

Robert P. Spunt, Ph.D.

Contact Information

Division of Humanities and Social Sciences
California Institute of Technology, MC 228-77
Pasadena, CA 91125

Email: spunt@caltech.edu
Website: bobspunt.com
GitHub: github.com/spunt

Employment

2012 - Present **California Institute of Technology**
Postdoctoral Fellow
Advisor: Ralph Adolphs

2011 - 2012 **University of California, Los Angeles**
Postdoctoral Scholar
Advisor: Naomi I. Eisenberger

Education

2005 – 2011 **University of California, Los Angeles**
Ph.D. - Social and Cognitive Psychology (June, 2011)
Advisor: Matthew D. Lieberman

1999 – 2003 **University of California, Berkeley**
B.A. - Psychology
B.A. - Rhetoric

Honors and Awards

2014 - Present Della Martin Postdoctoral Fellowship in Mental Health

2013 Instructor, University of Michigan Summer Training Course in fMRI

2013 Association for Psychological Science Rising Star Honor

2011 Trainee, UCLA Neuroimaging Training Program

2011 UCLA Department of Psychology Award for Dissertation in Social Psychology

2011 NIMH Interdisciplinary Behavioral Science Center Conference Travel Award

2010 - 2011 UCLA Gordon Hein Memorial Fellowship

2010 UCLA Shepherd Ivory Franz Distinguished Teaching Award

2009 Trainee, University of Michigan Summer Training Course in fMRI

2007 Trainee, UC Santa Barbara Summer Institute In Cognitive Neuroscience

Publications

- Scheele D, Schwering C, **Spunt RP**, Elison JT, Maier W, Hurlemann R (in press) A human tendency to anthropomorphize is enhanced by oxytocin. *European Neuropsychopharmacology*.
- Spunt RP** & Adolphs R (2015). Folk explanations of behavior: A specialized use of a domain-general mechanism. *Psychological Science*. 26(6), 724-736.
- Spunt RP**, Elison JT, Dufour N, Hurlemann R, Saxe R, & Adolphs R (2015). Amygdala lesions do not compromise the cortical network for false-belief reasoning. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 112(15), 4827–4832.
- Spunt RP**, Meyer ML, & Lieberman MD (2015). The default mode of human brain function primes the intentional stance. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*. 27(6), 1116-1124.
- Schaafsma SM, Pfaff DW, **Spunt RP**, & Adolphs R (2015). Deconstructing and Reconstructing "Theory of Mind". *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*. 19(2), 65-72.
- Spunt RP** & Adolphs R (2014). Validating the why/how the contrast for functional MRI studies of Theory of Mind. *NeuroImage*. 99, 301-311.
- Spunt RP** (2014). Dual-Process Theories in Social Cognitive Neuroscience. In A. Toga & MD Lieberman (eds.) *Brain Mapping: An Encyclopedic Reference*. Elsevier: Oxford.
- Spunt RP** & Lieberman MD (2014). Automaticity, control, and the social brain. In Sherman, Gawronski & Trope (eds.) *Dual process theories of the social mind*. Guilford Press: New York.
- Lick DJ, Carpinella CM, Preciado MA, **Spunt RP**, & Johnson KL (2013). Reverse-correlating mental representations of sex-typed bodies: the effect of number of trials on image quality. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 4(476), 1-9.
- Spunt RP** (2013). Mirroring, mentalizing, and the social neuroscience of listening. *International Journal of Listening*. 27(2), 61-72.
- Spunt RP** & Lieberman MD (2013). The busy social brain: evidence for automaticity and control in the neural systems supporting social cognition and action understanding. *Psychological Science*. 24(1), 80-86.
- Spunt RP** & Lieberman MD (2012). Dissociating modality-specific and supramodal neural systems for action understanding. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 31(10), 3575-3583.
- Meyer ML, **Spunt RP**, Berkman ET, Taylor SE, & Lieberman MD (2012). Evidence for social working memory from a parametric fMRI study. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 109, 1883-1888.
- Spunt RP** & Lieberman MD (2012). An integrative model of the neural systems supporting the comprehension of observed emotional behavior. *NeuroImage*. 59, 3050-3059.
- Falk EB, **Spunt RP**, & Lieberman MD (2012). Ascribing beliefs to ingroup and outgroup political candidates: Neural correlates of perspective taking, issue importance, and days until the election. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*. 367, 731-743.

