Updated April 2026

SAM PRATT

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EDUCATION

2025 – **University of California, Los Angeles**
PhD in Psychology
PI: Dr. Matthew Lieberman

2019 – 2023 **Harvard University**
B.A. in Psychology
GPA: 3.97
Magna Cum Laude with Highest Honors

FORMAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2023 – 2025 *Lab Manager,* **Deepest Beliefs Lab**
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
PI: Kurt Gray, PhD

2021 – 2023 *Research Assistant,* **Laboratory for Anxiety & Related Disorders**
Harvard University
PI: Richard J. McNally, PhD (Conducted senior honors thesis)

2021 Winter; 2023 Spring *Research Assistant,* **Laboratory on Complex Thought and Cooperation**
Harvard University
PI: Joshua Greene, PhD

2020 Summer *Research Assistant,* **Laboratory for Youth Mental Health**
Harvard University
PI: John Weisz, PhD

HONORS AND AWARDS

2026 **NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program** (GRFP) awardee
2026 **UCLA Graduate Summer Research Mentorship Award** ($6,000)
2025 **Editor's Choice Award** for Sending Signals publication in *JEP:A*
2025 **NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program**, Honorable Mention
2025 **Edwin W. Pauley Award** ($30,000), awarded to two incoming Psychology PhD students at UCLA
2024 **Harvard Institute for Quantitative Social Science Grant** ($16,000)
2023 **Phi Beta Kappa**, awarded to top 10% of graduating class, Harvard University
2023 **Summa Cum Laude**, Senior Honors Thesis in Psychology, Harvard University
2023 **Psychology Faculty Prize** for outstanding senior honors thesis, Harvard University
2023 **Highest Honors** in the field of Psychology, Harvard University
2023 **Seamus P. Malin Award**, for outstanding teamwork and dedication to Harvard Men's Soccer
2022 **Harvard College Research Program Grant** ($5,000) for senior honors thesis
2022 **Harvard College Research Program Grant** ($1,000) for senior honors thesis
2022 **John Harvard Scholar**, awarded to the top 5% of junior class, Harvard University
2021 **John Harvard Scholar**, awarded to the top 5% of sophomore class, Harvard University
2021 **Harvard College Research Program Grant** ($1,000) for independent research
2020 **Academic All-Ivy League**, awarded to one member of each varsity sports team, Harvard University

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Pratt, S., Jones, P. J., Bellet, B. W., McNally, R. & Gray, K. (2026). The words can harm scale: Measuring beliefs about harmful speech. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *257*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2026.113785

Womick, J., Kubin, E., Goya-Tocchetto, D., Ochoa, N. R., Rebollar, C., Kapsaskis, K., **Pratt, S.**, Devine, H., Payne, B. K., Vaisey, S. & Gray, K. (2026). Liberals and Conservatives See Different Victims: Moral Disagreement Is Explained by Different Assumptions of Vulnerability. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672261422957

Pratt, S., Rosenfeld, D. L., Goranson, A., Tomiyama, A. J., Sheeran, P. & Gray, K. (2025). Health behaviors are moralized when perceived to cause harm. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*. https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672251372823

Pratt, S.[*], Jones, P. J.[*], Bridgland, V. M. E, Bellet, B. W., & McNally, R. J. (2025). Sending signals: trigger warnings and safe space notifications. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied.* Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1037/xap0000541 †

Gray, K. & **Pratt, S.** (2025). Morality in our mind and across cultures and politics. *Annual Review of Psychology, 76*: 663-691. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-020924-124236

Worsnip, A., Lane, D., **Pratt, S.**, Napolitano, G. M., Gray, K., & Greene, J. A. (2025). Authority or autonomy? Philosophical and psychological perspectives on deference to experts. *Philosophical Psychology,* 1-36. https://doi.org/10.1080/09515089.2025.2475138

Rodriguez, M., **Pratt, S.**, Bellet, B. W., & McNally, R. J. (2023). Solitude can be good—If you see it as such: Reappraisal helps lonely people experience solitude more positively. *Journal of Personality, 93* (1): 118-135. https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12887 ‡

