Steve Rathje

Curriculum Vitae

Contact

New York University
Department of Psychology
6 Washington Pl
New York, NY 10003
Email: sr6276@nyu.edu
Website: stevenrathje.com

Appointments

2026-	**Assistant Professor (Incoming)** Human Computer Interaction Institute Social and Decision Sciences (by Courtesy) Carnegie Mellon University, School of Computer Science
2022-2026	**Postdoctoral Researcher** New York University Advisor: Jay Van Bavel

Education

2018-2022	**University of Cambridge (Trinity College)** PhD in Psychology Advisor: Sander van der Linden Gates Cambridge Scholar
2014-2018	**Stanford University** BA in Psychology (with Honors and Distinction) Minor in Symbolic Systems Junior Phi Beta Kappa

Research

Selected Publications

Rathje, S., Van Bavel, J.J. & van der Linden, S. (2021) Out-group animosity drives engagement on social media. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.* https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2024292118

Rathje, S., J., Roozenbeek, Van Bavel, J.J. & van der Linden, S. Accuracy and social motivations shape belief in (mis)information (2023). *Nature Human Behavior.* https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-023-01540-w

Rathje, S.*, Mirea, D. M.*, Sucholutsky, I., Marjieh, R., Robertson, C., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2024). GPT is an effective tool for multilingual psychological text analysis. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2308950121
*co-first authors

Rathje, S., Van Bavel, J.J. The Psychology of Virality. *Trends In Cognitive Sciences.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2025.06.014

All Publications

H~index~ = 28; i10~index~ = 33; Citations = 4,856; see Google Scholar

40. **Rathje, S.***, Asimovic, N.*, Ventura, T.*, Mughal, S., Robertson, C. E., Barrie, C, The Global Social Media Experiment Team., Tucker, J. A., & Van Bavel, J. J. (Stage 1 In Principle Acceptance of Registered Report). Testing the causal effect of social media usage around the globe. *Nature*.
*co-first authors

39. Brady, W.J., **Rathje, S.**, Globig, L., Van Bavel, J.J. (2025). Estimating the effect size of moral contagion in online networks: A pre-registered replication and meta-analysis. *PNAS Nexus*. https://doi.org/10.1093/pnasnexus/pgaf327

38. **Rathje, S.**, Van Bavel, J.J. (2025). The Psychology of Virality. *Trends In Cognitive Sciences.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2025.06.014

37. He, J., Wallis, F., Andres, G., & **Rathje, S.** (2024). Artificial intelligence chatbots mimic human collective behaviour. *British Journal of Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjop.12764

36. Feuerriegel, S., Maarouf, A., Bär, D., … **Rathje, S.**, … Van Bavel, J.J. (2024). Using natural language processing to analyze text data in behavioral science. *Nature Reviews Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1038/s44159-024-00392-z

35. Hu, T., Kyrychenko, Y., **Rathje, S.**, Collier, N., van der Linden, S., & Roozenbeek, J. (2025). Generative language models exhibit social identity biases. *Nature Computational Science*. https://arxiv.org/abs/2310.15819

34. Yang, X., Shulz, J., Schmidt, K., … **Rathje, S.**, … Dunham, Y. (2024). Large-scale cross-societal examination of real-and minimal-group biases. Stage One Registered Report at *Nature Human Behavior*. https://osf.io/preprints/psyarxiv/5gpr4

33. Voelkel, J., Stagnaro, M., Chu, J., Pink, S., Mernyk, J., Redekopp, C…. **Rathje, S.** ... & Willer, R. (2024). Megastudy testing 25 treatments to reduce antidemocratic attitudes and partisan animosity. *Science*. DOI: 10.1126/science.adh4764

32. Doell, K., Boryana, T., Vlasceanu, M., … **Rathje, S.** … Van Bavel, J.J. (2024). The International Climate Psychology Collaboration: Climate change-related data collected from 63 countries. *Nature Scientific Data.* https://doi.org/10.1038/s41597-024-03865-1

31. **Rathje, S.** To tackle social-media harms, mandate data access for researchers (2024). *Nature.* https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-024-02853-0

