

Yang Xiang

PERSONAL DETAILS

Department of Psychology
Stanford University
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Stanford, CA 94305
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EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

<u>Stanford University</u>	2026-present
Postdoctoral scholar	
Advisor: Tobias Gerstenberg	
<u>Harvard University</u>	2021-2026
Ph.D. in Psychology - Cognition, Brain, and Behavior	
Advisor: Samuel J. Gershman	
Dissertation: <i>Cognitive Foundations of Collaboration</i>	
Committee: Samuel J. Gershman, Fiery A. Cushman, Natalia Vélez	
<u>MIT</u>	2020-2021
Research associate at Sloan School of Management	
Advisor: Rahul Bhui	
<u>Harvard University</u>	2019-2020
Ed.M. in Mind, Brain, and Education	
Advisor: Ola Ozernov-Palchik	
<u>Peking University</u>	2015-2019
B.A. in Hebrew Language	
Advisor: Jiangping Kong	
Thesis: <i>Perception of Hebrew lexical stress by L1 speakers and L2 learners of Hebrew</i>	

PUBLICATIONS

1. **Xiang, Y.**, Ziv-Peteanu, O., & Gershman, S.J. (in prep). Rethinking intrinsic motivation as reflective planning.
2. **Xiang, Y.**, Aggarwal, A., Mosley, J., Gershman, S.J., & Hughes, B.L. (in prep). Transformative experiences, identity, and psychological richness: A network approach to

autobiographical memory.

3. **Xiang, Y.**, Vélez, N., & Gershman, S.J. (under revision). Cognitive foundations of collaboration. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*.
4. **Xiang, Y.**, Hsu, S., & Gershman, S.J. (under review). Intuitions about trait responsibilities. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.
5. Liu, S. *, **Xiang, Y.** *, & Gershman, S.J. (under review). Humans neglect Occam's razor in predictive model selection. *Psychological Review*.
6. Bhui, R., & **Xiang, Y.** (under revision). A rational account of the repulsion effect. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.
7. Tian, F., Gershman, S.J., & **Xiang, Y.**[†] (in press). Training collaborators for effective division of labor. *Cognitive Science*.
8. Liu, S., **Xiang, Y.**, & Gershman, S.J. (in press). Probabilistic forecasting guides dynamic decisions. *Psychological Review*.
9. **Xiang, Y.**, Gershman, S.J.[†], & Gerstenberg, T.[†] (2026). A signaling theory of self-handicapping. *Cognition*, 266, 106288.
10. Bigelow, E. *, **Xiang, Y.** *, Gerstenberg, T., Ullman, T.[†], & Gershman, S.J.[†] (2025). Actual or counterfactual? Asymmetric responsibility attributions in language models. *NeurIPS Workshop on Interpreting Cognition in Deep Learning Models*.
11. **Xiang, Y.**, Dorst, K., & Gershman, S.J. (2025). On the robustness and provenance of the Gambler's fallacy. *Psychological Science*, 36(6), 451–464.
12. **Xiang, Y.**, Landy, J., Cushman, F.A., Vélez, N., & Gershman, S.J. (2025). People reward others based on their willingness to exert effort. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 116, 104699.
13. **Xiang, Y.**, & Gershman, S.J. (2025). Modeling intrinsic motivation as reflective planning. *Proceedings of the 47th Annual Cognitive Science Society*.
14. **Xiang, Y.** *, Bigelow, E. *, Gerstenberg, T., Ullman, T.[†], & Gershman, S.J.[†] (2025). Language models assign responsibility based on actual rather than counterfactual contributions. *Proceedings of the 47th Annual Cognitive Science Society*.
15. **Xiang, Y.**, Vélez, N., & Gershman, S.J. (2024). Optimizing competence in the service of collaboration. *Cognitive Psychology*, 150, 101653.
16. **Xiang, Y.**, Landy, J., Cushman, F.A., Vélez, N., & Gershman, S.J. (2023). Actual and counterfactual effort contribute to responsibility attributions in collaborative tasks. *Cognition*, 241, 105609.
17. **Xiang, Y.**, Vélez, N., & Gershman, S.J. (2023). Collaborative decision making is grounded in representations of other people's competence and effort. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 152(6), 1565–1579.
18. **Xiang, Y.**, Graeber, T., Enke, B., & Gershman, S.J. (2021). Confidence and central tendency in perceptual judgment. *Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics*, 83, 3024–3034.

