

AVANI MEHTA SOOD

University of California, Berkeley – School of Law
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CURRENT POSITION

University of California, Berkeley, School of Law – Assistant Professor of Law (2013-present)

EDUCATION & CLERKSHIP

Princeton University – Ph.D. in Psychology (2013), M.A. in Psychology (2011)
Dissertation: *Motivated Cognition in Criminal Law Judgments* (Advisor: John Darley)

U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York – Judicial Clerkship with the
Honorable Kimba M. Wood (2004-2005)

Yale Law School – J.D. (2003)
Yale Law Journal, Senior Editor

Princeton University – A.B. in Psychology, *summa cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa (1999)
The Daily Princetonian, Editorials & Opinions Editor

SCHOLARSHIP

Articles and Substantial Essays

Attempted Justice: Misunderstanding and Bias in Psychological Constructions of Criminal Attempt,
71 STANFORD LAW REVIEW 593 (2019).

*The “Murder Scene Exception”—Myth or Reality? Empirically Testing the Influence of Crime
Severity in Federal Search-and-Seizure Cases*, 105 VIRGINIA LAW REVIEW 101 (2019) (with Jeffrey
Segal & Benjamin Woodson).

*Using Empirical Psychology to Inform Courtroom Adjudication—Potential Contributions and
Challenges*, 130 HARVARD LAW REVIEW FORUM 301 (2017).

Cognitive Cleansing: Experimental Psychology and the Exclusionary Rule, 103 GEORGETOWN LAW
JOURNAL 1543 (2015).

Motivated Cognition in Legal Judgments—An Analytic Review, 9 ANNUAL REVIEW OF LAW & SOCIAL
SCIENCE 307 (2013).

The Plasticity of Harm in the Service of Criminalization Goals, 100 CALIFORNIA LAW REVIEW 1313
(2012) (with John Darley).

The Fine Line Between Interrogation and Retribution, 45 JOURNAL OF EXPERIMENTAL SOCIAL
PSYCHOLOGY 191 (2009) (with Kevin Carlsmith).

Redressing Women's Rights Violations Through the Judiciary, 1 JINDAL GLOBAL LAW REVIEW 137 (2009).

Gender Justice through Public Interest Litigation—Case Studies from India, 41 VANDERBILT JOURNAL OF TRANSNATIONAL LAW 833 (2008).

Works in Progress

What's So Special About General Verdicts? Experimentally Testing the Legal and Psychological Effects of Verdict Format in Criminal Law (recipient of UC Berkeley's Hellman Faculty Fund Award).

Homicidal Opacity: Judgments About the Culpability of Killing (for publication in *Theoretical Inquiries in Law*).

Shorter Works

Was Revenge a Hidden Rationale for Torture? LOS ANGELES TIMES (Dec. 23, 2014).

Aggressive Interrogation and Retributive Justice: A Proposed Psychological Model, in IDEOLOGY, PSYCHOLOGY, AND LAW 574-604 (J. Hanson ed., Oxford Univ. Press 2012) (with Kevin Carlsmith).

Legal Efforts for Social Reform Through the Indian Supreme Court, 51 HARVARD INTERNATIONAL LAW JOURNAL ONLINE 63 (2010).

Published Reports

FAILURE TO DELIVER: VIOLATIONS OF WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN KENYAN HEALTH FACILITIES (2007) (with Elisa Slattery & Claris Ogangah).

LITIGATING REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS: USING PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION AND INTERNATIONAL LAW TO PROMOTE GENDER JUSTICE IN INDIA (2006).

TEACHING & CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

University of California, Berkeley, School of Law (Assistant Professor)

Criminal Law

Evidence

Colloquium on Law and Psychology

Ph.D. guest teaching sessions in UC Berkeley's Department of Psychology and the Jurisprudence & Social Policy Program on: Law and Psychology, Law School Pedagogy, and Professional Development for Graduate Students

Princeton University (Assistant in Instruction)

Social Psychology

Social and Personality Development

Yale Law School (Clinics)

Lowenstein International Human Rights Law Clinic

New Haven Legal Assistance Clinic

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

University of California, Berkeley
Hellman Faculty Fund Award

Princeton University (graduate program)
Fellowship of Woodrow Wilson Scholars
Laurance S. Rockefeller Graduate Prize Fellowship
Center for Human Values Graduate Prize Fellowship
Princeton Graduate Fellowship
National Science Foundation and Law School Admission Council research grants

