

Ed O'Brien

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Employment

July 2018-present	Associate Professor of Behavioral Science University of Chicago Booth School of Business Charles E. Merrill Faculty Scholar
July 2014-July 2018	Assistant Professor of Behavioral Science University of Chicago Booth School of Business Willard Graham Faculty Scholar

Education

May 2009-May 2014	Ph.D., Social Psychology University of Michigan Committee: Phoebe Ellsworth, Norbert Schwarz, Dick Nisbett, Katherine Burson
May 2005-May 2009	B.S., Psychology Saint Joseph's University <i>Summa cum laude</i> Only student in graduating class (university wide, > 1,000 students) named <i>University Scholar</i> ("Reserved for students of exceptional caliber, and who undertake independent research of unusual depth and breadth")

Honors and Awards

2020	Morrison Scholar Fellowship, UCLA Anderson School of Management
2019	Sage Young Scholar Award, Foundation for Personality and Social Psychology
2019	Fellow, Society of Experimental Social Psychology
2018	Top 40 under 40 Most Outstanding Business School Professors, Poets & Quants
2017	Early Career Award, International Social Cognition Network
2016	Rising Star Award, Association for Psychological Science
2016	Up-and-Comer, Psychology Today
2015	Top 30 Thinkers Under 30, Pacific Standard

- 2013 Philip Brickman Memorial Prize for Best Paper, University of Michigan
- 2012 Hillel Einhorn New Investigator Award (runner up), Society for Judgment and Decision Making
- 2012 Golden Walnut Award for Best Talk, Decision Consortium, University of Michigan
- 2011 Pat Gurin Distinguished Lecture Award for Best Research Program, University of Michigan
- 2010 Best Poster Award, Society for Personality and Social Psychology
- 2010 Travel Award, Society for Personality and Social Psychology
- 2010-2013 Graduate Research Fellowship, National Science Foundation

Journal Publications **supervisee

1. O'Brien, E. (2021). A mind stretched: The psychology of repeat consumption. *Consumer Psychology Review*, 4, 42-58.
2. O'Brien, E. (2020). When small signs of change add up: The psychology of tipping points. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 29, 55-62.
3. **Kristal, A. C., O'Brien, E., & Caruso, E. M. (2019). Yesterday's news: A temporal discontinuity in the sting of inferiority. *Psychological Science*, 30, 643-656.
4. O'Brien, E. (2019). Enjoy it again: Repeat experiences are less repetitive than people think. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 116, 519-540.
5. O'Brien, E., & **Kassirer, S. (2019). People are slow to adapt to the warm glow of giving. *Psychological Science*, 30, 193-204.
6. O'Brien, E., & Smith, R. W. (2019). Unconventional consumption methods and enjoying things consumed: Recapturing the "first time" experience. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 45, 67-80.
7. **Klein, N., & O'Brien, E. (2018). People use less information than they think to make up their minds. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 115, 13222-13227.

8. **Kardas, M., & O'Brien, E. (2018). Easier seen than done: Merely watching others perform can foster an illusion of skill acquisition. *Psychological Science*, 29, 521-536.
9. O'Brien, E., **Kristal, A. C., Ellsworth, P. C., & Schwarz, N. (2018). (Mis)imagining the good life and the bad life: Envy and pity as a function of the focusing illusion. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 75, 41-53.
10. O'Brien, E., & **Roney, E. (2017). Worth the wait? Leisure can be just as enjoyable with work left undone. *Psychological Science*, 28, 1000-1015.
11. **Klein, N., & O'Brien, E. (2017). The power and limits of personal change: When a bad past does (and does not) inspire in the present. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 113, 210-229.
12. O'Brien, E., & **Klein, N. (2017). The tipping point of perceived change: Asymmetric thresholds in diagnosing improvement versus decline. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 112, 161-185.
13. Chopik, W. J., O'Brien, E., & Konrath, S. (2017). Differences in empathic concern and perspective taking across 63 countries. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 48, 23-38.
14. Chopik, W. J., & O'Brien, E. (2017). Happy you, healthy me? Having a happy partner is independently associated with better health in oneself. *Health Psychology*, 36, 21-30.
15. O'Brien, E., & **Kardas, M. (2016). The implicit meaning of (my) change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 111, 882-894.
16. **Klein, N., & O'Brien, E. (2016). The tipping point of moral change: When do good and bad acts make good and bad actors? *Social Cognition*, 34, 149-166.
17. O'Brien, E. (2015). Mapping out past versus future minds: The perceived trajectory of rationality versus emotionality over time. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 144, 624-628.
18. O'Brien, E. (2015). Feeling connected to younger versus older selves: The asymmetric impact of life stage orientation. *Cognition and Emotion*, 29, 678-686.
19. Chopik, W. J., O'Brien, E., Konrath, S., & Schwarz, N. (2015). MLK Day and attitude change: Liking the group more but its members less. *Political Psychology*, 36, 559-567.

