Jackson Phillip Trager

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Education

- 2025 PhD Social Psychology (expected), University of Southern California, Thesis: The Moral Psychology of Digital Polarization
- 2023 MA Social Psychology, University of Southern California, Thesis: Ideological Threat on Twitter and Prejudice
- 2017 MA Cognitive Anthropology, *Queen's University Belfast*, Northern Ireland, U.K., Thesis: Shifting Morality in Intergroup Conflict
- 2015 BA Psychology & Religious Studies, CSU Northridge, Cum Laude Honors Minor: Jewish Studies

Research Topics _____

Cultural Morality • Conflict • Threat • Al Ethics • Intersectional Prejudice • Fairness • Polarization & Bias • HCI

Research Methods and Skills _____

Behavioral Experiments • Social Media Experiments • Time-Series Analysis • Survey Design & Analysis R Programming • Data Analysis • Anthropological Fieldwork • Qualitative Interviewing • Multilevel Modeling

Research Experience

Behavioral Researcher, Morality and Language Lab, University of Southern California

2020-Present

• Our lab combines Social Psychology PhDs and Computer Science PhDs, closely collaborating with projects on morality, prejudice, and hate, using behavioral experiments, theory constrained NLP, and Geo-spatial analysis of psychological constructs

Cognitive Anthropology Researcher, Institute of Cognition & Culture, Queen's University Belfast, U.K.

2016-17

• In-person surveys, questionnaire formulation, data analysis, and public opinion polling on shifting intergroup relations, trauma/ threat perception, and cross-community outreach analysis of the Northern Irish conflict known as "The Troubles"

Psychology Research Assistant, The Herczeg Institute, *Tel Aviv University, Israel*

2014-15

• Data analysis of 2013 World Happiness Report, hostile-world scenarios, workplace dynamics, well-being research, sentiment and narrative analysis in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Cognitive Research Assistant, Cognitive Science of Religion Lab, Cognitive Consultant Team, CSU Northridge

2013-15

• Led a user-centric research project at the University Children's Center to assess and address the psychological needs of student parents, involving survey design, user interviews, data analysis, tool creation, and presentation to stakeholders.

Selected Publications

AI Alignment

"Perils and Opportunities in Using LLMs in Psychological Research" (2023) (preprint)

"Improving Communication in the Shadow of Power: New (AI) Technologies & Policing" (2023) (under review, NHB)

Morality Across Culture & Technology

- "The Morality of Excessive Wealth Across Culture" (2023) (in preparation)
- "The Moral Foundations Reddit Corpus" (2022) arXiv preprint
- "Moral values predict county-level COVID-19 vaccination rates in the US" (2022) American Psychologist

Online Conflict, Hate Speech, Misinformation

- "Moral Alignment Shapes Responses to Shared Content" (2023) Journal of Experimental Psychology
- "The (Moral) Language of Hate" (2023) PNAS Nexus

Consulting & Teaching Experience

Adjunct Psychology Lecturer, *University of Southern California* – Los Angeles

2020-22

• Psychological Statistics, Experimental Psychological Research Methods, Psych Science and Society, Cognitive Processes

Adjunct Anthropology Lecturer, Pierce College, Harbor City College, Valley College – Los Angeles

2018-21

Cultural Anthropology, Anthropology of Religion, Human Systems

Director of Curriculum, The Antedote Initiative - A Wholeness Program for Adolescence

2019-21

• Led the development of a curriculum for a program addressing the complex emotional, psychological, and behavioral challenges in adolescence, focusing on managing anxiety, depression, and minor substance abuse

Culture Development Consultant, WolfTribe - Los Angeles, California

2019-21

 Consulted on corporate workplace culture and team development for Sony, Dreamworks, USC Marshall Business School, Microsoft, Redbull's High Performance Department, SpaceX, Snapchat, Walt Disney, Paramount, Virgin Galactica, Mattel, NorthropGunman, Google, Statefarm

Culture Development Consultant/Team Building Facilitator, Fulcrum Adventures

2013-19

• Led workshops on workplace culture, conflict resolution, and strategy implementation for LAUSD, UCLA, CSLA, USC, Apple, Universal, Medtronic, Fox, Farmers Insurance, Wounded Warriors

Interfaith Professional Fellow, Newground's Muslim-Jewish Fellowship for Change, Los Angeles

2015-16

Collaborated with the White House Advisory Council on Faith-Based & Neighborhood Partnership

International Field Experience

Manila, Philippines (2019), Belfast, Northern Ireland (2016-17), Malaysia-Myanmar (2016), Israel - Palestine (2015), Armenia (2015), Poland-Lithuania (2016)

Grants, Honors, & Scholarships

- 2023 USC Dornsife Dean's Emblem Award for Outstanding Scholarship in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging
- 2023 Psychology Department Doctoral Research Grant Award
- 2022 Psychology Department Doctoral Research Grant Award
- 2021 Graduate Student Research Fellowship University of Southern California
- 2018 Distinction in Graduate Research Dissertation Queen's University Belfast
- 2016 LA Human Relations Commission Certificate of Community Engagement, International Postgrad Scholarship
- Newground's Muslim-Jewish Fellowship, Onward Israel JFed Grant, Religious Studies Scholar Award, CS Honors Conference Scholarship, AS Medallion, Mellon Foundation Representative
- 2014 CS AAR Religion Competition Award, US Society of Leadership & Success, JS Scholarship, IRA Scholarship
- 2013/15 Dean's List, CSU Northridge Crisis Helpline Certification
- 2010/15 Cal Grant Awardee, Dean's List College of Arts & Sciences Psychology
- 2009 Eagle Scout Boy Scouts of America

Ad-hoc Journal Reviewer

Nature Communications; Humanities & Social Sciences Communications; The Journal of Cognitive Science; Behavioral Research Methods