Jae-Young Son

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Academic Appointments

2024 - Postdoctoral Research Associate, Brown University
Dept. of Cognitive & Psychological Sciences
Supervisor: Serra E. Favila

Education

2018-2024 Ph.D. Psychology, Brown University
Dept. of Cognitive, Linguistic, & Psychological Sciences
Supervisor: Oriel FeldmanHall

2012-2016 B.A. Psychology, Stanford University

Preprints & Recent Conference Papers

1. **Son, J.***, Carstensen, D.L.*, & Favila, S.E. (preprint). Humanlike representation of social networks in large language models. *PsyArXiv*. ** Co-first author.*
   Preprint | PDF

2. **Son, J.**, & Favila, S.E. (2026). Memories reflect the expected value of abstraction. Presented at the 9th Annual Conference on Cognitive Computational Neuroscience, New York, NY.
   Online (PDF)

Publications

3. **Son, J.** (2026). Towards a unified theory of social relationships and social networks. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. Commentary on Thomas, 2026.
   Online | Post-print | PDF

4. Teoh, Y.Y.*, **Son, J.***, Xia, A., Bhandari, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2026). Medial temporal lobe encodes cognitive maps of real-world social networks. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. ** Co-first author.*
   Online | PDF | Data & Code

5. Walker, A.C., **Son, J.**, Teoh, Y.Y., & FeldmanHall, O. (2026). The emotional cost of political engagement. *Emotion*.
   Online | PDF | Data & Code

6. Aslarus, I.C., **Son, J.**, Xia, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2025). Early insight into social network structure predicts climbing the social ladder. *Science Advances.*
   Online | PDF | Data | Code

7. FeldmanHall, O., **Son, J.**, Bhandari, A. (2025). Abstract cognitive maps for complex social systems. *Current Directions in Psychological Science.*
   Online | PDF

8. **Son, J.***, Vives, M-L.*, Bhandari, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2024). Replay shapes abstract cognitive maps for efficient social navigation. *Nature Human Behaviour. * Co-first author.*
   Online | PDF | Data & Code

9. **Son, J.**, Bhandari, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2023). Abstract cognitive maps of social network structure aid adaptive inference. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.
   Online | PDF | Data & Code

10. **Son, J.**, Bhandari, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2021). Cognitive maps of social features enable flexible inference in social networks. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.
    Online | PDF | Data & Code

11. Heffner, J., **Son, J.**, & FeldmanHall, O. (2021). Emotion prediction errors guide socially adaptive behaviour. *Nature Human Behaviour.*
    Online | PDF | Data & Code

12. **Son, J.**, Bhandari, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2019). Crowdsourcing punishment: Individuals reference group preferences to inform their own punitive decisions. *Scientific Reports.*
    Online | PDF | Data & Code

13. FeldmanHall, O., **Son, J.**, & Heffner, J. (2018). Norms and the flexibility of moral action. *Personality Neuroscience.*
    Online | PDF

Archival Preprints

14. Williams, W.C., Leong, Y.C., Collier, E.A., Nook, E.C., **Son, J.**, & Zaki, J. (2021). Communicating emotion through facial expressions: Social consequences and neural correlates. *PsyArXiv.*
Preprint | PDF

Grants & Fellowships

2025-2027 NINDS/NIH
Advancing Research Careers of Women and PEERs in Brain Science
How the expected value of abstraction shapes memory.
(Role: ARC Scholar; $25,000 direct costs; award R25NS124530; PIs Diane Lipscombe & Carlos D. Aizenman)

2023-2024 Robert J. and Nancy D. Carney Institute for Brain Science Graduate Award
($68,000 fellowship support)

2022-2023 Betty R.H. and James M. Pickett Endowed Fellowship in Psychology

2019-2022 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program
($138,000 fellowship support, award #2040433)

Awards & Honors

2022 Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching, Brown University
Brown University's top honor for graduate teaching, awarded to four graduate students annually.

2016 Undergraduate Departmental Honors, Stanford University
Honors thesis supervised by W. Craig Williams, Diana Tamir, & Jamil Zaki.

Chaired Symposia

2024 Neural, network, and neural network approaches for social relational representation.
Symposium presented at the 16th Annual Meeting of the Social & Affective Neuroscience Society, Toronto, Canada. Speakers: Eshin Jolly (co-chair), Manasi Malik, Miriam Schwyck, Jae-Young Son (co-chair).

Invited Talks

2026 Consortium for Interacting Minds, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH.
2026 Seminar, Dept. of Psychology, Yale University, New Haven, CT.
2025 Colloquium, Dept. of Psychology, Tufts University, Medford, MA.

