

Bob Spunt, Ph.D.

Email bobspunt@gmail.com
Website bobspunt.com

GitHub github.com/spunt
LinkedIn [linkedin.com/in/bobspunt/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/bobspunt/)

Employment

- 2018 - Present **Oracle Corp.**
Principal Data Scientist · Seattle, WA
- 2017 - Present **California Institute of Technology**
Research Consultant · Visiting appointment in the Humanities & Social Sciences division
- 2017 - 2018 **Snap Inc.**
Data Scientist · Seattle, WA
- 2012 - 2017 **California Institute of Technology**
Postdoctoral Fellow · Emotion & Social Cognition Lab · Supervisor: Ralph Adolphs
- 2011 - 2012 **University of California, Los Angeles**
Postdoctoral Scholar · Social Affective Neuroscience Lab · Supervisor: Naomi Eisenberger

Education

- 2005 – 2011 **University of California, Los Angeles**
Ph.D., Social Psychology
Supervisor: Matthew D. Lieberman
- 1999 – 2003 **University of California, Berkeley**
B.A., Psychology
B.A., Rhetoric

Selected Honors

- 2013 - 2017 Consulting Editor, *Social, Cognitive, and Affective Neuroscience*
- 2015 Most Downloaded Article, *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* ([10.1162/jocn.a.00785](https://doi.org/10.1162/jocn.a.00785))
- 2014 - 2016 Della Martin Postdoctoral Fellow in Mental Health
- 2014 Lead Instructor, University of Michigan Summer Training Course in fMRI
- 2013 Rising Star Award, Association for Psychological Science
- 2011 Dissertation in Social Psychology Award, UCLA Department of Psychology
- 2010 Distinguished Teaching Award, UCLA Department of Psychology

Publications

PDFs available for download at bobspunt.com/papers

- Spunt RP & Adolphs R (2019). The neuroscience of understanding the emotions of others. *Neuroscience Letters*. 693, 44-48.
- Spunt RP & Adolphs R (2017). A new look at domain specificity: insights from social neuroscience. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*. 18(9), 559–567.
- Spunt RP, Ellsworth E, & Adolphs R (2017). The neural basis of understanding the expression of the emotions in man and animals. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*. 12(1), 95-105.
- Spunt RP, Kemmerer D, & Adolphs R (2016). The neural basis of conceptualizing the same action at different levels of abstraction. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*. 11(7), 1141-1151.
- Scheele D, Schwering C, Spunt RP, Elison JT, Maier W, Hurlemann R (2015). A human tendency to anthropomorphize is enhanced by oxytocin. *European Neuropsychopharmacology*. 25(10), 1817-1823.
- Spunt RP & Adolphs R (2015). Folk explanations of behavior: A specialized use of a domain-general mechanism. *Psychological Science*, 26(6), 724-736.
- Spunt RP, Elison JT, Dufour N, Hurlemann R, Saxe R, & Adolphs R (2015). Amygdala lesions do not compromise the cortical network for false-belief reasoning. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA*. 112(15), 4827–4832.
- Spunt RP, Meyer ML, & Lieberman MD (2015). The default mode of human brain function primes the intentional stance. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*. 27(6), 1116-1124.
- Schaafsma SM, Pfaff DW, Spunt RP, & Adolphs R (2015). Deconstructing and Reconstructing "Theory of Mind". *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*. 19(2), 65-72.
- Spunt RP & Adolphs R (2014). Validating the why/how the contrast for functional MRI studies of Theory of Mind. *NeuroImage*. 99, 301-311.
- Spunt RP (2014). Dual-Process Theories in Social Cognitive Neuroscience. In A. Toga & MD Lieberman (eds.) *Brain Mapping: An Encyclopedic Reference*. Elsevier: Oxford.
- Spunt RP & Lieberman MD (2014). Automaticity, control, and the social brain. In Sherman, Gawronski & Trope (eds.) *Dual process theories of the social mind*. Guilford Press: New York.
- Lick DJ, Carpinella CM, Preciado MA, Spunt RP, & Johnson KL (2013). Reverse-correlating mental representations of sex-typed bodies: the effect of number of trials on image quality. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 4(476), 1-9.
- Spunt RP (2013). Mirroring, mentalizing, and the social neuroscience of listening. *International Journal of Listening*. 27(2), 61-72.
- Spunt RP & Lieberman MD (2013). The busy social brain: evidence for automaticity and control in the neural systems supporting social cognition and action understanding. *Psychological Science*. 24(1), 80-86.

Publications (Continued)

- Spunt RP & Lieberman MD (2012). Dissociating modality-specific and supramodal neural systems for action understanding. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 31(10), 3575-3583.
- Meyer ML, Spunt RP, Berkman ET, Taylor SE, & Lieberman MD (2012). Evidence for social working memory from a parametric fMRI study. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA*. 109, 1883-1888.
- Spunt RP & Lieberman MD (2012). An integrative model of the neural systems supporting the comprehension of observed emotional behavior. *NeuroImage*. 59, 3050-3059.
- Falk EB, Spunt RP, & Lieberman MD (2012). Ascribing beliefs to ingroup and outgroup political candidates: Neural correlates of perspective taking, issue importance, and days until the election. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*. 367, 731-743.
- Spunt RP, Lieberman MD, Cohen JR & Eisenberger NI (2012). The phenomenology of error processing: the dorsal anterior cingulate response to stop-signal errors tracks reports of negative affect. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*. 24, 1753-1765.
- Spunt RP, Satpute AB, & Lieberman MD (2011). Identifying the what, why, and how of an observed action: an fMRI study of mentalizing and mechanizing during action observation. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*. 23(1), 63-74.
- Spunt RP, Falk EB, & Lieberman MD (2010). Dissociable neural systems support retrieval of how and why action knowledge. *Psychological Science*. 21(11), 1593-1598.
- Spunt RP, Rassin E, & Epstein L (2009). Aversive and avoidant indecisiveness: Roles for regret proneness, maximization, and BIS/BAS sensitivities. *Personality and Individual Differences*. 47(4), 256-261.

Peer Review

Consulting Editor	Social, Cognitive, and Affective Neuroscience (2013 - Present)	
Ad Hoc Reviewer	Age and Aging	Frontiers in Human Neuroscience
	Behavioral Neuroscience	Human Brain Mapping
	Brain and Language	Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience
	Brain Research	Journal of Neuroscience
	British Journal of Psychiatry	Nature Communications
	Cerebral Cortex	Neurocase
	Cognition	NeuroImage
	Culture and Brain	Neuropsychologia
	Emotion	PLoS One
	Emotion Review	PNAS
	European Journal of Social Psychology	Psychological Science
	Experimental Brain Research	Psychonomic Bulletin & Review

Graduate-Level Teaching

- 2014 Summer **Functional MRI Design and Data Analysis Labs**
Instructor, Summer Training Course in fMRI, University of Michigan
- 2011 Summer **Methods in Social Cognitive Neuroscience**
Workshop for Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Labs, UCLA
- 2011 Winter **Computational Methods in Neuroimaging**
Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2009 – 2010 **Presentation of Psychological Materials**
Teaching Assistant Consultant, University of California, Los Angeles

Undergraduate-Level Teaching

- 2009 Winter **Human Motivation**
Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2008 Fall **Experimental Research Methods in Social Psychology**
Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2008 Spring **Introduction to Social Psychology**
Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2008 Winter **Introduction to Social Psychology**
Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2007 Fall **Introduction to Social Cognition**
Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2007 Spring **Experimental Research Methods in Social Psychology**
Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2007 Winter **Experimental Research Methods in Psychology**
Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2006 Fall **Introduction to Social Psychology**
Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles
- 2006 Summer **Experimental Research Methods in Social Psychology**
Teaching Assistant, University of California, Los Angeles

Selected Presentations

Spunt RP & Rassin E (March 2008). Trait indecisiveness from an approach/avoidance perspective: The role of regret, maximization, and attitudes towards risk. Poster for the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Conference.

Spunt RP, Satpute AB, & Lieberman MD (June 2008). Describing the Why, What and How of Action: An fMRI study of action identification. Poster for the Social & Affective Neuroscience Conference.

Selected Presentations (Continued)

- Spunt RP, Satpute AB, & Lieberman MD (February 2009). Identifying the what, why and how of an observed action: an fMRI study of action identification. Poster for the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Conference.
- Spunt RP, Falk EB, & Lieberman MD (October 2009). Why and how do people do what they do? An fMRI study of mentalizing and mechanizing known actions. Poster for the Social & Affective Neuroscience Conference.
- Spunt RP (October 2009). The role of intuitive confidence in performance and confidence during problem-solving. Talk presented at the Association for Consumer Research Conference.
- Spunt RP, & Lieberman MD (October 2010). Understanding the mental and mechanical aspects of others: Towards a reconciliation of mirror neuron and mental state inference accounts of social cognition. Poster for the Social & Affective Neuroscience Conference.
- Spunt RP & Lieberman MD, Cohen JR. & Eisenberger NI (January 2011). Is there cognitive pain? An fMRI study of negative affect during the exertion of cognitive control. Poster for the NIMH Interdisciplinary Behavioral Science Center Conference.
- Spunt RP & Lieberman MD (January 2011). The neural systems of understanding emotional expressions: distinct roles for mirror and mentalizing systems in how and why construals. Poster for the Emotion preconference at the meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.
- Spunt RP & Lieberman MD (January 2011). The busy social brain: an fMRI study of cognitive load during action understanding. Poster for the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.
- Spunt RP (April 2011). Mirroring bodies, inferring minds: an fMRI study of behavior identification and mental state inference during action understanding. Talk presented at the annual meeting of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society.
- Spunt RP (January 2012). The brain of the naive scientist: an identification-attribution model. Talk presented at the meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.
- Spunt RP (April 2012). The phenomenology of error processing: the dorsal anterior cingulate response to stop-signal errors tracks reports of negative affect. Talk presented at the meeting of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society.
- Spunt RP (October 2012). Investigating the neural bases of social inference. Invited talk for the California Institute of Technology Computational Neuroeconomics mini-conference.
- Spunt RP (December 2012). The brain of the naïve psychologist: fMRI studies of explaining behavior. Invited talk in the Department of Psychology at University of Mary Washington.
- Spunt RP & Lieberman MD (January 2013). The neural correlates of observing nonverbal behavior critically depend on the observer's goals. Talk presented at the Nonverbal Behavior preconference at the annual meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Selected Presentations (Continued)

Spunt RP, Meyer ML, & Lieberman MD (March 2013). The dorsomedial prefrontal cortex response to fixation baseline is associated with efficient social inference. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Caltech-Tamagawa gCOE Program.

Spunt RP, Meyer ML, & Lieberman MD (April 2013). The dorsomedial prefrontal cortex response to fixation baseline is associated with efficient social inference. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society.

Spunt RP, Elison, JT, Dufour, N, Hurlemann, R, Saxe, R, & Adolphs R (November 2013). An intact cortical network for theory of mind in three adults with bilateral amygdala lesions. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Social Neuroscience.

Spunt RP, Elison, J. T, Dufour, N, Hurlemann, R, Saxe, R, & Adolphs R. (November 2013). An intact cortical network for theory of mind in three adults with bilateral amygdala lesions. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience.

Spunt RP (February 2014). Automaticity and control in social cognitive neuroscience. Talk for Social Cognition preconference at the meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Spunt RP (February 2014). A framework for investigating automaticity and control in social neuroscience. Talk for the meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Spunt RP (February 2015). The neural bases of conceptual action hierarchies. Talk for Mental Simulation preconference at the meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Spunt RP (July 2015). Do humans have a brain network dedicated to theory of mind? Invited talk presented at the 12th International Symposium on the Science of Behavior.

Spunt RP (September 2015). Is fMRI data a valid measure of social cognition? Talk presented at the European Society of Social Psychology small group meeting entitled: "Towards a Neuroscience for Social Psychologists".

Spunt RP (June 2016). How the ordinary human mind answers why-questions: Clues from brain imaging studies. Invited talk for the meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology.