

Leor Hackel

University of Southern California, Department of Psychology
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hackellab.org

POSITIONS

Assistant Professor	2019-Present
Department of Psychology, University of Southern California	
Assistant Professor	Jan-June, 2019
Department of Psychology, Rutgers University	
Post-doctoral Fellow	2016-2018
Department of Psychology, Stanford University	

EDUCATION

PhD in Social Psychology , New York University	2016
Minor in Quantitative Psychology	
BS, Neuroscience & Behavior , <i>Summa Cum Laude</i> , Columbia University	2011
Departmental Honors in Neuroscience & Behavior	

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND HONORS

Fellow, Society of Experimental Social Psychology	2022
Rising Star Award, Association for Psychological Science	2021
Friends of Katzell Summer Fellowship, New York University	2014
Student Poster Award, Society for Personality & Social Psychology	2014
Graduate Student Outstanding Research Award, Society for Personality & Social Psychology	2014
Travel Award, Society for Personality & Social Psychology	2013
GSAS Dean's Conference Travel Award, New York University	2013
Travel Award, Center for Social & Political Behavior, New York University	2013
Honorable Mention, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	2013
Fellowship, NIH/University of Michigan Training Course in fMRI	2012
Engberg Award, NYU	2011
Jennifer A. Pack Prize in Psychology, Columbia University	2011

GRANTS

A Neural Model of Reinforcement Learning from Familiar Relational Roles. U.S.-Israel Binational Science Foundation: \$75,000. (2022-2024).

An Interdisciplinary Approach to Reducing Disparities in Social Capital. National Science Foundation, SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellowship: \$227,520. (2016-2018).

Neural Mechanisms of Social Learning. NYU Center for Brain Imaging Grant: \$10,000. (2014).

Neural Underpinnings of Identity-Related Social Preferences. NYU Center for Brain Imaging Grant: \$5,000. (2012-2013).

PUBLICATIONS

Babür, B. G., Leong, Y. C., Pan, C. X., & **Hackel, L. M.** (2024). Neural responses to social rejection reflect dissociable learning about relational value and reward. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 121(49), e2400022121.

Schultner, D. T., Stillerman, B. S., Lindström, B. R., **Hackel, L. M.**, Hagen, D. R., Jostmann, N. B., & Amodio, D. M. (2024). Transmission of societal stereotypes to individual-level prejudice through instrumental learning. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 121(45), e2414518121.

Hackel, L. M., Kalkstein, D. A., & Mende-Siedlecki, P. (2024). Simplifying social learning. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 28(5), 428-440.

Hackel, L. M., & Kalkstein, D. A. (2023). Social concepts simplify complex reinforcement learning. *Psychological Science*, 34(9), 968-983.

Hackel, L. M., & Mende-Siedlecki, P. (2023). Two modes of social impressions and their effects on choice. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 152(11), 3002-3020.

Sparkman, G., **Hackel, L. M.**, Randall Crosby, J., Gross, J. J., & Martin Hard, B. (2023). Connecting introductory psychology to climate change can empower students. *Teaching of Psychology*, 00986283231177949.

Cho, H., & **Hackel, L. M.** (2022). Instrumental learning of social affiliation through outcome and intention. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 151(9), 2204-2221.

Hackel, L. M., Mende-Siedlecki, P., Loken, S., & Amodio, D. M. (2022). Context-dependent learning in social interaction: Trait impressions support flexible social choices. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 123(4), 655-675.

Hackel, L. M., Kogon, D., Amodio, D. M., & Wood, W. (2022). Group value learned through interactions with members: A reinforcement learning account. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 99, 104267.

Rathje, S., **Hackel, L. M.**, & Zaki, J. (2021). Seeing live theatre improves empathy, changes attitudes, and leads to pro-social behavior. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 95, 104138.

Doell, K. C., Pärnamets, P., Harris E., **Hackel, L. M.**, & Van Bavel, J. J. (2021). Understanding the effects of partisan identity on climate change. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 42, 54-59.

