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SUMMARY

I am a collaborative researcher working at the intersection of psychology, anthropology, and public health. I am currently based at the University of Oxford, where my research investigates how social connection and belonging influence the psychophysiological processes that underpin both wellbeing and long-term health. My work has been published in leading academic journals, such as *Public Health* and *Nature Human Behaviour*, and featured by international media outlets including the BBC and *New Scientist*.

PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH ROLES

University of Oxford (Oxford, UK)

January 2022 – Present

- **Postdoctoral Researcher** • Research with Dr Emma Cohen, funded by the James S. McDonnell Foundation, focusing on how social environments and experiences affect fatigue, energy consumption and trade-offs, and physical activity in daily life; this project extends research from my DPhil (PhD), which showed that social inclusion and support can reduce perceptions of fatigue, increase feelings of energy, and enhance outputs during physical exercise (January 2022 – January 2025).
- **Postdoctoral Affiliate** • Investigated the relationships amongst social environments, physical activity, and wellbeing in experimental and survey-based datasets using multilevel statistical techniques and structural equation modelling (July 2019 – January 2022). Currently working on research investigating the socioecological drivers of perceived social connection, and their influence on fatigue, physical activity, and health (September 2025 – present).

Texture AI (London, UK)

June 2019 – January 2022

- **Chief Data Scientist** • Built algorithms for analysing sentiment in online text related to public health issues (e.g., measuring vaccine hesitancy and disease outbreaks using Twitter data); used the Python programming language and methods from natural language processing, experimental psychology, and machine learning.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION ROLES

University of Oxford (Oxford, UK)

October 2016 – August 2025

- **Departmental Lecturer, School of Anthropology & Museum Ethnography** • Delivered undergraduate lectures and tutorials that provided an evolutionary perspective on human psychological development and culture acquisition (February 2025 – August 2025).
- **Course Director, Wadham College Human Sciences Programme** • Provided student support, mentorship, and personal curriculum development (February 2025 – August 2025).
- **Junior Research Fellow, Wadham College** • Member of Governing Body and of Liaison & Equality Committee; co-lead for the Wadham Summer School aimed at widening access to higher education for British secondary school children facing socioeconomic disadvantage (May 2023 – August 2025).
- **Course Convenor – Mind & Culture Seminar for MSc in Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology** • Designed course in collaboration with Prof Emma Cohen, which reviews theoretical and empirical advances in modern scientific understandings of human cognition and psychology in context; the course explores and

integrates evolutionary, social, developmental, and cross-cultural perspectives on how human minds work and how they shape and are shaped by sociality and culture (Spring 2023, 2024).

- **Student supervision** • Supervision of MSc and DPhil students, focusing on quantitative methods (2022 – present).
- **Graduate Instructor – Quantitative Methods** • Taught theory and application of research design and essential statistical techniques in the programming language R to MSc and MPhil students (October 2018 – December 2020).
- **Undergraduate Tutor** • Tutored students in quantitative methods, cognitive anthropology, and evolutionary theory (October 2016 – present).
- **Interviewer – Human Sciences undergraduate admissions** • Creation and delivery of interview structure and questions with Prof Emma Cohen and Dr Paula Sheppard for prospective Human Sciences undergraduates at Wadham College (December 2016, 2023, 2024).

EDUCATION

University of Oxford (Oxford, UK)

October 2013 – June 2019

- **DPhil (PhD) in Anthropology (2019)** • Supervised by Prof Emma Cohen at the Institute of Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology
 - Used experimental, observational, survey, and ‘big data’ methods to investigate the effects of social support on physical activity; developed a theoretical account of how and why social environments affect the psychophysiological processes underpinning experiences and outcomes during physical exercise.
- **MSc in Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology (2014)** • Graduated with distinction

South Dakota State University (Brookings, SD, USA)

September 2008 – May 2012

- **BA in Spanish & Global Studies (double major)** • Graduated *summa cum laude* (4.0 GPA) from Honor’s College
 - Awarded an athletic scholarship to compete in the javelin throw for the Track & Field team; team co-captain (2011 – 2012); NCAA Division I Track & Field Academic All-American (2012); Summit League All-Conference (2011).
 - Credits (4.0 GPA) from: the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, MN, USA; 2013; courses in evolution, genetics, and biopsychology) • Georgetown University (Washington, DC, USA; 2011; courses in political science) • St. John’s University (Collegeville, MN, USA; 2008; general credits) • Cotter High School (Winona, MN, USA; 2006 – 2007; general credits).

