

# KEREM OKTAR

Department of Psychology, Princeton University

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## Education

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<b>Princeton University</b>	2021 - Present
Ph.D. Candidate in Psychology	
Advisors: Tania Lombrozo & Tom Griffiths	
Dissertation: <i>Cognitive, Social, and Computational Principles of Disagreement</i>	
<b>Princeton University</b>	2019 - 2021
M.A in Psychology	
<b>Pomona College</b>	2015 - 2019
B.A. in Economics, Cognitive Science ( <i>cum laude</i> )	

## Awards

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Best Poster Prize	Society for Philosophy and Psychology, 2023
Marr Prize for Best Student Paper	Cognitive Science Society, 2022
Graduate School Teaching Award	Princeton University, 2022
Diversity and Inclusion Conference Award	Cognitive Science Society, 2021
Fletcher Jones Foundation Top Thesis Prize	Pomona College, 2019
Distinction in Linguistics and Cognitive Science	Pomona College, 2019
Pomona College Scholar	Pomona College, 2015 - 2019

## Grants & Fellowships

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Rockefeller Graduate Prize Fellowship	Princeton Center for Human Values, 2023
Title: <i>A Study of Individual Belief Amid Controversy</i>	
Award: \$110,000 (PI) [research funding, stipend, tuition]	
Cognitive Science Research Grant	Princeton University, 2022
Title: <i>Computational Modeling of Belief Persistence</i>	
Award: \$3,000 (Co-PI) [research funding]	
Partisan Animosity Survey Time Grant	Polarization Research Lab, 2022
Title: <i>Political Differences in Belief Persistence</i>	
Award: Nationally representative sample (Co-PI) [2,000 participants]	
Summer Research Fellowship	Pomona College, 2019
Title: <i>Affective Reactions to Inconsistent Information</i>	
Award: \$4,000 (PI) [research funding, travel]	

## TRAVEL FELLOWSHIPS

Conference/Symposium	Society for Judgment and Decision-Making, 2024 NYU Stern School of Business, 2024 Institute for Humane Studies, 2024 Cognitive Science Society, 2022
Summer Institute	Diverse Intelligences Summer Institute, 2023

## Publications

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### PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

\* denotes joint first- or senior-authorship

1. **Oktar, K.**, Lombrozo, T.\*, & Griffiths, T.\* (2024). Learning from Aggregated Opinion. (*Accepted at Psychological Science*).
2. **Oktar, K.**, Sucholutsky, I., Lombrozo, T., & Griffiths, T. (2024). Dimensions of Disagreement: Unpacking Divergence and Misalignment in Cognitive Science and Artificial Intelligence (*Accepted at Decision*).
3. **Oktar, K.**, Lerner, A., Malaviya, M., & Lombrozo, T. (2023). Philosophy instruction changes views on moral controversies by decreasing reliance on intuition. *Cognition*, 236, 105434. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2023.105434>
4. **Oktar, K.** and Lombrozo, T. (2022). Deciding to be authentic: Intuition is favored over deliberation when authenticity matters. *Cognition*, 223, 105021. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2022.105021>
5. **Oktar, K.**, Laura, Z., & Leticia, S. (2019). Impact of Increasing Levels of Difficulty on the Generation Effect. *Koc University Undergraduate Psychology Journal*, 4(18), 12-17. [[Link](#)]

### PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

1. **Oktar, K.** and Lombrozo, T., (2022). Mechanisms of Belief Persistence in the Face of Societal Disagreement. Proceedings of the 44th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, *Cognitive Science Society*. [[Link](#)]
2. Malaviya, M., Sucholutsky, I., **Oktar, K.**, and Griffiths, T. (2022). Can Humans Do Less-Than-One-Shot Learning? Proceedings of the 44th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, *Cognitive Science Society*. [[Link](#)]
3. **Oktar, K.** and Lombrozo, T., (2021). Deciding to be Authentic: Intuition is Favored Over Deliberation for Self-Reflective Decisions. Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, *Cognitive Science Society*. [[Link](#)]

