

1 **Detection of Prenatal Alcohol Exposure Using Machine Learning Classification of**
2 **Resting-State Functional Network Connectivity Data**

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ABSTRACT

29 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), a wide range of physical and
30 neurobehavioral abnormalities associated with prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE), is
31 recognized as a significant public health concern. Advancements in the diagnosis of
32 FASD have been hindered by a lack of consensus in diagnostic criteria and limited use
33 of objective biomarkers. Previous research from our group utilized resting state
34 functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to measure functional network
35 connectivity (FNC) revealed several sex- and region-dependent alterations in FNC as a
36 result of moderate PAE relative to controls. Considering that FNC is sensitive to
37 moderate PAE, this study explored the use of FNC data and machine learning methods
38 to detect PAE among a sample of rodents exposed to alcohol prenatally and controls.
39 We utilized previously acquired resting state fMRI data collected from adult rats
40 exposed to moderate levels of prenatal alcohol (PAE) or a saccharin control solution
41 (SAC) to assess FNC of resting state networks extracted by spatial group independent
42 component analysis (GICA). FNC data was subjected to binary classification using
43 support vector machine (SVM)-based algorithms and leave-one-out-cross validation
44 (LOOCV) in an aggregated sample of males and females (n=48; 12 male PAE, 12
45 female PAE, 12 male SAC, 12 female SAC), a males only sample (n=24; 12 PAE, 12
46 SAC), and a females only sample (n=24; 12 PAE, 12 SAC). Results revealed that a
47 quadratic SVM (QSVM) kernel was significantly effective for PAE detection in females.
48 QSVM-kernel-based classification resulted in accuracy rates of 62.5% for all animals,
49 58.3% for males, and 79.2% for females. Additionally, qualitative evaluation of QSVM
50 weights implicate an overarching theme of several hippocampal and cortical networks in

51 contributing to the formation of correct classification decisions by QSVM. Our results
52 suggest that binary classification using QSVM and adult female FNC data is a potential
53 candidate for the translational development of novel and non-invasive techniques for the
54 identification of FASD.

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65 **ACRONYMS**

66	BOLD	Blood Oxygen Level Dependent
67	FAS	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
68	FASD	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
69	fMRI	function Magnetic Resonance Imaging
70	FNC	Functional Network Connectivity
71	FWHM	Full Width Half Max
72	GICA	Group Independent Components Analysis
73	GIFT	Group ICA of fMRI Toolbox
74	HPA	Hypothalamic Pituitary Adrenal Axis
75	LOOCV	Leave One Out Cross Validation
76	MLP	Multilayer Perceptron
77	NMDA	N-methyl-D-Aspartate

78	PAE	Prenatal Alcohol Exposure
79	QSVM	Quadratic SVM
80	RBF	Radial Basis Function
81	RSN	Resting State Network
82	SAC	Saccharin
83	SVM	Support Vector Machine
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INTRODUCTION

85
86 Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) is a term that is utilized to encompass a
87 wide range of morphological and neuro-behavioral phenotypes caused by prenatal
88 alcohol exposure [PAE, (Loock et al., 2005; Williams, Smith, & Committee On
89 Substance, 2015)]. The most severe phenotype is known as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
90 (FAS) and is linked to heavy prenatal alcohol exposure (PAE) (Lemoine, Harousseau,
91 Borteyru, & Menuet, 1968; Manning & Eugene Hoyme, 2007). Children with FAS exhibit
92 facial dysmorphologies, growth deficits, and numerous impairments in cognitive and
93 behavioral functions related to attention, learning, memory, and motor coordination
94 among others (Connor et al., 2000; Jones & Smith, 1973, 1975; Streissguth et al.,
95 1986). Although the most severe, FAS is the least common FASD with an estimated
96 prevalence rate of ~0.1% in the U.S. (May & Gossage, 2001). However, when
97 considering the entire spectrum, estimated prevalence rates of FASD (including FAS)
98 fall between 1.1% and 5.0% of U.S. children, many of which will not display readily
99 identifiable facial dysmorphologies, but may nonetheless exhibit cognitive and
100 behavioral impairments (May et al., 2014; May et al., 2018). Unfortunately, children who
101 do not display the cardinal facial features characteristic of FAS, may fail to receive a
102 timely diagnosis which can prevent securing the appropriate treatment or support
103 services (Bertrand et al., 2005) and increase the likelihood of experiencing negative life
104 outcomes related to academic success (Mattson & Riley, 1998), difficulty in finding and
105 maintaining meaningful employment, and staying out of trouble with the law (Popova et
106 al., 2011). In addition, disagreement among diagnostic criteria and a lack of clinical
107 expertise contribute to challenges in identifying individuals with FASD (Mattson, Bernes,