- Kalkstein, D. A., **Hackel, L. M.**, & Trope, Y. (2020). Person-centered cognition: The presence of people in a visual scene promotes relational reasoning. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 90, 104009.
- Hackel, L. M.**, Wills, J., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2020). Shifting prosocial intuitions: Neurocognitive evidence for a value based account of group-based cooperation. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 15(4), 371-381.
- Wills, J., **Hackel, L. M.**, FeldmanHall, O., Pärnamets, P., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2020). The social neuroscience of cooperation. In Poeppel, D., Mangun, G. R., & Gazzaniga, M. S. (Eds.) *The Cognitive Neurosciences. 6th Edition*. MIT Press.
- Hackel, L. M.**, Mende-Siedlecki, P., & Amodio, D. M. (2020). Reinforcement learning in social interaction: The distinguishing role of trait inference. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 88, 103948.
- Hackel, L. M.**, Berg, J. J., Lindström, B. R., & Amodio, D. M. (2019). Model-based and model-free social cognition: Investigating the role of habit in social attitude formation and choice. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 2592.
- Hackel, L. M.**, & Amodio, D. M. (2018). Computational neuroscience approaches to social cognition. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 24, 92-97.
- Schmid, P., **Hackel, L. M.**, & Amodio, D. M. (2018). Power effects on instrumental learning: Evidence from the brain and behavior. *Motivation Science*, 4(3), 206-226.
- Hackel, L. M.** & Zaki, J. (2018). Propagation of economic inequality through reciprocity and reputation. *Psychological Science*, 29(4), 604-613.
- Hackel, L. M.**, Coppin, G., Wohl, M. J. A., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2018). From groups to grits: Social identity shapes evaluations of food pleasantness. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 74, 270-280.
- Schmid, P., **Hackel, L. M.**, Jasperse, L., & Amodio, D. M. (2018). Frontal cortical effects on feedback processing and reinforcement learning: Relation of EEG asymmetry with the feedback-related negativity and behavior. *Psychophysiology*, 55(1), e12911.
- Dixon-Gordon, K. L., Tull, M. T., **Hackel, L. M.**, & Gratz, K. L. (2018). The influence of emotional state on learning from reward and punishment in borderline personality disorder. *Journal of Personality Disorders* 32(4), 433-446.
- Hackel, L. M.**, & Zaki, J. (2017). My brain contains multitudes: The value of a flexible approach to identity. *Psychological Inquiry*, 28(2-3), 99-102.
- Hackel, L. M.**, Zaki, J., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2017). Social identity shapes social valuation: Evidence from prosocial behavior and vicarious reward. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 12(8), 1219-1228.

Hackel, L. M., Larson, G. M., Bowen, J. D., Ehrlich, G. A., Mann, T. C., Middlewood, B., Roberts, I. D., Eyal, J., Fetterolf, J.C., Gonzalez, F., Garrido, C. O., Kim, J., O'Brien, T., O'Malley, E. E., Mesquita, B., & Barrett, L.F. (2016). On the neural implausibility of the modular mind: Evidence for distributed construction dissolves boundaries between perception, cognition, and emotion. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 39.

Hackel, L. M., Doll, B. B., & Amodio, D. M. (2015). Instrumental learning of traits versus rewards: Dissociable neural correlates and effects on choice. *Nature Neuroscience*, 18, 1233-1235.

Featured in "News & Views": Hsu, M., & Jenkins, A. C. (2015). Character studies. *Nature Neuroscience*, 18, 1198-1199.

Hackel, L. M., Looser, C. E., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2014). Group membership alters the threshold for mind perception: The role of social identity, collective identification, and intergroup threat. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 52, 15-23.

Van Bavel, J. J., **Hackel, L. M.**, & Xiao, Y. J. (2014). The group mind: The pervasive influence of social identity on cognition. In J. Decety & Y. Christian (Eds.) *New frontiers in social neuroscience*. (pp. 41-56). Springer.

Van Bavel, J. J., Xiao, Y. J. & **Hackel, L. M.** (2013). Social identity shapes social perception and evaluation: Using neuroimaging to look inside the social brain. In B. Derks, D. Scheepers & N. Ellemers (Eds.) *The Neuroscience of Prejudice and Intergroup Relations*. (pp. 110-129). Psychology Press.

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVISION

Zhang, Y., & **Hackel, L. M.** (2023). Reward association with mental states shapes empathy and prosocial behavior. *Invited revision*.

MANUSCRIPTS SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION

Luo, J., Mende-Siedlecki, P., & **Hackel, L. M.** (2023). Rewards bias self-evaluations of ability. *Manuscript submitted for publication*.

SYMPOSIA CHAIRED

Hackel, L. M. (2024, May). *How semantic meaning shapes and is shaped by social learning*. Symposium chaired at the annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, San Francisco, CA.