* These authors contributed equally to this work.
† Selected as an Editor's Choice paper in *JEP:A*
‡ Recognized as a top 10 Most Cited and top 10% Most Viewed article of 2023 by the *Journal of Personality*

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Pratt, S., Bellet, B. W., Jones, P. J., & McNally, R. J. (2024). *Testing the coddling hypothesis: Campus safetyism and student resilience. PsyArXiv*. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/zav5g

Sarkar, A., Sella, F., Rebollar, C., Ibata, N. G. O., **Pratt, S.**, Kahane, G., Gray, K., Savulesco, J., Elliot, A. J., & Thompson, J. M. (2025). *Social impressions shape moral decisions.* Manuscript in preparation.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

Bai, F., Chan, S., Dong, Y., Tierney, W., Celniker, J., **Pratt, S.**, Gray, K., Clark, C. J., … & Uhlmann, E. L. (2024). *Person-centered moral judgments: Replicability, cross-cultural generalizability, and theoretical integration.* Ongoing large-scale project.

INVITED TALKS

Pratt, S. (June, 2025). *How Camp Shapes Us: The Psychology of Belonging*. Invited talk presented in person at YMCA Camp Belknap, Wolfeboro, New Hampshire.

Pratt, S. & Kubin, E. (April, 2025). *Testing True Victimhood Beliefs Across Cultures and Contexts*. Invited talk presented in person at the Templeton World Charity Foundation grant cohort meeting, Listening and Learning in a Polarized World, Marrakesh, Morocco.

Pratt, S. & Gray, K. (October, 2024). *The Roots of Moral Disagreement and How to Find Common Ground*. Invited talk presented virtually at St. Paul's High School.

PODCASTS

Guest, *Outrage Overload Podcast*. Episode 63: Moral Psychology and the Harm-Based Roots of Political Polarization. Interviewed by David Beckemeyer. April 30, 2025. https://outrageoverload.net/outrage-63-how-perceptions-of-harm-drive-moral-outrage-and-political-conflict-samuel-pratt/

EDITED BOOKS

Assisted with research, writing, and editing for….Gray, K. (January 14, 2025). Outraged: Why We Fight About Morality and Politics and How to Find Common Ground. *Pantheon*. https://www.amazon.com/Outraged-Morality-Politics-Common-Ground/dp/0593317432

CONFERENCE POSTERS

Pratt, S. & Gray, K. "Harm denial: A source of political animosity and a potential solution." Poster presented by S. Pratt at the annual convention for the Society of Personality and Social Psychology (February, 2024, San Diego, CA).

Pratt, S., Rodriguez, M., Bellet, B. W., & McNally, R. J. "Alone but not lonely: Brief cognitive interventions for lonely individuals." Poster presented by S. Pratt at the annual convention for the American Psychological Association (August 2023, Washington, D.C.).

Pratt, S. Rodriguez, M., Bellet, B. W., & McNally, R. J. "Alone but not lonely: Cognitive reappraisal helps lonely individuals experience time alone more positively." Poster presented by S. Pratt at the annual convention for the Society of Personality and Social Psychology (February 2023, Atlanta, GA).

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & SCIENCE WRITING

Pratt, S. (2026, April). Can words harm? My new measure that sparked Twitter outrage. *Train of Thought*. https://sampratt.substack.com/p/can-words-harm

Pratt, S. (2026, April). Most students want trigger warnings: They don't actually help. *The Science Matters*. https://thesciencematters.org/most-students-want-trigger-warnings-they-dont-actually-help/

Pratt, S., Jones, P., & Bridgland, V. (2025, September). Want a more supportive classroom? Skip the trigger warning. *SPSP Character and Context Blog*. https://spsp.org/news/character-and-context-blog/pratt-jones-bridgland-supportive-classroom-safe-space-messages-trigger-warnings