20. Konrath, S., Chopik, W. J., Hsing, C., & O'Brien, E. (2014). Changes in adult attachment styles in American college students over time: A meta-analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 18, 326-348.
21. Campbell, T., O'Brien, E., Van Boven, L., Schwarz, N., & Ubel, P. A. (2014). Too much experience: A desensitization bias in emotional perspective taking. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 106, 272-285.
Campbell, O'Brien share joint authorship
22. O'Brien, E., & Hagen, A. L. (2013). The thrill of (absolute) victory: Success among many enhances emotional payoffs. *Emotion*, 13, 366-374.
23. O'Brien, E. (2013). Easy to retrieve but hard to believe: Metacognitive discounting of the unpleasantly possible. *Psychological Science*, 24, 844-851.
24. O'Brien, E., Konrath, S., Grühn, D., & Hagen, A. L. (2013). Empathic concern and perspective taking: Linear and quadratic effects of age across the adult lifespan. *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences*, 68, 168-175.
25. O'Brien, E., Ellsworth, P. C., & Schwarz, N. (2012). Today's misery and yesterday's happiness: Differential effects of current life-events on perceptions of past wellbeing. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48, 968-972.
26. O'Brien, E., & Ellsworth, P. C. (2012). More than skin deep: Visceral states are not projected onto dissimilar others. *Psychological Science*, 23, 391-396.
27. O'Brien, E., & Ellsworth, P.C. (2012). Saving the last for best: A positivity bias for end experiences. *Psychological Science*, 23, 163-165.
28. O'Brien, E., Anastasio, P. A., & Bushman, B. J. (2011). Time crawls when you're not having fun: Feeling entitled makes dull tasks drag on. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37, 1287-1296.
29. Konrath, S., O'Brien, E., & Hsing, C. (2011). Changes in dispositional empathy in American college students over time: A meta-analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 15, 180-198.
30. Anderson, M. J., Williams, S. A., & O'Brien, E. (2009). Individual differences in preferred neck-resting position of Caribbean flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber*). *Laterality: Asymmetries of Body, Brain and Cognition*, 14, 66-78.

Chapters/Invited Submissions **supervisee

1. O'Brien, E. (in press). Look back, not ahead? Time use and the value of revisiting past experiences. In C. Hoerl, T. McCormack, & A. Fernandes (Eds.), *Temporal*

asymmetries in philosophy and psychology. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

2. **Roberts, A., & O'Brien, E. (2019). Work well-being. In D. S. Dunn (Ed.), *Oxford Bibliographies in Psychology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
3. O'Brien, E., & Ellsworth, P. C. (2012). Polar opposites: Empathy does not extend across the political aisle. *The Jury Expert*, 24, 25-39.
Invited lead article with peer commentary
4. Bushman, B. J., & O'Brien, E. (2011). Aggression. In V. S. Ramachandran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Human Behavior*. New York, NY: Academic Press.

Selected Work in Progress **supervisee

1. Garcia-Rada, X., John, L. K., O'Brien, E., & Norton, M. I. (revise and resubmit). A preference for revision absent objective improvement.
2. **Kardas, M., Schroeder, J., & O'Brien, E. (revise and resubmit). Keep talking: (Mis)Understanding the hedonic trajectory of conversation.
3. O'Brien, E. (revise and resubmit). The “next” effect: When a better future worsens the present.
4. **Klein, N., & O'Brien, E. (under review). How many good or bad acts make good or bad actors? Moral change occurs sooner than people think.
5. **Wald, K., & O'Brien, E. (under review). Clueless critics: Repeated exposure to success fosters unfounded criticism of those who try (and fail).
6. **Yoon, J., Whillans, A. V., & O'Brien, E. (under review). Connecting the dots: Superordinate framing enhances the value of unimportant tasks.
7. **Li, X., Hsee, C. K., & O'Brien, E. (under review). “It could be better” can make it worse: When and why people mistakenly communicate better counterfactual information.
8. **Winet, Y., & O'Brien, E. (under review). Ending on a familiar note: Last chances motivate repeat consumption.
9. O'Brien, E. (under review). Piecemeal progress be damned? People lump and dismiss improvement efforts that fall short—despite improving.
10. Hagen, L., & O'Brien, E. (under review). The trap of the gap: People seek to salvage lost time by holding out for higher value.