30. **Rathje, S.*,** Mirea, D. M.*, Sucholutsky, I., Marjieh, R., Robertson, C., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2024). GPT is an effective tool for multilingual psychological text analysis. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2308950121
*co-first authors

29. Robertson, C.E., del Rosario, K., **Rathje S.**, Van Bavel, J.J. (2024). Changing the incentive structure of social media may reduce online proxy failure and proliferation of negativity. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X23002935

28. Kozyreva, A., Lorenz-Spreen, P., Herzog, S., Ecker, U., Lewandowsky, S., & Hertwig, R... **Rathje, S.**, Wineburg. (2024). Toolbox of Interventions Against Online Misinformation and Manipulation. *Nature Human Behaviour*. https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-024-01881-0

27. Martel, C., **Rathje, S.**, Pennycook, G., Clark, C., Roozenbeek, J., Van Bavel, J.J., Rand, D., van der Linden, S. (2024). Do Accuracy Nudges Improve Sharing Discernment Across the Political Spectrum? An Adversarial Multiverse Collaboration. *Psychological Science*. https://doi.org/10.1177/09567976241232905

26. Vlasceanu, M.*, Doell, K.*… **Rathje, S.,** …. Van Bavel, J.J. et al (2024). Addressing Climate Change with Behavioral Science: A Global Intervention Tournament in 63 Countries. *Science Advances*. DOI: 10.1126/sciadv.adj5778.

25. Van Bavel J., Pretus C., **Rathje S.,** Pärnamets P., Vlasceanu M., Knowles, E. The Costs of Polarizing a Pandemic: Antecedents, Consequences, and Lessons (2023). *Perspectives on Psychological Science*. https://psyarxiv.com/qdb97/

24. Van Bavel, J.J., **Rathje, S.**, Vlasceanu, M., Pretus, C. (2023). Updating the Identity-based Model of Belief: From False Belief to the Spread of Misinformation. *Current Opinion in Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2023.101787.

23. Robertson, C., del Rosario, K., **Rathje, S.**, Van Bavel, J.J (2023). Changing the incentive structure of social media may reduce online proxy failure and proliferation of negativity. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/bwp2g.

22. Koppel, L., Robertson, C.E., Doell, K., Javeed, A., Rasmussen, J., **Rathje, S.**, Vlasceanu, M.,

& Van Bavel, J.J. (2023). Individual-level solutions may support system-level change if they are internalized as part of one's social identity. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X2300105X

21. Altay, S., Berriche, M., Heuer, H., Farkas, J., **Rathje, S.** A Survey of Expert Views on Misinformation: Definitions, Determinants, Solutions, and Future of the Field (2023). *Harvard Kennedy Misinformation Review.* https://doi.org/10.37016/mr-2020-119

19. **Rathje, S.**, Robertson, C., Brady, W., Van Bavel, J.J. (2023). People think social media does (and should not) amplify harmful content. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*. https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916231190392

18. **Rathje, S.** & van der Linden, S. (2023). Shifting online incentive structures to reduce polarization and the spread of misinformation. *Research Handbook on Nudges and Society*.

17. Van Bavel, J.J., Robertson, C. del Rosario, K., Rasmussen, J., **Rathje, S.** Social Media and Morality (2023). *Annual Review of Psychology*. https://psyarxiv.com/ywevq.

16. **Rathje, S.**, J., Roozenbeek, Van Bavel, J.J. & van der Linden, S. Accuracy and social motivations shape belief in (mis)information (2023). *Nature Human Behavior.* https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-023-01540-w.

15. Azevedo, F., Pavlović, T., Rêgo, G.G., … **Rathje, S.,** … Waldir, S. Social and moral psychology of COVID-19 across 69 countries (2023). Nature Scientific Data.