108 & Doyle, 2019). As a result, novel diagnostic approaches for FASD may possess clinical
109 utility that may lead to improved outcomes.

110 From the early clinical descriptions of FAS (Jones & Smith, 1973, 1975),
111 research with human participants has been critical for understanding the social,
112 physical, and neuro-behavioral sequelae of PAE (Connor et al., 2000; Streissguth et al.,
113 2004). However, variables such as dose (e.g., high, moderate, low), timing (e.g., 1st, 2nd
114 trimester), and pattern of alcohol exposure (e.g., daily vs binge), can be difficult to
115 account for and, for ethical reasons, are impossible to experimentally manipulate in
116 human subjects research (Patten, Fontaine, & Christie, 2014). To overcome these
117 challenges, animal models of FASD have been important for illuminating the underlying
118 neurobiological consequences associated with developmental alcohol exposure.

119 Considering that children are more likely to be exposed to moderate, rather than
120 heavy, levels of prenatal alcohol exposure (May et al., 2018; May & Gossage, 2001),
121 animal research aimed at studying the effects of moderate PAE is extremely valuable
122 because it closely mimics the pattern of alcohol exposure observed in the human
123 population. Within animal models of PAE, considerable work has been undertaken with
124 the aim of investigating discrete brain areas such as the hippocampus (Gil-Mohapel,
125 Boehme, Kainer, & Christie, 2010; Savage, Becher, de la Torre, & Sutherland, 2002)
126 and cerebellum (Servais et al., 2007). However, higher level cognitive and behavioral
127 functions, including those associated with FASD, involve sophisticated and highly
128 coordinated activity across multiple, rather than single, brain regions (Green et al.,
129 2009). Functional network connectivity (FNC) methods (i.e. functional connectivity
130 between coherent brain networks) offer an important lens that can be leveraged to

131 understand the temporal statistical dependencies (e.g. correlations) of multiple and
132 distant brain networks (Arbabshirani & Calhoun, 2011) following PAE. Functional
133 magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), a neuroimaging modality employed to non-
134 invasively measure blood-oxygenation-level dependent (BOLD) signals that reflect
135 patterns of neuronal activity (Logothetis et al., 2001; Raichle & Mintun, 2006), has been
136 widely utilized to derive measures of FNC (Allen et al., 2011). Group level fMRI data
137 gathered at rest, an experimental condition that lacks externally presented stimuli or
138 behavioral responses (Snyder & Raichle, 2012), can be examined by group
139 independent component analysis (GICA). As a blind source separation algorithm, GICA
140 is a data driven technique that extracts the temporal activation patterns (time courses)
141 of resting state networks (RSNs) where each network may consist of multiple brain
142 regions (Allen et al., 2011; Arbabshirani & Calhoun, 2011; Buckner, Krienen, & Yeo,
143 2013). The FNC assessment consists of correlations between the time-courses of brain
144 networks. Brain dysfunction can then be identified by abnormal correlations (e.g. too
145 high or too low) when comparing FNC across control and experimental treatment
146 conditions. Our group previously applied GICA to resting state fMRI data acquired from
147 adult rodents exposed to moderate levels of PAE that revealed several sex and
148 regionally dependent alterations in FNC (Rodriguez et al., 2016a) which point to FNC is
149 a potential biomarker that can be used concurrently with machine learning for the
150 identification of PAE.

