

# RACHEL SHLOMIT BREZIS, PhD

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Sagol Center for Brain and Mind  
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Place/date of birth: Jerusalem, Israel; August 11, 1984

## Education

- 2011                    PhD Comparative Human Development, University of Chicago
- 2008                    MA Comparative Human Development, University of Chicago
- 2006                    BA Psychology and Amirim Multi-Disciplinary Honors Program, Hebrew University. Minors in Anthropology and Cognitive Science. *Summa Cum Laude*.

## Academic Employment

- 2014-present        *Research Associate*, Sagol Center for Brain and Mind, School of Psychology, Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya. Research lead: Interpersonal Sensory-Motor Synchronization in Adult with and without Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- 2011-2013            *Postdoctoral Fellow*, Center for Culture and Health, Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles. Research Project: Autism Spectrum Disorder in India and the United States

## Individual Research Grants

- 2016                    German-Israel Foundation Young Scientist award. Project no. *I-1110-105.1-2014*. **Interpersonal sensory-motor synchronization in Autism Spectrum Disorders.** *Role: PI.*

## Publications

- Brezis, R. S.** (2012) Autism as a Case for Neuroanthropology: Delineating the Role of Theory of Mind in Religious Development. In: D. Lende and G. Downey (eds.) *The Encultured Brain: Neuroanthropology Foundations*. MIT Press. pp. 291-314.
- Brezis, R. S.,** Galili, T., Wong, T., Piggot, J. (2014) Impaired social processing in autism and its reflections in memory: A deeper view of encoding and retrieval processes. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 44(5):1183-1192.

- Brezis, R. S.** (2015) Memory integration in the autobiographical narratives of individuals with autism. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*. 9:76.
- Brezis, R. S.,** Weisner, T., Daley, T., Singhal, N., Barua, M., Chollera, S. (2015) Parenting a child with autism in India: Narratives before and after a parent-child intervention program. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 39(2): 277-298.
- Gillespie-Lynch, K. and **Brezis, R.S.** (in review) Parent-implemented Interventions for Children with Autism around the Globe. M. Siller and L. Morgan (eds.) *Handbook of Parent-Implemented Interventions for Very Young Children with Autism*. Springer Press.
- Brezis, R. S.,** McKay, L., Galili, T., Wong, T., Piggot, J. (in review) Self-Related Processing and its Reflections in Memory: An fMRI Study of Youth with and without Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Brezis, R.S.,** Weisner, T., Singhal, N., Daley, T., Barua, M., Mark, L., Chollera, S. (in review) Self-Concepts of individuals with autism in Los Angeles and New Delhi: A case for cross-cultural clinical developmental research.
- Daley, T., **Brezis, R. S.,** Singhal, T., Barua, M., Weisner, T. (in review) Evaluation of an Indian Parent-Guided intervention for Children with Autism.

### **Manuscripts in Preparation**

- Brezis, R. S.,** McKay, L., Wong, T., Pham, D., Piggot, J. Amygdala but not Hippocampus Related to Personal Memory in Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- Daley, T., **Brezis, R. S.,** Singhal, T., Barua, M., Weisner, T. Evaluation of an Indian Parent-Guided intervention for Children with Autism.
- McKay, L., **Brezis, R.S.,** Wong, T., Piggot, J. Brain activations during biological motion processing in youth with Autism Spectrum Conditions.
- Piggot, J. McKay, L., **Brezis, R.S.,** Wong, T., Neural correlates of emotional processing of dynamic faces in youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

### **Research publications for broader dissemination**

- Brezis, R.S.** (2012) “The Self in Autism” *Autism Network, New Delhi, India* 7,2:2-7 (In Hindi: Dec 2012, Vol. 7, issue 3, pp. 10-14). <http://www.autism-india.org/aug12.pdf>
- Brezis, R.S.** (2015) “Autism in Israel: Small Country, Big Love.” In English and in Hindi. *Autism Network, New Delhi, India*

### **Media Coverage**

- “Interviewing the experts: Dr. Rachel-Shlomit Brezis on Autism”, *The Interdisciplinary Radio 106.2fm*, Sept. 21, 2015
- “The Self in Autism” *Radio Tel-Aviv 102fm* podcast; Oct. 18, 2015