PUBLICATIONS

- Paone, G., Davis, A. J., & Cohen, E. (2025). Modality matters: differences in abstract and social memory skills in children from high-stress and low-stress environments. *OSF Preprints*. doi:[10.31219/osf.io/2zm3v_v1](https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/2zm3v_v1)
- Davis, A.J., Greenhouse-Tucknott, A., Beedie, C., & Cohen, E. (2025c). Social support reduces perceptions of fatigue while increasing energy expenditure and outputs during physical activity. *OSF Preprints*. doi:[10.31234/osf.io/8nfgv_v1](https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/8nfgv_v1)
- Davis, A. J., Tunçgenç, B., & Cohen, E. (2025b). Evolutionary Perspectives on Cooperative Sociality in Exercise and Sport. In M. Beauchamp & M. Eys (Eds.), *Group Dynamics in Exercise and Sport Psychology*. New York, USA: Routledge. doi:[10.4324/9781032649177-1](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781032649177-1)

- Davis, A. J., Cohen, E., & Nettle, D. (2025a). Associations amongst poverty, loneliness, and a defensive symptom cluster characterised by pain, fatigue, and low mood. *Public Health*, 242, 272-277. doi:[10.1016/j.puhe.2025.02.037](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2025.02.037)
- Berdugo, S., Cohen, E., Davis, A. J., Matsuzawa, T., & Carvalho, S. (2024). Reliable long-term individual variation in wild chimpanzee technological efficiency. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 1-9. doi:[10.1038/s41562-024-02071-8](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-024-02071-8)
- Cohen E., Davis, A.J., & Taylor, J. (2023). Interdependence, Bonding and Support Are Associated With Improved Mental Well-being Following an Outdoor Team Challenge. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being*, 1-24. doi:[10.1111/aphw.12351](https://doi.org/10.1111/aphw.12351)
- Davis, A. J., MacCarron, P., & Cohen, E. (2021b). Social reward and support effects on exercise experiences and performance: Evidence from parkrun. *PLoS ONE*, 16(9), e0256546. doi:[10.1371/journal.pone.0256546](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0256546)
- Davis, A. J., Crittenden, B., & Cohen, E. (2021a). Effects of social support on performance outputs and perceived difficulty during physical exercise. *Physiology & Behavior*, 239, 113490. doi:[10.1016/j.physbeh.2021.113490](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physbeh.2021.113490)
- Davis, A. J., Hettinga F., & Beedie, C. (2020). You don't need to administer a placebo to elicit a placebo effect: Social factors trigger neurobiological pathways to enhance sports performance. *European Journal of Sport Science*, 20(3): 302-312. doi:[10.1080/17461391.2019.1635212](https://doi.org/10.1080/17461391.2019.1635212)
- Davis, A. J. (2019). Robin Dunbar, *Human Evolution: Our Brains and Behavior* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 415 pages. ISBN: 9780190616786. *Politics and the Life Sciences*, 1-3. doi:[10.1017/pls.2019.5](https://doi.org/10.1017/pls.2019.5)
- Beedie, C., Benedetti, F., Barbiani, D., Camerone, E., Cohen, E., Coleman, D., Davis, A. . . & Szabo, A. (2018). Consensus statement on placebo effects in sports and exercise: The need for conceptual clarity, methodological rigour, and the elucidation of neurobiological mechanisms. *European Journal of Sport Science*, 18(10), 1383-1389. doi:[10.1080/17461391.2018.1496144](https://doi.org/10.1080/17461391.2018.1496144)
- Davis, A., & Cohen, E. (2018). The Effects of Social Support on Strenuous Physical Exercise. *Adaptive Human Behavior and Physiology*, 4(2), 171-187. doi:[10.1007/s40750-017-0086-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s40750-017-0086-8)
- Taylor, J., & Davis, A. (2018). Social Cohesion. *The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. doi:[10.1002/9781118924396.wbiea2297](https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118924396.wbiea2297)
- Davis, A., Taylor, J., & Cohen, E. (2016). How the buzz of dancing and sports bond us together. *Aeon*.
- Davis, A., Taylor, J., & Cohen, E. (2015). Social Bonds and Exercise: Evidence for a Reciprocal Relationship. *PLoS ONE*, 10(8), e0136705. doi:[10.1371/journal.pone.0136705](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0136705)
- Davis, A. (2012). Immigration Liberalization in the United States and Beyond. *South Dakota State University Journal of Undergraduate Research*, 10, 1-42. <https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/jur/vol10/iss1/2>

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- BBC Radio 4 & Davis, A.J. (2025, August 25). [Interviewed by James Gallagher as expert guest]. In *Inside Health*. BBC. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m002hkp9>
- BBC Radio 4 & Davis, A.J. (2025, August 12). [Interviewed by Winifred Robinson as expert guest]. In *Call You & Yours: Have you joined any kind of social club?* BBC. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m002gzz6>
- BBC Ideas & Davis, A. J. (2024, July 31). The surprising benefits of exercising with friends [Video]. *BBC*. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/videos/c17g8lx2y7po>
- Davis, A. J., Cohen, E., Nettle, D. (2024, May). Social relationships, poverty, and energetic regulation. Talk presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society Annual Meeting. Århus, Denmark.

