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Xian Li

Curriculum Vitae · October 2026

EDUCATION

2020–2026 **Johns Hopkins University** · Baltimore, MD
Ph.D., Psychological and Brain Sciences (conferred 28 August 2026).
Advisors: Janice Chen and Christopher Honey.
Dissertation: *Organization of Real-World Human Memory*.

2018–2019 **University of Chicago** · Chicago, IL
M.A., Social Sciences (Integrative/Cognitive Neuroscience).
Advisors: Howard Nusbaum and David Gallo.

2013–2018 **Capital Normal University** · Beijing, China
B.A., English (Language and Linguistics).

2016–2017 **University at Buffalo, State University of New York** · Buffalo, NY
Exchange program in Neuroscience and Cognitive Psychology.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

10/2026– **Postdoctoral Researcher** · Department of Psychology, University of California, Los Angeles
Mentors: Maureen Ritchey and Ajay Satpute.
Memory-based construction of social and affective experience; how the brain holds and reuses context over minutes.

07/2019–07/2020 **Research Associate** · DeGutis Lab, Department of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School / VA Boston
Led a multimodal study of developmental prosopagnosia (structural MRI, task and resting-state fMRI, DTI, EEG, eye tracking, behavior).

05/2018–06/2019 **Graduate Student Researcher** · Gallo Memory Lab, University of Chicago
Led a behavioral study of memory distortion in older and younger adults; assisted a tDCS project.

09/2018–06/2019 **Graduate Student Researcher** · Nusbaum APEX Lab, University of Chicago
Led task-fMRI projects on auditory perceptual learning and on emotional speech and perspective taking.

03/2017–10/2018 **Student Researcher** · Wei Reward & Visual Attention Lab and Guo Associative Memory Lab, Capital Normal University
Task fMRI and ERP studies of reward-modulated attention; ERP studies of unitization and associative memory.

09/2016–03/2017 **Student Researcher** · Buffalo Neuroimaging Analysis Center, University at Buffalo
Resting-state fMRI and DTI network analyses in multiple sclerosis.

PREPRINTS AND MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

- **Li, X.**, Lee, H., & Honey, C. J. (2026). Cortical and hippocampal pathways to mental continuity. *bioRxiv*. doi:10.64898/2026.09.04.749493. Under review; data and code: doi:10.5281/zenodo.22260085.
- **Li, X.**, Li, X., Antony, J. W., & Chen, J. (in preparation). Human and LLM alignment in causal reasoning for narrative events and their structural association with human memory.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS 14 journal articles

1. Zhang, M., Liu, P. R., Su, H., Zhao, M., **Li, X.**, Born, S., Lee, Y., Honey, C. J., Chen, J., & Lee, H. (2026). An fMRI dataset of verbalized spontaneous thought with annotated transcripts and self-report trait measures. *Scientific Data*. doi:10.1038/s41597-026-08414-6.
2. **Li, X.**, Ni, N. K., Born, S. J., Gualano, R. J., Lee, I., Bellana, B., & Chen, J. (2026). Interactive narratives reveal the personalizing effect of agency on episodic memory. *Nature Communications*, 17, 7272. doi:10.1038/s41467-026-73907-2.
3. Campbell, A., **Li, X.**, Rothlein, D., Esterman, M., & DeGutis, J. (2025). Left hemisphere abnormalities in face-selective activation and functional connectivity in developmental prosopagnosia. *Imaging Neuroscience*, 3, IMAG.a.971. doi:10.1162/imag.a.971.