11. O'Brien, E. (writing). How experience changes experience.
12. **Roberts, A., & O'Brien, E. (collecting data). Advice about how to spend time.
13. **Christensen, K., & O'Brien, E. (collecting data). The value of past connection.
14. **White, M., & O'Brien, E. (collecting data). Hurting by helping.

Chaired Symposia **supervisee

1. O'Brien, E. (2021). Pitfalls of progress: Unintended negative consequences of positive social change. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology*, virtual.
2. **Winet, Y., & O'Brien, E. (2021). "When" matters: Exploiting time and timing to maximize well-being. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology*, virtual.
3. **Wald, K., & O'Brien, E. (2021). Adversity begets adversity: How failures create further negative consequences. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology*, virtual.
4. **Kardas, M., & O'Brien, E. (2017). New directions in empathy gaps: Insights for improving learning, social interactions, and wellbeing. *Association for Psychological Science*, Boston, MA.
5. O'Brien, E. (2016). Mistaken intuitions about hedonic experience: Unforeseen pleasures of the monotonous, the mundane, and the unknown. *Society of Experimental Social Psychology*, Santa Monica, CA.
6. **Molouki, S., & O'Brien, E. (2016). The trouble of believing in self-improvement. *Association for Psychological Science*, Chicago, IL.
7. **Steinmetz, J., & O'Brien, E. (2016). Impression (mis)management: The unforeseen social consequences of a positive self. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology*, San Diego, CA.
8. O'Brien, E., & Schwarz, N. (2012). Life goes on: Perceiving change in self and circumstances. *Society of Experimental Social Psychology*, Austin, TX.
9. O'Brien, E., & Ellsworth, P. C. (2012). Where have all the good times gone? Causes and consequences of perceiving a positive past. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology*, San Diego, CA.
10. O'Brien, E., & Ellsworth, P. C. (2011). Misperceptions in mental state inference. *Society of Experimental Social Psychology*, Washington, DC.

Conference Talks

- 2021 Marketing Science
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology
- 2020 Association for Consumer Research
 Society for Judgment and Decision Making
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology
- 2019 Academy of Management
 Choice Symposium
 Society for Judgment and Decision Making
- 2018 Behavioral Decision Research in Management
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology
- 2017 Association for Consumer Research
 Association for Psychological Science
 Society for Judgment and Decision Making
 Society of Experimental Social Psychology
- 2016 Association for Consumer Research
 Association for Psychological Science
 Society for Judgment and Decision Making
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology
 Society of Experimental Social Psychology
- 2015 Association for Consumer Research
 Society for Judgment and Decision Making
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology
- 2014 Association for Consumer Research
 Behavioral Decision Research in Management
- 2013 Society for Consumer Psychology
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology
- 2012 Association for Consumer Research
 Society for Personality and Social Psychology
 Society of Experimental Social Psychology
- 2011 Society for Judgment and Decision Making
 Society of Experimental Social Psychology
- 2010 Society for Judgment and Decision Making
 Society for the Advancement of Behavioral Economics

Invited Talks

2021	UC San Diego, Rady School of Management (March)
2021	Simon Fraser University, Beedie School of Business (March)
2020	Stanford University, Graduate School of Business (February)
2020	University of Pennsylvania, Wharton Decision Processes Colloquia (postponed)
2020	Stanford University, Graduate School of Business (February)
2019	UCLA, Behavioral Decision Making Brown Bag (December)
2019	UCLA, Anderson School of Management (November)
2019	University of Toronto, Rotman School of Management (April)
2019	Cornell University, Behavioral Economics & Decision Research Center (March)
2019	Duke University, Fuqua School of Business (March)
2019	UC Berkeley, Haas School of Business (February)
2019	UCLA, Anderson School of Management (February)
2019	Harvard Business School, Negotiation, Organizations & Markets (January)
2018	University of Michigan, Department of Psychology (November)
2017	Michigan State University, Department of Psychology (March)
2016	University of Chicago, Booth School of Business (November)
2016	University of Waterloo, Department of Psychology (February)
2015	University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of Psychology (November)
2015	Kellogg-Booth Student Symposium, Invited Faculty Speaker (April)
2014	University of Michigan, Department of Psychology (January)
2013	Stanford University, Graduate School of Business (December)
2013	New York University, Department of Psychology (December)
2013	University of Chicago, Booth School of Business (December)
2013	UCLA, Anderson School of Management (November)
2013	Cornell University, Johnson Graduate School of Management (November)
2013	Yale University, School of Management (October)
2013	Harvard University, Department of Psychology (October)
2013	University of Minnesota, Carlson School of Management (September)
2013	Indiana University, Department of Psychology (March)
2011	University of Michigan, Decision Consortium (October)
2011	University of Michigan, Pat Gurin Distinguished Lecture Series (February)
2010	University of Michigan, School of Education (October)