Yale Law School
Robert L. Bernstein Fellowship in International Human Rights

Princeton University (undergraduate program)
Howard Crosby Warren Senior Prize
Edward E. Jones Memorial Thesis Prize

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Center for Reproductive Rights, International Legal Program
Legal Fellow (New York, India, and Kenya, 2005-2007)

Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
Litigation Associate (New York, 2003-2004)

Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Summer Associate (New York, Summer 2002)

National Center for Youth Law
Summer Associate (Oakland, Summer 2001)

New York County District Attorney's Office
Paralegal (New York, 1999-2000)

SELECT PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

Conference in Honor of Robert Cooter – UC Berkeley School of Law (upcoming Feb. 2020)
How Law Changes What You Want: Positive and Normative Effects of Law on Values and Preferences (conference co-organizer and presenter)

Dialogues on Constitutionalism in the 21st Century – University of Bologna, Italy (upcoming Oct. 2019)

Aspen Institute's Justice & Society Seminar – Aspen Meadows, Colorado (upcoming Jul. 2019)

Law and Society Association, Annual Meeting – Washington, DC (upcoming May 2019)
Law and Psychology in Criminal Justice and Evidence (panel organizer/chair and presenter)

Experimental Methods in Legal Scholarship – ETH Zurich (2019)
What’s So Special About General Verdicts? Preliminary Data from an Experimental Test

Law and Society Association, Annual Meeting – Toronto, Canada (2018)
Testing the Psychology of Verdict Format

Access to Justice Lab Workshop on Field Experimentation – Harvard Law School (2018)
Randomized Controlled Trials in the Law

Workshop on Judicial Behavior – University of Chicago Law School (2018)
The “Murder Scene Exception”—Myth or Reality?

Keynote Address, California Appellate Defense Counsel Annual Conference – Burlingame (2018)
The Psychology of Legal Decision Making

Experimental Methods in Legal Scholarship Workshop – Columbia Law School (2018)
What’s So Special About General Verdicts?

Social and Personality Psychology Speaker Series – UC Davis Dept. of Psychology (2018)
The Lay Psychology of Criminality and Criminal Verdicts

Public Law and Legal Theory Workshop – University of Chicago Law School (2017)
Misunderstanding and Bias in Psychological Constructions of Criminal Attempt

Berkeley Law Faculty Workshop – UC Berkeley School of Law (2017)
Misunderstanding and Bias in Psychological Constructions of Criminal Attempt

Conference on Empirical Legal Studies – Cornell Law School (2017)
Misunderstanding and Bias in Psychological Constructions of Criminal Attempt

Stanford Law Faculty Workshop – Stanford Law School (2017)
Misunderstanding and Bias in Psychological Constructions of Criminal Attempt

UC Irvine Law Faculty Workshop – UC Irvine School of Law (2017)
Misunderstanding and Bias in Psychological Constructions of Criminal Attempt

Center for the Study of Law and Society Speaker Series – UC Berkeley School of Law (2017)
Misunderstanding and Bias in Psychological Constructions of Criminal Attempt

Experimental Methods in Legal Scholarship Workshop – UCLA School of Law (2016)
Constructions of Criminality: How Lay and Legal Understandings Diverge

Colorado Law Faculty Workshop – University of Colorado Law School (2016)
Constructions of Criminality: How Lay and Legal Understandings Diverge

Law and Society Association, Annual Meeting – New Orleans (2016)
Constructions of Criminality: How Lay and Legal Understandings Diverge

Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Annual Conference – San Diego (2016)
Criminal Justice and Social Psychology

