

## BENJAMIN WEISSMAN

Lecturer, Department of Cognitive Science – Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
he/him/his

[bpweissman@gmail.com](mailto:bpweissman@gmail.com) | [weissb2@rpi.edu](mailto:weissb2@rpi.edu)

[bpweissman.com](http://bpweissman.com)

### EDUCATION

- 2019      Ph.D., Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
            Dissertation: “The role of linguistic meaning in the concept of lying”  
            Committee: Marina Terkourafi, Darren Tanner, Peter Lasersohn, Tania Ionin
- 2017      M.A., Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- 2014      B.A., Linguistics; B.A., History, College of William & Mary  
            Honors Thesis: “Linguistic strategies of authority in the television program *The Wire*” (Highest Honors)

### PUBLICATIONS

- Forthcoming      **Weissman, B.** Can an emoji be a lie? The links between emoji meaning, commitment, and lying. Accepted for publication at *Journal of Pragmatics*.
- 2023      **Weissman, B.**, Engelen, J., Baas, E., & Cohn, N. (2023). The lexicon of emoji? conventionality modulates processing of emoji. *Cognitive Science*, 47(4), e13275.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/cogs.13275>
- 2022      **Weissman, B.** Emoji semantics/pragmatics: investigating commitment and lying. In *Proceedings of The Fifth International Workshop on Emoji Understanding and Applications in Social Media*. <https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/2022.emoji-1.3>
- 2022      **Weissman, B.** What counts as a lie in and out of the courtroom? The effect of discourse genre on lie judgments. In L. Horn (ed.), *From Lying to Perjury: Linguistic and Legal Perspectives on Lies and Other Falsehoods*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110733730-014>
- 2020      Terkourafi, M., **Weissman, B.**, & Roy, J. Different scalar terms are affected by face differently. *International Review of Pragmatics*, 12(1), 1-43.  
<https://doi.org/10.1163/18773109-01201103>
- 2019      **Weissman, B.** The roles of linguistic meaning and context in the concept of lying. PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. <https://hdl.handle.net/2142/106230>

- 2019 **Weissman, B.** Emojis in sentence processing: An electrophysiological approach. In *Companion Proceedings of The 2019 World Wide Web Conference*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3308560.3316544>
- 2019 **Weissman, B.** Peaches and eggplants or. . . something else? The role of context in emoji interpretations. In *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America*, Vol 4 (2019).  
<https://doi.org/10.3765/plsa.v4i1.4533>
- 2018 Tanner, D., Goldshtein, M., and **Weissman, B.** Individual differences in the real-time neural dynamics of language comprehension. In K. Federmeier & D. Watson (eds.), *Psychology of Learning and Motivation: Current Topics in Language (Vol 68)*. Cambridge, MA: Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.plm.2018.08.007>
- 2018 **Weissman, B.** and Terkourafi, M. Are false implicatures lies? An experimental investigation. *Mind & Language* 34(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/mila.12212>
- 2018 **Weissman, B.** and Tanner, D. A strong wink between verbal and emoji-based irony: How the brain processes ironic emojis during language comprehension. *PloS One*, 13(8), e0201727. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0201727>
- 2018 Terkourafi, M., Catedral, L., Haider, I., Karimzad, F., Melgares, J., Mostacero, C., Nelson, J., and **Weissman, B.** Uncivil Twitter: A sociopragmatic analysis. *Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict* 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlac.00002.ter>

PUBLICATIONS IN PROGRESS
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| Under review | <b>Weissman, B.</b> , Cohn, N., & Tanner, D. The electrophysiology of lexical prediction of emoji and text. Under review at <i>Neuropsychologia</i> . |
| Under review | <b>Weissman, B.</b> , Thamsen, L, Engelen, J., and Cohn, N. Compositional affordances of emoji sequences. Under review at <i>Language@Internet</i> .  |

