

# Leor Zmigrod, PhD.

Department of Psychology, University of Cambridge  
www.leorzmgrod.com | lz343@cam.ac.uk | @LeorZmigrod

## SUMMARY

Dr Leor Zmigrod's research utilises social psychology, computational cognitive science, neuroimaging, genetics, longitudinal experimental designs, and sensitivity to upbringing and culture, to tackle the question of what makes a mind ideologically dogmatic and extreme. This research is captured in over twenty publications in prestigious scientific journals including *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, *Trends in Cognitive Science*, *Politics and the Life Sciences*, *Current Opinions in Behavioural Sciences*, *Neuroscience & Biobehavioural Reviews*, *Consciousness and Cognition*, *Neuroscience*, *Current Directions in Psychological Sciences*, amongst others. She was recently the Editor of a state-of-the-art Theme Issue for the Royal Society on "The Political Brain: Neurocognitive and Computational Mechanisms" in *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B Biological Sciences*. Leor has spoken on this research widely, including the Festival of Ideas, TEDx, and BBC Radio, and received recognition through the Glushko Prize by the Cognitive Science Society, the Young Investigator Award by the European Society for Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience, Forbes 30 Under 30 in Science, and the United Kingdom's Women of the Future Science Award.

## EMPLOYMENT

**Junior Research Fellowship** 2019-2022  
**Director of Studies, Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Tripos**  
Churchill College, University of Cambridge

**Guest Lecturer in Social Cognition and Political Neuroscience**  
Department of Psychology, University of Cambridge

## EDUCATION

**PhD Psychology, University of Cambridge** 2016-2019  
*Supervisor:* Professor Trevor Robbins CBE FRS  
*Thesis Title:* The Cognitive Underpinnings of Ideological Thinking  
*Scholarship:* Gates Cambridge Trust; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

**BA (Hons) Psychological and Behavioural Sciences** 2013-2016  
**Downing College, University of Cambridge**  
*Degree Class:* 1<sup>st</sup> Class  
*Ranking:* Ranked the best performing student in the PBS Tripos at the Department of Psychology, Cambridge for three consecutive years.

## VISITING FELLOWSHIPS

**Paris Institute for Advanced Study** 2021  
*Position:* Gretty Mirdal Junior Chair in 'Brain, Culture and Society'

**Department of Psychology, Harvard University** 2019  
*Collaborators:* Professor Mina Cikara and Professor Fiery Cushman

**Department of Psychology, Stanford University** 2018  
*Collaborator:* Professor Russell Poldrack

## GRANTS & AWARDS

Albert Einstein Fellowship Shortlisted Finalist 2021  
Women of the Future Science Award Winner 2020  
Forbes 30 Under 30 by Forbes Magazine (Science & Healthcare) 2020

Glushko Dissertation Prize, Cognitive Science Society & Robert J. Glushko Foundation	2020
Young Investigator Award, European Society for Cognitive & Affective Neuroscience	2020
Legal Priorities Project Research Fellowship, Harvard Business School	2020
Junior Research Fellowship, Churchill College, Cambridge	2019-2022
Paris Institute for Advanced Study Fellowship	2020-2021
Gates Scholarship, Gates Cambridge Trust	2016-2019
Fieldwork Award, Department of Psychology, Cambridge	2018, 2019
Treherne Studentship in Biological Science, Downing College	2018
John Maples Scholarship & Downing Association Prize	2018
International Convention of Psychological Science Travel Grant	2018
EnterpriseTECH Program, Cambridge Judge Business School	2018
PsyPAG Study Visit Award, British Psychological Society	2018
Alfred Monk Travel Grant, Downing College, Cambridge	2017
Vice Chancellor's Award, University of Cambridge	2016
Downing College Foundation Scholar	2016
British Psychological Society Undergraduate Award	2016
Cambridge University Psychology Department CUP Prize	'14 '15 '16
Downing College Association Prize, Cambridge	2016
Downing College Whalley Tooker Prize, Cambridge	2015
International School of Amsterdam Director's Award for Excellence	2013
Smith College Book Award for "Outstanding Young Woman in Community"	2013