151 Machine learning is a topic of growing interest to the scientific community. It
152 encompasses a wide range of statistical and computational techniques that can model
153 the complex and nonlinear relationships between predictor variables. Machine learning

154 is well suited for “wide” data sets in which the number of predictor variables exceeds the
155 number of subjects (Bzdok, Altman, & Krzywinski, 2018) and generally emphasizes
156 prediction rather than explanation, even at the expense of interpretability (Breiman,
157 2001; Yarkoni & Westfall, 2017). Machine learning methods can be broadly categorized
158 into two classes, supervised and unsupervised learning (Bastanlar & Ozuysal, 2014;
159 Hastie, 2009). In unsupervised learning, the aim is to develop a model that can describe
160 associations and patterns among a set of predictor variables (Hastie, 2009). In
161 supervised learning, both outcome and predictors variables are used to develop models
162 that can later be used on novel data, of the same structure, to predict an outcome. The
163 process of building a model algorithmically is referred to as training, while deploying the
164 developed model on data not included in the training phase is referred to as testing.
165 Features represent the predictor variables of the input data used in training, while
166 outcomes represent the predicted output variables (Bastanlar & Ozuysal, 2014).
167 Outcome variables can take on quantitative or qualitative values. When output variables
168 take on a set of discrete labels, the predictive model is called a classifier. A binary
169 classifier specifically refers to a model that predicts a variable adopting only one of two
170 discrete outcome values often referred to as labels. Classifiers can then be evaluated
171 based on how well they predict an outcome variable when deployed on test data (Choi
172 et al., 2020).

173 The discovery of phenotypic, biological, and psychometric markers related to
174 PAE has motivated explorations of machine learning methods for detecting FASD in
175 clinical settings. Fang and colleagues used facial dysmorphology data and binary
176 classification to identify facial features that discriminate between FAS and control

177 participants (Fang et al., 2008). Zhang and colleagues used psychometric, eye tracking,
178 and structural MRI data alone and in combination to detect FASD (Zhang et al., 2019).
179 Utilizing the same psychometric data set as Zhang et al., 2019, artificial neural networks
180 proved useful in identifying individuals with FASD (Duarte, 2020). Machine learning has
181 also been utilized to detect FASD in children and adolescents solely from structural MRI
182 data (Little & Beaulieu, 2020). However, the utility of machine learning for the detection
183 of FASD from fMRI connectivity data remains to be determined.

184 In this study, we explore the use of binary-classification algorithms to detect PAE
185 among a mixed sample of FNC data from rodents with PAE and controls. The
186 effectiveness of the implemented binary-classifiers was tested using leave-one-out-
187 cross validation (LOOCV). Functional neuroimaging data were obtained from our
188 previously published report that characterized the effects of moderate PAE on FNC by
189 utilizing GICA of resting-state fMRI data (Rodriguez et al., 2016a). The primary goal of
190 this current investigation was to explore the utility of machine learning algorithms as a
191 novel and non-invasive means to classify aberrant brain connectivity patterns
192 associated with PAE.

193 **METHODS**

194 **Subjects**

195 Subjects, materials, and procedures were previously reported in separate studies
196 approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee of the University of New
197 Mexico main campus and Health Sciences Center (Rodriguez et al., 2016a; Rodriguez
198 et al., 2016b). Briefly, 48 Long-Evans rats (24 SAC and 24 PAE; 24 males and 24
199 females) were generated in a single breeding round designed to prenatally expose rats

200 to either a 5% ethanol (v/v) or 0.066% saccharin solution (Hamilton et al., 2014) for the
201 duration of the entire 21-day gestational period. Following weaning, animals were
202 housed with an age- and weight-matched cagemate from the same prenatal treatment,
203 but different litter, in standard plastic cages with water and food available ad libitum.