14. Harris, E.*, **Rathje, S.***, Robertson, C., Van Bavel, J.J. (2023). The SPIR Model of Social Media and Polarization: Exploring the Role of Selection, Platform Design, Incentives, and Real-World Context. *International Journal of Communications*.
*co-first authors

13. **Rathje, S.**, He, J., Roozenbeek, Van Bavel, J.J., & van der Linden, S. (2022). Social media behavior is associated with vaccine hesitancy. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences – Nexus*.
https://doi.org/10.1093/pnasnexus/pgac207

12. Roozenbeek, J., van der Linden, S., Golberg, B., **Rathje, S.**, Lewandowsky, S. Psychological inoculation improves resilience against misinformation on social media (2022). *Science Advances*.
10.1126/sciadv.abo6254
*Altmetric score: 2936

11. Robertson, C. Pretus, C. **Rathje, S.**, Harris, E., Van Bavel, J.J. (2022). How social identity shapes conspiracy beliefs. *Current Opinion in Psychology*.
10.1016/j.copsyc.2022.101423

10. Pavlović, T., Cichocka, A., Capraro, V., Sjåstad, H., Nezlek, J. B., Alfano, M.,… **Rathje, S.**, … Hudecek, M. F. C. (2022). Predicting attitudinal and behavioral responses to COVID-19 pandemic using machine learning. *PNAS Nexus*.
https://doi.org/10.1093/pnasnexus/pgac093

9. **Rathje, S.**, Shariff, A., & Schnall, S. (2022). Ideology Trumps Self-Interest: Continued Support for a Political Leader Despite Disappointing Tax Returns. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion, and Parties*.
https://doi.org/10.1080/17457289.2022.2051148

8. Van Bavel, J. J., **Rathje, S.**, Harris, E., Robertson, C., & Sternisko, A. (2021). How social media shapes polarization. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2021.07.013

7. **Rathje, S.**, Roozenbeek, J., Steenbuch Traberg, C., Van Bavel, J.J., & van der Linden, S. (2021) Meta-analysis reveals that accuracy nudges have little to no effect for US conservatives: Regarding Pennycook et al. (2020). *Psychological Science.*
https://journals.sagepub.com/page/pss/letters-to-the-eds

6. **Rathje, S.**, Van Bavel, J.J. & van der Linden, S. (2021) Out-group animosity drives engagement on social media. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.
https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2024292118
*Altmetric score: 2660

5. Van Bavel, J. J., Cichocka, A., Capraro, V., Sjåstad, H., Nezlek, J. B., Alfano, M.,… **Rathje, S.**, … Hudecek, M. F. C. (2021). National identity predicts public health support during a global pandemic: Results from 67 nations. *Nature Communications.*
https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-021-27668-9

4. **Rathje, S.**, Hackel, L, Zaki, J. (2021). Attending live theatre improves empathy, changes attitudes, and leads to pro-social behavior. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2021.104138

3. Van Bavel, J. J., Harris, E. A., Pärnamets, P., **Rathje, S.**, Doell, K., & Tucker, J. A. (2021). Political psychology in the digital (mis)information age. *Social Issues and Policy Review*.
https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12077

2. Van der Linden, S., Roozenbeek, J., Basol, M., Kacha, O., Martins, R., **Rathje, S.,** Traberg, C. (2021). How can psychological science help counter the spread of fake news.
Spanish Journal of Social Psychology.
https://doi.org/10.1017/SJP.2021.23

1. Fong, A., Roozenbeek, J., Goldwert, D., **Rathje, S.**, & van der Linden, S (2021).
The language of conspiracy: A psychological analysis of speech used by conspiracy theorists and their followers on Twitter. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*.
https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430220987596

Manuscripts in preparation

Rathje, S., Ye, M., Globig, L., Pillai, R., Oldemburgo de Mello, V., Van Bavel, J.J. (In Prep). Sycophantic AI increases attitude extremity and overconfidence. https://osf.io/preprints/psyarxiv/vmyek_v1

Rathje, S., He, J., Harjani, T., Roozebeek, J., Pretus, C., Gray, K., van der Linden, S, & Van Bavel, J.J. (Under Review). Unfollowing hyperpartisan social media influencers durably reduces out-party animosity. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/acbwg.

Capraro, V., Globig, L., Rausch, Z., Rathje, S., Wormley, A. S., Olson, J., … Van Bavel, J. J. A consensus statement on potential negative impacts of smartphone and social media use on adolescent mental health.

Reinero, D.*, Harris, E.*, **Rathje, S.**, Duke, A., Van Bavel, J.J. Partisans are more likely to entrench their beliefs in misinformation when political outgroup members provide fact checks. https://osf.io/preprints/psyarxiv/z4df3. Revise and Resubmit at *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.

