Meeting 2016, San Francisco, CA
- 2016 Nov Co-chair, "Tropical convection and radiative convective equilibrium" session, WCRP Model Hierarchies Workshop, Princeton, NJ
- 2015 June-Aug Organizer, Princeton AOS convection journal club
- 2013-2015 Organizer, GFDL Climate Sensitivity Journal Club
- 2012-2013 Organizer, Princeton AOS Student/Postdoc Seminar Series
- 2012-2013 Princeton AOS Program Student Representative to the Faculty
- 2012-2013 Member, Princeton Energy and Climate Scholars
- 2012 July Participant, GFDL Summer School on Atmospheric Modeling
- 2011 June-Aug Research Intern, UCLA California Research Training Program in Computational and Applied Mathematics, Slurry Flows Group
- 2011 Jan Invited Student Secretary, International Geosphere-Biosphere Program Workshop on Ecosystems Impacts of Geoengineering, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UCSD, La Jolla, CA
- 2010 June-Aug Research Intern, NOAA Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory, Princeton, NJ. Advisor Dr. Yi Ming

## Major Honors and Awards

- 2016 NSF Atmospheric and Geospace Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowship. NSF Award #1624740
- 2016 California Institute of Technology Foster and Coco Stanback Postdoctoral Fellowship, deferred to 2018
- 2013 U.S. Dept. of Defense National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship (3 years)
- 2012 Princeton University Elliott Robinson Little '25 Fellowship
- 2012 American Meteorological Society Climate Change Travel Scholarship, 92nd AMS Annual Meeting
- 2012 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Honorable Mention
- 2009 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship
- 2007 United States Presidential Scholar. Honored by President George W. Bush at the White House as part of the Presidential Scholars National Recognition Week.

## Teaching & Mentoring

### Princeton Teaching Transcript certification

Administered by the Princeton University McGraw Center for Teaching & Learning. Requirements include two-day teacher training, lectures and workshops on pedagogy, and video recording and subsequent analysis of teaching as a TA. Completed August 2016.

### Teaching Assistant

Princeton University, Fall 2014, Geosciences 361, "Physics of Earth: The Habitable Planet." Professor George Philander.

## Mentorship

- Advisor to UCLA undergraduate student Micah Kim for independent research course work on the "aospy" software package (Fall 2017)
- Assistant mentor to UCLA undergraduate students for work on the DIYnamics portable rotating tank science outreach project: Norris Khoo (2017), Juliet Olsen (Fall 2016)
- Assistant mentor to summer interns at NOAA GFDL: Jane Smyth (2015), Marjahn Finlayson (2014), Colin Raymond (2013)

## Guest lectures

- [2018-11-29 Thu] "Thermal wind balance: lab demonstrations" UCLA AOS 200A (graduate level): Introduction to Atmospheric and Oceanic Fluid
- [2018-11-15 Thu] "The general circulation of the atmosphere: momentum" UCLA AOS 200A (graduate level): Introduction to Atmospheric and Oceanic Fluid
- [2018-11-13 Tue] "The general circulation of the atmosphere: energetics" UCLA AOS 200A (graduate level): Introduction to Atmospheric and Oceanic Fluid
- [2014-12-11 Thu] "Climate modeling and climate change projections" Princeton University GEO 361 (upper-division undergraduate): Physics of Earth: The Habitable Planet.
- [2014-10-14 Tue] "Weather: From orbital order, atmospheric chaos" Princeton University GEO 361 (upper-division undergraduate): Physics of Earth: The Habitable Planet.

## Public Outreach

### "DIYnamics" project

Developing inexpensive, easy-to-assemble rotating tank platforms for use in teaching fundamental principles of Earth science at levels from K-12 science classes to AOS graduate courses. Materials include the kits themselves, PDF assembly instruction, instructional videos, and a website: <https://diynamics.github.io/>

Press:

- UCLA press release: <http://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/a-50-do-it-yourself-device-designed-at-ucla-make>
- Story on UCLA Physical Sciences Division website, linked to from their main page (as of March 2018): <https://www.physicalsciences.ucla.edu/spinlab/>
- Listed on official UCLA Physical Sciences Division Outreach page: <https://www.physicalsciences.ucla.edu/outreach/>

Used the tables as part of presentations at Los Angeles area middle schools: "Building scientific models of Earth's atmosphere, oceans, and more," and at other public outreach events.