204 At 3-4 months of age, all animals underwent a series of structural- and blood
205 oxygenation level dependent (BOLD) fMRI-scan sequences under isoflurane anesthesia
206 for ~45 min in a 4.7T Bruker Biospin (Billerica, MA) MRI scanner. Functional MRI data
207 were acquired with a 10-minute echo planar imaging acquisition at a temporal resolution
208 (TR) of 2 sec (FOV = 3.84 cm x 3.84 cm, matrix = 64 x 64, TE = 21.3 ms, flip angle =
209 90°, 27 slices, and slice thickness = 1 mm).

210 **Image Preprocessing, Group Independent Component Analysis (GICA), and** 211 **Functional Network Connectivity**

212 Preprocessing, GICA, and FNC methods are described in (Rodriguez et al.,
213 2016a). To summarize, fMRI data preprocessing included realignment, spatial
214 normalization to the Paxinos & Watson atlas (Schweinhart et al., 2003), and smoothing
215 with a 0.5 mm full-width-half-maximum (FWHM) Gaussian kernel in Statistical
216 Parametric Mapping 8 (SPM8) (Wellcome Department of Cognitive Neurology, London,
217 UK) running in MATLAB (Mathworks, Inc., Natick, MA) version R2012b. After
218 preprocessing, 40 group-level independent components were extracted utilizing the
219 Infomax algorithm (Bell & Sejnowski, 1995) in the Group ICA of fMRI Toolbox (GIFT,
220 www.trendscenter.org/software/gift) (Calhoun, Adali, Pearlson, & Pekar, 2001). Of the
221 initial 40 components, 17 components were retained based on the exclusion of

222 components localized to white matter tracts or cerebro-spinal fluid and the presence of
223 artifactual features upon visual inspection.

224 In this study, component time courses were orthogonalized with respect to the
225 following: (1) linear, quadratic, and cubic trends; (2) the six realignment parameters
226 (translation in the x, y, and z directions and rotations about the x, y, z axes); and the 6
227 realignment parameter derivatives. Time-courses were lowpass filtered with a cutoff at
228 0.15Hz. Functional network connectivity (FNC) measures were estimated from pairwise
229 correlations between average individual component time-courses for each rat. A total of
230 136 unique pairwise correlations were calculated for each animal given by the following:
231 $(\frac{C*(C-1)}{2})$ where $C = 17$ (the number of retained components). Thus, the structure of the
232 FNC data utilized for machine learning procedures consisted of 48 correlation matrices,
233 one from each rodent. All correlation values were Fisher's Z transformed for subsequent
234 analyses and served as features during machine learning training. Retained
235 components are displayed in Figure 1 and the anatomical location for the peak value of
236 each component, in Paxinos and Watson space, is displayed in Table 1 (Paxinos &
237 Watson, 2004). However, these components and their location were previously reported
238 in an earlier study and do not represent results from an independent investigation
239 (Rodriguez et al., 2016a). Components are displayed to aid in localizing the brain
240 regions from which the FNC measures for this study were derived from.