4. **Oktar, K.** and Lombrozo, T., (2020). You Should Really Think This Through: Cross-Domain Variation in Preferences for Intuition and Deliberation. Proceedings of the 42nd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, *Cognitive Science Society*. [\[Link\]](#)

## INVITED COMMENTARY

1. **Oktar, K.** (2024). Psychology Remains Marginally Valid. *Nature Reviews Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44159-024-00281-5>

## Manuscripts in Progress

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### PRE-PRINTS

1. Sucholutsky, I., Muttenthaler, L., ..., **Oktar, K.**, ..., Lampinen, A., Müller, K., Toneva, M., & Griffiths, T. L. (2023). Getting aligned on representational alignment. *arXiv preprint* [arXiv:2310.13018](https://arxiv.org/abs/2310.13018)

### MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

1. Gottlieb-Cohen, S.\*, **Oktar, K.\***, & Lombrozo, T. Deciding when we cannot know: First-person priority in transformative choice. (*R&R at Open-mind*).

## Presentations

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† denotes forthcoming

### INVITED TALKS

#### How Beliefs Persist When Millions Disagree

- Stanford (PI: Zaki)<sup>†</sup> 2024
- UC Berkeley (PI: Ayduk & Mendoza-Denton) 2024
- UC San Diego (PI: Rossano) 2024
- Harvard (PI: Cushman & Greene) 2023
- Harvard Kennedy School (PI: Minson) 2022
- UCL (Judgment and Decision Making Seminar) 2022
- Princeton (PI: Crockett) 2022

#### Learning from Aggregated Opinion

- Carnegie Mellon (ICSD Talk Series)<sup>†</sup> 2024
- Stevens Institute (PI: Ho)<sup>†</sup> 2024

- MIT Sloan (PI: Rand & Bhui)<sup>†</sup> 2024
- NYU (ConCats Talk Series) 2024
- Princeton (PI: Vélez) 2023

### **Can Morality be Taught?**

- Bogazici University (Psychology Department Colloquium) 2023
- Princeton (PI: Crockett) 2022

### **Deciding to be Authentic**

- Pomona College (Cognitive Science Department Colloquium) 2020

### CONFERENCE TALKS

Spring 2023. Ideological Differences in Belief Persistence. Talk at the Second Annual Meeting on Partisan Animosity in America, New Orleans, LA.

Fall 2023. Learning from Aggregated Opinion. Talk at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Judgment and Decision Making, San Francisco, CA.

Summer 2023. Learning from Aggregated Opinion. Virtual Symposium talk: 45th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Sydney, Australia.

Summer 2022. Mechanisms of Belief Persistence in the Face of Societal Disagreement. Conference talk: 44th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Toronto, Canada.

Summer 2021. Deciding to be Authentic: Intuition is Favored Over Deliberation for Self-Reflective Decisions. Virtual conference talk: 43rd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Vienna, Austria.

### CONFERENCE POSTER PRESENTATIONS

**Oktar, K.\***, & Lombrozo, T. (2024, February). What Enables Societal Controversy? Presentation at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

**Oktar, K.\***, Byers, J. B. & Lombrozo, T. (2024, February). Is Disagreement Just a Difference in Beliefs?. Presentation at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

**Oktar, K.\***, Sumers, T.R., & Griffiths, T. L. (2023, November). Trust and Doubt: A Rational Model of Epistemic Vigilance Explains How Inferred Motivations Moderate Inferences. Presentation at the MIT Conference on Directions of Polarization, Social Norms, and Trust in Societies: Perspectives from behavioral sciences.

**Oktar, K.**, Lerner, A., Malaviya, M., & Lombrozo, T. (2023, June). Philosophy instruction changes views on moral controversies by decreasing reliance on intuition. Presentation at the 49th Annual Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and

Psychology.

**Oktar, K.** and Lombrozo, T. (2021, June). Intuition is Favored Over Deliberation When Authenticity Matters. Virtual presentation at the 47th Annual Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology.

**Oktar, K.** and Lombrozo, T. (2021, June). Intuition is Favored Over Deliberation When Authenticity Matters. Virtual presentation at the 47th Annual Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology.