- [2018-11-04 Sun] UCLA "Exploring Your Universe" (booth w/ repeated demonstrations throughout day)
- [2018-04-27 Fri] El Marino Language School 23rd Annual Science Fair (booth w/ repeated demonstrations for 3 hrs)
- [2017-11-05 Sun] UCLA "Exploring Your Universe" (booth w/ repeated demonstrations throughout day)
- [2017-05-12 Fri] La Tijera K-8 Charter School, Inglewood, CA (7th grade students; 3 class periods)
- [2017-05-19 Fri] La Tijera K-8 Charter School, Inglewood, CA (8th grade students; 3 class periods)
- [2017-05-22 Mon] Ralph J. Bunche Middle School, Compton, CA (8th grade students; 2 class periods)

### Prior outreach efforts

- [2015-06-19 Fri] "Introduction to climate models." 20 minute presentation to New Jersey Japanese School during their visit to NOAA Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory, Princeton, NJ.
- [2015-04-10 Fri] "Introduction to weather and climate." 45 minute presentation + Q&A to 7th grade class at Forrestdale Middle School, Rumson, NJ. Co-presented with Sarah Schlunegger.

## Reviewing

- Proposal reviewer for National Science Foundation and NASA Juno Participating Scientist Program
- Article reviewer for *Nature Climate Change*, *Journal of Climate*, *Geophysical Research Letters*, *Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences*, *Geoscientific Model Development*, *Climatic Change*, *Climate Dynamics*, *Journal of Geophysical Research - Atmospheres*, and GFDL internal manuscript review.

## Presentations

### Invited

- [2019-01-07 Mon] "Robust responses of the Sahelian hydrological cycle to global warming." Invited seminar. UCSB Earth Research Institute Monthly Climate Meeting. Santa Barbara, CA.
- [2018-11-07 Wed] "Back to the basics of monsoons, Hadley cells, and rotating tanks." Invited seminar. UCLA AOS formal seminar series.
- [2016-11-12 Sat] "infinite-diff and animal-spharm: xarray-based finite differencing and spherical harmonics." Invited conference talk. Columbia University AOS-Python workshop. New York, NY.
- [2016-10-13 Thu] "The fate of rainfall in the African Sahel under global warming." Invited seminar. Westmont College, Santa Barbara, CA.
- [2015-05-21 Thu] "Towards constraining Sahel rainfall responses to global mean temperature changes." Invited conference talk. Linde Center for Global Environmental Science "Monsoons: Past, Present and Future" workshop, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, CA.
- [2015-03-06 Fri] "Mechanisms of forced ITCZ shifts and of rainfall responses in the African Sahel to SST warming." Invited seminar. New York University AOS student seminar series.
- [2014-10-09 Thu] "Mechanisms of forced ITCZ shifts and Sahelian drought in GCMs." Invited seminar. Yale University, New Haven, CT.

### Non-invited

- [2018-12-13 Thu] "What sets the locations of the solsticial cross-equatorial Hadley cell edges?" Oral. AGU Fall Meeting. Washington, DC.
- [2018-08-28 Tue] "Towards transient simulation of the Green Sahara onset and demise through idealized modeling of vegetation-land-atmosphere interactions." Poster. 17th Swiss Climate Summer School, "Earth system variability through time", Grindelwald, Switzerland.
- [2018-04-16 Mon] "What Determines the ITCZ Position During Solsticial Seasons on Earth and Other Planets?" Oral. AMS 33rd Conference on Hurricanes and Tropical Meteorology. Ponte Vedra, FL.
- [2018-02-16 Fri] "Robust responses of the Sahelian hydrological cycle to global warming." Oral. Columbia University/Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory formal seminar series. Palisades, NY.
- [2018-02-14 Wed] "What limits the ITCZ's poleward extent during summer?" Oral. NOAA Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory informal seminar series. Princeton, NJ.
- [2017-12-14 Thu] "Dry Rainbelts: Understanding Boundary Layer Controls on the ITCZ Using a Dry Dynamical Core." Oral. AGU Fall Meeting. New Orleans, LA.
- [2017-07-19 Wed] "Towards transient simulation of the Green Sahara onset and demise through idealized modeling of vegetation-land-atmosphere interactions." Poster. Gordon Research Conference on Radiation and Climate. Bates College, Lewiston, ME.
- [2017-06-27 Tue] "Control of convergence zone migrations by planetary parameters." Poster. AMS 21st Conference on Atmospheric and Oceanic Fluid Dynamics. Portland, OR.
- [2017-01-24 Tue] "Automate your climate and weather data analysis with aospy." Oral. AMS Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA.

- [2017-01-24 Tue] "Energetic and precipitation responses in the Sahel to sea surface temperature perturbations." Oral. AMS Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA.
- [2016-12-16 Fri] "Robust drying influence of mean ocean surface warming on The Sahel and implications for constraining future rainfall change." Poster. AGU 2016 Fall Meeting, San Francisco, CA.
- [2016-11-09 Wed] "Energetic and precipitation responses in the Sahel to sea surface temperature perturbations." Oral. New York University Center for Atmosphere Ocean Science formal seminar series. New York, NY.
- [2016-11-02 Wed] "A hierarchy of perturbation complexities: Case study of Sahel rainfall response to global warming." Poster. WCRP Model Hierarchies Workshop, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.
- [2016-10-26 Wed] "Tropical energetic and precipitation responses to sea surface temperature perturbations: Zonal mean and the African Sahel." Oral. Caltech GPS formal seminar series.
- [2016-10-05 Wed] "Tropical energetic and precipitation responses to sea surface temperature perturbations: Zonal mean and the African Sahel." Oral. UCLA AOS formal seminar series.
- [2015-12-14 Mon] "Towards constraining future rainfall in the Sahel using the moist static energy budget." Oral. AGU 2015 Fall Meeting, San Francisco, CA.
- [2015-03-13 Fri] "Radiative and dynamical controls on the Sahel rainfall response to uniform ocean warming." Oral. Princeton AOS dynamics seminar series.
- [2015-01-06 Tue] "Convection scheme, cloud, and stability effects on Sahel rainfall response to uniform warming." Poster. AMS Annual Meeting, Phoenix, AZ.
- [2014-12-15 Mon] "Convection scheme, cloud, and stability effects on Sahel rainfall response to uniform warming." Poster. AGU Fall Meeting, San Francisco, CA.
- [2014-06-19 Thu] "Mechanisms of forced tropical meridional energy flux change." Poster presentation. Latsis Symposium, ETH Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland.
- [2014-02-05 Wed] "Mean and extreme tropical precipitation changes caused by the uniform and spatially varying components of anthropogenic forcing." Oral presentation. AMS 2014 Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA.
- [2013-12-13 Fri] "Mechanisms of forced tropical meridional energy flux change." Oral presentation. AGU 2013 Fall Meeting, San Francisco, CA.
- [2013-11-02 Sat] "Mechanisms of forced tropical meridional energy flux change." Oral presentation. Graduate Climate Conference, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Woods Hole, MA.
- [2013-07-09 Tue] "Mechanisms of forced tropical meridional energy flux change." Poster presentation. Gordon Research Conference, Colby-Sawyer College, New London, NH.
- [2012-02-28 Tue] "Climate response to a geoengineered brightening of subtropical marine boundary clouds." Oral. Princeton AOS Program Student/Postdoc Seminar Series.
- [2012-01-22 Sun] "Climate response to a geoengineered brightening of subtropical marine boundary clouds." Poster. 11th Annual Student Conference at the AMS Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA.
- [2011-11-11 Fri] "Climate response to a geoengineered brightening of subtropical marine boundary clouds." Oral. Princeton University Department of Geosciences Graduate Research Symposium, Princeton, NJ.
- [2010-12-16 Thu] "Climate response to a geoengineered brightening of subtropical marine boundary clouds." Poster. Session GC31A: "Can We Counteract Global Warming?" American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting. San Francisco, CA.
- [2010-10-26 Tue] "Climate response to a geoengineered brightening of subtropical marine boundary clouds." Oral. Special Symposium on Aerosols in Geoengineering at the American Association for Aerosol Research 29th Annual Conference. Portland, OR.
- [2010-08-03 Tue] "Investigating climate response to geoengineering using a global climate model." Oral. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Education Science Symposium, Silver Spring, MD.