Hackel, L. M., & Mende-Siedlecki, P. (2022, May). *Expectation versus experience: Prediction error in social cognition*. Symposium chaired at the annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, Chicago, IL.

Hackel, L. M., & Zaki, J. (2018, May). *How learning gives rise to morality*. Symposium chaired at the 30th annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, San Francisco, CA.

Hackel, L. M., & Zaki, J. (2018, March). *How learning gives rise to morality*. Symposium chaired at the 19th annual meeting of the Society for Personality & Social Psychology, Atlanta, GA.

Kalkstein, D., & Hackel, L. M. (2017, October). *Making cognition social: How thinking, reasoning, and learning change in social versus nonsocial situations*. Symposium chaired at the annual meeting of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology, Boston, MA.

Amodio, D. M., & Hackel, L. M. (2015, May). *Learning from social rewards and punishments: How social contexts transform the dynamics of reinforcement learning*. Symposium chaired at the 25th annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, New York, NY.

Hackel, L. M., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2013, May). *Group influences on mind perception*. Symposium chaired at the 25th annual meeting of Association for Psychological Science, Washington, D.C.

Hackel, L. M., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2013, January). *Group influences on mind perception: Novel insights into when and how we see minds across group divides*. Symposium chaired at the 14th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, New Orleans, LA.

TALKS

Hackel, L. M. (2024, May). *Social concepts simplify complex reinforcement learning*. Annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, San Francisco, CA.

Hackel, L. M. (2024, February). *Simplifying Social Decisions*. Judgment and Decision Making Preconference to the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Long Beach, CA.

Hackel, L. M. (2023, October). *Two modes of social impressions and their effects on choice*. Society for Experimental Social Psychology, Madison, WI.

Hackel, L. M. (2023, May). *An emotion regulation perspective on moral disagreement*. Open Minds conference, Florence, Italy.

Hackel, L. M. (2023, April). *Neural responses to social rejection reflect learning about relational value*. Annual meeting of the Social Affective Neuroscience Society, Santa Barbara, CA.

Hackel, L. M. (2023, March). *Simplicity in social learning*. UC Santa Barbara Social Psychology Colloquium.

Hackel, L. M. (2022, November). *Simplicity in social learning*. USC Psychology Department Colloquium.

Hackel, L. M. (2022, July). *Instrumental learning of social affiliation through outcome and intention*. Annual meeting of the International Society for Research on Emotion, Los Angeles, CA

Hackel, L. M. (2022, May). *Instrumental learning of social affiliation through outcome and intention*. Annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, Los Angeles, CA.

Hackel, L. M. (2021, October). *Instrumental learning of social affiliation through outcome and intention*. Annual meeting of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology, Santa Barbara, CA.

Hackel, L. M. (2021, May). *Generalization of social value across contexts*. Annual meeting of the Social Affective Neuroscience Society, Santa Barbara, CA.

Hackel, L. M. (2019, October). *An instrumental learning approach to social cognition: Neural substrates and behavioral implications*. University of California, Los Angeles.

Hackel, L. M. (2019, October). *Empathy as an engine of reciprocity*. University of Southern California.

Hackel, L. M. (2019, April). *Instrumental learning in social interaction*. Invited paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.

Hackel, L. M. (2019, February). *Instrumental learning in social interaction*. Rutgers-Princeton Center for Cognitive Computational Neuropsychiatry Seminar, Piscataway, NJ.

Hackel, L. M. (2019, January). *Instrumental learning in social interaction*. Yale University, New Haven, CT.

Hackel, L. M. (2018, October). *Empathy as an engine of reciprocity*. Neuroleadership Summit, New York, NY.

Hackel, L. M. (2018, August). *Social groups shape cooperation: Evidence from behavior and the brain*. Paper presented at the annual Mind & Life European Summer Research Institute, Chiemsee, Germany.

Hackel, L. M, & Zaki, J. (2018, March). *Propagation of economic inequality through reciprocity and reputation: A reinforcement learning account*. Paper presented at the 30th annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, San Francisco, CA.

Hackel, L. M, & Zaki, J. (2018, March). *Propagation of economic inequality through reciprocity and reputation: A reinforcement learning account*. Paper presented at the 19th annual meeting of the Society for Personality & Social Psychology, Atlanta, GA.

Hackel, L. M. (2017, December). *Instrumental learning in social interaction*. Departmental talk, Boston College, Boston, MA.

Hackel, L. M. (2017, November). *Instrumental learning in social interaction*. Departmental talk, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

Hackel, L. M. (2017, November). *Instrumental learning in social interaction*. Presented at the Wood Lab, University of Southern California.

Hackel, L. M., Mende-Siedlecki, P., & Amodio, D. M. (2017, October). *Trait inference distinguishes social versus nonsocial reinforcement learning*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology, Boston, MA.

Hackel, L. M. (2016, October). *Instrumental learning about people: Bridging action, value, and social cognition*. Paper presented at the Stanford University Psychology Department Affective Seminar, Stanford, CA.

Hackel, L. M., & Amodio, D. M. (2016, September). *Social interactions guided by habits*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology, Santa Monica, CA.

Hackel, L. M., & Amodio, D. M. (2016, August). *Habit and social cognition: Learning processes and effects on behavior*. Paper presented at the Habit-Driven Consumer meeting, Catalina Island, CA.

Hackel, L. M., Doll, B. B., & Amodio, D. M. (2016, April). *Instrumental learning of traits versus rewards: Dissociable neural correlates and effects on choice*. Paper presented at the 9th annual meeting of the Social and Affective Neuroscience Society, New York, NY.

Hackel, L. M., Doll, B. B., & Amodio, D. M. (2015, May). *Neural signatures of both trait and value learning guide social decisions*. Paper presented at the 27th annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, New York, NY.

Hackel, L. M., Doll, B. B., & Amodio, D. M. (2015, May). *Neural encoding of traits drives decision-making above and beyond reward learning*. Paper presented at the 5th annual Interdisciplinary Symposium on Decision Neuroscience, Boston, MA.

Hackel, L. M., Zaki, J., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2015, February). *Motivational components of group identification shape altruistic behavior and neural vicarious reward responses*. Data blitz presented at the Emotion Preconference to the 16th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Long Beach, CA.

Hackel, L. M., Looser, C. E., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2013, May). *Social identity alters mind perception*. Data blitz presented at the Four College Conference, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.

Hackel, L. M., Looser, C. E., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2013, April). *Social identity alters mind perception: Behavioral and neuroimaging evidence*. Paper presented at the 25th annual meeting of Association for Psychological Science, Washington, D.C.

Hackel, L. M., Looser, C. E., Jost, J. T., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2013, April). *Social identity alters mind perception: Behavioral and neuroimaging evidence*. Paper presented at the 6th annual meeting of the Social & Affective Neuroscience Society, San Francisco, CA.

Hackel, L. M., Looser, C. E., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2013, January). *Social identity alters the threshold for mind perception*. Paper presented at the 14th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, New Orleans, LA.

Hackel, L. M., Looser, C. E., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2012, May). *Failing to see the mind across the group divide: Social identity alters the threshold for mind perception*. Paper presented at the New York University Psychology Department, New York, NY.

POSTERS

Mende-Siedlecki, P., & Hackel, L. M. (2022, April). *Reference-dependent impressions bias social decisions*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Social Affective Neuroscience Society (virtual conference).

Zhang, Y.*, & Hackel, L. M. (2021, April). *Learning empathy via Pavlovian conditioning*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Social for Affective Science (virtual conference).

Cho, H.*, & Hackel, L. M. (2021, February). *Instrumental learning of social affiliation through outcome and intention*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (virtual conference).

Hackel, L. M., Mende-Siedlecki, P., Foerde, K., & Amodio, D. M. (2017, March). *Instrumental social learning across contexts*. Poster presented at the 10th annual meeting of the Social and Affective Neuroscience Society, Los Angeles, CA.

Hackel, L. M., Mende-Siedlecki, P., Loken, S., & Amodio, D. M. (2017, January). *Instrumental social learning across contexts*. Poster presented at the 18th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Antonio, TX.

Hackel, L. M., Coppin, G., Wohl, M. J. A., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2016, January). *From groups to grits: Identity shapes food evaluation*. Poster presented at the 17th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Diego, CA.

Hackel, L. M., Zaki, J., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2015, April). *Motivational components of group identification shape altruistic behavior and neural vicarious reward responses*. Poster presented at the 8th annual meeting of the Social and Affective Neuroscience Society, Boston, MA.

