Qingqing Yang

PhD student in Cognitive Neuroscience | The Ohio State University

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Research Interests

Visual attention, perception, memory, and decision-making.
Neural mechanisms of the goal-directed behaviors in human visual system.
Integrate behavioral measurements (psychophysics, eye-tracking) and neuroimaging (fMRI, TMS).

Education & Research

Ohio State University, OSU 2024 – Expected 2029
PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience, 4/4 Ohio, USA
Advisors: Hsin-Hung Li, Julie Golomb

Reward optimized memory behaviors in humans and recurrent models.

Yang Q, Li HH (2025). Efficient Allocation of Working Memory Resource for Utility Maximization in Humans and Recurrent Neural Networks. ***NeurIPS***. *paper*

Representational geometric changes across memory stages.

Yang Q, Han H W, Song B, et al. (in prep). Hierarchical representational transformations of working memory in brains and machines. ***Spotlight poster*** *(top 10%) at Conference on Computational Cognitive Neuroscience (CCN) 2026. 2-pages abstract*

Representational geometry and alignment of brains and artificial models.

Han H W, **Yang Q**, Mohsenzadeh Y (in prep). Concept Manifold Geometry Explains Asymmetry in Model–Brain Bidirectional Predictivity. ***Contributed Talk*** *& spotlight poster at CCN 2026. 2-pages abstract*

Han H W*, Dhar R*, **Yang Q***, et al. (2024). Investigating the role of modality and training objective on representational alignment between transformers and the brain. *Proceedings of NeurIPS Unireps Workshop. paper*

New York University, NYU 2021 – 2024
MA in Psychology, 3.97/4 New York, USA
Advisor: Clayton Curtis

How parietal cortex contributes to the quality of working memory.

Yang Q, Curtis C (in prep). Effects of Interrupting Parietal Cortex Neural Activity by TMS on Working Memory Prioritization. *Talk presented at Neuromatch Conference 2022.*

Zhejiang University, ZJU 2017 – 2021
BS in Psychology, 3.92/4 Zhejiang, China
Advisor: Hui Chen

The mechanism of attention guided by working memory contents.

Zhu P*, **Yang Q***, et al. (2023). Working-Memory-Guided Attention Competes with Exogenous Attention but Not with Endogenous Attention. *Behavioral Sciences*, *13*(5), 426. doi:10.3390/bs13050426

* denotes equal contributions.

Research Experience

Assistant Research Scientist, NYU 09/2023 – 04/2024
Advisors: Catherine Hartley, Noam Goldway

Relate reinforcement learning properties to brain activities and clinical symptoms across large developmental groups. Expected to analyze data from 1000 behavioral and 120 fMRI subjects.

Goldway N, Harhen N, **Yang Q**, et al (in prep). Correspondence between reinforcement learning phenotypes and transdiagnostic clinical symptomatology across development. *Poster at CCN 2025. 2-pages abstract*

Goldway N, ..., **Yang Q**, et al. (in prep). Reliability of a reinforcement-learning task battery for computational phenotyping of decision-making in adolescent psychopathology. *Poster at Computational Psychiatry Conference 2023*.

Goldway N, …, Yang Q, et al. (in prep). Structural asymmetries in amygdala connectivity mediate valence-symmetry learning in humans.

Fellowships and Awards

Elsevier/Vision Research Travel Award**,** Vision Sciences Society (VSS)	2026
Graduate Student Research Enhancement Awards, OSU	2026
University Fellowship, OSU	2024

Professional Activities

Conference Reviewer

Conference on Computational Cognitive Neuroscience (CCN)	2026
NeurIPS Unireps workshop	2024-2025

Teaching Assistant

Introduction to Cognitive Science, OSU, undergrad	2026
Memory and Cognition, OSU, undergrad	2026
Sensation and Perception, OSU, undergrad	2026
Psychology of Creativity, OSU, undergrad	2025
Introduction to Psychology, OSU, undergrad	2025
Advanced Psychological Statistics in R, NYU, undergrad	2022

Technical Skills

Skills

Deep Learning (PyTorch, TensorFlow),
Computer Vision (CNNs), Memory Models (RNNs), Language Models (Transformers),
Reinforcement Learning, Cognitive Science, Neuroscience, Bayesian Modeling, Statistics.

Languages

Python, MATLAB, Bash, R, JavaScript.