2025 Lab meeting (PI Ashley J. Thomas), Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
2025 Colloquium, Dept. of Psychological & Brain Sciences, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD.
2025 Colloquium, Dept. of Psychology, Columbia University, New York, NY.
2024 Lab meeting (PI Nico Schuck), Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, Germany.
2024 Lab meeting (PIs Matthew Apps, Romy Froemer, Arkady Konovalov, Patricia Lockwood, & Lei Zhang), University of Birmingham, Birminghak, UK.
2024 Lab meeting (PI Jon Freeman), Columbia University, New York, NY.
2023 Lab meeting (PI Juliet Davidow), Northeastern University, Boston, MA.
2023 New England Research on Decision-Making, Cambridge, MA.
2023 Lab meeting (PIs Fiery Cushman, Mina Cikara, & Joshua Greene), Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
2023 Lab meeting (PI Rebecca Saxe), MIT, Cambridge MA.
2022 Emerging Scholars of Psychological Science, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.
2022 Lab meeting (PI Soyoung Park), Decisional Neuroscience and Nutrition at the German Institute of Human Nutrition (DIfE), Potsdam, Germany.
2022 Social Minds Reading Group, Center for Adaptive Rationality at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, Germany.
2021 Lab meeting (PIs Amit Goldenberg & Jullian Jordan), Harvard Business School, Cambridge, MA.
2021 Seminar, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India.
2021 Seminar, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland.
2021 Lab meeting (PI Hyowon Gweon), Stanford, CA.
2021 Lab meeting (PI Yuko Munakata), UC Davis, Davis, CA.
2019 New England Research on Decision-Making, Cambridge, MA.
2018 Lab meeting (PI Liane Young), Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA.
2017 New England Research on Decision-Making, Providence, RI.

Selected Posters & Conference Abstracts

Son, J., & Favila, S.E. (2026). Memories reflect the expected value of abstraction. Presented at the 9th Annual Conference on Cognitive Computational Neuroscience, New York, NY. *** Recognized as Spotlight poster (top 10% of all peer-reviewed abstracts)*

Son, J.*, Carstensen, D.L.*, Sayette, A., & Favila, S.E. (2026). Multistep representation of social networks in large language models. Presented at the 9th Annual Conference on Cognitive Computational Neuroscience, New York, NY. ***** Equal contribution.*

Teoh, Y.Y., **Son, J.**, Xia, A., Aslarus, I., Bhandari, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2024). Hippocampal encoding of abstract cognitive maps supports navigation in a real-world social network. Presented at the 7th Annual Conference on Cognitive Computational Neuroscience, Cambridge, MA.

Son, J., Vives, M.L., Bhandari, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2024). Replay shapes abstract cognitive maps for efficient social navigation. Presented at the 7th Annual Conference on Cognitive Computational Neuroscience, Cambridge, MA.

Aslarus, I., **Son, J.**, Xia, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2024). Mental representation of network structure drives later network position in real-world social networks. Presented at the 16th Annual Meeting of the Social & Affective Neuroscience Society, Toronto, Canada.

Aslarus, I., **Son, J.**, & FeldmanHall, O. (2023). Network position biases mental representations of real-world social networks. Presented at the 21st Annual Conference of the Society for NeuroEconomics, Vancouver, Canada.

Son, J., Bhandari, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2022). The Successor Representation explains how people infer unobserved relationships in social networks. Presented at the 5th Multidisciplinary Conference on Reinforcement Learning and Decision Making, Providence, RI.
*** Recognized as Spotlight poster*

Son, J., Bhandari, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2020). Structural knowledge adaptively shapes the representation of social networks. Presented at the 18th Annual Meeting of the Society for NeuroEconomics (virtual).

Son, J., Bhandari, A., & FeldmanHall, O. (2019). Crowdsourcing punishment: Individuals reference group preferences to inform their own punitive decisions. Presented at the 6th Annual Meeting of the Society for Affective Science, Boston, MA.

Son, J., & FeldmanHall, O. (2017). A tipping-point conformity effect for justice: Group choice shifts preferences for punishment. Presented at the 29th Annual Meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, Boston, MA.

Williams, W.C., Leong, Y.C., **Son, J.**, Alqueza, K., & Zaki, J. (2016). Facial expressions track brain regions associated with affective salience and theory of mind. Presented at the 9th Annual Meeting of the Social & Affective Neuroscience Society, New York, NY.

Williams, W.C., Nook, E., **Son, J.**, & Zaki, J. (2014). Audiences enhance the expression and communication but not the experience of emotion. Presented at the 7th Annual Meeting of the Social & Affective Neuroscience Society, Denver, CO.

Teaching

2021 Guest Instructor, Computational Psychiatry Course Zurich. Translational Neuromodeling Unit, Zurich, Switzerland.
Delivered introductory lecture on drift diffusion modeling (DDM) to an audience of 400+ attendees. Taught hands-on tutorial for using the HDDM package.

2021 Teaching Assistant, CLPS 0010: Mind, Brain, and Behavior: An Interdisciplinary Approach. Brown University, Providence, RI. Supervisor: Dr. Elena Festa.
Taught in Summer 2021 and Fall 2021. Weekly sections in an introductory lecture course with an enrollment of 200 students. Delivered solo guest lecture on social psychology, developed de novo.

2019-2021 Guest Instructor, Computational Modeling Workshop. Carney Institute for Brain Science, Brown University, Providence, RI.
Delivered hands-on workshop for using the HDDM package.

2020 Teaching Assistant, CLPS 0700: Social Psychology. Brown University, Providence, RI. Supervisor: Dr. Oriel FeldmanHall.
Introductory lecture course with an enrollment of 300 students. Delivered solo guest lecture on attribution.