POPULAR SCIENCE PUBLICATIONS
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| 2021 | “Emojis aren’t debasing language – they’re enriching it.” <i>The Guardian</i> . August 10, 2021.<br><a href="https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/aug/10/emojis-debasing-language-symbols-communication">https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/aug/10/emojis-debasing-language-symbols-communication</a> |
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INVITED PRESENTATIONS
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- 2023      **Weissman, B.** “Commitment via images and emoji in text messages.” *Seminar on Graphics and Digital Communication*. Guangzhou/online. January 14, 2023.
- 2022      **Weissman, B.** “Processing emoji in real time.” Keynote at *Emoji2022 - 5<sup>th</sup> International Workshop on Emoji Understanding and Applications in Social Media*. July 14, 2022.
- 2022      **Weissman, B.** “Exploring emoji processing.” *Emoji Talk*. Oxford, UK. May 21, 2022.
- 2019      **Weissman, B.** “Emojis in sentence processing: An electrophysiological approach.” *Emoji2019 - 2nd International Workshop on Emoji Understanding and Applications in Social Media*. San Francisco, CA. May 13, 2019.
- 2019      **Weissman, B.** “The role of linguistic meaning in the concept of lying.” *Yale Linguistics Friday Lunch Talk Series*. New Haven, CT. April 19, 2019.
- 2017      **Weissman, B.** “An ERP study of emoji-generated irony” *University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign Linguistics Seminar*. Urbana, IL. March 13, 2017.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS
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- 2023      **Weissman, B.** “Quantifying the effect of deceptive intention on scalar inference and lie judgments” – Poster presentation at *The 10th biennial meeting of Experimental Pragmatics*. Paris, France, September, 2023.
- 2023      **Weissman, B.** “Predictions and uptake of social meaning in others’ utterances: Gender-neutral vs. gender-marked role nouns” – Oral presentation at *The 18th International Pragmatics Conference*. July, 2023.
- 2023      **Weissman, B.** “Attributions and predictions of social meaning in others: the case of English role nouns” – Poster presentation at *The 36th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing*. Pittsburgh, PA, March, 2023.
- 2022      **Weissman, B.** “Commitment and lying across modalities” – Oral presentation at *The 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the American Pragmatics Association (AMPRA-5)*. November, 2022.
- 2022      **Weissman, B.** “Emoji semantics/pragmatics: Investigating commitment and lying” – Oral presentation at *Emoji2022*. July, 2022.

- 2022 **Weissman, B.** “Speaker commitment and message modality” – Poster presentation at *The 35th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing*. March, 2022.
- 2022 **Weissman, B.**, Engelen, J., Thamsen, L., and Cohn, N. “The combinatorial properties of emoji” – Poster presentation at *The 35th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing*. March, 2022.
- 2019 **Weissman, B.** “Experimental insights on the relationship between pragmatics, lying, and misleading” – Poster presentation at *The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing*. Boulder, CO, March, 2019.
- 2019 **Weissman, B.**, Cohn, N., and Tanner, D. “Multimodal prediction in text + emoji sentences: an ERP study” – Poster presentation at *The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing*. Boulder, CO, March, 2019.
- 2019 **Weissman, B.** “Peaches and eggplants or... something else? The role of context in emoji interpretations” – Poster presentation at *The 93<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America*. New York, NY, January, 2019.
- 2018 **Weissman, B.** “Lie judgments, what is said, and a predisposition to disagree” – Oral presentation at *The 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the American Pragmatics Association (AMPRA-4)*. Albany, NY, November, 2018.
- 2018 **Weissman, B.** “Emojis and prediction in sentence contexts” – Poster presentation at *The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for the Neurobiology of Language*. Quebec City, Quebec, August, 2018.
- 2018 **Weissman, B.** and Tanner, D. “Ironic emojis are processed like ironic words” – Poster at *The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing*. Davis, CA, March, 2018.
- 2017 Tanner, D. and **Weissman, B.** “Is an emoji worth a thousand words? Neural responses to emoji-generated irony” – Oral presentation at *The 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Psychonomic Society*. Vancouver, BC, November, 2017.
- 2017 **Weissman, B.** and Terkourafi, M. “False implicatures and the lying/misleading distinction” – Oral presentation at *The 15<sup>th</sup> International Pragmatics Conference*. Belfast, UK, July, 2017.
- 2017 Terkourafi, M and **Weissman, B.** “Investigating the role of politeness in the interpretation of scalar terms: Does ‘some people loved your poem’ mean the rest of them hated it?” – Oral presentation at *The 15<sup>th</sup> International Pragmatics Conference*. Belfast, UK, July, 2017.

- 2017 **Weissman, B.** and Tanner, D. “Brain potentials elicited by ironic emojis in sentence context” – Poster presentation at *The 30<sup>th</sup> CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing*. Cambridge, MA, April, 2017.
- 2017 **Weissman, B** and Tanner, D. “ERP brain responses to emoji-generated irony” – Poster presentation at *Cognitive Neuroscience Society 2017 Annual Meeting*. San Francisco, CA, March, 2017.
- 2017 **Weissman, B.** and Tanner, D. “An ERP study of emoji-generated irony” – Poster presentation at *CSLI Workshop: Bridging Computational and Psycholinguistic Approaches to the Study of Meaning*. Stanford, CA, February, 2017.
- 2016 **Weissman, B.** “False implicatures, lying, and patterns of what is said” – Oral presentation at the *3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference of the American Pragmatics Association*. Bloomington, IN, November, 2016.
- 2016 **Weissman, B.** and Terkourafi, M. “Are false implicatures lies: An experimental investigation” – Poster presentation at *Trends In Experimental Pragmatics Workshop*. Berlin, Germany, January, 2016.

