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Introducing Grand Central Station – Where All Lines of Information Connect!

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Why Me? Who Am I?

Kelly Tremblay is a Canuck as well as a professor at the University of Washington in Seattle. She has a 30-plus year history of serving and advocating for people with hearing loss. As an audiologist and educator, she teaches graduate students how to prevent, assess, and manage hearing loss. As a neuroscientist, she studies the effects of hearing loss and hearing prosthesis on the brain in addition to the public health benefits of intervention for our aging society. Her research is funded by the National Institutes of Health and is published in top-tier journals.

Kelly's career started at the University of Western Ontario where she completed an undergraduate degree in psychology. Then she made the move east, to Dalhousie University, to complete a degree in audiology. What was supposed to be a temporary move to USA (Colorado) in the 1980s, to complete an externship working with single-channel cochlear implant users, ended up as a 30-year stay. She worked as an audiologist in Colorado for a number of years, then returned to school to complete a PhD from Northwestern University. She studied under Nina Kraus, PhD and was one of the first people to identify some of the physiological changes that take place during auditory learning and how these results relate to auditory rehabilitation.

Kelly continued her training at the world-renowned House Ear Institute in Los Angeles, CA where she researched how cochlear implantation and perceptual learning changes the way the sound is encoded in the brain. It was too sunny in Los Angeles, so Kelly accepted an invitation to join the faculty at the University of Washington, where the weather is much more interesting and the culture feels much more like Canada. Almost 20 years later, Dr. Tremblay continues to mentor PhD and Aud students while creating knowledge through her program of research. The list of her accolades and awards is impressive and long, but at heart Kelly describes herself as a clinician and educator. She remains a passionate Canadian who splits her time between Vancouver and Seattle. For all of these reasons, Kelly agreed to join us and share her knowledge through this new column.

Why This column and Why this Format?

As a professor and audiologist, my audiology students often bring research articles to me with follow up questions. Sometimes the *take home* message gets lost when presented in research publications because information is communicated in a *one-way direction*. There is little opportunity for clinical audiologists to ask the authors questions; such as, "how can I convey this information to my patients/clients? Or, how might this information relate to a case I saw last week?" And there is little opportunity to researchers to learn from clinicians.

"Grand Central Station" is aimed at *connecting* clinicians with science, acknowledging that this is sometimes a *two-way return trip*. Readers will be invited to submit their questions regarding a research topic/article and these questions will be responded to, based on published research.

As the title implies, the focus will be the *central station* – the brain. It is the ultimate *arrival and departure* hub (*central station*) that is responsible for lines of communication. It is also the centre where intersecting lines of information from other senses merge. When combined with decision-making and other cognitive processes, meaningful communication and *connections* can take place. It is a structure that is well mapped, but new explorations are uncovering new *neural tracks* every day.

Here we invite you to *stay on track* by contributing to this column.

In the next issue, we'll review the central effects of noise exposure and how the presence or absence of a noise-notch in the audiogram does not tell us everything about the effect noise exposure can have on peripheral and central auditory mechanisms. Send me your questions @ tremblay@uw.edu on this topic as well as other burning questions for future issues.

All aboard!