Teaching

I. BUS 38001 “Managing in Organizations” (Chicago Booth)

M.B.A., Spring 2022 (scheduled)
 M.B.A., Winter 2021
 M.B.A., Summer 2020
 M.B.A., Summer 2019
 M.B.A., Summer 2018
 M.B.A., Summer 2017
 M.B.A., Spring 2016
 M.B.A., Winter 2015

Evaluations (809 respondents over 7 courses):

“Conveys course material clearly?” (1 = not clear, 5 = very clear)

Mean = 4.9, Median = 5.0, Mode = 5.0

“Conveys course material in an interesting way?” (1 = not interesting, 5 = very interesting)

Mean = 4.9, Median = 5.0, Mode = 5.0

“Did you take away useful tools, concepts, and/or insights?” (1 = very few, 5 = a great many)

Mean = 4.7, Median = 5.0, Mode = 5.0

“How much did you get out of this course?” (1 = very little, 5 = a great deal)

Mean = 4.6, Median = 5.0, Mode = 5.0

“Would you recommend to other students?” (1 = definitely no, 5 = definitely yes)

Mean = 4.7, Median = 5.0, Mode = 5.0

II. BUS 38903 “Current Topics in Behavioral Science” (Chicago Booth)

Ph.D., Spring 2020

Ph.D., Winter 2018

Ph.D., Winter 2016

Evaluations (24 respondents over 3 courses):

“Conveys course material clearly?” (1 = not clear, 5 = very clear)

Mean = 5.0, Median = 5.0, Mode = 5.0

“Conveys course material in an interesting way?” (1 = not interesting, 5 = very interesting)

Mean = 4.9, Median = 5.0, Mode = 5.0

“Did you take away useful tools, concepts, and/or insights?” (1 = very few, 5 = a great many)

Mean = 4.9, Median = 5.0, Mode = 5.0

“How much did you get out of this course?” (1 = very little, 5 = a great deal)

Mean = 4.8, Median = 5.0, Mode = 5.0

“Would you recommend to other students?” (1 = definitely no, 5 = definitely yes)

Mean = 4.9, Median = 5.0, Mode = 5.0

III. Graduate Student Instructor (University of Michigan)

Undergrad, Spring 2013, “Introduction to Social Psychology” (PSYCH 280)

Undergrad, Fall 2012, “Social Cognition: Thinking About Your Life” (PSYCH 487)

Undergrad, Spring 2012, “Introduction to Psychology” (PSYCH 111)

Popular Media **supervisee

Writing:

1. O’Brien, E. (2021). Humans are hard-wired to expect the worst. No wonder we can’t let go of masks. *Washington Post*, May 24.
2. O’Brien, E. (2020). There’s a psychological reason we won’t return to normal right away after society reopens. *Los Angeles Times*, June 1.

3. **Yoon, J., Whillans, A. V., & O'Brien, E. (2019). How to make even the most mundane tasks more motivating. *Harvard Business Review*, July 24.
4. O'Brien, E. (2019). We use less information to make decisions than we think. *Harvard Business Review*, March 7.
5. Smith, R., & O'Brien, E. (2018). Why you should eat popcorn with chopsticks—and other psychological tricks to make life more enjoyable. *The Conversation*, June 6.
6. **Kardas, M., & O'Brien, E. (2018). Watching an expert do something makes you think you can do it too. *Harvard Business Review*, May 21.
7. O'Brien, E. (2017). Stop putting off fun for after you finish all your work. *Harvard Business Review*, July 7.
8. O'Brien, E., & **Klein, N. (2016). It's hard to shake a bad reputation. *Fortune*, July 7.
9. O'Brien, E. (2015). Thinking about people we'd rather not think about. *New America*, November 12.

Radio/Podcast:

1. O'Brien, E. (2020). Finding joy in repeat experiences, even during a pandemic. *WPR Ideas Network*, November 23.
2. O'Brien, E. (2019). Confidence: Why it misleads us. *BBC The Why Factor*, May 22.
3. O'Brien, E. (2019). Close enough: The lure of living through others. *NPR Hidden Brain*, February 11.
4. O'Brien, E. (2018). YouTube isn't as good a teacher as you think. *Chicago Booth Review*, July 30.
5. O'Brien, E. (2017). It's getting worse! The science of negativity bias. *Canvas8*, March 24.
6. O'Brien, E. (2017). The medicinal effects of a happy spouse. *Chicago Booth Review*, March 2.
7. O'Brien, E., & Ellsworth, P. C. (2012). Why can't Republicans and Democrats empathize with each other? *Center For Building a Culture of Empathy*, April 12.
8. O'Brien, E. (2012). Why the best chocolate is the one you eat last. *NPR All Things Considered*, February 14.

