

UW ECE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



KATHERINE PRATT, Ph.D.

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Katherine's specialization of research is in the field of neural elicitation of private information. Her dissertation focuses on accessibility to personal information via elicited neural signals, while using a brain-computer interface. "The 1995 movie, *Batman Forever!* is a fantastic piece of terrible 90's sci-fi but the plot of the movie is a close representation of my work," Katherine remarks, in that, "the Riddler is trying to discover the identity of Batman by creating a device to steal the brain signals of everyone in Gotham." Katherine uses a cap of electrodes to record reactions to images on a computer. This elicitation of specific responses has been shown to identify who you can recognize, where you live, or what is your favorite coffee shop. This can be extrapolated to find out what your bank pin numbers are and other personal information. "The questions on data privacy", Katherine says, "...have real world applications that I'm trying to quantify."

She gives this advice to prospective graduate students, "Pick a program that fits your passions and what you want to do. For the type of program and not the name. The research you do upfront, searching for certain criteria, will benefit you in the end."

Katherine features in the Marvel© Comic Series, *The Unstoppable Wasp*, as an agent of G.I.R.L.S: Genius in Action Research Labs. She is also a triathlon competitor.