*equal first authors, [†]senior author

AWARDS & HONORS

Toyota Research Institute (\$900,000): “Adaptive Responsibility in Human-AI Collaboration”, co-authored with and submitted by Tobias Gerstenberg (2025)
Mind, Brain, Behavior Interdisciplinary Mind Grant (\$10,000), Harvard University (2025)
Graduate Student Council Conference Grant (\$750), Harvard University (2025)
Travel award (\$150), Society for Philosophy and Psychology (2025)
Stimson Fund Travel Grant (\$750), Harvard University (2025)
Stimson Fund Travel Grant (\$750), Harvard University (2025)
Three Minute Thesis competition finalist, Harvard University (2025)
Teaching Certificate, Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard University (2025)
Murray Fund Research Grant (\$10,000), Harvard University (2025)
Norman Anderson Fund Grant (\$7,500), Harvard University (2024)
Stimson Fund Travel Grant (\$750), Harvard University (2024)
Stimson Fund Travel Grant (\$500), Harvard University (2024)
Mind, Brain, Behavior Graduate Student Award (\$5,000), Harvard University (2024)
Merit Fellowship (\$20,415), Harvard University (2024)
Smith Fund Research Grant (\$5,000), Harvard University (2023)
McMaster Fund Independent Research Fellowship (\$5,000), Harvard University (2022)
Stimson Fund Research Grant (\$500), Harvard University (2022)
Graduate Society Summer Predissertation Fellowship (\$3,000), Harvard University (2022)
Stimson Fund Research Grant (\$1,000), Harvard University (2022)
HGSE Grant (\$18,500), Harvard University (2019)
Financial Support for Paper Presentation, ICOIE (2019)
Conference Presentation Travel Award, Peking University (2019)
National Scholarship, Ministry of Education of China (2018)
Student of the Year, Peking University (2018)
Merit Student Pacesetter, Peking University (2018)
International Regional Studies Scholarship, China Scholarship Council (2017)
Kwang-Hua Scholarship, Peking University (2017)
Merit Student, Peking University (2017)

INVITED TALKS

Social Neuroscience Lab, University of California, Riverside (November 2025)
CoLab, Princeton University (August 2025)
Annual Meeting of the Society for the Science of Motivation (May 2025)
Shenhav Lab, University of California, Berkeley (April 2025)

Laboratory for Social Cognitive Science, Harvard University (April 2025)
 Cognition, Brain, and Behavior Research Seminar, Harvard University (January 2025)
 Causality in Cognition Lab, Stanford University (September 2024)
 Cognitive Tools Lab, Stanford University (September 2024)
 Social Learning Choice Lab, University of Southern California (September 2024)
 Visual Intelligence Lab, University of California, Los Angeles (August 2024)
 Harvard University Department of Psychology Interview Day (February 2024)
 New England Reinforcement Learning and Decision-Making meet-up (November 2023)
 Causality in Cognition Lab, Stanford University (February 2023)
 Journal of Emerging Investigators Mini-PhD Program (June 2021)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Bigelow, E. *, **Xiang, Y. ***, Gerstenberg, T., Ullman, T.[†], & Gershman, S.J.[†] (December 2025). Actual or counterfactual? Asymmetric responsibility attributions in language models. Poster presented at *NeurIPS* Workshop on Interpreting Cognition in Deep Learning Models. San Diego, CA.
- **Xiang, Y. ***, Bigelow, E. *, Gerstenberg, T., Ullman, T., & Gershman, S.J. (August 2025). Language models assign responsibility based on actual rather than counterfactual contributions. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society. San Francisco, CA.
- **Xiang, Y.**, & Gershman, S.J. (July 2025). Modeling intrinsic motivation as reflective planning. Talk presented at the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society. San Francisco, CA.
- **Xiang, Y.**, Gershman, S.J., & Gerstenberg, T. (June 2025). A signaling theory of self-handicapping. Talk presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology. Ithaca, NY.
- Bhui, R., & **Xiang, Y.** (September 2022). A rational account of the repulsion effect. Talk presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Neuroeconomics. Arlington, VA.
- Bhui, R., & **Xiang, Y.** (June 2022). A rational account of the repulsion effect. Talk presented at the Advances in Decision Analysis Conference. Arlington, VA.
- Bhui, R., & **Xiang, Y.** (February 2022). A rational account of the repulsion effect. Talk presented at the Society of Judgment and Decision Making (SJDM) Annual Meeting. Virtual.
- Bhui, R., & **Xiang, Y.** (November 2021). A rational account of the repulsion effect. Talk presented at the Psychonomic Society 2021 Annual Meeting. Virtual.
- Bhui, R., & **Xiang, Y.** (August 2021). A rational account of the repulsion effect. Talk presented at the 28th Biennial Subjective Probability, Utility and Decision Making (SPUDM) Conference. Virtual.
- Bhui, R., & **Xiang, Y.** (July 2021). A rational account of the repulsion effect. Talk presented

