

Research Opening in the Cushman Lab

Graduate student advisor: Jorie Koster-Hale

Faculty advisor: Fiery Cushman

Description of research: For humans, success and even survival depend upon our ability to guess what others will do before they do it. Social prospection, the ability to reason about the possible future actions of others, relies on ability to make inferences about an internal, unobservable causal structure: goals and beliefs, preferences and personality traits.

In the Moral Psychology Research Lab, we are interested in understanding the cognitive and neural processes that give rise to this kind of complex social decision making, including moral judgment and theory of mind.

We looking for someone to help with neuroimaging and behavioral projects related to mental state reasoning, neural coding, and social inference. The position will include getting certified to operate an fMRI scanner, and learning to do experimental design, stimulus creation, and analysis of neural and behavioral data.

Responsibilities: Your work would include learning background about the field, designing experimental stimuli, conducting experiments, doing data analysis and presentation, and potentially taking the lead on future experiments.

The position is for 10-15 hours a week, with flexible hours. Some, but not all of this time, will spent be in lab, for weekly meetings, running participants, and attending talks of interest. The rest can be done from home or at a desk in the lab space. The lab is located in William James Hall (33 Kirkland Street), and most research will happen on campus.

Preference will be given to those able to commit to the position for at least 2 semesters, and a background in any of reenforcement learning, computational modeling, matlab, or R is particularly welcome.

For more information about the lab, please visit our website: <http://cushmanlab.fas.harvard.edu>

Status: Volunteer or course credit through Psych 2560r.

Contact: If you are interested, please email Jorie Koster-Hale (jorie@mit.edu) with a brief paragraph about yourself and a current CV. Include "Undergraduate RA position: [name]".

Thank you!