241

242 **Machine Learning Procedures**

243 The machine learning methods to classify FNC patterns between PAE and SAC
244 animals were based on work previously described in (Vergara, Mayer, Kiehl, & Calhoun,
245 2018) and relied on utilizing FNC data from GICA-extracted components. As reported in
246 Vergara and colleagues (2018) SVM tuning parameters were set to a least squares
247 solving method, a soft margin parameter of 0.1 and a feature selection threshold of
248 absolute value of 0.75. Feature selection was implemented by conducting a two-sample
249 t-test on SAC and PAE groups for each of the 136 FNC values and discarding FNCs
250 with a t-value failing to meet the $|t| = 0.75$ threshold. The use of t-tests was not
251 implemented to statistically compare groups as those analyses were reported in a
252 previous investigation (Rodriguez et al., 2016a). Instead, the resulting t-values were
253 used to select a subset of FNC features with the aim of guarding against overfitting and
254 improving generalizability of the computational models. This SVM configuration was
255 used to test five different SVM kernels: linear, quadratic (QSVM), cubic, radial basis
256 functions (RBF) and multilayer perceptron (MLP) kernels in MATLAB (Mathworks, Inc.,
257 Natick, MA) version 2016b to perform binary classification of FNC data at the subject
258 level. Because of the relatively small sample size, leave-one-out cross validation
259 (LOOCV) was chosen to assess classification performance. The LOOCV procedure
260 consisted of isolating one sample for testing and the remainder of the samples for
261 training across multiple iterations as displayed in Figure 2. Statistical significance of
262 accuracy rates was assessed by a permutation test approach in which the prenatal
263 condition labels of individual subject's FNC data were randomized and subsequently
264 subjected to 10,000 replications of QSVM classification and LOOCV with random

265 groups on each replication to establish the null probability distribution of accuracy rates
266 from randomized data (null model). Significance at the $p = 0.01$ level (Bonferroni
267 corrected $\alpha = .05/5$, accounting for the five kernels tested) was estimated from the null
268 distribution. Finally, to address classification performance within each sex separately,
269 the permutation test approach and LOOCV procedures were repeated for subsets of
270 male and female only data.

271 **RESULTS**

272 Table 2 displays the accuracy rates of multiple kernels used in SVM binary
273 classification. The quadratic kernel demonstrated the highest classification rates when
274 classifying all (both male and female samples; 62.5%) and female samples only
275 (79.2%). The quadratic and RBF kernels demonstrated the highest accuracy rates for
276 male samples (58.3 %). The lowest accuracy rates were observed for all samples using
277 the RBF kernel (50%), males using the linear kernel (50%) and for females a three-way
278 tie (66.7%) among linear, cubic, and MLP kernels. The quadratic SVM (QSVM) kernel
279 displayed the best overall accuracy rates for discriminating between alcohol- and
280 saccharin exposed animals and was therefore chosen for the remaining series of
281 analyses.

282 Figure 3 displays accuracy-rate histograms after the prenatal conditions of FNC
283 data were randomized and subjected to 10,000 iterations of QSVM classification and
284 LOOCV to establish null distributions. Each null distribution was used to estimate the
285 adjusted $p = 0.01$ level threshold of statistical significance for accuracy rates of QSVM
286 classification in all (A), female (B), and male samples (C). The significance threshold for
287 all samples was 63%. The accuracy rate for all animals in QSVM classification (62.5%)

288 was not significant. For females, the significance threshold was estimated at 75% thus
289 the QSVM classification rate for females (79.2%) was statistically significant. Finally, the
290 significance threshold for males was 71%, rendering the QSVM's performance for
291 classifying males (58.3%) as not statistically significant. To verify that the permutation
292 tests were not influenced by FNC couplings with unequal variances, we performed a
293 supplementary analysis consisting of a series of Levene's tests for equality of variance
294 on the female data. The results of these tests are displayed in Supplementary Figure 1
295 and revealed no significant differences of variance between PAE and SAC females.
296 This analysis was important to verify that the permutation results were not influenced by
297 differences in group variability.

298 Figure 4 displays a series of matrices that display the percentage of times that
299 each FNC value met the feature selection threshold during all iterations of LOOCV for
300 all animals (A), females (B), and males (C). For all animals, a total of 48 iterations of
301 LOOCV were conducted, whereas LOOCV was conducted over 24 iterations separately
302 for male and female animals. These matrices indicate which FNC couplings were
303 typically used as features for training with the five separate SVM kernels.