9. Konrath, S., & O'Brien, E. (2010). Empathy. *WPR Ideas Network*, June 15.
10. Konrath, S., & O'Brien, E. (2010). Empathy. *Scientific American 60 Second Mind*, May 29.

Other Professional Activities

Lab director at Chicago Booth:

See website for current lab members. Some alumni placements:

Kate Christensen, Assistant Professor, Indiana University
Anne Derrenberger, Master's student, Boston University
Jonathan Fischell, Medical school, University of Maryland
Yara Ganem, Lab manager, Vanderbilt University
Curtis Grayer, Law school, University of Notre Dame
Mike Kardas, Post-doc, Northwestern University
Sami Kassirer, Ph.D. student, Northwestern University
Nadav Klein, Assistant Professor, INSEAD
Alex Kristal, Ph.D. student, London Business School
Lauren Lutzke, Ph.D. student, University of Michigan
Hannah Noah, Medical school, University of North Carolina
Ellen Roney, Master's student, University of Washington
Taylor Rothman, Law school, University of Chicago
Craig Sanders, Ph.D. student, Indiana University
Mike White, Ph.D. student, Columbia University
Jaewon Yoon, Ph.D. student, Harvard Business School
Xuan Zhao, Research scientist, Stanford University

Dissertation committee:

Mike Kardas, Behavioral Science, Chicago Booth
Xilin Li, Behavioral Science, Chicago Booth
Sarah Molouki, Behavioral Science, Chicago Booth
Natalie Wheeler, Behavioral Science, Chicago Booth

Curriculum paper advisor:

Melissa Beswick, Behavioral Science, Chicago Booth
Robert Hanrahan, Psychology, Indiana University
Xilin Li, Behavioral Science, Chicago Booth
Yuji Winet, Behavioral Science, Chicago Booth

Honors thesis advisor:

Yara Ganem, Psychology, University of Michigan
Hannah Noah, Psychology, University of Michigan
Ellen Roney, Psychology, University of Chicago
Taylor Rothman, Psychology, University of Michigan

Jaewon Yoon, Psychology, University of Chicago

Workshop organizer:

Center for Decision Research, Chicago Booth, Spring 2016

Center for Decision Research, Chicago Booth, Spring 2019

Professional affiliations:

American Association for the Advancement of Science

Association for Psychological Science

Society for Judgment and Decision Making

Society for Personality and Social Psychology

Society of Experimental Social Psychology

Grant/award reviewer:

Behavioral Decision Research and Management

National Science Foundation

Society for Personality and Social Psychology

Society for Consumer Psychology

Peer reviewer (recent examples):

Basic and Applied Social Psychology

Cognitive Science

Consciousness and Cognition

Developmental Psychology

Emotion

Journal of Behavioral Decision Making

Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied

Journal of Experimental Psychology: General

Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

Journal of Gerontology

Journal of Personality and Social Psychology

Nature Human Behaviour

Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes

Personality and Social Psychological Bulletin

Perspectives on Psychological Science

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

Psychological Science

Review of General Psychology

Self and Identity

Social Psychological and Personality Science

As a Ph.D. student (2009-2014):

Advisor for over 30 research assistants

Granted "Faculty Associate" status with a vote at faculty meetings, 2013

Elected to Faculty Executive Committee, 2013

Elected to Faculty Search Committee, 2013

Elected to Ph.D. Admissions Committee, 2013

Elected to Graduate Student Council, 2012

Organizer of “Mental Time Travel” campus event, 2012

Visiting scholar, Robert Zajonc Institute for Social Studies, Warsaw, Poland, 2011

University of Michigan fMRI Neuroscience Summer Training Course, 2011

As an undergraduate (2005-2009):

Erasmus Social Science Scholar (1 of 12 selected nationwide), University of Notre Dame

Research Assistant, University of Pennsylvania (Prof. Ayelet Meron Ruscio)

Research Assistant, Saint Joseph’s University (Prof.’s Phyllis Anastasio, Matt Anderson)

Senior Honors Thesis, Saint Joseph’s University (Prof. Phyllis Anastasio)

Summer Scholar Research Award, Saint Joseph’s University (every summer)