Christian T. Beltran

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4272 Social & Behavioral Sciences Gateway, University of California, Irvine

EDUCATION

2023–2028 (Expected) **Ph.D., Psychology** (Social/Personality), University of California, Irvine
Advisors: Drs. Peter Ditto & Pia Dietze
GPA: 3.99/4.00

2023 **B.A., Psychology**, University of California, Los Angeles
Honors Thesis Advisor: Dr. Eugene Caruso
GPA: 3.93/4.00 (*Cum Laude*)

AWARDS, GRANTS, & FELLOWSHIPS

2026 **Graduate Research Grant**, UCI Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies ($2,000)
2025 **NSF GRFP Honorable Mention**, National Science Foundation
2025 **Summer Institute for Social & Personality Psychology (SISPP) Fellow**
Course: Politics & Gender; Instructors: Drs. Mark Brandt & Thekla Morgenroth
2025 **COGDOP Graduate Student Scholarship**, American Psychological Foundation ($2,500)
2025 **Graduate Research Grant**, UCI Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies ($2,000)
2025 **Graduate Research Grant**, Psi Chi International Honor Society ($1,500)
2023–2024 **GAANN Fellowship**, University of California, Irvine ($31,200)
2023 **M. Phipps Clark Graduate Research Grant**, Psi Chi International Honor Society ($1,000)
2023 **Undergraduate Research Grant**, Psi Chi International Honor Society ($1,407)

PUBLICATIONS & RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Manuscripts Under Review

Celniker, J.B., **Beltran, C.T.**, Ballantyne, N., & Ditto, P.H. *Moral Empathy Gaps Across the Political Divide.* Revise & Resubmit at the *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.

Manuscripts In Preparation

Beltran, C.T., Puryear, C., Celniker, J.B., Ballantyne, N., & Ditto, P.H. *They DO Mean Harm: How Inferences of Partisan Motives Drive Moralized Political Division.* Target Journal: *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*.

Beltran, C.T., Siddiqi, S.S., Dietze, P., & Ditto, P.H. *Ideological Perceptions of "Me-search": The (A)symmetrical Preferences of Prejudice Research Between Liberals and Conservatives.* Stage 1 Registered Report at *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*.

Celniker, J.B., **Beltran, C.T.**, Ballantyne, N., & Ditto, P.H. *The Toxicity in Our Minds: Does Highlighting the Unrepresentativeness of Toxic Polarization Reduce It?*

Research In Progress

Beltran, C.T., Gray, Z., Puryear, C., & Ditto, P.H. *Stupid, Evil, or Both? Lay Perceptions and Explanations of Political Outgroups' Unintelligence and Immorality*. Target Journal: *Psychological Science*.

Beltran, C.T., Cassario, A., & Brandt, M. *Because of Me, or Because of Them? Political Identity Strength vs. Animosity as Predictors of Political Attitude Change.* Target Journal: *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*.

Beltran, C.T., Lee, H., & Piff, P.K. *Perceptions of "The Charitable Rich" and Support for Economic Inequality.*

Hubeny, T.J., **Beltran, C.T.**, Ditto, P.H., & Gawronski, B. *The "Hot" and "Cold" Processes of Myside Bias.*

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2027 **Beltran, C.T.**, Cassario, A., & Brandt, M. **Symposium Talk**: "*Political Identity Strength vs. Political Animosity as Predictors of Attitude Change*". Society for Personality & Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention (Philadelphia, PA)

2026 **Beltran, C.T. Symposium Talk**: *"They Know What They're Doing": The Role of Bad Faith Assumptions on Partisan Divides & Political Sectarianism.* UCI Center for Global Peace & Conflict Studies Annual Conference (Irvine, CA)

2026 Bhutani, S*., **Beltran, C.T.**, & Ditto, P.H. **Poster**: *Does 'Bi-partisan' = Unbiased? How Neutrality Labels Affect Trust in Fact-Checks*. Society for Personality & Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention (Chicago, IL)

2025 **Beltran, C.T.**, Celniker, J., Ballantyne, N., & Ditto, P.H. **Poster**: *"They Just Don't Get It": The Drivers and Consequences of Moral Empathy Gaps Across the Political Aisle.* Society for Personality & Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention (Denver, CO)

2024 **Beltran, C.T**., Celniker, J., Siddiqi, S.S., Ballantyne, N., & Ditto, P.H. **Poster**: *They Don't Get Us, and We Don't Get Them: Moral Empathy Gaps in Partisanship.* Society for Personality & Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention (San Diego, CA)

2023 **Beltran, C. T.**, Weber, M., & Caruso, E. **Data Blitz**: "Tell the Truth, Are You Lying?" How Compassion and Framing Drive Prosocial Lies. UCLA Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference; **Poster**: Society for Personality & Social Psychology (SPSP) Annual Convention (Atlanta, GA) and Society for Affective Science (SAS) Annual Conference (Long Beach, CA)

* *denotes an undergraduate advisee*

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2024–Present **Graduate Teaching Assistant**, University of California, Irvine
The Perfect School (Dr. Amy Dent, Spring 2026)
The Psychology of Success (Dr. Amy Dent, Winter 2025, Winter 2026)
Error & Bias (Dr. Peter Ditto, Fall 2025)
Psychology Fundamentals (Dr. Peter Ditto, Spring 2025; Dr. Jenny Rinehart, Summer 2026)
The Social Animal (Dr. Peter Ditto, Fall 2024; Dr. Pia Dietze, Fall 2026)
Abnormal Psychology (Dr. Jenny Rinehart, Summer 2024)

SERVICE & MENTORSHIP

2026–Present **NSF GRFP Fellowship Advisor**, University of California, Irvine
2024–Present **Graduate Student Advisor**, Hot Cognition Lab (UCI)
2024–Present **Co-Founder & Graduate Advisor, BridgeUCI** (UCI chapter of BridgeUSA)
2024–Present **DECADE Departmental Representative**, University of California, Irvine

2024–2025 **Ph.D. Admissions Mentor** — NextGen Psych Scholars & Project SHORT

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2023–Present **Hot Cognition Lab**, Graduate Student (Primary Laboratory)
PI: Dr. Peter Ditto, University of California, Irvine

2023–Present **Psychology of Inequality Lab**, Graduate Student
PI: Dr. Pia Dietze, University of California, Irvine

2023–Present **Morality, Emotion, and Social Hierarchy Lab**, Graduate Student
PI: Dr. Paul Piff, University of California, Irvine

2024–Present **Evolutionary, Culture, and Stereotyping Lab**, Graduate Student
PI: Dr. Oliver Sng, University of California, Irvine

2021–2023 **Anderson Behavioral Lab**, Departmental Honors Thesis Student
PI: Dr. Eugene Caruso, University of California, Los Angeles
Thesis: *"Tell the Truth, Are You Lying?" How Request Framing Affects Prosocial Dishonesty*

2022–2023 Research Assistant — Anderson Lab (UCLA), Lieberman Lab (UCLA) & Oveis Lab (UCSD)

POPULAR WRITING & SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Beltran, C.T., & Celniker, J.B. (2025). *When Outrage Goes Viral: What's Ragebait and How to Spot It.* Guest Blog Post, *Builders Movement*.

RESEARCH METHODS & SKILLS

Methods: Qualtrics, survey and questionnaire design, randomized online experiments, longitudinal panel surveys, power analysis, semi-structured interviews, qualitative coding and thematic analysis.

Quantitative: Advanced statistical analysis (multilevel modeling, longitudinal modeling, SEM, factor analysis), R (tidyverse, dplyr, psych, lavaan, emmeans, lme4, ggplot2, patchwork, R Markdown), SQL (in progress).

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

External Affiliate, Penn State Consortium on Moral Decision-Making (2024–Present)
Association for Psychological Science (2024–Present)
Society for Personality and Social Psychology (2022–Present)
Psi Chi International Honors Society in Psychology (2021–Present)
Psi Beta National Honors Society in Psychology (2019–Present)