

Dr. BRIONY SWIRE-THOMPSON  
Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Network Science Institute  
Northeastern University  
177 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115, United States  
**Citizenship** Australian / British  
**Email** b.swire-thompson@northeastern.edu

## **Research Interests**

---

My research investigates what drives belief in inaccurate information, why certain individuals are predisposed to refrain from belief change even in the face of good corrective evidence, and how corrections can be designed to maximize impact. I currently explore misinformation effects, source credibility, motivated reasoning, older adults, political psychology, and familiarity-recollection dual process theory. I am also interested in false memory, forgetting, how emotion impacts memory, and memory distortion over time.

## **Education**

---

Ph.D. in Psychological Science, University of Western Australia Cognitive Science Laboratories Dissertation title: “The Role of Memory and Ideological Biases in the Correction of Misinformation” Supervisors: Associate Professor Ullrich Ecker, Professor Stephan Lewandowsky	Feb 2013 - Dec 2017
Honours <sup>1</sup> in Psychological Science, University of Western Australia Cognitive Science Laboratories Thesis: “Misinformation in Memory: Strength of Encoding and Retracting Information” Supervisors: Associate Professor Ullrich Ecker, Professor Stephan Lewandowsky	Feb 2009 - Dec 2009
Bachelor of Arts, University of Western Australia Double major in Psychological Science, single major in English Literature	Feb 2003 - Dec 2005

## **Studies / Collaborations Abroad**

---

Visiting Scholar, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Host supervisor: Professor Adam Berinsky, Political Experiments Research Laboratory	Sep 2016 - Dec 2016
Postgraduate Fulbright Scholar, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Host supervisor: Professor Adam Berinsky, Political Experiments Research Laboratory	Aug 2015 - Jun 2016
Visiting Scholar, University of Bristol Host laboratory: Dr. Jonathan Brooks, Clinical Research and Imaging Centre	Aug 2014 - Sep 2014
Visiting Student, University of Bristol Undergraduate studies: Psychology and English Literature	Aug 2004 - May 2005

## **Employment (academic / psychology related only)**

---

Postdoctoral researcher Northeastern University, Harvard Institute for Quantitative Social Sciences, Boston	Aug 2017 – present
--	--------------------

---

<sup>1</sup> In Australia, honours is one year course with a substantial research component. It is completed after a bachelor’s degree and is a prerequisite for postgraduate studies.

Teaching Support Officer Curtin University, Perth	Jun 2012 - Jan 2013
Clinical Psychology Supervisor Hospital San Luis de Otavalo, Ecuador	Oct 2010 – Dec 2011
Special Needs Teaching Assistant Career Teachers, London	Jan - Jun 2007

## **Publications**

---

Grinberg, N., Joseph, K., Friedland, L, **Swire-Thompson, B.**, & Lazer, L. (2019) Voter exposure to fake news on Twitter during the 2016 U.S. election, *Science*.

**Swire, B.** & Ecker, U. K. H. (2018). Misinformation and its correction: Cognitive mechanisms and recommendations for mass communication. In B. Southwell, E. A. Thorson, & L. Sheble. (Eds), *Misinformation and Mass Audiences*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Aird, M., Ecker, U. K. H., **Swire, B.** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S. (2018) Does truth matter to voters? The effects of correcting political misinformation in an Australian sample, *Royal Society Open Science*.

**Swire, B.**, Ecker, U. K. H. & Lewandowsky, S. (2017). The role of familiarity in correcting inaccurate information, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*.

**Swire, B.**, Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2017). Processing political misinformation—Comprehending the Trump phenomenon, *Royal Society Open Science*.

Ecker, U. K. H., **Swire, B.**, & Lewandowsky, S. (2014). Correcting misinformation—A challenge for education and cognitive science. In D. N. Rapp & J. Braasch. (Eds.), *Processing Inaccurate Information: Theoretical and Applied Perspectives from Cognitive Science and the Educational Sciences*. (pp. 13-38). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Ecker, U. K. H., Lewandowsky, S., **Swire, B.**, & Chang, D. (2011). Correcting false information in memory: Manipulating the strength of misinformation encoding and its retraction. *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review*, 18, 570-578.

## **Publications In Preparation**

---

**Swire, B.** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (under review). They might be a liar but they're my liar: Source evaluation and the prevalence of misinformation.

**Swire, B.**, Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (in prep.). The efficacy of diverse explanation formats.

## **Awards and Honors**

---

University of Western Australia's Dean's List Honourable Mention Recognition of an Outstanding Thesis	2017
Gregory Schwartz Fulbright Enrichment Travel Grant Australian-American Fulbright Association, \$1,200	2016
Fulbright Postgraduate Scholarship Australian-American Fulbright Association, \$30,000	2015

University Postgraduate Award University of Western Australia, \$88,900 This is a stipend paid fortnightly for 3.5 years of graduate studies	2013
Safety-net Top Up Scholarship University of Western Australia, \$12,250 This is a stipend paid fortnightly for 3.5 years of graduate studies	2013
Study Abroad Undergraduate Scholarship University of Western Australia, \$2,500	2004

### **Invited Talks**

---

**Swire B.** (2018). Ideas that sell and the correction of misinformation. Talk to NATO, Latvia.

**Swire, B.** (2018). The psychology of misinformation. Talk to Nordic government officials, Finland.

**Swire, B.** (2017). Measuring misinformation using social media and cognitive approaches to its correction. Talk to the US Advisory Council, Boston.

