

Second Northwest Functional Analysis Symposium

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Functional analysis grew out of attempts—in the first half of the twentieth century—to find a conceptual framework for a wide range of analytic phenomena concerning algebraic systems of functions, such as existence and uniqueness of solutions to differential and integral equations. The discipline is well established at universities in Western Canada, with two large groups working at the Universities of Alberta and Victoria, respectively, and smaller groups elsewhere (Calgary and Regina, for instance).

Research in functional analysis in Western Canada is carried out in the following areas:

- Abstract harmonic analysis (Tony Lau and Volker Runde, both at Alberta);
- Banach space theory and geometric functional analysis (Sasha Litvak, Nicole Tomczak-Jaegermann, and Vaclav Zizler, all at Alberta);
- Operator algebras (Marcelo Laca, John Phillips, and Ian Putnam, all at Victoria, Berndt Brenken and Mike Lamoureux, at Calgary, and Martin Argerami and Juliana Erlijman, both at Regina);
- Operator theory (Doug Farenick at Regina, Ahmed Sourour at Victoria, and Vladimir Troitsky at Alberta).

The aims of the workshop were twofold: firstly, to enable researchers from a large geographical area to stay in touch with developments in the general field, but outside their respective areas of specialization, and secondly, to provide a forum for young researchers—junior faculty, postdocs, and graduate students—to present their results to a wider audience. For the second reason, five of the 14 talks at the workshop were given by graduate students, and four by postdocs.

Besides researchers in functional analysis from Western Canada, there were also participants whose research was not really in functional analysis, but in an area sufficiently close. For instance, Karoly Bezdek (Calgary) spoke about a topic in convex geometry, which has connections with geometric functional analysis, Bahram Rangipour (Victoria) presented results in non-commutative geometry, a discipline with many connections to operator algebras, and Alex Brudnyi was dealing with Lipschitz functions between metric spaces. As there turned out to be sufficient space at BIRS in the end, we were also able to invite people from Manitoba, and Ebrahim Samei (Manitoba) presented his results on hyper-Tauberian Banach algebras from his (soon to be defended) PhD thesis.

As indicated by the title of the workshop, there was a First Northwest Functional Analysis Symposium. It was held at BIRS in 2003 and organized by Tony Lau, Mike Lamoureux, Ian

Putnam, Nicole Tomczak-Jaegermann. At the present workshop, the possibility of a third meeting in the series was discussed, and the general attitude was positive. A successor meeting next year would probably be premature, but two years should generate enough new results and sufficient turnover in the postdoc and graduate student population to justify a Third Northwest Functional Analysis Symposium.