## PUBLICATIONS

1. **Zmigrod, L.**, Eisenberg, I. W., Bissett, P., Robbins, T. W., & Poldrack, R.A. (2021). A Data-Driven Analysis of the Cognitive and Perceptual Attributes of Ideological Attitudes. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*. (*Altmetric* = 557)
2. **Zmigrod, L.** & Tsakiris, M. (2021). Computational and Neurocognitive Approaches to the Political Brain: Key Insights and Future Avenues for Political Neuroscience. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*. (*Altmetric* = 34).
3. **Zmigrod, L.** & Goldenberg, A. (2021). Cognition and Emotion in Extreme Political Action: Individual Differences and Dynamic Interactions. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*. (*Altmetric* = 50).
4. **Zmigrod, L.** (2021). A Neurocognitive Model of Ideological Thinking. *Politics and the Life Sciences*.
5. Ramakrishnan, S., Robbins, T.W., & **Zmigrod, L.** (2021). The Habitual Tendencies Questionnaire: A Tool for Psychometric Individual Differences Research. *Personality and Mental Health*, 1-14.
6. **Zmigrod, L.** (in press). A Psychology of Ideology: Unpacking the Psychological Structure of Ideological Thinking. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*. (*Altmetric* = 45).
7. **Zmigrod, L.**, Ebert, T., Götz, F.M., & Rentfrow, P.J. (in press). The Psychological and Socio-political Consequences of Infectious Diseases. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*. (*Altmetric* = 93).
8. **Zmigrod, L.** (in press). Mental Computations of Ideological Choice and Conviction: The Utility of Integrating Psycho-Economics and Bayesian Models of Belief. *Psychological Inquiry*.
9. Gaffney, D. & **Zmigrod, L.** (in press). Historicising creativity: an interdisciplinary perspective between the social and natural sciences. *One World Anthropology*.
10. **Zmigrod, L.** (2020). The Role of Cognitive Rigidity in Political Ideologies: Theory, Evidence, and Future Directions. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 34, 34-39. (*Altmetric* = 214).
11. **Zmigrod, L.**, Rentfrow, P. J., & Robbins, T. W. (2020). The Partisan Mind: Is Extreme Political Partisanship Related to Cognitive Inflexibility? *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 149(3), 407-418. (*Altmetric* = 295).
12. Rollwage, M., **Zmigrod, L.**, De-Wit, L., Dolan, R.J., & Fleming, S.M. (2019). What Underlies Political Polarization? A Manifesto for Computational Political Psychology. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 23(10), 820-822. (*Altmetric* = 36).
13. **Zmigrod, L.**, Rentfrow, P. J., & Robbins, T. W. (2019). Cognitive Inflexibility Predicts Extremist Attitudes. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 989. (*Altmetric* = 106).
14. **Zmigrod, L.**, Zmigrod, S., Rentfrow, P. J., & Robbins, T. W. (2019). The psychological roots of intellectual humility: The role of intelligence and cognitive flexibility. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 141, 200-208. (*Altmetric* = 119).

15. Ebert, T., Goetz, F., Obschonka, M., **Zmigrod, L.**, & Rentfrow, P.J. (2019). Regional Variation in Courage and Entrepreneurship—The Contrasting Role of Courage for the Emergence and Survival of Start-Ups in the US. *Journal of Personality*, 87, 1039-1055. (Altmetric = 85).
16. **Zmigrod, L.**, Rentfrow, P.J., & Robbins, T.W. (2018). Cognitive underpinnings of nationalistic ideology in the context of Brexit. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 201708960. (Altmetric = 268).
17. **Zmigrod, L.**, Rentfrow, P. J., Zmigrod, S., & Robbins, T. W. (2018). Cognitive flexibility and religious disbelief. *Psychological Research*, 1-11. (Altmetric = 84).
18. Zmigrod, S., **Zmigrod, L.**, & Hommel, B. (2018). The relevance of the irrelevant: Attentional distractor-response binding predicts performance in the Remote Associates Task. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 13(1), 15-23.
19. Khalighinejad, N., Schurger, A., Desantis, A., **Zmigrod, L.**, & Haggard, P. (2018). Precursor processes of human self-initiated action. *NeuroImage*, 165, 35-47.
20. **Zmigrod, L.**, Garrison, J. R., Carr, J., & Simons, J. S. (2016). The neural mechanisms of hallucinations: A quantitative meta-analysis of neuroimaging studies. *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*, 69, 113-123.
21. **Zmigrod, L.**, & Zmigrod, S. (2016). On the Temporal Precision of Thought: Individual Differences in the Multisensory Temporal Binding Window Predict Performance on Verbal and Nonverbal Problem Solving Tasks. *Multisensory Research*, 29(8), 679-701.
22. Zmigrod, S., **Zmigrod, L.**, & Hommel, B. (2016). Transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) over the right dorsolateral prefrontal cortex affects stimulus conflict but not response conflict. *Neuroscience*, 322, 320-325.
23. Zmigrod, S., & **Zmigrod, L.** (2015). Zapping the gap: Reducing the multisensory temporal binding window by means of transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS). *Consciousness and Cognition*, 35, 143-149.
24. Zmigrod, S., **Zmigrod, L.**, & Hommel, B. (2015). Zooming into creativity: Individual differences in attentional global-local biases are linked to creative thinking. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6:1647.