4. Su, H., **Li, X.**, Born, S., Honey, C. J., Chen, J., & Lee, H. (2025). Neural dynamics of spontaneous memory recall and future thinking in the continuous flow of thoughts. *Nature Communications*, 16, 6433. doi:10.1038/s41467-025-61807-w.
5. Xie, M., Han, M., Liu, Z., **Li, X.**, & Guo, C. (2024). Effects of congruent emotional contexts during encoding on recognition: An ERPs study. *Psychophysiology*, 61, e14516. doi:10.1111/psyp.14516.
6. Fry, R., **Li, X.**, Evans, T. C., Esterman, M., Tanaka, J., & DeGutis, J. (2023). Investigating the influence of autism spectrum traits on face processing mechanisms in developmental prosopagnosia. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 53, 4787–4808. doi:10.1007/s10803-022-05705-w.
7. Liu, Z., **Li, X.**, Li, X., Yuan, J., & Guo, C. (2023). From encoding to retrieval: Change in level of unitization resolves debate about unitization's effect on associative recognition. *Psychophysiology*, 60, e14161. doi:10.1111/psyp.14161.
8. Bartnik, A., Fuchs, T. A., Ashton, K., Kuceyeski, A., **Li, X.**, Mallory, M., et al. (2023). Functional alteration due to structural damage is network dependent: Insight from multiple sclerosis. *Cerebral Cortex*, 33, 6090–6102. doi:10.1093/cercor/bhac486.
9. DeGutis, J., **Li, X.**, Yosef, B., & Mishra, M. V. (2022). Not so fast! Response times in the computerized Benton Face Recognition Test may not reflect face recognition ability. *Cognitive Neuropsychology*, 39, 155–169. doi:10.1080/02643294.2022.2114824.
10. **Li, X.***, Zhang, M.*, Wu, L., Zhang, Q., & Wei, P. (2021). Neural mechanisms of reward-by-cueing interactions: ERP evidence. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 15, 608427. doi:10.3389/fnhum.2021.608427. (*equal contribution)
11. Fuchs, T. A., Benedict, R. H. B., Bartnik, A., Choudhery, S., **Li, X.**, et al. (2019). Preserved network functional connectivity underlies cognitive reserve in multiple sclerosis. *Human Brain Mapping*, 40, 5231–5241. doi:10.1002/hbm.24768.
12. Yang, X., Mao, X., Han, M., **Li, X.**, & Guo, C. (2019). Electrophysiological evidence of encoding in self-referential effect. *NeuroReport*, 30, 901–907. doi:10.1097/WNR.0000000000001303.
13. Fuchs, T. A., Dwyer, M. G., Kuceyeski, A., Choudhery, S., Carolus, K., **Li, X.**, et al. (2018). White matter tract network disruption explains reduced conscientiousness in multiple sclerosis. *Human Brain Mapping*, 39, 3682–3690. doi:10.1002/hbm.24203.
14. Lyu, Y., Wang, Y., Mao, X., **Li, X.**, & Guo, C. (2018). Semantic relationship shared between words: Influence on associative recognition supported by event-related potentials. *NeuroReport*, 29, 71–78. doi:10.1097/WNR.0000000000000910.

INVITED TALKS

October 2026	Human memory area data blitz (organized by David Clewett), Department of Psychology, University of California, Los Angeles
September 2026	Tompary Lab (Alexa Tompary), Drexel University
August 2026	Naturalistic Cognition Lab (Coraline Iordan), University of Rochester
April 2026	Colloquium, Cognitive Neuroscience program, Ohio State University
March 2026	Voss Lab and Jacobs Lab (Joel Voss, Josh Jacobs), University of Chicago
March 2026	MemoLab (Maureen Ritchey), University of California, Los Angeles
February 2026	Stanford Memory Lab (Anthony Wagner), Stanford University
September 2025	Dynamic Perception and Memory Lab (Chris Baldassano), Columbia University
March 2025	Princeton Neuroscience Institute seminar (Kenneth Norman), Princeton University
February 2025	Decision Neuroscience Lab (Tobias Donner), University Medical Center Hamburg-Eppendorf
July 2022	Episodic Memory Group (Chris Bird), University of Sussex
June 2020	Invited talk, Vision Sciences Society Annual Meeting

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS 19 entries; first-author entries in bold

2026	**Li, X.**, Lee, H., & Honey, C. J. Cortical and hippocampal pathways to mental continuity. Abstract, Society for Neuroscience (SfN) Annual Meeting.
2026	**Li, X.**, Li, X., & Chen, J. Human and LLM alignment in causal reasoning for narrative events. Poster, Conference on Cognitive Computational Neuroscience (CCN), New York, NY.
2026	Kressin Palacios, G., **Li, X.**, Lai, Y., & Honey, C. J. Cognitive and neural origins of persistent experiences. Poster, CCN, New York, NY.

