

## **Melissa Kline**

Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
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### **Education**

2009-2015 Ph.D. in Cognitive Science

MIT Brain & Cognitive Sciences

Committee: Laura Schulz; Ted Gibson; Jesse Snedeker; Josh Tenenbaum

Thesis title: *Who did what to whom: Developmental perspectives on the meaning and communication of transitive events*

2004-2008 Sc.B. in Cognitive and Linguistic Sciences, magna cum laude

Brown University

Advisor: Katherine Demuth

Thesis title: *Syntactic generalization with novel intransitive verbs: Who is pilking?*

### **Employment**

2018-Present Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Brain & Cognitive Sciences

Postdoctoral Associate; Supervisor Joshua Tenenbaum

2018 Harvard Extension School, Department of Psychology

Senior Teaching Fellow Supervisor Jesse Snedeker

2016-2017 Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Brain & Cognitive Sciences

Postdoctoral Associate; Supervisor Evelina Fedorenko

2015-2016 Harvard University, Department of Psychology

Postdoctoral Fellow; Supervisor Jesse Snedeker

### **Publications**

Black, A., Bergmann, C., Byers-Heinlein, K., Frank, M., Gervain, J. **Kline, M.**, Polka, L., Singh, Leher., Soderstrom, M. (Registered Report: Manuscript accepted, data collection ongoing) A multi-lab study of bilingual infants: Exploring the preference for infant-directed speech. *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Sciences*.

Bergelson, E., Bergmann, C., Byers-Heinlein, K., Cristia A., Cusack, R., Dyck, K., Floccia, C., Frank, M., Gervain, J., Hamlin, K., Hannon, E., Kellier, D., **Kline, M.**, Lew-Williams, C., Nazzi, T., Panneton, R., Rabagliati, H., Rennls, J., Seidl, A., Soderstrom, M. (Registered Report: Manuscript accepted, data collection ongoing) Quantifying sources of variability in infancy research using the infant-directed speech preference. *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Sciences*.

- Kline, M.,** Schulz, L. & Gibson, E. (2017). Partial truths: Adults choose to mention agents and patients in proportion to informativity, even if it doesn't fully disambiguate the message. *Open Mind: Discoveries in Cognitive Science*.
- Frank, M., Bergelson, E., Bergmann, C., Cristia, A., Floccia, C., Gervain, J., Hamlin, J.K., Hannon, E., **Kline, M.,** Lew-Williams, C., Nazzi, T., Panneton, R., Rabagliati, H., Soderstrom, M, Sullivan, J., Waxman, S. & Yurovsky, D. (2017). A collaborative approach to infancy research: Promoting reproducibility, best practices, and theory-building. *Infancy*. 22(4), 421-435. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/infa.12182>
- Kline, M.,** Snedeker, J. & Schulz, L.E. (2017). Linking Language and Events: Spatiotemporal cues drive children's expectations about the meanings of novel transitive verbs. *Language Learning and Development*, 13(1), 1-23. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15475441.2016.1171771>
- Kline, M.** & Demuth, K. (2013). Syntactic generalization with novel intransitive verbs. *Journal of Child Language*, 41(3), 543-74. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0305000913000068>
- Kline, M.,** & Demuth, K. (2010). Factors facilitating implicit learning: The case of the Sesotho passive. *Language Acquisition*, 17(4), 220-234. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10489223.2010.509268>
- Demuth, K. & **Kline, M.** (2006). The distribution of passives in spoken Sesotho. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 24, 377-388. (Special issue on Theory and Description of Southern Bantu Syntax). <http://dx.doi.org/10.2989/16073610609486426>

### Additional Manuscripts (Preprints)

- Moshontz, H., Campbell, L., Ebersole, C. R., IJzerman, H., Urry, H. L.,... **Kline, M.**...Chartier, C. R. The Psychological Science Accelerator: Advancing Psychology through a Distributed Collaborative Network. Available at PsyArxiv <http://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/785QU>
- Kline, M.,** Salinas, M., Lim, E., Fedorenko, E., & Gibson, E. Word order patterns in gesture are sensitive to modality-specific production constraints. Available at <https://psyarxiv.com/62puh/>
- Kline, M.,** Gallee, J., Balewski, Z., & Fedorenko, E. Understanding jokes relies on the Theory of Mind system. Available at <https://psyarxiv.com/h2nyx/>
- Kline, M.,** Gibson, E. & Schulz, L. Young children choose informative referring expressions to describe the agents and patients of transitive events. Available at <https://psyarxiv.com/r6mwb/>

### Conference Proceedings

- Wittenberg, E., Kline, M. & Hartshorne, J. (2016) Learning to talk about events: Grounding language acquisition in intuitive theories and event cognition. Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Annual Conference<sup>3</sup> of the Cognitive Science Society
- Kline, M., Snedeker, J. (2015). 2-year-olds use syntax to infer actor intentions in a rational-action paradigm. *Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