- Spunt RP**, Lieberman MD, Cohen JR & Eisenberger NI (2012). The phenomenology of error processing: the dorsal anterior cingulate response to stop-signal errors tracks reports of negative affect. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*. 24, 1753-1765.
- Spunt RP**, Satpute AB, & Lieberman MD (2011). Identifying the what, why, and how of an observed action: an fMRI study of mentalizing and mechanizing during action observation. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*. 23(1), 63-74.
- Spunt RP**, Falk EB, & Lieberman MD (2010). Dissociable neural systems support retrieval of how and why action knowledge. *Psychological Science*. 21(11), 1593-1598.
- Spunt RP**, Rassin E, & Epstein L (2009). Aversive and avoidant indecisiveness: Roles for regret proneness, maximization, and BIS/BAS sensitivities. *Personality and Individual Differences*. 47(4), 256-261.

Presentations

- Spunt RP** (April 2007). The role of intuitive confidence in performance and confidence during problem-solving. Invited talk presented in the Social Psychology colloquium at the University of California, Los Angeles.
- Spunt RP** & Rassin E (March 2008). Trait indecisiveness from an approach/avoidance perspective: The role of regret, maximization, and attitudes towards risk. Poster presentation at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Conference.
- Spunt RP**, Satpute AB, & Lieberman MD (June 2008). Describing the Why, What and How of Action: An fMRI study of action identification. Poster presentation at the Social and Affective Neuroscience Conference.
- Spunt RP**, Satpute AB, & Lieberman MD (February 2009). Identifying the what, why and how of an observed action: an FMRI study of action identification. Poster presentation at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Conference.
- Spunt RP**, Falk EB, & Lieberman MD (October 2009). Why and how do people do what they do? An fMRI study of mentalizing and mechanizing known actions. Poster presentation at the Social and Affective Neuroscience Conference.
- Spunt RP** (October 2009). The role of intuitive confidence in performance and confidence during problem-solving. Talk presented at the Association for Consumer Research Conference.
- Spunt RP**, Kahn K, Frederick S, & Lieberman MD (January 2010). A special case of stereotype threat improving mathematical performance in women and impairing it in men. Poster presentation at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Conference.
- Spunt RP**, & Lieberman MD (October 2010). Understanding the mental and mechanical aspects of others: Towards a reconciliation of mirror neuron and mental state inference accounts of social cognition. Poster presentation at the Social and Affective Neuroscience Conference.
- Meyer ML, Berkman ET, **Spunt RP**, Rameson LT, & Lieberman MD (October 2010). Social working memory. Poster presentation at the Social and Affective Neuroscience Conference.

Spunt RP & Lieberman MD, Cohen JR. & Eisenberger NI (January 2011). Is there cognitive pain? An fMRI study of negative affect during the exertion of cognitive control. Poster presentation at the NIMH Interdisciplinary Behavioral Science Center Conference.

Spunt RP & Lieberman MD (January 2011). The neural systems of understanding emotional expressions: distinct roles for mirror and mentalizing systems in how and why construals. Poster presentation at the Emotion preconference at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Spunt RP & Lieberman MD (January 2011). The busy social brain: an fMRI study of cognitive load during action understanding. Poster presentation at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Meyer ML, Berkman ET, **Spunt RP**, Rameson LT, & Lieberman MD (January 2010). Social working memory. Poster presentation at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Spunt RP (April 2011). Mirroring bodies, inferring minds: an fMRI study of behavior identification and mental state inference during action understanding. Talk presented at the annual meeting of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society.

Yan L, **Spunt RP**, Kilroy D, Gunter, M, Lieberman MD & Wang, DJJ (May 2011). GRASE functional MRI with asymmetric spin-echo. Poster presentation at annual meeting of the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine.

Spunt RP (April 2011). Identifying behavior, inferring mental states: an integrative model of the social cognitive brain. Invited talk in the Department of Psychology at Indiana University.

Spunt RP (December 2011). The social perceiver as naive scientist: causal explanation of behavior in the brain. Invited talk in the Department of Psychology at Dartmouth College.

Spunt RP (January 2012). The brain of the naive scientist: an identification-attribution model. Talk presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Spunt RP (April 2012). The phenomenology of error processing: the dorsal anterior cingulate response to stop-signal errors tracks reports of negative affect. Talk presented at the annual meeting of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society.