at the Annual meeting of the Society for Mathematical Psychology and the International Conference on Cognitive Modeling. Virtual.

- Bhui, R., & **Xiang, Y.** (May 2021). A rational account of the repulsion effect. Talk presented at the Association for Psychological Science (APS) 2021 Convention. Virtual.
- **Xiang, Y.**, & Jia, J. (July 2019). Mainstream software for teaching spoken English: Current status and prospects. Talk presented at the International Conference on Open and Innovative Education. Kowloon, Hong Kong.
- **Xiang, Y.**, & Kong, J. (March 2019). Perception of Hebrew lexical stress by L1 speakers and L2 learners of Hebrew: An Experimental Study. Talk presented at the International Forum on Translation, Cognition and Audio Description. Kowloon, Hong Kong.

MENTORSHIP

Research assistants

- Stephanie Hsu, undergraduate at Harvard College (Fall 2025-Spring 2026)
- Cory Wu, undergraduate at Harvard College (Fall 2025)
- Autumn Shin, undergraduate at Harvard College (Fall 2025)
- Abby Sadler, undergraduate at Harvard College (Fall 2025)
- **Kira Tian**, undergraduate at Harvard College (Spring 2025-Spring 2026)
- Ossimi Ziv-Petreanu, undergraduate at Harvard College (Spring 2025-Spring 2026)
- Peggy Yin, undergraduate at Harvard College (Fall 2024-Spring 2025)
- **Jenna Landy**, undergraduate at Cornell University (Summer 2022-Spring 2023)

thesis students in boldface

Pre-concentration advisees at Harvard College

- Beatrice Hearey, Caleb Idahor, Troy Rampersad, Teddy Chung (2025-2026)
- Garvin Kim, Griffin Egan, Callie Loeffel, Sofia Branco (2024-2025)
- Jasper Jain, Annabel Yu, Jenny Kim, Brooke Manning (2023-2024)
- Gauri Sood, Elijah Dorroh, Chalisa Hoskins, Brooke Nye (2022-2023)

TEACHING

- Thesis supervisor – Senior Tutorial: Honors Thesis in Psychology (Fall 2025, Spring 2026)
- Teaching fellow – Computational Cognitive Neuroscience: Building Models of the Brain (Spring 2024)
- Teaching fellow – Introduction to Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences (Fall 2023)

SERVICE

- Reviewer: PNAS, Psychological Science, Cognition, Management Science, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, NeuroImage, Open Mind, Cognitive Science, Current Research in Behavioral Sciences, Cognitive Science Society.
- Mentor, Prospective Ph.D. & RA Event in Psychology (PPREP), Harvard University (2021-2025)
- Pre-concentration academic advisor, Harvard University (2022-2026)
- Associate editor and Reviewer, Journal of Emerging Investigators (2021-2023)
- Department of Psychology orientation organizer, Harvard University (2022)
- On-camera performer & interpreter, Hebrew Service at China Radio International (2017-2018)
- Teacher, Summer Service & Learning Program in Rural China, Tsinghua University (2013-2017)

MEDIA & OUTREACH

- Harvard Gazette: Cracking the code of why, when some choose to ‘self-handicap’. December 2025. [link](#)
- Harvard University Dissertation in One Minute: Building Collaborations that Harness the Strength of the Human Mind. November 2025. [link](#)