304 The QSVM assigns weights to each FNC feature in each iteration used in
305 classification. Mean classification weights are displayed in Figure 5 for all samples(A),
306 females (B), and males (C). Weights can be used to explore the contributions of specific
307 component correlations that most strongly impact correct classification decisions. For all
308 samples, a general pattern of moderately positive weights results from network
309 correlations between cerebellar-hippocampal connectivity. Other moderate positive
310 weights result from couplings in hippocampal-striatal, hippocampal-cortical, and

311 hippocampal-midbrain components, while a strong mean positive weight was found in a
312 hippocampal-thalamic coupling consisting of components with peak activations localized
313 to the ventral-anterior thalamus and the dentate gyrus of the hippocampus. Strong
314 negative weights result from cerebellar-cortical, hippocampal-midbrain, and cortical-
315 striatal couplings. For males, strong and moderately strong positive weights cluster in
316 cortical-midbrain, cortical-hippocampal, cortical-cortical, cerebellar-hippocampal, and
317 hippocampal-thalamic, midbrain-thalamic, midbrain-striatal, and midbrain-hippocampal
318 connectivity. Strong negative weights are observed between striatal-cortical, cerebellar-
319 cortical, cortical-hippocampal, and midbrain-midbrain, and striatal-thalamic connectivity.
320 For females, strong and moderately positive weights are observed between cortical-
321 hippocampal, cortical-striatal, striatal-thalamic, cerebellar-hippocampal, and cerebellar-
322 midbrain couplings. Clear patterns of moderately strong negative weights are observed
323 in hippocampal-midbrain, cortical-cortical, cortical-cerebellar, cortical-hippocampal,
324 cortical-cortical, thalamic-hippocampal, striatal-hippocampal, striatal-cortical, and
325 striatal-thalamic couplings.

326

DISCUSSION

327 The motivation for this study was predicated on previous work that showed the
328 potential of FNC as a biomarker for moderate PAE in adult rats. In the present study,
329 our goal was to explore the translational utility of binary classification of FNC with the
330 aim of guiding future human subjects research. We found that a QSVM kernel was
331 significantly effective for PAE detection in females. QSVM-kernel-based classification
332 resulted in a correct accuracy rate of 62.5% for all animals, 58.3% for males, and 79.2%
333 for females. Characterization of QSVM weights implicate an overarching theme of

334 several hippocampal and cortical networks in contributing to the formation of correct
335 classification decisions by the QSVM. Our results imply that binary classification using
336 QSVM and female FNC data may hold translational value for the development of novel
337 and non-invasive techniques for the identification of PAE.

338 Surprisingly, statistically significant classification accuracies were only observed
339 for females using QSVM. In our previous investigation, we found males, relative to
340 females, displayed more alterations in FNC as a result of moderate PAE (Rodriguez et
341 al., 2016a) and thus higher classification accuracies in females were unexpected. A
342 possible explanation for our findings may be due to differences in the processing of
343 independent component time-courses used to assess FNC. In the present investigation,
344 time-courses were pre-processed by detrending, regressed for motion using an
345 approach that included temporal derivatives, and filtered to account for in-scanner
346 movement and to reduce the potential signal contributions stemming from respiratory
347 processes. Relatedly, modifications to time-course pre-processing may have resulted in
348 a greater number of FNC features that met the feature selection threshold and
349 facilitated classification in females. An alternative explanation is that the QSVM is
350 capturing complex non-linear relationships that are beyond the scope of the
351 conventional explanatory modeling methods (Breiman, 2001). In the present work, non-
352 linear data features resulted in improved classification of PAE in females.

353 In the present study, maternal blood alcohol levels during prenatal development
354 reached a moderate 60.8 mg/dL (Davies et al., 2019). In rat studies of PAE, maternal
355 alcohol serum levels can range from 30mg/dL (Cullen, Burne, Lavidis, & Moritz, 2014) in
356 light exposure to 300 mg/dL (Mooney & Varlinskaya, 2011) in heavier exposure models.

