# MATTHEW CASHMAN

**Houlden Fellow**
Warwick Business School | Behavioural Science Group

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| CITIZENSHIP | United States, Italy |

### EDUCATION

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2023 | **Ph.D.** | **MIT Sloan** | | **Cambridge, MA** |
| | | Management Science | | |
| | | Committee: Drazen Prelec (chair), Rahul Bhui, Dave Rand | | |
| 2008 | **A.B.** | **Hamilton College** | | **Clinton, NY** |
| | | Chemistry & Philosophy | | |

### EMPLOYMENT

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| 2023 – | **Univ. of Warwick** | **Fellow** | **Warwick, UK** | |
| | | Houlden Postdoctoral Fellow (3yr) | | |
| | | Warwick Business School | | |
| 2023– | **MIT** | **Affiliate** | **Cambridge, MA** | |
| | | MIT Sloan | | |
| 2021 – | **Harvard** | **Affiliate** | **Cambridge, MA** | |
| | | Culture, Cognition, & Coevolution Lab | | |
| | | Prof. Joe Henrich | | |
| 2015–2017 | **Harvard** | **Lab Manager** | **Cambridge, MA** | |
| | | Moral Psychology Research Lab | | |
| | | Prof. Fiery Cushman | | |
| 2010–2015 | **L.E.K. Consulting** | **Consultant** | **Boston, MA** | |
| | | Strategy and due diligence for private | | |
| | | equity and corporate clients | | |
| 2010 | **Chungdahm** | **English Teacher** | **Seoul, SK** | |
| 2008–2009 | **Eze Castle Software** | **Analyst** | **Boston, MA** | |
| | | Software for hedge funds | | |

### AWARDS

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|---|---|---|
| 2025 | Award for Outstanding Postdoctoral Achievements (research), University of Warwick | |
| 2025 | Univ. of Warwick Primary Data Support Fund | £5,000 |

| 2024 | Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Postgraduate Programs (teaching), University of Warwick | |
| 2024 | Univ. of Warwick Primary Data Support Fund | £4,000 |
| 2021 | Harvard Kennedy School Program on Negotiation Next-Generation Grant | $5,000 |
| 2019 | Harvard Dean's Competitive fund<br>*PI: Prof. Fiery Cushman* | $34,000 |
| 2006–08 | Henry B. Watkins Scholarship for First-Generation College Students | $48,000 |

PUBLICATIONS

Voelkel, J.G., Stagnaro, M.N., Chu, J., Pink, S., Mernyk, J.S., Redekopp, C., **Cashman, M.**, [Qualifying Strengthening Democracy Challenge Submitters], Druckman, J.N., Rand, D.G., Willer, R. (2024). Megastudy testing 25 treatments to reduce antidemocratic attitudes and partisan animosity. *Science*, *386* (6719), eadh4764.

> The Strengthening Democracy Challenge, an N= 32,059 study, finds that 23 of 25 interventions designed to reduce anti-democratic attitudes and partisan animosity are effective. These interventions are also effective in reducing support for undemocratic practices and partisan violence, among a variety of other secondary outcomes.

**Cashman, M. P.** & Cushman, F. A. (2020). Learning from Moral Failure. In Schwenkler, John & Lambert, Enoch (eds.) *Becoming Someone New: Essays on Transformative Experience, Choice, and Change*. Oxford University Press.

> Pedagogical environments are often designed to minimize the chance of people acting wrongly, and this is surely a sensible approach. But could it ever be useful to design pedagogical environments to permit, or even encourage, moral failure? We consider the possibility that moral failure can be an especially effective tool for fostering learning, and the costs involved.

Cao, C., Cao, X., **Cashman, M.** *et al.* How do successful scholars get their best research ideas? An exploration. *Mark Lett* 30, 221–232 (2019).

> We interview 24 authors to ask how they got the ideas for 64 of their papers. More than three quarters of the papers were inspired by holes in the literature, by a "stylized fact" that the current literature cannot explain, or by an interaction with a manager. The rest fall into several smaller categories that to a large extent can be seen as special cases of the three big ones. We describe how papers from each of the three big categories help move the literature forward.

UNDER REVIEW

[R&R *J.LEO*] **Cashman, M.**, Maciejovsky,B. , Wernerfelt, B. 2024. *Small talk as a contracting device: trust, cooperative norms, and changing equilibria.*

> We show experimentally that even very brief small talk with a potential trading partner functions as contracting device by enhancing trust and cooperation. In contrast to formal contracts, pre-deal socializing can cover contingencies that are truly unforeseen, and unlike relational contracts, it is independent of repeated play.

| WORKING PAPERS | **Cashman, M.** 2024. *Humans as next-token predictors: measuring the flow of memes through minds.* |
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**Cashman, M.** 2024. *Humans as next-token predictors: measuring the flow of memes through minds.*

> I develop a widely-applicable, content-agnostic, quantitative measure of culturally-transmitted information. Using cloze completion tasks I estimate entropy (bits per character or word) with a treatment group (those that have been exposed to a target work, Readers) and a control group (those who have not been exposed) and take a difference measure between those estimates. This quantity is a representation of the information from the target work that is in Readers' minds.