Gray, K., Devine, H., & **Pratt, S.** (2025, April). Strip club physics: Serious decisions need serious settings. *The Moral Understanding Substack*. https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/strip-club-physics

Gray, K., **Pratt, S.**, & Devine, H. (2025, February). AI is more moral than you (And the NYTimes' best ethicist). *The Moral Understanding Substack.* https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/ai-is-more-moral-than-you

Gray, K., & **Pratt, S.** (2025, January). Why grandma's cookies taste so good (Or: When I gave electric shocks to Harvard undergraduates). *The Moral Understanding Substack*. https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/why-grandmas-cookies-taste-so-good

Gray, K., **Pratt, S.**, & Devine, H. (2024, December). How the DMV saved Christmas: Shared irritation brings us together. *The Moral Understanding Substack.* https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/how-the-dmv-saved-christmas

Gray, K., Devine, H., & **Pratt, S**. (2024, December). The assassination of a CEO: Why some celebrate the pain of the powerful. *The Moral Understanding Substack*. https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/the-

assassination-of-a-ceo

Gray, K., **Pratt, S.**, & Devine, H. (2024, November). In defense of flat earthers: Conspiracy theorists are more logical than you think. *The Moral Understanding Substack*. https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/in-defense-of-flat-earthers

Gray, K., Devine, H., & **Pratt, S.** (2024, November). Moving forward: The 2024 election and the curse of knowledge. *The Moral Understanding Substack.* https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/moving-forward

Gray, K., Devine, H., & **Pratt, S.** (2024, October). The psychology of pettiness: Why (some) people get so angry at line-cutting and grape-stealing. *The Moral Understanding Substack*. https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/the-psychology-of-petty

Gray, K. & **Pratt, S**. (2024, September). The problem with moral psychology: What science says about moral truths and romancing your sibling. *The Moral Understanding Substack*. https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/the-problem-with-moral-psychology

Gray, K., **Pratt, S.**, & Puryear, C. (2024, April). DANGER! Why MORAL PANICS(!) are irresistible to your brain. *The Moral Understanding Substack.* https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/danger-why-moral-panics-are-irresistible

Pratt, S. & Gray, K. (2024, February). Being alone doesn't make you a killer (OR: would Henry David Thoreau be a mass shooter in 2024?). *The Moral Understanding Substack.* https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/being-alone-doesnt-make-you-a-killer

Gray, K., & **Pratt, S**. (2024, January). Hidden brain and evil explain: Lessons from death threats. *The Moral Understanding Substack*. https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/hidden-brain-and-evil-explain

Rodriguez, M., **Pratt, S.**, & Bellet, B. (2023, November). Improving our relationship to being alone. *SPSP Character & Context Blog*. https://spsp.org/news/character-and-context-blog/rodriguez-pratt-bellet-benefits-perceptions-solitude-loneliness

Gray, K., **Pratt, S**, & Blakey, W. (2023, October). The Myopia of Heroism: Hamas, Israel, and the quest to save victims. *The Moral Understanding Substack*. https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/the-myopia-of-heroism

Gray, K., Blakey W., & **Pratt, S**. (2023, August). Charitable condescension: You're not a saint for thinking "they" are stupid. *The Moral Understanding Substack*. https://www.moralunderstandingnewsletter.com/p/charitable-condescension

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2026 Spring	*Teaching Assistant*, PSYCH-10 Introductory Psychology, UCLA
2023 Fall	*Teaching Assistant,* "The Science of Moral Understanding," UNC Chapel Hill
2023 Summer	*Teaching Assistant,* "Becoming a Brain Scientist: Neuroscience and Psychology Research," Harvard Summer School

AFFILIATIONS AND SERVICE

2025 –	Psychology in Action, University of California, Los Angeles
2024 –	Advisory committee member, Institute for Multipartisan Education
2023 –	Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)
2022 – 2023	Psychology Undergraduate Planning Committee, Harvard University

TECHNICAL SKILLS

RStudio, Qualtrics, Microsoft Office, Amazon Mechanical Turk, CloudResearch, Prolific