**Swire, B.,** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2017). Belief updating and the 2016 Presidential election. Talk at Massachusetts, Institute of Technology / University College London's Affective Brain Lab, Boston.

**Swire, B.,** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2017). What does cognitive psychology recommend for correcting misinformation? Talk at Fact 4: Global Fact Checking Conference, Madrid.

**Swire, B.,** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2016). Processing political misinformation. Talk at Impact Hub, Boston.

**Swire, B.** (2016) Australian-American Postgraduate Fulbright Scholarships. Talk at the University of Western Australia, Perth.

### **Conference Presentations**

---

**Swire, B.,** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2017). Source evaluation after disproportionate presentations of misinformation and factual information. Poster presented at Psychonomic Society Conference, Vancouver.

**Swire, B.,** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2016). Correcting political misinformation. Talk at Massachusetts, Institute of Technology, Graduate Student Seminar, Boston.

**Swire, B.,** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2016). Processing political misinformation—Comprehending the Trump phenomenon. Poster presented at Psychonomic Society Conference, Boston.

**Swire, B.,** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2016). Processing political misinformation—Comprehending the Trump phenomenon. Talk in the Midwest Political Science Conference Junior Scholar Symposium, Chicago.

**Swire, B.,** Ecker, U. K. H. & Lewandowsky, S. (2015). Correcting misinformation and the familiarity backfire effect. Talk at the University of Western Australia School of Psychology Colloquium, Perth.

**Swire, B.,** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2015). Misinformation and backfire effects. Poster presented at Massachusetts Fulbright Seminar, Boston.

**Swire, B.,** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2015). Misinformation and backfire effects. Poster Presented at the Western Australian Fulbright Seminar, Perth.

**Swire, B.,** Ecker, U. K. H. & Lewandowsky, S. (2015). Misinformation in memory. Talk at Massachusetts, Institute of Technology, Graduate Student Seminar, Boston

**Swire, B.,** Berinsky, A., J., Lewandowsky, S., & Ecker, U. K. H. (2015). Misinformation and backfire effects. Poster presented at the Australian-American National Fulbright Seminar, Perth.

**Swire, B.,** Ecker, U. K. H. & Lewandowsky, S. (2015). Correcting misinformation and the familiarity backfire effect. Talk at the Australasian Experimental Psychology Conference, Sydney.

## **Teaching**

---

Coordinating Graduate Research Instructor for Cognitive Psychology Feb - Jun 2015  
University of Western Australia  
Responsibilities: Teaching the graduate student instructors content and activities for the laboratories, helping the unit-coordinator create laboratory content, managing the course website, and preparing individualized content for students with special needs.

The responsibilities for the Graduate Student Instructor and Sessional Academic positions below involved teaching laboratories of up to 40 students, demonstrating SPSS, and marking assignments, exams, and oral presentations. Average teaching rating 4.66 / 5 across courses.

Graduate Student Instructor for Cognitive Psychology Feb - Jun 2013, Feb - Jun 2015  
University of Western Australia  
This second and third-year undergraduate course covered attention, executive functioning, principles and dissociations of human memory, information updating, problem solving and reasoning, judgement and decision making, applied cognition including forensic analysis, eyewitness testimony, and human error.

Sessional Academic for Introduction to Psychology Feb - Jun 2013, Feb - Jun 2014  
Curtin University  
This first-year undergraduate course was an introduction to social psychology, personality, development, learning, memory, motivation, and the methodological issues related to psychology.

Graduate Student Instructor for Research Methods: Design and Analysis Feb – Jun 2014  
University of Western Australia  
This third-year undergraduate course covered performing and interpreting statistical analyses. The laboratories involved analyzing sets of data using SPSS, writing reports of analyses, and evaluating research design.

Sessional Academic for Brain and Behavior Jun – Nov 2013  
Curtin University  
This first-year undergraduate course covered the structural and functional organization of the central nervous system, and the interrelationships between physiological functioning and behavior.

## **Media (examples)**

---

Fake news is more likely to be shared by older people — but we don't know why (2019). *ABC News*.  
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2019-01-25/older-people-share-more-social-media-fake-news-2016-election/10746348>

Tired of being manipulated by fake news? This Northeastern researcher is creating the tools we need to fight against it. (2018). *News@Northeastern*. Available from <https://news.northeastern.edu/2018/06/18/tired-of-being-manipulated-by-fake-news-this-northeastern-researcher-is-creating-the-tools-we-need-to-fight-against-it/>

These academics are on the research frontlines of fake news research. (2018). *Poynter*. Available from <https://www.poynter.org/news/these-academics-are-frontlines-fake-news-research>

Why we lie: The science behind our deceptive ways (2017). *National Geographic*. Available from <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2017/06/lying-hoax-false-fibs-science/>

Trump supporters will still vote for him even if he lies *ABCnews*. (2017). <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-03-02/trump-supporters-will-still-vote-for-him-even-if-he-lies/8320100>

There's probably nothing that will change Clinton or Trump supporters' minds. (2016). *FiveThirtyEight*. Available from <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/theres-probably-nothing-that-will-change-clinton-or-trump-supporters-minds/>

Behind the Tweed: where academics give us insight into their research. (2014). *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, National radio interview. Available from <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/drive/behind-the-tweed3a-how-we-tell-fact-26-fiction-apart/5641138>