2026 Arekar, D., Kressin Palacios, G., **Li, X.**, & Chen, J. Automated recall-to-story matching for memory research. Poster, CCN, New York, NY.

2026 **Li, X.**, & Honey, C. J. Two pathways to mental continuity. Poster, Context and Episodic Memory Symposium (CEMS), Philadelphia, PA.

2025 **Li, X.**, Ni, N. K., Born, S. J., Gualano, R. J., Lee, I., Bellana, B., & Chen, J. Agency personalizes episodic memories. Poster, SfN Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.

2025 **Li, X.**, & Honey, C. J. Narrative representations resist interference. Poster, SfN Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.

2025 Kressin Palacios, G., **Li, X.**, Lai, Y., & Honey, C. J. Neural origins of persistent mental content. Poster, SfN Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.

2025 **Li, X.**, & Honey, C. J. Neural representations that resist interference. Poster, CCN, Boston, MA.

2024 **Li, X.**, Ni, N. K., Born, S. J., Gualano, R. J., Lee, I., Bellana, B., & Chen, J. Agency enhances individuality in memory for narratives. Talk, CEMS, Philadelphia, PA.

2024 **Li, X.**, Ni, N. K., Born, S., Gualano, R. J., Lee, I., Bellana, B., & Chen, J. Agency personalizes naturalistic event memories. Poster, SfN Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.

2022 **Li, X.**, Ni, N. K., Born, S., Gualano, R., & Chen, J. The role of agency in memory for narratives. Poster, CCN, San Francisco, CA.

2022 **Li, X.**, Ni, N. K., Born, S., Gualano, R., & Chen, J. The role of agency in memory for narratives: A choose-your-own-adventure paradigm. Talk and poster, CEMS, Philadelphia, PA.

2021 **Li, X.**, Su, H., Born, S., Chen, J., & Honey, C. J. Exploration path trajectory during self-guided viewing of complex photographs and paintings predicts brain activity patterns in the default network. Talk and poster, SfN Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.

2021 **Li, X.**, Ni, N. K., Born, S., Gualano, R., & Chen, J. The role of agency in memory for narratives: A choose-your-own-adventure paradigm. Poster, CEMS, Philadelphia, PA.

2020 **Li, X.**, Arizpe, J., Rothlein, D., Esterman, M., & DeGutis, J. Deficient functional MRI selectivity and connectivity in developmental prosopagnosia is specific to face regions. Abstract, Vision Sciences Society (VSS) Annual Meeting (online); *Journal of Vision*, 20(11), 827.

2020 Fry, R., **Li, X.**, Wilmer, J., & DeGutis, J. Faces are no object: Normal novel object performance in developmental prosopagnosia. Abstract, VSS Annual Meeting (online); *Journal of Vision*, 20(11), 1231.

2020 Bartnik, A., Fuchs, T. A., Ashton, K., **Li, X.**, Mallory, M., Oship, D., et al. Alteration of resting-state functional connectivity in response to structural disruption differs between well-established functional networks in multiple sclerosis. Poster, American Academy of Neurology (AAN) Annual Meeting, Toronto, Canada.

2018 Fuchs, T. A., Benedict, R. H. B., Choudhery, S., **Li, X.**, Carolus, K., Mallory, M., et al. Preservation of functional connectivity moderates the impact of white matter tract disruption on cognition in multiple sclerosis. Poster, AAN Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA.