357 Furthermore, the alcohol-exposed offspring in the present investigation did not produce
358 any detectable differences in brain volume measured by structural MRI nor blood
359 perfusion in the frontal cortex measured by arterial spin labeling when assessed in
360 adulthood and compared to their corresponding control groups (Rodriguez et al.,
361 2016a). Taken together, these points suggest that the classification accuracy for
362 females is achieved despite moderate levels of PAE, the absence of gross brain
363 morphological abnormalities, and alterations in vascular function.

364 The results presented here, must also be considered within the context of a
365 number of limitations. First, the successful SVM method in our results was non-linear
366 which decreased our ability of establishing one-to-one relationships between specific
367 brain abnormalities and PAE, thereby reducing interpretability of the computational
368 model developed for classification. However, this disadvantage is compensated by the
369 enhanced ability of detecting PAE in females. Second, the FNC data utilized was of the
370 static form which ignores temporal variations in connectivity across the scanning period.
371 Examination of dynamic connectivity, which can account for these variations, may lead
372 to disparate findings as evidenced in human-subjects research with dynamic FNC
373 approaches showing better classification performance (Hutchison et al., 2013; Vergara,
374 Mayer, Kiehl, & Calhoun, 2018). Third, the neuroimaging data utilized to subsequently
375 measure FNC was gathered from rodents under light isoflurane anesthesia. This
376 approach was chosen to minimize the influence of motion during image acquisition. An
377 alternative approach could have employed the use of animal restraining devices to
378 overcome anesthetic-related influences on brain function (King et al., 2005). Such
379 devices used with rats and voles have revealed modest contributions of stress in normal

380 and awake animals after an acclimation procedure (Liang, King, & Zhang, 2011, 2012;
381 Reed, Pira, & Febo, 2013; Yee et al., 2016). However, changes in the sensitivity of
382 stress-related circuitry including the hippocampus and the hypothalamic-pituitary-
383 adrenal (HPA) axis following PAE are well documented (Hellemans et al., 2008; Lam et
384 al., 2018; Rainecki, Ellis, & Weinberg, 2018), and carry the potential to introduce a
385 different set of confounds in an awake scanning procedure with PAE rodents. Fourth,
386 animals in this investigation reached adulthood by the time image acquisition was
387 conducted. Thus, additional research will need to examine machine learning detection
388 in earlier developmental periods to enhance any potential utility of this approach. Fifth,
389 our results are based off of a total sample size of 48, and a within-sex sample size of 24
390 (12 PAE; 12 SAC). Consequently, the machine learning procedures employed in this
391 report stand to benefit greatly from validation with increased sample sizes to better
392 leverage the advantages of machine learning classifiers and may partially explain the
393 gap in classification accuracies observed between males and females. Finally, and most
394 importantly, we recognize the binary classification approach used in this investigation
395 was conducted on rodent data, and any clinical applications will need be developed with
396 human subjects.

397 The classification techniques used in this study have not been utilized with FNC
398 data assessed from resting state fMRI within the context of PAE. In contrast,
399 psychometric, structural MRI, eye tracking, and facial features have been used with
400 binary classification and other machine learning techniques to detect PAE in human
401 subjects. Using psychometric data alone, artificial neural networks attained an accuracy
402 rate of 75% (Duarte, 2020). Zhang and colleagues utilized eye tracking, psychometric,

403 and combined eye tracking, psychometric, and diffusion tensor imaging data from
404 children and adolescents with PAE to achieve 72%, 67%, and 78% accuracy rates
405 respectively (Zhang et al., 2019). Using structural MRI data from children and
406 adolescents, one study achieved a 77% classification accuracy rate (Little & Beaulieu,
407 2020; Zhang et al., 2019). In a study relying on a 3d facial feature scanning system,
408 Fang and colleagues achieved an overall 80% accuracy in two ethnic samples of
409 children with FAS (Fang et al., 2008). Thus, the QSVM method employed in the present
410 investigation achieved a classification accuracy comparable to those previously found in
411 the literature and suggest that this approach is feasible and may hold translational utility
412 if applied in research with humans.