Grants (Total: $2,781,751):

2025   **Cosmos Institute x Fire AI for Truth-Seeking Grant ($10,000)**
            Small grant to study AI that promotes truth-seeking.

2025   **Digital Media Accelerator ($20,000)**
            Funding to make a series of TikToks about AI safety.

2024   **NSF SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellowship ($160,000)**
            Contribution: lead author and PI. "Understanding the causal impact of social media reduction around the globe."

2024   **AXA Postdoctoral Fellowship (140,000€/~$146,000)**
            Contribution: lead author and PI. "Understanding the causal impact of social media reduction around the globe."

2024   **Open AI Research Access Program ($10,000 in API Credits)**
            Contribution: lead author and PI. "Using GPT to detect misinformation and polarizing social media content across languages and countries."

2024   **Cyber NYC/Google ($160,000)**
            Contribution: Project co-lead author (with Laura Globig). Leveraging AI and design to detect and mitigate cyber threats around the globe. (2023-2024).

2023   **National Science Foundation ($1,199,751)**

Contribution: Project lead author. "Secure and Trustworthy Cyberspace: CORE: Medium: Testing the causal influence of social media on well-being and animosity." Co-PI: Joshua Tucker. PI: Jay Van Bavel

2023 **Collaborator, Google Jigsaw ($200,000)**
Contribution: Collaborator. "Trust in generative AI." PI: Jay Van Bavel.

2023 **Templeton World Charity Foundation ($250,000)**
Contribution: Project lead author. "Testing the causal impact of social media on polarization around the globe." PI: Jay Van Bavel. https://doi.org/10.54224/31570

2023 **Alliance for Public Interest Technology Seed Grant ($25,000)**
Contribution: Project lead author. "Testing the causal impact of social media on polarization around the globe." PI: Jay Van Bavel.

2022 **Russel Sage Foundation Grant ($175,000)**
Contribution: Project lead author. "Reducing and understanding polarization online: a computational social science approach." PI: Jay Van Bavel.

2021 **Alliance for Decision Education Grant ($180,000)**
Contribution: Collaborator. "Exploratory research on the mechanisms of the backfire effect." PI: Jay Van Bavel.

2021 **Collaborator, Google Trust & Safety Team ($160,000)**
Contribution: Collaborator. "Measuring and fighting misinformation, extremism, and polarization online." PIs: Sander van der Linden & Jon Roozenbeek

2021 **Synergy Scholar, Center for the Science of Moral Understanding ($50,000)**
Contribution: Project lead author and PI. Proposal Title: "Improving Moral Understanding Online."

2021 **Increasing Open Inquiry on College Campuses ($30,000)**
Contribution: Project lead author. "Can changing one's online social network increase open-minded cognition?" PI: Jay Van Bavel.

2019 **Psychology Department Field Work Funding ($6,000)**

Selected Awards

2025 **Best Flash Talk (Runner Up) – Society of Affective Science**
Selected out of 70 total talks

2024 **Forbes 30 Under 30**

2024 **APS Rising Star Award**

2024	**NSF Postdoctoral Fellowship**
2024	**AXA Postdoctoral Fellowship**
2024	**Falling Walls Award in the Social Sciences and Humanities** Awarded to members of the Cambridge Social Decision-Making Lab
2024	**Prosocial Ranking Challenge Finalist**
2023	**SESP Dissertation Award Finalist**
2023	**Postdoctoral Travel Award (NYU)**
2022	**Strengthening Democracy Challenge** Co-developed 3rd most successful intervention (out of 252 submissions) in a mega-study evaluating the best interventions for reducing partisan animosity.
2021	**Psychology of Technology Institute Dissertation Award ($1,000)**
2021	**Top 10 Insights from the "Science of A Meaningful Life"**
2019	**1st Place, Trinity College Hooper Declamation Public Speaking Prize (£450)**
2018	**Gates Cambridge Scholarship (Full PhD Funding)**
2018	**Louis and Valerie Freedman Studentship (Full PhD Funding)**
2018	**Finalist, Rhodes Scholarship**
2018	**J.E. Wallace Sterling Award for Scholastic Achievement** Awarded to top 25 graduating seniors at Stanford University.
2017	**Phi Beta Kappa (Elected as a Junior)** Awarded to top 2% of Stanford students.
2015	**President's Award for Academic Excellence** Awarded to top 5% of Stanford's freshman class.
2018	**People's Choice Award, California Cognitive Science Conference**
2017	**Oregon New Play Prize ($10,000 Playwriting Award)**
2017	**Ozy Genius Award ($10,000 Grant)**
2017	**Undergraduate Advising and Research Grant ($7,000 Research Grant)**