AWARDS AND HONORS

2026 **Walter L. Clark Scholar Award** · Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, Johns Hopkins University

2025–2026 **Dissertation Prize Fellowship** · Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Johns Hopkins University

2021–2022 **Science of Learning Fellowship** · Science of Learning Institute, Johns Hopkins University

2020 **Elsevier / Vision Research Travel Award** · Vision Sciences Society

2018–2019 **Half Scholarship, M.A. program** · University of Chicago

2017–2018 **National Scholarship (top 0.01%)** · China

2016–2017 **Full Scholarship, exchange program** · University at Buffalo

2016 **Inducted into Psi Chi, the International Honor Society in Psychology** · University at Buffalo

2014–2016 **Scholarship for Excellence in Academic Performance (top 2%)** · Capital Normal University

2014–2015 **Scholarship for Excellence in Research and Creative Activities** · Capital Normal University

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Spring 2023	**Seminar in Theoretical Neuroscience (AS.200.332)** · Teaching Assistant, Johns Hopkins University
Fall 2022	**Research Methods in Psychology (AS.200.200)** · Teaching Assistant, Johns Hopkins University
Spring 2022	**Introduction to Cognitive Psychology (AS.200.110)** · Teaching Assistant, Johns Hopkins University
Fall 2021	**Clinical Neuropsychology (AS.200.322)** · Teaching Assistant, Johns Hopkins University
Fall 2016	**Introduction to Psychology (PSY101)** · Teaching Assistant, University at Buffalo Opened each class with a 20-minute presentation on students' questions; graded homework and part of the exams; held office hours and review sessions.
Summer 2016	**Psychological Statistics (PSY207)** · Teaching Assistant, University at Buffalo Ran recitation sections reviewing the lecture material; wrote and graded quizzes; graded homework; held office hours.

RESEARCH MENTORSHIP undergraduate researchers

2025–2026	**Yijun Lai** · Computer Engineering and Neuroscience, Johns Hopkins University
2023–2026	**Nicole Kim Ni** · Psychology, Johns Hopkins University
2023–2024	**Arthur Li** · Molecular and Cellular Biology, Johns Hopkins University
2023–2024	**Hannah Fu** · Molecular and Cellular Biology, Johns Hopkins University
2022–2024	**Iris Lee** · The Writing Seminars, Johns Hopkins University
2022	**Molly Ervin** · Neuroscience, Johns Hopkins University
2021–2022	**Ria Gualano** · Psychology, Johns Hopkins University
2021–2022	**Sydney (Seungmin) Baek** · Neuroscience, Johns Hopkins University
2020	**Anna Hu** · Psychology and Neuroscience, Johns Hopkins University

SOFTWARE AND DATA RELEASES

narRaters. Human-in-the-loop pipeline and web interface for narrative recall analysis (transcription, event segmentation, recall correction and parsing, recall-to-event matching, causal rating) with rule-based, local-model, and cloud-model raters. GitHub and PyPI; archived release doi:10.5281/zenodo.20486079.

Agency and episodic memory: data, code, and stimuli. Subject-level data, analysis scripts, figure notebooks, story maps and the task demo for Li et al. (2026), *Nature Communications*. GitHub (xianNeuro/agency-personalizes-episodic-memory); Zenodo doi:10.5281/zenodo.19124153.

Interruption fMRI dataset. Dataset and analysis code for Li, Lee & Honey (2026). Zenodo doi:10.5281/zenodo.22260085.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Ad hoc reviewer for *Nature Communications*, *Journal of Neuroscience*, *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, *Computational Linguistics*, the Conference on Cognitive Computational Neuroscience, and ACL Rolling Review.

METHODS AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

Neuroimaging	fMRI (task, resting-state, naturalistic; fMRIPrep, FSL); inter-subject correlation, pattern reliability and reinstatement, event segmentation, representational similarity analysis; DTI; EEG/ERP; eye tracking.
Computation	Python and Jupyter analysis pipelines; large language models as annotators and model subjects (local and API); online behavioral data collection.