Spunt RP (October 2012). Investigating the neural bases of social inference. Invited talk for the California Institute of Technology Computational Neuroeconomics mini-conference.

Spunt RP (October 2012). Investigating the neural bases of social inference. Invited talk for the California Institute of Technology Computational Neuroeconomics mini-conference.

Spunt RP (December, 2012). The brain of the naïve psychologist: fMRI studies of explaining behavior. Invited talk in the Department of Psychology at University of Mary Washington.

Spunt RP & Lieberman MD (January, 2013). The neural correlates of observing nonverbal behavior critically depend on the observer's goals. Talk presented at the Nonverbal Behavior preconference at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Spunt RP (January, 2013). The naïve psychologist's brain: investigating attribution using functional MRI. Invited talk in the Department of Psychology at Princeton University.

Spunt RP, Meyer ML, & Lieberman MD (March, 2013). The dorsomedial prefrontal cortex response to fixation baseline is associated with efficient social inference. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Caltech-Tamagawa gCOE Program.

Spunt RP, Meyer ML, & Lieberman MD (April, 2013). The dorsomedial prefrontal cortex response to fixation baseline is associated with efficient social inference. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society.

Spunt RP, Elison, JT, Dufour, N, Hurlemann, R, Saxe, R, & Adolphs R (November, 2013). An Intact Cortical Network for Theory of Mind in Three Adults with Bilateral Amygdala Lesions. Poster to be presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Social Neuroscience.

Spunt RP, Elison, J. T, Dufour, N, Hurlemann, R, Saxe, R, & Adolphs R. (November, 2013). An Intact Cortical Network for Theory of Mind in Three Adults with Bilateral Amygdala Lesions. Poster to be presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience.

Spunt RP (November, 2013). Attribution: A Social Cognitive Neuroscience Approach. Invited talk in the Department of Psychology at Harvard University.

Spunt RP (January, 2014). Attribution: A Social Cognitive Neuroscience Approach. Invited talk in the Department of Psychology at Ohio State University.

Spunt, RP (January, 2014). Attribution: A Social Cognitive Neuroscience Approach. Invited talk in the Department of Psychology at University of California, Santa Barbara.

Spunt RP (February, 2014). Automaticity and Control in Social Cognitive Neuroscience. Talk presented at the Social Cognition preconference at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Spunt RP (February, 2014). A Framework for Investigating Automaticity and Control in Social Cognitive Neuroscience. Talk presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Service

Ad Hoc Reviewer Age and Aging; British Journal of Psychiatry; Behavioral Neuroscience; Brain and Language; Cerebral Cortex; Cognition; Emotion; European Journal of Social Psychology; Experimental Brain Research; Frontiers in Human Neuroscience; Human Brain Mapping; Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience; Neurocase; Neurolmage; Neuropsychologia; Psychological Science; Psychonomic Bulletin & Review

Consulting Editor Social, Cognitive, and Affective Neuroscience

Graduate-Level Teaching

Summer 2014	Functional MRI Design and Data Analysis Labs Instructor, Summer Training Course in fMRI, University of Michigan
Summer 2011	Methods in Social Cognitive Neuroscience Workshop for Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Labs, UCLA
Winter 2011	Computational Methods in Neuroimaging Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles
2009 – 2010	Presentation of Psychological Materials Teaching Assistant Consultant, University of California, Los Angeles

Undergraduate-Level Teaching

Winter 2009	Human Motivation Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles Instructor: Bernard Weiner
Fall 2008	Experimental Research Methods in Social Psychology Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles Instructor: Naomi Eisenberger
Spring 2008	Introduction to Social Psychology Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles Instructor: Sabrina Pagano
Winter 2008	Introduction to Social Psychology Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles Instructor: Benjamin Karney
Fall 2007	Introduction to Social Cognition Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles Instructor: Matthew D. Lieberman
Spring 2007	Experimental Research Methods in Social Psychology Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles Instructor: Elisheva Gross
Winter 2007	Experimental Research Methods in Psychology Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles Instructor: Elizabeth Bjork
Fall 2006	Introduction to Social Psychology Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles Instructor: Paul Davies
Summer 2006	Experimental Research Methods in Social Psychology Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles Instructor: Adam Fingerhut and Elisheva Gross