## EDITOR

*Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* (IF=7.2)

“The Political Brain: Neurocognitive and Computational Mechanisms” (publication 22 February 2021). <https://royalsocietypublishing.org/toc/rstb/2021/376/1822>. Compiled and edited 18 empirical manuscripts highlighting the use of computational, neurocognitive, and behavioural approaches to the study of modern political behaviour.

## AD-HOC REVIEWING

*Perspectives on Psychological Science; Cognition; Scientific Reports; Journal of Experimental Psychology: General; Current Opinions in Behavioural Science; Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics; Self & Identity; Social Psychological and Personality Science; Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin; British Journal of Social Psychology; Journal of Research on Personality; Cognitive Neuropsychiatry; Legal and Criminological Psychology; Frontiers in Psychology; Journal of Social and Political Psychology; Journal of Philosophy of Emotion; Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences; European Psychologist; Group Processes & Intergroup Relations; Political Behavior; Psychological Science.*

## PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

*Cambridge Cognitive Science Research Assistantship Scheme.* Founder of STEM teaching and mentoring scheme for young people and those from underrepresented communities. Mentored over 45 students.

*Cambridge University Behavioural Insights Team (CUBIT).* Co-founder and committee member.

*Academic-Practitioner Counter Extremism Network, Commission for Counter-Extremism.* Academic advisor.

## MEDIA COVERAGE

*The Guardian, The Times, New Scientist, The Financial Times, TIME Magazine, BBC Radio, Guardian Science Weekly Podcast, Psychology Today, International Business Times, The Independent, Yahoo News, The Telegraph, The Harvard Gazette, Politics on the Couch Podcast With Rafael Behr, The Conversation, The Royal Society Blog, CAM, PsychCentral, The Cambridge Independent, Foreign Policy, South China Morning Post, N+1, Le Scienze, Science Presse, El Pais, De Standaard, Slate FR, etc.*

## SELECTED INVITED TALKS

Michael S. Goodman Cognitive Seminar Series, Department of Psychological Sciences, Brown University  
Centre for Adaptive Rationality, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, Germany  
Hot Politics Lab, University of Amsterdam  
Oxford Forum for Questioning Extremism, University of Oxford  
Young Investigator Award Keynote, European Society for Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience  
Cambridge Festival, University of Cambridge  
Glushko Dissertation Prize Keynote Talk, Cognitive Science Society  
Decision-Making and Voluntary Action Seminar, University College London  
Zlotowski Centre for Neuroscience, Ben Gurion University  
Harvard Intergroup Neuroscience Lab & Moral Psychology Research Lab, Harvard University  
The Brains that Pull the Triggers Seminar, Paris Institute for Advanced Study  
International Convention of Psychological Science (ICPS), Paris, France  
Association for Psychological Science Convention, San Francisco, US  
TEDx Cambridge University, Cambridge  
Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats, Birmingham, UK  
BBC Radio Cambridgeshire

## INVITED ESSAYS

**Zmigrod, L.** (2021). Investigating Extremist Brains and Building Cognitive Resilience. *Partnership for Conflict, Crime, & Security Research*.

**Zmigrod, L.** (2021). The Political Brain: Pioneering an Innovative Psychology of Ideology. *Royal Society Blog*.

**Zmigrod, L.** (2021). Axes of Diversity in Peer Review Systems. *Royal Society Blog*.

**Zmigrod, L.** (2020). Susceptible to dogmatism? New research suggests cognitive science can illuminate ideological extremism. *Brainwaves – CAM*.

**Zmigrod, L.** (2019). The Partisan Brain: Cognitive study suggests people on the left and right are more similar than they think. *The Conversation*.

**Zmigrod, L.** (2019). Extreme Democratic and Republican partisans display greater mental rigidity on cognitive tests. *PsyPost*.

**Zmigrod, L.** (2019). Cognition and religiosity: Who is most likely to believe? *PsyPAG Quarterly of the British Psychological Society (BPS)*.

**Zmigrod, L.** (2018). Brexit Psychology: Cognitive styles and their relationship to nationalistic attitudes. *London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) British Politics and Policy Blog*.

**Zmigrod, L.** (2018). Brexit: How cognitive psychology helps us make sense of the vote. *The Conversation / The Independent*.

*For an extended CV or more information on current research projects or teaching, please contact Leor Zmigrod at [lz343@cam.ac.uk](mailto:lz343@cam.ac.uk).*