2016	**Strauss Public Service Scholarship ($10,000 Grant)**
2016	**Chappell-Lougee Scholarship ($6,400 Research Grant)**
2016	**Finalist, Eugene O'Neill Playwriting Competition**
2014	**Winner, Psychology One Scholar Award**

Teaching

2024	**Guest Lecturer – Psychology and Society (NYU)** Lecture on the psychology of social media
2023	**Tutorial on using GPT for text analysis** NYU Artificial Intelligence working group
2023	**Tutorial on analyzing social media data** For regression course taught by Professor Madalina Vlasceanu
2022	**Supervisor/Teaching Assistant, Applied Behavioral Insights (Winter Term)** Taught by Sander van der Linden at the University of Cambridge
2021	**Supervisor/Teaching Assistant, Applied Behavioral Insights (Fall Term)** Taught by Lee De-Wit at the University of Cambridge
2020	**Supervisor/Teaching Assistant, Applied Behavioral Insights (Winter Term)** Taught by Lee De-Wit at the University of Cambridge
2017-2018	**Stanford Psychology One Teaching Fellow** Taught by James Gross (Fall Semester) and Jamil Zaki (Spring Semester)
2015-2017	**Stanford Oral Communication Tutor** Public speaking tutor for Stanford undergraduate students

Mentorship

Meryl Ye, *Carnegie Mellon University*, PhD Student (2025-)
Hannah Karsting, *New York University*, Half-Time Research Assistant (2025-)
Sarah Mughal, *New York University*, Half-Time Research Assistant (2023-2025)
Jingzhu Chen, *New York University*, Research Assistant (2024-2025)
Shaye Ann-Hopkins, *Duke University*, Research Assistant (2024)
James K. He, *University of Cambridge*, Research Assistant (2022-2024)

Invited Talks

2025	**University of Pittsburgh Social Psychology Colloquium**

"The Psychology of Virality: Why Information Spreads Online and Offline"

2025   **Austin Riggs Center Fall Conference**
Invited panelist on a discussion on rebuilding trust in institutions.

2025   **Aspen Ideas: Health**
Invited panelist on a panel about influencers, social media, and health.

2025   **VivaTech 2025**
Invited panelist on panel called "The New Information Gods: From Fact-Checking to Reality Checking."

2025   **University of Chicago (Computational Social Science Seminar)**
"The Psychology of Virality: Why Information Spreads Online and Offline"

2025   **Brown (Social Psychology)**
"The Psychology of Virality: Why Information Spreads Online and Offline"

2024   **Rutgers-Newark (Psychology)**
"The Psychology of Virality: Why Information Spreads Online and Offline"

2024   **Carnegie Mellon (Human Computer Interaction)**
"The Psychology of Virality: Why Information Spreads Online and Offline"

2024   **MIT (Comparative Media Studies and Writing)**
"The Psychology of Virality: Why Information Spreads Online and Offline"

2024   **Harvard Business School (NOM)**
"The Psychology of Virality: Why Information Spreads Online and Offline"

2024   **NYU Research Coordination Network (Center for Social Media and Politics)**
Invited participant in discussion about technology and democracy

2024   **Trending Up – Creating for a Cause (Washington, D.C.)**
Invited participant in conference about social media creators and politics

2024   **Stanford University - Polarization and Social Change Lab**
"The causal impact of unfollowing polarizing social media accounts"

2024   **Institute for Humane Studies**
"The causal impact of unfollowing polarizing social media accounts"

2024   **Harvard University (Social Psychology)**
"The paradox of virality"