**Cashman, M.** & Prelec, D. 2024. *Acting* as if *drives cooperation among the purely self-interested*

> We provide experimental evidence for a psychological mechanism that explains cooperation even among the self-interested: acting *as if.* In one-shot Public Goods Games where players move one after another but do not observe others' moves, only payoff-maximizing players act as if future players will choose to make the same move they have. We see a positional order effect, where contributions to the public good are highest at the beginning of the sequence and decline as order increases, while telling payoff-maximizers that everyone moving after them has their move made randomly for them eliminates the effect.

| CONFERENCE TALKS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 2025 | IAREP | Talk |
| | 2025 | Human Behavior & Evolution Society | Talk |
| | 2025 | Thurgau Experimental Economics Meeting | Talk |
| | 2024 | Society for Judgment & Decision-Making | Poster |
| | 2024 | Cogsci | Poster |
| | 2024 | Cognitive Science of Culture | Talk |
| | 2024 | Winter American Marketing Association | Talk |
| | 2023 | Society for Judgment & Decision-Making | Poster |
| | 2023 | SPUDM | Short talk |
| | 2023 | IAREP-SABE | Talk |
| | 2021 | Society for Judgment & Decision-Making | Poster |
| | 2021 | Int'l Conference on Thinking | Talk |
| | 2021 | Max Planck Summer Institute | Short talk |
| | 2020 | Cogsci | Poster |
| | 2019 | Human Behavior and Evolution Society | Talk |
| | 2019 | Boston JDM Conference | Talk |

| INVITED TALKS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 2024 | Harvard Human Evolutionary Biology | |
| | 2024 | MIT Sloan Behavioral Group | |
| | 2024 | Harvard Psych. Cushman-Greene-Cikara meeting | |
| | 2024 | UPF Center for Brain and Cognition | |
| | 2024 | Decision Research @ Warwick | |
| | 2024 | Culture, Cognition, and Co-ev. Lab | PI: Joe Henrich |
| | 2024 | MIT Brain & Cognitive Sciences Cog Lunch | |
| | 2023 | Konstanz Social Norms Workshop | |

|  | 2023 | Warwick Modeling Group | |
|--|------|------------------------|-|
|  | 2023 | University of Warwick Psychology | |
|  | 2023 | WBS Behavioural Science Lab | |
|  | 2021 | Culture, Cognition, and Co-ev. Lab | PI: Joe Henrich |
|  | 2020 | Human Cooperation Lab | PI: Dave Rand |
|  | 2020 | MIT Sloan Marketing Seminar | |
|  | 2019 | Culture, Cognition, and Co-ev. Lab | PI: Joe Henrich |
|  | 2019 | Human Dynamics Lab | PI: Sandy Pentland |
|  | 2019 | MIT Neuroeconomics Lab | PI: Drazen Prelec |
|  | 2017 | Moral Psychology Research Lab | PI: Fiery Cushman |
|  | 2016 | Moral Psychology Research Lab | PI: Fiery Cushman |

| TEACHING | 2025 | Lead, Big Data Analytics | WBS |
|----------|------|--------------------------|-----|
|  | 2024 | Economics of Wellbeing | WBS |
|  | 2023, 24 | Data-Driven Decision Making | WBS |
|  | 2020 | TA, Psychology and Economics | MIT Economics |
|  |  | *Prof. Drazen Prelec* | |
|  | 2020, 23 | TA, Applied Behavioral Economics | MIT Sloan |
|  |  | *Prof. Drazen Prelec* | |
|  | 2010 | Instructor, Chungdahm Institute | Seoul, South Korea |
|  |  | *Full-time English teacher for 11-17 y.o.* | |

| SERVICE | 2023 | Ad hoc reviewer | Experimental Economics |
|---------|------|-----------------|------------------------|
|  | 2020–23 | Advisory board member | MIT Open Publishing |
|  | 2019 | Ad hoc reviewer | Emotion |
|  | 2016 | MPRG meeting planning | Harvard Psychology |

| VOLUNTEER | 2016–18 | MAPS Public Benefit Corporation |
|-----------|---------|----------------------------------|
|  |  | *Consulting work for a non-profit pharmaceutical company developing a novel treatment for PTSD* |
|  | 2013–15 | Fellow, MIT Center for Collective Intelligence |
|  |  | *Managed Climate CoLab teams as part of research on crowdsourcing* |

| SKILLS | Developed "oTree Video" video interaction platform for online experiments |
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|  | Linux user day-to-day, Bash & Python for general scripting use |
|  | Python + NumPy + pandas or R for statistics, oTree / Django for stimuli |

REFERENCES

**Drazen Prelec**
Digital Equipment Corp LGO Professor of Management
MIT Sloan; Departments of Economics, Brain & Cognitive Sciences
dprelec@mit.edu

**Birger Wernerfelt**
J.C. Penney Professor of Management; Professor of Marketing
MIT Sloan
bwerner@mit.edu

**Dave Rand**
Erwin H. Schell Professor and Professor of Management Science
MIT Sloan; Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences
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**Joe Henrich**
Ruth Moore Professor of Biological Anthropology
Harvard University Department of Human Evolutionary Biology
henrich@fas.harvard.edu