MEDIA AND PUBLIC WRITING
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- 2023 Quoted in “Your 🙄 On Emoji.” *Nautlius Magazine*. August 22, 2023. <https://nautil.us/your-%F0%9F%A7%A0-on-emoji-365823/>
- 2022 Quoted in “Uffizi gallery director Schmidt lays down email rules in Italy.” *BBC*. December 22, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64063047>
- 2022 Featured on WAMC/NPR’s Academic Minute. July 18, 2022. <https://academicminute.org/2022/07/benjamin-weissman-reusselaer-polytechnic-institute-emoji-language-or-communication/>
- 2021 Appearance on *Times Radio UK* with Henry Bonsu. August 13, 2021.
- 2019 Quoted in “How the sexy peach emoji joined the resistance.” *Washington Post*. October 1, 2019. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/how-the-sexy-peach-emoji-joined-the-resistance/2019/09/30/4b0d292e-e142-11e9-be96-6adb81821e90\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/how-the-sexy-peach-emoji-joined-the-resistance/2019/09/30/4b0d292e-e142-11e9-be96-6adb81821e90_story.html)
- 2018 Research highlighted in “Our brains process irony in emojis, words in the same way” – *University of Illinois News Bureau*, September 5, 2018 <https://news.illinois.edu/view/6367/690952>

- 2017      Featured on Mashable/Snapchat. “The brain interprets sarcasm in emoji the same way as in words, study shows.” *Mashable*. April 19, 2017. <https://mashable.com/article/brain-interprets-sarcasm-emoji>
- 2017      Research highlighted in “Sarcasm Looks the Same in the Brain Whether It’s Words or Emojis” – *ScienceNews*, March 28, 2017. <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/sarcasm-looks-same-brain-whether-its-words-or-emoji>

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2019-present      Lecturer, Department of Cognitive Science, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Introduction to Cognitive Science**  
                     Developed curriculum, designed and taught all course materials
- Introduction to Linguistics**  
                     Developed curriculum, designed and taught all course materials
- Advanced Topics in Linguistics (Psycholinguistics)**  
                     Developed curriculum, designed and taught all course materials
- Cognitive Psychology**  
                     Developed curriculum, designed and taught all course materials

## ADDITIONAL TRAININGS AND CERTIFICATIONS

- 2021              Intergroup Dialogue Training (Levels 1 + 2)

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

- 2023-2024      Innovative Pedagogy Faculty Fellowship, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- 2022-2023      HASS Flash Grant, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- 2019-2020      HASS Flash Grant, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- 2016, 2018      2x Department of Linguistics Silver Jubilee Award for Outstanding Teaching Assistant, University of Illinois
- 2018              Graduate Student Travel Grant recipient for abstract submitted to American Pragmatics Association (AMPRA-4)
- 2015-2018      5x Teachers Ranked as Excellent, University of Illinois
- 2014              School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics Fellowship (3-year award), University of Illinois

**SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION**

- 2021-present HASS Fellowship Evaluation Committee, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- 2021-present Undergraduate Adviser, Department of Cognitive Science, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- 2017-present Ad hoc reviewer for *Analysis*, *Cambridge Elements*, *Computers in Human Behavior*, *Discourse and Communication*, *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Journal of Quantitative Linguistics*, *Language and Cognition*, *Language and Communication*, *Lingua*, *Memory & Cognition*, *PLOS ONE*, *Social Semiotics*
- 2015-2016 Illinois Language and Linguistics Society 8 Conference Committee
- 2016-2018 Electrophysiology and Language Processing Laboratory, University of Illinois (Lab Director: Darren Tanner)

**REFERENCES**

- Dr. Marina Terkourafi Professor, Leiden University [m.terkourafi@hum.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:m.terkourafi@hum.leidenuniv.nl)
- Dr. Neil Cohn Associate Professor,  
Tilburg University/Visual Language Lab [neilcohn@visuallanguagelab.com](mailto:neilcohn@visuallanguagelab.com)
- Dr. Darren Tanner Senior Applied Research Scientist,  
Microsoft AI For Good [dstanner@gmail.com](mailto:dstanner@gmail.com)