2024   **University of Cambridge (Social Psychology)**

"The paradox of virality"

2023	**Columbia University (Psychology)** "Identity-based motivations for sharing (mis)information"
2023	**University of Southern California, Marshall School of Business** "The paradox of social media virality"
2023	**New York University (Social Psychology)** "The paradox of social media virality"
2023	**Stanford University, Graduate School of Business** "The paradox of social media virality"
2023	**Deepest Beliefs Lab, UNC Chappell Hill** "People think (but do not want) divisive content to go viral"
2023	**UK Government** Presentation about polarization and misinformation for the UK MOD
2023	**Media and Democracy Conference, SRCC** Discussion on building trust online.
2023	**Social Learning and Cognition Lab Meeting, USC** "People think (but do not want) divisive content to go viral"
2023	**American Physical Society Annual Leadership Meeting** Panel discussion on leadership and science communication
2022	**Work and Play Lab, University of Toronto** "Out-group animosity drives engagement on social media"
2022	**Collective Cognition Lab, New York University** "Accuracy and Social Incentives Shape Judgements of (Mis)Information"
2022	**Mental Sciences Club, University of Cambridge** "Understanding and reducing polarization on social media"
2021	**Politics and Evolution Lab Meeting, Aarhus University** "Understanding and reducing polarization on social media"
2021	**Designing for Empathy Summit** "Attending live theatre changes attitudes, increases empathy, and leads to pro-social behavior"
2021	**Human Cooperation Lab Meeting, MIT**

"Accuracy and social motivations shape perceptions of (mis)information"

| 2021 | **How Theatre Teaches Empathy**
Conversation with Hamilton star Phillipa Soo and Professor Jamil Zaki about research on theatre and empathy. |

| 2019 | **Arts and Pro-Social Research Group, University of Kent**
"Attending live theatre changes attitudes, increases empathy, and leads to pro-social behavior" |

| 2019 | **Gates Day of Research, University of Cambridge**
"Attending live theatre changes attitudes, increases empathy, and leads to pro-social behavior" |

Conference Presentations

| 2026 | **Society for Personality and Social Psychology**
Invited talk at Misinformation and Belief Science pre-conference. "Sycophantic AI increases attitude extremity and overconfidence." |

| 2025 | **Society of Experimental Social Psychology**
Research Spotlight Talk: "Unfollowing hyper-partisan social media influencers durably reduces out-party animosity." |

| 2025 | **Psychology of Technology Conference**
Lightening talk: "The consequences of AI sycophancy." |

| 2025 | **Human-AI Complementarity for Decision Making (Carnegie Mellon)**
Poster presentation: "The consequences of AI sycophancy." |

| 2025 | **NYU Research Coordination Network (Center for Social Media and Politics)**
Lightening talk: "Testing the causal impact of social media around the globe." |

| 2025 | **NYU Center for Conflict and Cooperation Florence**
Talk: "Testing the causal impact of social media around the globe." |

| 2025 | **Polarization Research Lab Annual Meeting**
Talk: "Unfollowing hyperpartisan social media influencers durably reduces out-party animosity." |

| 2025 | **Templeton World Charity Foundation LLPW Cohort Gathering**
Talk: "Testing the causal impact of social media around the globe." |

| 2025 | **Society for Affective Science (SAS) Innovation Forum**
Hoemann, K., Boyd, R., V, V., Rathje, S. "What can affective science learn from natural language?" |

2025	**Society for Affective Science (SAS) Flash Talk**

2025   **Society for Affective Science (SAS) Flash Talk**
Rathje, S., He, J., Harjani, T., Roozebeek, J., Pretus, C., Gray, K., van der Linden, S, & Van Bavel, J.J. Unfollowing hyperpartisan social media influencers durably reduces out-party animosity.

2025   **AI and Disinformation Summit (Carnegie Mellon)**
Invited participant.

2025   **Society for Personality and Social Psychology**
Rathje, S., He, J., Harjani, T., Roozebeek, J., Pretus, C., Gray, K., van der Linden, S, & Van Bavel, J.J. Unfollowing hyperpartisan social media influencers durably reduces out-party animosity.