2019 Teaching Assistant, CLPS 1790: Personality and Clinical Assessment. Brown University, Providence, RI. Supervisor: Dr. Jack Wright.
Upper-level lab course with capped enrollment of 24 students. Assisted students with formulating their own research questions, collecting and analyzing data, and writing academic manuscripts.

2019 Workshop Instructor, Data Science Using R. Brown University, Providence, RI. Primary instructor.
Weekly undergraduate-level workshop. Covered data wrangling, visualization, and mixed-effects regression.

2019 Guest Lecturer, Summer @ Brown. Brown University, Providence, RI.
Delivered a lecture entitled "Social Preferences and the Brain" for the class "Neuroeconomics: The science of decision-making", which was part of the "Summer @ Brown" summer school for high school students.

2018 Workshop Instructor, Programming Psychology Experiments. Brown University, Providence, RI. Primary instructor.
Three-part workshop teaching the fundamentals of programming computerized psychology experiments using PsychToolbox in Matlab.

2014-2016 Teaching Fellow, Psych One: Introduction to Psychology. Stanford University, Stanford, CA. Supervisors: Drs. Bridgette Martin-Hard, James Gross, Jamil Zaki, & Greg Walton.
Taught weekly sections (13-15 students each) in F14, W15, W16, and S16.

Scientific & Community Outreach

2024 Volunteer, Brown Brain Fair.
Delivered a "flash talk" on spatial navigation and hippocampal replay.

2023 Volunteer, Brown Brain Fair.
Helped design materials to introduce community members (primarily children) to the science of affect, emotion, and social decision making. Delivered a "flash talk" on the neuroscience of cognitive maps.

2020-2021 Study Group Mentor, Leadership Alliance.
Provided mentorship for undergraduate students (the Carney Brain Science cohort) participating in Leadership Alliance, an organization that provides research opportunities to students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups.

2021 Lesson Plan Designer, Brain Week Rhode Island.
Helped design a lesson plan and multimedia materials to introduce Rhode Island students to the brain sciences, specifically to the science of intergroup cognition.

2019 Guest Workshop Instructor, Leadership Alliance.
Delivered workshop to students participating in Leadership Alliance, an organization that provides research opportunities to students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups. Discussed and practiced the principles of effective scientific writing and communication.

2016 Co-organizer, Stanford Undergraduate Psychology Conference.
An entirely undergraduate-organized conference hosted at Stanford University, featuring research from undergraduates from around the U.S. and internationally.

2014-2016 Organizer, Stanford Undergraduate Psychology Association.
Helped organized events for undergraduate students and community members to learn about (and engage in) psychological science. Primary organizer for a discussion with Dr. Albert Bandura regarding his newly-published book, Moral Disengagement*. Co-organizer for a screening of the film* The Stanford Prison Experiment*, and a panel discussion with Dr. Philip Zimbardo afterwards.*



Left: *Facilitating a discussion with Dr. Bandura about his newly-published book,* Moral Disengagement.
Right: *SUPA event organizers with Dr. Zimbardo following a special screening of the* Stanford Prison Experiment *movie and subsequent panel discussion.*

Professional & Departmental Service

2026-2027	Peer Mentor, Cognitive Computational Neuroscience Mentorship Program
2025	Ad Hoc Grant Reviewer, National Science Foundation
2020-2022	Graduate Representative, Graduate Council, Carney Institute for Brain Science
2020-2022	Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) committee Member of "Hiring & Recruitment" sub-committee
2020-2022	Co-Organizer, Social Cognitive Seminar Series, Brown Dept. of CLPS
2019-2021	Student Committee, Society for Affective Science (SAS) Member of "Diversity & Innovation" sub-committee
2019-2020	Social Media Editor, Personality Neuroscience, Cambridge University Press
2019-2020	Graduate Student Representative, Brown Dept. of CLPS
2018-2019	Social Events Co-Chair, Brown Dept. of CLPS
2017	Co-Organizer, New England Research on Decision-Making (NERD)

Ad Hoc Review

- Cognition
- Cognitive Science
- Communications Psychology
- eLife
- Journal of Experimental Psychology: General (JEPG)
- Journal of Experimental Social Psychology (JESP)
- Journal of Personality and Social Psychology (JPSP)
- Open Mind
- Psychological Science
- Psychonomic Bulletin & Review
- Royal Society Open Science
- Social, Cognitive, and Affective Neuroscience (SCAN)
- Social Neuroscience

Theses Supervised

2021 Martina Pesce, Master's Thesis, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Popular Science Writing

Carney Institute for Brain Science

- 2021: Cognitive maps play decisive role in helping people learn social information, study finds
- 2019: What is love? Here's what brain science can tell us.

Media Coverage

Carney Institute for Brain Science

- 2021: The next generation of scientists on the future of brain science.

Brown Daily Herald

- 2026: Engaging with politics increases feelings of emotional volatility, Brown researchers find
- 2021: U. researchers find that cognitive maps are used to navigate social networks
- 2018: FeldmanHall Lab demystifies human behavior
- 2017: New lab studies emotional decision-making