## Invited Presentations and Talks

- The Self in Autism: Journey between personal narratives, brain and culture. Keynote address at the *Beit Ekstein* Seminar for Educational Staff. August 28, 2015.
- Self-descriptions by individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder in New Delhi and Los Angeles: Bridging cross-cultural psychology and neurodiversity. *International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology Meeting*. San Cristobal, Mexico. July 29, 2015.
- Self-descriptions by individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder in New Delhi and Los Angeles: Bridging cross-cultural psychology and neurodiversity. *Diversity of Social Cognition Workshop*, University of Cologne, Germany. July 26, 2015.
- Interpersonal Sensory-Motor Synchronization in Autism. Beit Issie Shapiro Conference on Disabilities. Tel-Aviv, Israel. July 8, 2015.
- The Self in Autism: Journey between personal narratives, brain and culture. Amcha Organization for Holocaust Survivors, Clinical Forum. February 5, 2015.
- The Self in Autism: Journey between personal narratives, brain and culture. Bar-Ilan University Neuropsychology Workshop. January 29, 2015.
- The Self in Autism: Journey between personal narratives, brain and culture. Opening talk at the Talking Autism (Medabrim Autism) annual conference, Tel Aviv University. January 18, 2015.
- Self-processing and memory: Brain activation in youth with and without Autism Spectrum Disorders. *The International Neuropsychological Society 2014 Mid-Year Meeting*. Jerusalem. July 11, 2014.
- Memory in Autism: Tracing the contours and the cause. *Developmental Psychology Research Forum*. University of Haifa. April 8, 2014.
- Memory in Autism: Tracing the contours and the cause. *Autism Research Study Group*. Ben-Gurion University/Soroka Medical Center. April 6, 2014.
- Memory in Autism: Tracing the contours and the cause. *School of Psychology Research Seminar*. Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya. April 1, 2014.
- Autism and Culture: Parenting Children with Autism in India. *Interdisciplinary Program in Child Development*. University of Haifa. May 16, 2013.
- Memory in Autism: At the juncture of biological, psychological and cultural constraints. *Gonda Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center*, Bar-Ilan University. May 12, 2013.
- Research on Families and Children with Autism in India: Preliminary Report. *Center for Culture, Brain, Development and Mental Health*. University of California, Los Angeles. April 10, 2013.
- Parenting a child with autism in India: Observations from a Parent-Child Training Program. *Society for Psychological Anthropology 2013 Biennial Meeting*. San Diego, CA. April 7, 2013.
- Autism and Culture: Theory and Practice. *Cross-cultural studies of children and socialization*. UCLA. February 21, 2013.
- International Approaches to ASD Research. *Center for Autism Research and Treatment*, UCLA. October 26, 2012.

Understanding Self and Other in Autism. *Department of Philosophy*, Jawahrlal Nehru University, New Delhi. April 19, 2012.

Relating memory for self in autism to underlying social, cognitive and verbal impairments. *Institute for Mind and Biology*, University of Chicago. June 16, 2011.

Social and Non-Social Memory in Children and Adolescents with Autism. *Comparative Human Development Workshop*, University of Chicago. May, 2010

Autism as a Case Study for Acculturation. *The Encultured Brain Conference*. University of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN. Oct. 8, 2009.

Autism and Jewish Religious Development: An ethnography of Self, Culture and Cosmos. *Society for Psychological Anthropology*. Asilomar, CA. March 29, 2009.

Theory of Mind, Self-Coherence and the Emergence of Religious Belief: An Ethnographic Study of Jewish Children with Autism. *Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion*. Chicago, IL. Nov. 2, 2008.

Autism and Religious Development: A Case for Neuroanthropology. *Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association*. San Francisco, CA. Nov. 20, 2008.

Autism and Religious Development: A Window onto the Intricate Alignment of Self, Culture and Cosmos. *The Department of Comparative Human Development 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Conference*. University of Chicago, Apr. 25, 2008

## Poster Presentations

Brezis, R.S., Weisner, T. S., Singhal, N., Daley, T.C., Barua, M., Piggot, J. Chollera, S.P. (2015) Self-descriptions by individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder in New Delhi and Los Angeles: Bridging cross-cultural psychology and neurodiversity. *International Meeting for Autism Research*. Salt Lake City, Utah, May 2015.

Brezis, R. S., McKay, L., Wong, T., Pham, D., Galili, T., D., Piggot, J. (2015) Self-related processing and memory: Brain activations in youth with and without ASD. *International Meeting for Autism Research*. Salt Lake City, Utah, May 2015.

McKay, L., Brezis, R.S., Wong, T., Piggot, J. (2015) Emotion Attribution from Dynamic Faces: Bold Differences Pre- and Post- Decision in ASDs. *International Meeting for Autism Research*. Salt Lake City, Utah, May 2015.

Brezis, R.S., Weisner, T. S., Singhal, N., Daley, T.C., Barua, M., Chollera, S.P. (2014) Indian Mothers' and Fathers' Changing Views of their Child with Autism Before and After a Parent-Child Training Program. *International Meeting for Autism Research*. Atlanta, GA, May 2014.

Brezis, R. S., Singhal, N., Daley, T., Barua, M., Weisner, T. (2013) Indian Mothers' and Fathers' Changing Views of their Child with Autism Before and After a Parent-Child Training Program: Initial findings. *International Meeting for Autism Research*. San Sebastian, Spain, May 2013.