- Journal of Empirical Legal Studies Junior Workshop – Cornell Law School (2015)
Motivated Cognition on the Bench
- Berkeley Law Faculty Workshop – UC Berkeley School of Law (2015)
Does Crime Severity Influence Judges in Search-and-Seizure Cases?
- Law and Society Association, Annual Meeting – Seattle (2015)
New Developments in Law and Psychological Science
- Kadish Workshop in Law, Philosophy, and Political Theory – UC Berkeley School of Law (2015)
Motivated Suppression in the Lab and on the Bench
- UC Consortium on Social Science and Law, Inaugural Conference – UC Irvine (2015)
Corrections, Prisons, and Punishment
- Berkeley Law Judicial Reunion Panel – UC Berkeley School of Law (2015)
Bias in the Courtroom (chair and moderator)
- Stanford Symposium on Prosecutorial Discretion – Stanford Law School (2014)
Understanding Prosecutorial Discretion: How Prosecutors Make Decisions
- Conference on Empirical Legal Studies – UC Berkeley School of Law (2014)
Evidence and Adjudication
- International Society of Justice Research Conference – New York University (2014)
Law and Morality (symposium organizer, chair, and presenter)
- Center for the Study of Law and Society Speaker Series – UC Berkeley School of Law (2014)
Cognitive Cleansing: Experimental Psychology and the Exclusionary Rule
- Young Leaders Conference – Matera, Italy (2014)
Culture, Creativity, and Technology
- Institute of Personality and Social Research Colloquium – UC Berkeley Dept. of Psychology (2013)
Motivated Cognition in Legal Judgments
- Princeton Law and Public Affairs Workshop – Princeton University (2012)
‘Unpoisoning’ the Fruit of the Poisonous Tree
- Harvard Law and Cognition Colloquium – Harvard Law School (2011)
Motivated Reasoning and Cultural Cognition
- Law and Society Association Annual Meeting – San Francisco (2011)
Assessing Damages and Harms in Multiple Contexts
- Princeton Law and Public Affairs Workshop – Princeton University (2011)
Motivated Reasoning and the Law
- Harvard Law and Mind Sciences Conference – Harvard Law School (2010)
Moral Biology: Mind Sciences and Punishment

Conference on Empirical Legal Studies – Yale Law School (2010)

Criminal Justice: Psychology of Crime

Northeast Law and Society Conference – Amherst College (2010)

Motive and Meaning: Legal Understandings and Line Drawing

Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, Biennial Conference – New Orleans (2010)

Attitudes Toward Torture: Social Psychological Investigations

Harvard International Law Journal Symposium – Harvard Law School (2010)

International Dispute Resolution in Practice: Legal Efforts at Social Reform in Foreign Fora

Princeton Conference on Psychology and Policymaking – Princeton University (2008)

The Fine Line Between Interrogation and Retribution

Robert L. Bernstein Symposium on International Human Rights – Yale Law School (2006)

Using Public Interest Litigation to Address Violations of Women's Rights in India

SERVICE

External Leadership & Memberships

Law and Society Association – Member and Co-Founder of the Collaborative Research Network on Law, Society, and Psychological Science

Partnership for Trauma Recovery – Advisory Board

University of California Consortium on Social Science and Law – Inaugural Member

Society for Empirical Legal Studies – Member

Admitted to the New York State Bar in 2004

University Service & Affiliations

UC Berkeley Committee for Protection of Human Subjects (2019-20)

Institute of Personality and Social Research, Affiliate

Institute of Governmental Studies, Affiliate

Institute for South Asia Studies, Affiliate

Berkeley Law School Service & Affiliations

Open-Field Lateral Faculty Search Committee – Chair (2019-20)

Curriculum and Student Affairs Committee (2018-19, 2019-20)

Boalt Parent Student Network – Faculty Advisor (2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20)

Faculty Retreat Planning Committee – Subcommittee on Scholarship (2018-19)

Academic Placement Committee (2017-18)

Admissions Committee (2015-16, 2017-18)

Faculty Scholarship Fund Committee (2016-17)

Thelen Marrin Writing Prize Committee (2014-15, 2016-17)

Criminal Law Lateral Faculty Search Committee (2015-16)

Faculty Workshop – Co-Chair (2015-16)

Junior Working Ideas Group – Co-Chair (2014-15)

Judicial Clerkship Committee (2013-14, 2014-15)

Jurisprudence and Social Policy Program, Affiliate

Center for the Study of Law and Society, Affiliate

Select Peer Reviewing

American Journal of Comparative Law

Behavioral Sciences and the Law

Cognition

Journal of Empirical Legal Studies

Journal of Experimental Social Psychology

Journal of Legal Studies

Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin

Review of Philosophy and Psychology

Social Justice Research

Timesharing Experiments for the Social Sciences (grant reviewer)