

# Jean Luo

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## EDUCATION

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University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

2021-2026/7 (*expected*)

PhD Candidate in Social Psychology; Advisor: Leor Hackel

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

2017- 2021

Bachelor of Arts in Neuroscience with Applications of Computing certificate

Cumulative GPA: 3.87/4.00 (*Magna Cum Laude*)

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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### PhD Student

*Aug 2021 – Present*

Advised by Leor Hackel, Social Learning and Choice Lab, University of Southern California

- **Project 1 (2023-present).** Interpersonal Closeness and Meta-Perceptions in Dyadic Conversations
  - Designed, obtained funding, and ran in-person conversation study
  - Designed and ran online third-party observer study to investigate the markers of closeness and responsiveness as conversations unfold
  - Extracted multimodal features from conversations relating to facial expression, auditory cues, and semantic meaning and fit predictive model to understand the behavioral inputs to perceptions of interest
  - Designed, obtained funding, and set up fNIRS conversation study; data collection ongoing (20/50 pairs completed)
- **Project 2 (2023-present).** Reinforcement learning from familiar relational roles
  - Developed fMRI study to examine how people generalize rewarding experiences across social roles
  - Led data collection and analyses in SPM
  - Started new extension project investigating whether people generalize across social roles less for non-prototypical members
- **Project 3 (2022-present).** Influence of rewards and social comparison on self-evaluations of ability
  - Designed and developed new experimental paradigm that involves psychophysics games in which a staircase algorithm holds objective performance constant across participants
  - Examined the influence of rewards on self-concept and fit computational models to behavioral data
  - Examined the influence of social comparison on self-concept, as well as the moderating role of memory encoding style during learning
  - Wrote up project about reward influence on self-concept and submitted for publication

### Thesis Student

*Jan 2020 – May 2021*

Advised by Susan Fiske, Department of Psychology, Princeton University

- Investigated the role of social reward in motivating confirmation of interpersonal expectations in Senior Thesis
- Proposed and ran studies to test the role of verbal reinforcement and leading questions in behavioral confirmation
- Wrote and submitted IRB materials, created surveys in Qualtrics, recruited participants through Prolific, and analyzed data in Excel, R and Python
- Built Bayesian agent-based model to observe the conditions necessary for stereotype formation and maintenance in a population over time

### Student Researcher

*May 2020 – Jan 2021*

Computational Cognitive Science Lab, PI: Tom Griffiths, Department of Psychology, Princeton University

- Led project examining the effect of reward loss on cognitive effort avoidance

- Designed experimental paradigms and developed all study materials
- Set up front-end (HTML, Javascript, CSS) and back-end (Node.js, Mongo) for multiple versions of a web-based sequential-choice task
- Recruited participants on Prolific and analyzed decision and reaction time data

### Research Assistant

May 2018 – Dec 2019

Hasson Lab, PI: Uri Hasson, Princeton Neuroscience Institute, Princeton University

- Contributed to research towards mapping out representation of words in the brain
- Created and refined pre-processing pipeline to align EcoG data with audio recordings of speech
- Analyzed data using MATLAB and investigated predictability of brain waves during comprehension versus production of speech with a predictability measure called Active Information Storage (AIS)
- Implemented supervised machine learning methods in Python to examine performance of models in predicting EcoG brain waves during production versus comprehension of speech

### Summer Research Intern

Jun – Aug 2019

Couzin Lab, PI: Iain Couzin, Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior, University of Konstanz

- Investigated group dynamics of zebras in Kenya using drone footage
- Implemented image segmentation and optimization algorithm, wrote code to merge parts of image similar in texture and color, and trained a U-net model to automatically detect animal trails in landscape maps
- Shortened data processing pipeline by saving time on human annotations of landscape maps

## SCHOLARSHIPS AND HONORS

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| University of Southern California Graduate Student Government Professional Development Fund (\$500)      | 2025       |
| University of Southern California Ph.D. Academy Scholarship and Research Fund (\$400)                    | 2025       |
| University of Southern California Ph.D. Academy Certificate in Communication, Leadership, and Management | 2025       |
| Nominated (1 of 2 students) by Psychology Department for Gold Family Award                               | 2025       |
| University of Southern California Department of Psychology Travel Funding (\$1250)                       | 2024, 2025 |
| Psychology Department Doctoral Research Grant Award (\$1827)   | 2024       |
| Hearing and Communication Neuroscience Pre-Doctoral Fellowship (NIH T32)                                 | 2024, 2025 |
| University of Southern California Ph.D. Academy Scholarship and Research Fund (\$500)                    | 2022, 2024 |
| Selected for Methods in Neuroscience at Dartmouth (MIND) Summer School                                   | 2023       |
| Honorable Mention, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship                              | 2023       |
| University of Southern California Department of Psychology Travel Funding (\$1000)                       | 2022, 2023 |
| Psychology Department Doctoral Research Grant Award (\$1800)   | 2022       |
| External Fellowship Boot Camp Award (\$1000)   | 2022       |
| Max Planck Institute for Human Development Summer Institute Funding (travel and accommodation)           | 2022       |
| University of Southern California Graduate Student Government Professional Development Fund (\$500)      | 2022       |
| University of Southern California Department of Psychology Valentine Endowed Fellowship                  | 2021       |
| Princeton University Summer, Fall, and Spring Thesis Funding (\$4360 in total)                           | 2020-2021  |
| Princeton International Internship Program Summer Fellowship (housing, flight, and \$2000 stipend)       | 2019       |

## TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

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**Luo, J.** (Apr. 2025). From Rewards to Relationships: Learning about self and others in a social world. Presented at Hearing and Communication Neuroscience Program Retreat, University of Southern California.