- Daley, T. C., Singhal, N., Barua, M., Weisner, T., Brezis, R. S. (2013) The Relevance of “RealWorld Evaluation” to Autism Intervention Research. *International Meeting for Autism Research*. San Sebastian, Spain, May 2013.
- Brezis, R. S., Singhal, N., Daley, T., Barua, M., Weisner, T. (2013) Indian Parent-Child Training Program Empowers Parents of Children with ASD: A Culturally Relevant Model for Autism Intervention. *Society for Research on Child Development*. Seattle, WA, April 2013.
- Brezis, R. S. Wong, T., Pham, D., Galili, T., D., Piggot, J. (2012) Autobiographical and Social Memory Narratives in Autism: Delineating the Role of the Hippocampus and Amygdala. *International Meeting for Autism Research*. Toronto, Canada, May 2012.
- Brezis, R. S., Wong, T., Pham, D., Galili, T., D., Piggot, J. (2011) Amygdala but not Hippocampus Related to Personal Memory in ASD. *International Meeting for Autism Research*. San Diego, CA, May 2011.
- Brezis, R. S., Wong, T., Pham, D., Galili, T., D., Piggot, J. (2011) Social and Non-Social Memory in Children and Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Society for Research on Child Development 2011 Biennial Meeting*. Montreal, Canada, March 2011.
- Brezis, R. S., Wong, T., Piggot, J. (2010) Memory in Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Deficit in Social Processing or Complex Information Processing? *International Meeting for Autism Research*. Philadelphia, PA, May 2010.

## **Fellowships and Awards**

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|-----------|---|
| 2014-2016 | “Returning Scientist” Postdoctoral Research Grant, Israel Ministry of Science and Ministry of Immigration and Absorption. |
| 2011-2013 | Postdoctoral fellow, Interdisciplinary Studies of Culture and Neuroscience, Foundation for Psychocultural Research        |
| 2010-2011 | Fellow, Institute for Mind and Biology, University of Chicago   |
| 2008-2010 | Graduate Research Fellow, Center for Autism Research and Treatment, University of California, Los Angeles                 |
| 2007-2011 | Full scholarship and stipend granted by the University of Chicago   |
| 2008      | Giannino Foundation graduate research grant, University of Chicago  |
| 2004-2005 | Dean’s list, Faculty of Humanities, Hebrew University   |
| 2003-2006 | Full scholarship and stipend granted by the <i>Amirim</i> Multi-Disciplinary Honors Program, Hebrew University.           |
| 2001-2002 | Full scholarship, based on outstanding high-school achievement, granted by the Hebrew University                          |

## Leadership and Teaching Experience

- 2014-2015 Co-founder, The Interdisciplinary Center's Association of Post-Doctoral Fellows.
- 2014-2015 Management of 2 MA students and 3 BA students at the Sagol Center for Brain and Mind, Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya.
- 2012-2014 Management of 8 undergraduate research assistants at the Center for Culture and Health, UCLA: Amol Patel, Ayesha Khan, Namrata Kakade, Nitasha Kaur, Shreya Chollera, Avani Bedakar, Navjot Sandhu and Fatima Burney.
- 2012 Co-management of 3 MA-certified research assistants at Action for Autism, New Delhi: Deepali Taneja, Sachita Suryanarayan, and Simi Sunny.
- 2011 Management of 4 undergraduate research assistants in Tel Aviv, Israel: Yael Wolfenson, Karen Chernick, Ellen Hockley, and Lucy Blechner.
- 2010-2011 Management of 4 undergraduate research assistants at the University of Chicago: Raisa Santiago, Tiffany Tso, Courtney Paine, and Meera Lee Sethi.
- 2009-2010 Co-founder and co-coordinator, Autism Journal Club, Center for Autism Research and Treatment, UCLA.
- 2008-2010 Management of 8 undergraduate research assistants at UCLA: Minh-Vu Nguyen, Christina Schin, Tiffany Chen, Caroline Kim, Alana Taniguchi, Alex Zhu, Crystal Park, Sydney Brown, and Wai-Ling Wu.
- 2007-2008 Coordinator, Clinical Ethnography Workshop, University of Chicago.
- 2005-2006 Co-moderator of Memory Skills Workshop for Holocaust Child Survivors, *Amcha*, Jerusalem.
- 2004 Teacher of Hebrew at the *Rothberg International School*, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.
- 2003-2004 Teacher at *Chaverim*, Jewish Studies Program for New Immigrant Students, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.
- 2002-2003 Civic Service (*Sherut Le'umi*) as full-time Tutor and Aid at the *Henrietta Szold School for Mentally Disabled Children* in Haifa, Israel.

## Language Skills

Native proficiency of Hebrew, French, and English. Conversational Spanish and Yiddish.

## Clinical Certifications

Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS)  
Autism Diagnostic Interview (ADI-R)  
UCLA PEERS Program – Social Skills Group for Teens

## Professional Membership

International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)  
International Neuropsychological Society (INS)  
Society for Research on Child Development (SRCD)

Society for Psychological Anthropology (SPA)

**Ad Hoc Journal Reviewer**

Cognitive Research: Principles and Implications

Journal of Family Studies

Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute

PLoS One

Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders