

# EMALIE MCMAHON

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<https://emaliemcmahon.github.io>

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**Massachusetts Institute of Technology**, Boston, MA 2025–*current*  
Postdoctoral research associate  
Advisor: Nancy Kanwisher

**National Institute of Mental Health**, Bethesda, MD 2017–2019  
Postbaccalaureate research fellow  
Advisors: Leslie Ungerleider and Maryam Vaziri-Pashkam

## EDUCATION

**Johns Hopkins University**, Baltimore, MD 2019–2024  
PhD in Computational Cognitive Science  
Advisors: Leyla Isik and Mick Bonner

**University of Tennessee**, Knoxville, TN 2013–2017  
BA in Neuroscience

## PUBLICATIONS

**McMahon, E.**, Im, E. J., Bonner, M., & Isik, L. (2025). A spatiotemporal hierarchy for social interaction perception in the lateral visual stream. *OSF*. 10.31234/osf.io/mdt4u\_v1

Garcia, K.\*, **McMahon, E.\***, Conwell, C., Bonner, M. F., & Isik, L. (2025). Modeling dynamic social vision highlights gaps between deep learning and humans. *International Conference on Learning Representations*.

\*equal contribution

**McMahon, E.** & Isik, L. (2023). Seeing social interactions. *Trends in Cognitive Science*. doi: 10.1016/j.tics.2023.09.001

- **McMahon, E.** & Isik, L. Abstract social interaction representations along the lateral pathway. *Trends in Cognitive Science*. doi: 10.1016/j.tics.2024.03.007
- **McMahon, E.** & Isik, L. (2024). The neurodevelopmental origins of seeing social interactions. *Trends in Cognitive Science*. doi: 10.1016/j.tics.2023.12.007

**McMahon, E.**, Bonner, M. F., & Isik, L. (2023). Hierarchical organization of social action features along the lateral visual pathway. *Current Biology*. doi: 10.1016/j.cub.2023.10.015

**McMahon, E.**, Kim, D., Mehr, S. A., Nakayama, K., Spelke, E., & Vaziri-Pashkam, M. (2020). The ability to predict actions of others from distributed cues is still developing in six- to eight-year-old children. *Journal of Vision*, 21(5): 14, 1–11. doi: 10.1167/19.7.16

Lam, K. C., Pereira, F., Vaziri-Pashkam, M., Woodard, K., & **McMahon, E.** (2020, June 22). Mental representations of objects reflect the ways in which we interact with them. arXiv: 2007.04245v1.

**McMahon, E.**, Zheng, C. Y., Pereira, F., Gonzalez, R., Ungerleider, L.G. & Vaziri-Pashkam, M. (2019) Subtle predictive movements reveal actions regardless of social context. *Journal of Vision*, 19(7): 1-16. doi: 10.1167/19.7.16

Corbetta, D., Wiener, R. F., Thurman, S. L., & **McMahon, E.** (2018). The Embodied Origins of Infant Reaching: Implications for the Emergence of Eye-Hand Coordination. *Kinesiology Review*, 7: 10-17. doi: 10.1123/kr.2017-0052

## AWARDS

Cognitive Science Society Glushko Dissertation Prize	2025
National Eye Institute Early Career Travel Grant	2023
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	2019-2022
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	2019-2022
Cognitive Computational Neuroscience Student Travel Award	2018
National Institutes of Health Research Training Award	2017-2019
University of Tennessee Neuroscience Outstanding Graduate	2017
University of Tennessee Chancellor's Honors Scholarship	2013-2017

## INVITED TALKS

Johns Hopkins University, Lab of Christopher Krupenye	March 2023
Harvard University, Vision Lab of Talia Konkle and George Alvarez	July 2022
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Lab of Nancy Kanwisher	July 2022
Johns Hopkins University, Lab of Marina Bedny	April 2022

## ORAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

**McMahon, E.**, Abel, T., Gonzalez-Martinez, J., Bonner, M.F., Ghuman, A., & Isik, L. The spatiotemporal dynamics of social scene perception in the human brain. *Vision Science Society*; May 19-24, 2023; St. Petersburg, FL.

**McMahon, E.**, Gonzalez, R., Nakayama, K., Ungerleider, L.G., & Vaziri-Pashkam, M. Understanding Action Prediction with Machine Learning and Psychophysics. *Conference on Cognitive Computational Neuroscience*; Sept. 5-8, 2018; Philadelphia, PA.

## SELECT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

**McMahon, E.**, Conwell, C., Garcia, K., Bonner, M.F., & Isik, L. Language model prediction of visual cortex responses to dynamic social scenes. *Vision Science Society*; May 17-22, 2024; St. Petersburg, FL.

Conwell, C., **McMahon, E.**, Vinken, K., Prince, J.S., Alvarez, G., Konkle, T., Isik, L., & Livingstone, M. Is visual cortex really "language-aligned"? Perspectives from Model-to-Brain Comparisons in Human and Monkeys on the Natural Scenes Dataset. *Vision Science Society*; May 17-22, 2024; St. Petersburg, FL.

Garcia, K., Conwell, C., **McMahon, E.**, Bonner, M. F., & Isik, L. Large-scale Deep Neural Network Benchmarking in Dynamic Social Vision. *Vision Science Society*; May 17-22, 2024; St. Petersburg, FL.

## TEACHING

Cognitive Science Fiction	Jan 2023
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## SERVICE

First-year graduate student mentoring	2021-2023
Graduate applicant mentoring	2022-2024
Cognitive Science Diversity and Representation Committee	2020-2023
JHU Graduate Representation Organization	2020-2022