**Oktar, K.** and Lombrozo, T. (2020, July). You Should Really Think This Through: Cross-Domain Variation in Preferences for Intuition and Deliberation. Virtual presentation at the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society.

**Oktar, K.** and Sher, S. (2019, September). Investigating the Affective Reactions Elicited Through Inconsistency Processing. Presentation at the Pomona College Linguistics and Cognitive Science Thesis Conference in Claremont, CA.

**Oktar, K.** (2018, September). Investigating the Affective Reactions Elicited Through Inconsistency Processing. Presentation at the Pomona College Stover Walk Research Conference in Claremont, CA.

**Oktar, K.** (2017, September). Investigating the Neural Basis of Age Related Deficits in Word Retrieval. Presentation at the Pomona College Stover Walk Research Conference in Claremont, CA.

Gertel, V., **Oktar, K.**, & Diaz, M. (2017, November). Graph Theoretical Approaches Show a Relationship Between Resting State Functional Connectivity in Younger and Older Adults and Phonological Aspects of Language Production. Presentation at the meeting of the Society for the Neurobiology of Language, Baltimore, MD.

Winter, S.B., Rizio, A.A., Dempsey, J., **Oktar, K.**, Diaz, M.T. (2017, November). White Matter Integrity and Language Production in Aging. Presentation at the meeting of the Society for the Neurobiology of Language, Baltimore, MD.

## Teaching

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Instructor Psychology of Justice, Edna Mahan Women's Prison, 2024

- Co-designed and co-taught course on moral judgment and behavior. Material covered cognitive (e.g., moral deliberation), social (e.g., harm aversion), and institutional (e.g., eyewitness testimony) processes.

Teaching Assistant Developmental Psychology, Princeton University, 2022  
Cognitive Psychology, Princeton University, 2021  
Cognitive Psychology, Princeton University, 2020  
Thought and Cognition, Pomona College, 2018

Lit., Film, and Cognitive Science, Pomona College, 2017

## Press Coverage

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[APALA](#): Effective actions to reduce our carbon footprint. [French] 2023  
[Big Think](#): Why it isn't strategic to always be rational. 2022  
[Psychology Today](#): When to Go With Your Gut and Be True to Yourself. 2022

## Leadership, Diversity, & Service

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### LEADERSHIP

Mentor Project SHORT, 2022 - Present  
Ambassador Center for Open Science, 2022  
First Year President Associated Students of Pomona College, 2015

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

Syllabus Committee Member Princeton Prison Teaching Initiative, 2023 - 2024  
President Princeton Graduate Turkish Students Association, 2021 - Present  
Conference Assistant Anti-racist Research Methods Conference at Princeton, 2021  
Mentor Pomona International Student Mentorship Program, 2016

### INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

Prospective Student Interview Committee Princeton University, 2022  
Student Pool Administrator & IRB Reviewer Princeton University, 2019 - 2021  
Student Liaison Pomona Cognitive Science Department, 2018  
Faculty Search Panel Member Pomona Cognitive Science Department, 2018

### AD HOC REVIEWER

#### Journals

Psychological Science  
Journal of Experimental Psychology: General  
Cognition  
Decision  
Scientific Reports  
International Journal of Psychology

#### Conferences

The Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society  
NeurIPS Workshop on Human and Machine Decision-making  
The ACM Annual Designing Interactive Systems (DIS) Conference

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Cognitive Science Society  
Society for Judgment and Decision-Making  
Society for Philosophy and Psychology  
The Society for Personality and Social Psychology  
The American Psychological Association

## MENTORSHIP

### Undergraduate

Sungho (Sam) Park [Philosophy] Princeton University, 2023 - Present

- Advised independent research. Mentee applied psychological principles to explain peer disagreements in epistemology; presented at SPP 2024.

Joshua Schoenberg [Computer Science] Princeton University, 2022 - Present

- Advised independent research. Mentee applied importance sampling to explain political perception gaps.

### Application Mentorship (Project SHORT)

Dung (Derrick) Nguyen [Economics] Fulbright University Vietnam, 2023 - Present

- Advised graduate school application. Mentee received full-ride scholarship for an M.A at University of Trento.