Davis, A. J., Greenhouse-Tucknott, A., Beedie, C., Cohen, E. (2023, April) Effects of social support on energy expenditure, perceived fatigue, and performance outputs during aerobic physical activity. Talk presented at the European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association Conference. London, United Kingdom.

Davis, A., Mac Carron, P., & Cohen, E. (2017, April). Buffering effects of social cohesion and support during exercise: a 'big data' investigation of parkrun. Plenary talk presented at the European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association Conference. Paris, France.

Taylor, J., & Davis, A. (2016, June). Social Bonds and Exercise: Evidence for a Reciprocal Relationship. Talk presented at the Human Behavior and Evolution Society Annual Meeting, Vancouver, Canada.

AWARDS

University of Oxford (Oxford, UK)

- Winner of the Vice-Chancellor's Local Community Engagement Award for volunteer work with the Oxford Young Sports Leaders Programme (2025).
- Junior Research Fellowship at Wadham College (2023 – present).
- Full Blue in javelin throw for Oxford University Athletics Club (2015); placed 7th in the javelin throw at the 2016 British University and Colleges Outdoor Athletics Championships; recipient of Wolfson College High Profile Support Grant for Sport.
- Clarendon Scholarship for DPhil studies (2014 – 2018); full academic tuition plus living stipend.
- Dr Nicola Knight Dissertation Prize in Quantitative Methods for best use of quantitative methods in an anthropological dissertation (MSc dissertation; 2014).

South Dakota State University (Brookings, SD, USA)

- Capital One NCAA Division I Track & Field Academic All-American (2012); Summit-League All-Conference (2011).
- Schultz-Werth Award (2012) – top cash prize (US \$2,500) for outstanding undergraduate research thesis, which focused on the benefits of liberalising immigration policy in the United States.

VOLUNTEER AND OUTREACH WORK

Oxford Young Sports Leaders Programme (Oxford, UK)

April 2024 – Present

- **Organiser and teacher** • Worked in collaboration with Oliver Cook to design, deliver, and assess a yearly six-week programme for local youth facing socioeconomic disadvantage to engage with academic and athletic programmes at the University of Oxford; delivered seminars on the wellbeing and performance benefits of supportive, inclusive environments for sport and exercise; worked with University sports teams to coordinate taster events for participants; designed a survey study to assess the programme's impact.

Wadham Summer School (Oxford, UK)

August 2024 – August 2025

- **Co-director and instructor** • Collaborated with colleagues at Wadham College to recruit and select students for the Climate Change Summer School, a one-week outreach programme for secondary school students with the goal of broadening access to the University; adopted material from the Human Sciences course to design and deliver introductory lessons on climate change, migration, social connection, and health.

Local Civics (New York, NY, USA)

January 2021 – May 2021

- **Data science consultant** • Created reports on government funding opportunities and analysed mobile application data on student engagement with events promoted by Local Civics, a for profit company with the aim of building civic engagement and community leadership in the United States.

University of Oxford Athletics Club outreach (Oxford, UK)

June 2016 – June 2019

- **Mentor and presenter** • Worked with the Oxford Hub and the Oxford University Athletics Club (OUAC) to organise and run outreach events aimed at underrepresented undergraduate student populations; presented at events and worked with OUAC to help prospective student-athletes apply to the University.

South Dakota State University's ESL School (South Dakota, USA)

September 2011 – May 2012

- **Student Director and co-founder** • Organised community outreach programmes and taught English as a Second Language (ESL) courses to Honduran, Guatemalan, and Mexican migrants.

M.O.M.I.E.S. TLC (Washington, DC, USA)

June 2011 – August 2011

- **Teacher** • Created lessons, taught, and fundraised for M.O.M.I.E.S. TLC (Mentors of Minorities in Education's Total Learning System), a non-profit organisation that provides creative and culturally relevant out-of-school programmes aimed at fostering academic development.

Aldea Yanapay (Cuzco, Peru)

February 2008 and January 2013

- **Intern** • Created lessons, coordinated volunteer teaching, taught, and led international fundraising campaigns for Aldea Yanapay, an after-school programme for disadvantaged children.

REFEREES

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