Hackel, L. M., Doll, B. B., & Amodio, D. M. (2015, March). *Neural signatures of both trait and value learning guide social decisions*. Poster presented at the 22nd annual meeting of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society, San Francisco, CA.

Hackel, L. M., Doll, B. B., & Amodio, D. M. (2015, March). *Learning about people through feedback: Reinforcement learning in social cognition*. Poster presented at the 16th annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Long Beach, CA.

Hackel, L. M., Looser, C. E., Jost, J. T., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2013, February). *Social identity shapes mind perception: Behavioral and neuroimaging evidence*. Poster session presented at the 15th Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Austin, TX.

Hackel, L. M., Looser, C. E., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2012, January). *Seeing minds: Social identity alters the threshold for mind perception*. Poster session presented at the Mind Perception Pre-Conference to the 13th Annual Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, San Diego, CA.

TEACHING

Psychology Department, University of Southern California

Instructor, Social Cognition 2020-

Instructor, Social Neuroscience 2021-

Instructor, Special Topics in Social Psychology Spring, 2021

Psychology Department, New York University

Teaching Assistant, *Cognition* Spring, 2016

Teaching Assistant, *Intermediate Graduate Statistics* Fall, 2014

Teaching Assistant, *Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences* Summer, 2013

Guest Lecturer, *Graduate Research Methods* Fall, 2012, 2014

Psychology Department, Columbia University

Guest Lecturer, *Intro to Social Cognition* Spring, 2011

Teaching Assistant, *Intro to Social Cognition* Spring, 2010 & 2011

MENTORING

PhD Trainees

- Yi Zhang, Jean Luo, Kira Harris

Undergraduate Honors Theses Advised

- Evans Alvarez (University of Southern California)
- Daniel Belkind (University of Southern California)
- Alexis Pinela (University of Southern California)
 - Provost's Undergraduate Research Fellowship recipient
- Stacy Beach (New York University)
 - Dean's Undergraduate Research Fellowship recipient
 - Dean's Undergraduate Research Conference, Panel Award
 - Doris Aaronson Award for Outstanding Thesis in Psychology
- Bosi Chen (New York University)
 - Dean's Undergraduate Research Fellowship recipient
 - Walter & Phyllis Loeb Research Scholarship
- Siri Loken (New York University)

- Dean's Undergraduate Research Fellowship recipient
- Hillary Ann Citrin Award for Outstanding Thesis in Psychology
- Jonathan Rosenthal (New York University)
 - Dean's Undergraduate Research Fellowship recipient
 - Dean's Undergraduate Research Conference, Panel Award
- Amanda Szerdi (Stanford University)
 - Undergraduate Advising & Research grant recipient
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EDITORIAL BOARDS

Associate Editor, Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience

2025-Present

REVIEWING: JOURNALS

Cognition; Cognitive Affective & Behavioral Neuroscience; Cognitive Science; Cerebral Cortex; Emotion; Group Processes and Intergroup Relations; Human Brain Mapping; Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience; Journal of Experimental Psychology: General; Journal of Experimental Social Psychology; Journal of Personality & Social Psychology; Nature Communications; Neuroimage; Neuropsychologia; PLoS One; Perspectives on Psychological Science; PNAS; Psychological Science; Review of General Psychology; Science: Advances, Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience; Social Psychological and Personality Science; Trends in Cognitive Sciences

REVIEWING: FUNDING AGENCIES

Israel Science Foundation; U.S. National Science Foundation

SERVICE

Reviewer , Social Affective Neuroscience Society conference	2024-2025
Social Behavior Lab Director , Psychology Department, USC	2022-
Steering Committee , Psychology Department, USC	2019-
Graduate Student Career Readiness Committee , Faculty Advisor, Psychology Department, USC	2021
Graduate Admissions Committee , Psychology Department, USC	2019-2021
Coordinator , Social Psychology Brown Bag Series, USC	2020-
Co-Chair , SPSP Climate Impact Task Force	2019-2020
Reviewer , Society for Personality & Social Psychology conference	2015-2023
Graduate Admissions Committee , Social Psychology, New York University	2014-2015
Coordinator , Social Neuroscience Journal Group, New York University	2012-2014

ORGANIZATIONS

Association for Psychological Science (APS)
 Social & Affective Neuroscience Society (SANS)
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)
 Society for Experimental Social Psychology (SESP)