2024   **European Association of Personality**
Symposium co-presentation (with Dan Mircea-Mirea): GPT is an effective tool for multilingual psychological text analysis.

2024   **Polarization Research Lab Annual Meeting**
Discussant on four papers.

2024   **Society for Personality and Social Psychology**
"Large Language Models and the Future of Social Psychology" Co-Chaired Symposium. Rathje, S., Ashokumar, A., Dillon, D., Brisbee, J.

2023   **Society for Experimental Social Psychology**
Symposium Presentation: Rathje, S., He, J., Harjani, T., Roozebeek, J., Pretus, C., Van Bavel, J.J. & van der Linden, S. The causal effect of social media (unfollowing) behavior on affective polarization: results from a digital field experiment.

2023   **European Association for Social Psychology**
Symposium Presentation: Rathje, S., He, J., Harjani, T., Roozebeek, J., Pretus, C., Van Bavel, J.J. & van der Linden, S. The causal effect of social media (unfollowing) behavior on affective polarization: results from a digital field experiment.

2023   **Society for Personality and Social Psychology**
Symposium Presentation: Rathje, S., He, J., Harjani, T., Roozebeek, J., Pretus, C., Van Bavel, J.J. & van der Linden, S. The causal effect of social media (unfollowing) behavior on affective polarization: results from a digital field experiment.

2022   **Center for the Science of Moral Understanding**
"Social Media and Moral Understanding."

2022	**SPSP Psychology of Technology Pre-Conference** Flash Talk: Rathje, S, Van Bavel, J & van der Linden, S. Outgroup animosity drives engagement on social media.
2021	**Association for Psychological Science** Flash Talk: Rathje, S, Van Bavel, J & van der Linden, S. Accuracy and Social Motivations Shape Perceptions of (Mis)Information.
2021	**Society for Personality and Social Psychology** Single Presenter Panel: Rathje, S, Van Bavel, J & van der Linden, S. Outgroup animosity drives engagement on social media.
2020	**Association for Psychological Science (APS) Annual Convention** Poster Presentation: Rathje, S, Hackel, L, Zaki, J. Seeing theatre improves empathy, changes attitudes, and leads to pro-social behavior.
2018	**Association for Psychological Science (APS) Annual Convention** Poster Rathje, S, Santoro, E, Dweck, C, Crum, A. How the subtle use of metaphorical language shapes our mindsets.
2018	**California Cognitive Science Conference** Rathje, S, Santoro, E, Dweck, C, Crum, A. How the subtle use of metaphorical language shapes our mindsets. *Winner of the "Best Poster" People's Choice Award

Grants and Awards from Mentees

2025	**Meryl Ye – Carnegie Mellon Samson Graduate Fellowship ($85,000)**
2025	**Meryl Ye – Carnegie Mellon Graduate Student Assembly Funding ($750)**

Ad-Hoc Reviewer

Nature
PNAS
Nature Human Behaviour
Nature Communications (3x)
Science Advances
Nature Scientific Reports
Trends in Cognitive Sciences
Psychological Science (2x)
Journal of Personality and Social Psychology
Journal of Experimental Psychology: General (2x)
Nature Scientific Reports
Social Psychological and Personality Science
PNAS Nexus (4x)

Neuroscience
Cognition
Journal of Politics
Political Psychology
Cortex
Journal of Personality
Applied Developmental Science
Palgrave MacMillon
Applied Cognitive Psychology
Media Psychology
Social Science Research Council
Templeton World Charity Foundation

Professional Memberships

Member, Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)
Member, Association for Psychological Science (APS)

Service

Member of Knight-Georgetown Institute (KGI) Recommender Systems Optimization Working Group (2024)
Scientific Advisor, Artificial Societies (Y Combinator Startup with 5 million in funding) (2024-)
Member of NSF Study Group providing feedback on the new Technology, Innovation and Partnerships directorate (2023)
NYU Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Steering Committee (2023-2024)
Postdoc Representative, NYU (2022-2023)
Created online tutorial about using GPT for text analysis (2023)
Board Member, Clarity Foundation (2023-)
Created "meet the post-docs" event at NYU (2022-)
Post-doc representative for social psychology post-docs, NYU (2022)
Led tutorials on analyzing social media data and on science communication for the Social Identity and Morality Lab (2022; 2021)
Guest speaker for Santa Fe Community College about Science Communication (2022)
Panel discussion about PhD life at Stanford University (2021)
Gates Cambridge Scholarship Orientation Council (2019)

Science Communication

2020-Present **Verified Content Creator on TikTok (1 million+ followers).**
              @stevepsychology on TikTok.