- Kline, M., Muentener, P. & Schulz, L.E. (2013). Transitive and periphrastic sentences affect memory for simple causal scenes. *Proceedings of the Thirty-Fifth Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.
- Kline, M., Snedeker, J., & Schulz, L.E. (2011). Children's comprehension and production of transitive sentences is sensitive to the causal structure of events. *Proceedings of the Thirty-Third Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

## **Presentations**

- Kline, M. and participants (2018) Workshop on machine-readable, human-friendly dataset sharing at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for the Improvement of Psychological Sciences. Grand Rapids, MI.
- Kline, M. (2018). Analysis of "fussout effects" in the ManyBabies1 dataset. 21<sup>st</sup> Biennial Congress of the International Congress of Infant Studies, Philadelphia, PA.
- Kline, M. & Snedeker, J. (2017) Do children appreciate parallels in means/ends event structure across semantic fields? 2017 Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, Austin, TX.
- Kline, M. (2017). Language, Space & Time. Workshop on Cognitive Universals, CUNY Sentence Processing Conference, 2017
- Kline, M. (2016) Which semantic primitives and why those ones? Workshop talk, Learning to Talk About Events, 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Philadelphia, PA.
- Kline, M., Snedeker, J. (2015). 2-year-olds use syntax to infer actor intentions in a rational-action paradigm. 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Pasadena, CA
- Kline, M., Muentener, P. & Schulz, L.E. (2013). Transitive and periphrastic sentences affect memory for simple causal scenes. 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Berlin, Germany.
- Kline, M., Snedeker, J. & Schulz, L.E. (2013) Representations of causality in verb learning. 2013 Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, Seattle, WA.
- Kline, M., Snedeker, J., & Schulz, L.E. (2011). Preschoolers prefer to map novel transitive verbs to events with spatiotemporal features that mark causation. 36th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston, MA.
- Kline, M., Snedeker, J., & Schulz, L.E. (2011). Children's comprehension and production of transitive sentences is sensitive to the causal structure of events. 33rd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Boston, MA.
- Kline, M. & Demuth, K. (2008). Syntactic generalization with novel intransitive verbs: Who is pilking? 33rd Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston, MA.
- Kline, M. & Demuth, K. (2008). Frequency and structural priming in the input: Implications for learning the passive. Generative Approaches to Language Acquisition North America (GALANA) 3, Storrs, CT.
- Kline, M. & Demuth, K. (2006). Learning passives from the input: Evidence from Sesotho. 2nd Bantu Acquisition Workshop, Northampton, MA.

## **Conference Posters**

- Mahowald, K., Kline, M., Fedorenko, E. & Gibson, T. (2015). Informativity and efficient compression of sentences. Annual CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing, CUNY 2015. Los Angeles, CA
- Kline, M., Snedeker, J. (2014) Daxing my toy or Daxing TO my toy? Two-year-olds use syntax to override rational imitation effects. 39th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston, MA.
- Friel, D., Kline, M., Seed, A., & Schulz, L. (2011). It's okay to judge a block by its color: Toddlers' use of symbolic and intrinsic cues to objects' causal powers. Seventh Biennial Meeting of the Cognitive Development Society, Philadelphia, PA.

### **Honors and Awards**

- Harvard University Foundations of Human Behavior Grant, 2015 (\$40,000)
- NSF SBE Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, 2012-2014 (Project title: *Causal Representations in Children's Transitive Sentences*; \$12,000)
- NSF Fellowship, 2011-2014
- Norman B. Leventhal Fellowship, 2010-2011
- Singleton Graduate Fellowship, 2009-2010
- Departmental Thesis Prize (Cognitive Science), Brown University, 2008

### **Service**

- Governing Board, ManyBabies (2017-)
- PsyArxiv Committee (2017-)
- Organizing committee, CUNY Sentence Processing Conference (March 2017)
- Co-Organizer, Learning to Talk About Events Workshop (August 2016)
- Co-Chair, Events in Language & Cognition Workshop (March 2016)
- CogLunch coordinator, 2010-2011

Reviewer for Autism Research, Collabra: Psychology, Cognitive Science, Developmental Science, Infant Behavior & Development, Journal of Child Language, Journal of Experimental Psychology, Language Cognition & Neuroscience, Language Learning and Development, Semantics and Pragmatics (Journals); Society for Research in Child Development, Cognitive Science, CUNY Sentence Processing Conference (Conferences)

### **Teaching Experience**

Supervised over 30 undergraduate and 3 masters' student research assistants, including 1 undergraduate thesis project (2010-present).

- Human Development (Graduate/Undergraduate level), 2018 (Senior Teaching Fellow)
- Science of Living Systems 20/ Introduction to Psychological Science, 2013 (Teaching Fellow)
- Project consultant for 'Special Topics' independent research students, Spring 2013 and 2014
- Graduate Student Teaching Certificate Program, 2011-2012

Infant & Early Childhood Cognition, Fall 2011 (Teaching Assistant)  
Laboratory in Higher-Level Cognition, Spring 2011 (Teaching Assistant)  
Models of Computation, Fall 2006 (Teaching Assistant)  
After-school science educator, 2008-2009 (AmeriCorps, Providence Children's Museum)