**Luo, J.,** Kleiman, T., Kalkstein, D., & Hackel, L. (Apr. 2025). Neural Correlates of Learning and Choice from Familiar Social Roles. Poster Presentation, *Social and Affective Neuroscience Society (SANS) Conference*. Chicago, IL.

**Luo, J.** (Apr. 2025). Decoding Interest: Examining the Behavioral and Neural Underpinnings of Meta-Perceptions in Conversations. OHNS Research Seminar Series Talk, University of Southern California.

**Luo, J.,** Kleiman, T., & Hackel, L. (Feb. 2025). Stereotypes Influence Reward-Learning About Other People. Poster Presentation, *Society of Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention Social Cognition Preconference*. Denver, CO.

**Luo, J.,** Alvarez, E., Zimmerman, J., & Hackel, L. (Feb. 2025). Decoding Interest: Examining the Behavioral Cues that Signal Interest in Conversation. Poster Presentation, *Society of Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention Emotion Preconference*. Denver, CO.

**Luo, J.,** Mende-Siedlecki, P., & Hackel, L. (Apr. 2024). Rewards Bias Self-Evaluations of Ability. Blitz Talk and Poster Presentation, *Social and Affective Neuroscience Society (SANS) Conference*. Toronto, Canada.

**Luo, J.,** Mende-Siedlecki, P., & Hackel, L. (Feb. 2024). Rewards Bias Self-Evaluations in Novel Tasks. Poster Presentation, *Society of Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention*. San Diego, CA.

**Luo, J.,** Mende-Siedlecki, P., & Hackel, L. (Jan. 2024). Rewards Bias Self-Evaluations in Novel Tasks. Poster Presentation at Psychology Department Poster Party, University of Southern California.

**Luo, J.,** Mende-Siedlecki, P., & Hackel, L. (2023). Encoding Style Shapes Self-Concept Formation and Social Comparison. Poster Presentation, *SPSP Annual Convention*. Atlanta, GA.

**Luo, J. & Fiske, S.** (2022). The Rationality of Confirming Stereotypes. Poster Presentation, *Bounded Rationality Summer Institute*. Berlin, Germany.

**Luo, J. & Fiske, S.** (2022). Positive Verbal Reinforcement Shapes Confirmation of Interpersonal Expectations. Poster Presentation, *SPSP Annual Convention*. San Francisco, CA.

**Luo, J. & Fiske, S.** (2021). Maximizing Social Reward: Positive Verbal Reinforcement Shapes Confirmation of Interpersonal Expectations. Poster Presentation, *Princeton Research Day*. Princeton, NJ.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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**Luo, J.,** Mende-Siedlecki, P., & Hackel, L. Rewards Bias Self-Evaluations of Ability. *Communications Psychology*, 3(1), 143.

**Luo, J.,** Kleiman, T., Kalkstein, D., Zimmerman, J., & Hackel, L. (In prep). Neural responses to social concepts support simplification of complex reinforcement learning

## **TEACHING AND MENTORING**

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**Guest Lecturer,** Social Neuroscience, USC

*Fall 2024*

**Teaching Assistant,** USC

- PSYC 274: Statistics
- PSYC 100: Introduction to Psychology

*August 2023-May 2024*

*August 2022-May 2023*

## Peer Mentor, Graduate Association for Students in Psychology (GASP)

May 2022-Present

- Mentor first-year students, provide information about resources and guidance about coursework, research, and adjusting to graduate school

## Research Mentor

- Research Assistants: Chloe Xia (*Apr 2025- present*), Estrella Calvo Jung (*Jan 2025- present*), Unnatee Kumar (*Jan 2025- present*), Jiaji Jin (*Jan 2025- present*), Amber Hoddle (*Sep 2024- present*), Natalie Patton (*Sep 2024- present*), Macie Miller (*Jan 2023-Dec 2024*), Evans Alvarez (*Jan 2023-Aug 2025*), Nuo Chen (*Jan 2024- Aug 2024*), Yumeng Huang (*Jan 2023- July 2023*)
- Honors Thesis Student: Dan Belkind (*Jan 2022-May 2023*)

## Polygence Mentor, Polygence

- Project 1: How does self-concept clarity affect body image leading to an eating disorder? (2022)
  - Mentored student on ideation, writing, and showcasing of project
- Project 2: Exploring the Influence of Personality on Situational Judgements (2025)
  - Mentored student through developing research questions, literature search, data collection and analysis, and paper writeup and presentation

## ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

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### GASP Executive Board

- **Co-President** *May 2024- May 2025*
  - Planned and organized social events including new-student orientation and serve as liaison between department administration and student body
  - Managed other officer positions and oversaw all programming
- **Mentorship Program Coordinator** *May 2022- May 2023*
  - Coordinated mentorship program to help first-year students transition to graduate school, planned social events, and addressed any student concerns
  - Organized social events and serve as liaison between faculty and students

### EqualAI Research Fellow

*Jun-Aug 2021*

- Built online platform to launch program designed to prepare senior executives for responsible AI governance
- Compiled reading materials and created corresponding assessment tools

### GetSet After-School Program Tutor

*Jan 2019- Mar 2020*

- Designed and led after-school activities once a week for students K-8 in Trenton
- Taught students how to read and assisted with homework

## SKILLS

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**Programming:** R, Python, HTML/CSS/Javascript (JsPsych), MATLAB

**Research Tools:** PsychoPy, Qualtrics, Prolific/Mturk

**Languages:** Mandarin Chinese (fluent), German (beginner)