2018-Present **Contributor at Psychology Today**
              Contributor for blog "Words Matter."

To the Editor: Re "Why Schools Are Pushing Laws to Ban Smartphones" (2024). *New York Times*.

Op-Ed: Why we click on stuff we know we won't like (2023). *Boston Globe.*
Op-Ed: Why Facebook really, really doesn't want to prevent extremism (2021). *Washington Post.*
Op-Ed: Why theater makes us better people. Bring it back (2021). *Los Angeles Times.*
The Science of Live Theatre (2021). *Psychology Today.*
The Psychology of Live Theatre: Can Seeing Theatre Increase Empathy? (2021). *SPSP Blog.*
The power of framing: it's not what you say, it's how you say it (2017). *The Guardian.*
Metaphors can change our opinions in ways we don't even realize (2018). *Quartz.*
Will the Coronavirus Bring Us Together or Pull Us Apart? (2020). *Psychology Today.*
Why People Ignore Facts (2018). *Psychology Today.*
You Know Less Than You Think (2019). *Psychology Today.*
How to Get More People to Vote (2018). *Psychology Today.*
Do We Need a Common Enemy? (2018). *Psychology Today.*
The Danger of Searching for One True Cause (2019). *Psychology Today.*
When Correcting a Lie, Don't Repeat It. Do This Instead (2018). *Psychology Today.*
Can Art Change Minds? (2019). *Gates Scholars Magazine.*

Selected Podcasts & TV Appearances

The Science Behind Why Social Media Makes Us Miserable (2025). *Andrew Yang Podcast.*
Discussion of "Influencers" and Health Information (2025). *CBS Mornings.*
The Hidden Forces Driving Our Online Behavior (2024). *Where We Go Next Podcast.*
Dr. Steve Rathje – The Global Social Media Experiment (2024). *The Nature & Nurture Podcast.*
#123 The Stanford Podcast Experiment (2023). *The Downside with Gianmarco Soresi.*
Guilty as charged: how we contribute to polarizing content on social media (2023). *APS's Under the Cortex Podcast.*
A lot of angry reactions (2023). *Outrage Overload Podcast.*
Social Science on TikTok (2022). *Opinion Science Podcast.*
Why is the U.S. Media So Negative? (2021). *Freakonomics.*
How Animosity Drives Social Media Engagement with Steve Rathje (2021) *Break Thru Radio.*
Steve Rathje on Identity and Reason (2019). *Know Thyself History Podcast.*
Lab Lockdown #3: Steve Rathje (2020). *Cognitive Revolution Podcast.*

Selected Media Coverage

The Politics of Delusion Have Taken Hold (2023). *New York Times.*
Here's Hoping Elon Musk Destroys Twitter (2022). *New York Times.*
We're Staring at Our Phones, Full of Rage for 'the Other Side' (2022). *New York Times.*
Google Finds 'Inoculating' People Against Misinformation Helps Blunt Its Power (2022). *New York Times.*
The feedback loop of social media (2022). *Sixty Minutes.*
Political trolling twice as popular as positivity, study suggests (2021). *BBC.*
How to go viral on social media? Attack a political opponent, study says (2021). *NBC.*
A Surprising Reason Why You Should Attend Live Theater (2021). *Wall Street Journal.*
Why The Past 10 Years of American Life Have Been Uniquely Stupid (2022). *The Atlantic.*
From viral videos to Fox News: how rightwing media fueled the critical race theory panic (2021). *The Guardian.*

References

Jay Van Bavel
Professor of Psychology and Neural Science,
New York University
jay.vanbavel@nyu.edu

Sander van der Linden
Professor of Social Psychology
University of Cambridge
sander.vanderlinden@psychol.cam.ac.uk

Jamil Zaki
Professor of Psychology
Stanford University
jzaki@stanford.edu