413 FASD continues to pose as a significant public health concern with far reaching
414 economic, and societal consequences. The application of SVM-based classification
415 algorithms to FNC data may serve as a potential tool that can be developed into novel
416 and non-invasive diagnostic aids for FASD. If successful, such an approach may lead to
417 earlier diagnoses resulting in timelier referrals to treatment and support services that
418 may lead to improved outcomes for individuals with FASD and their caregivers.

419

420 *Author Contribution Statement: Carlos Rodriguez: Conceptualization, Data curation,*
421 *Software, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Visualization, Writing – Original Draft. Victor*
422 *Vergara: Conceptualization, Methodology Software, Formal Analysis, Investigation,*
423 *Visualization, Writing – Review & Editing, Supervision. Vince Calhoun:*
424 *Conceptualization, Software, Supervision, Funding acquisition. Writing – Review &*
425 *Editing. Suzy Davies: Methodology, Investigation, Resources, Writing – Review &*
426 *Editing. Daniel Savage: Conceptualization, Methodology, Resources, Funding*
427 *acquisition, Supervision, Writing – Review & Editing. Derek Hamilton:*
428 *Conceptualization, Resources, Funding acquisition, Software, Supervision, Writing –*
429 *Review & Editing.*

430

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623 **Table 1.** Anatomical locations of extracted components. Components are arranged according to the Paxinos and Watson
 624 rat atlas (Paxinos & Watson, 2004) coordinates from anterior to posterior within regional grouping. Cortex (COR),
 625 hippocampus (HIP), midbrain (MID), striatum (STR), and cerebellum (CER). Reprinted with permission (Rodriguez et al.,
 626 2016a) with modified labels to reflect the acronyms used in this study.

Component Number & Label		Coordinates in (AP, ML, DV)			Abbreviation & Area	
39	COR1	1.5	0.1	-2.7	Cg2	cingulate cortex, area 2
15	COR2	-0.1	3.5	-2.9	S1FL	primary somatosensory cortex, forelimb region
24	COR3	-3.3	-1.9	-1.5	LPtA	lateral parietal association cortex
32	COR4	-8.7	-2.1	-1.7	V2MM /V1M	secondary visual cortex, medio medial/primary visual cortex
3	HIP1	-5.1	2.1	-3.3	DS	dorsal subiculum
34	HIP2	-5.1	-5.3	-6.9	MoDG	molecular layer of the dentate gyrus
30	HIP3	-5.9	4.9	-6.3	Or	Oriens layer of the hippocampus
23	HIP4	-6.1	-3.1	-4.1	MoDG	molecular layer of the dentate gyrus
17	HIP5	-6.3	-5.5	-5.5	Lmol	lacunosum moleculare layer of the hippocampus
1	MID1	-3.5	-1.9	-7.7	ZID/ZI V	zona incerta dorsal/zona incerta ventral
18	MID2	-6.3	2.5	-4.7	InG	intermediate gray layer of the superior colliculus
6	MID3	-8.3	1.7	-2.7	ECIC	external cortex of the inferior colliculus

14	STR1	2.1	2.3	-4.3	Cpu	Caudate Putamen
25	STR2	-0.7	1.3	-4.9	LSI	lateral septal nucleus, intermediate part
40	THL1	-1.7	-1.9	-5.9	VA/VL	region where VA and VL overlap (ventral anterior thalamic nucleus/ventrolateral thalamic nucleus)
16	THL2	-3.1	1.7	-6.1	Po	posterior thalamic nuclear group
10	CER1	-11.7	-1.5	-5.1	MedD L	medial cerebellar nucleus, dorsolateral protuberance

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630 **Table 2. Classification accuracy rates of different SVM kernels.** Support vector machine (SVM), radial basis function
631 (RBF), multilayer perceptron (MLP). * significant at Bonferroni corrected ($\alpha = 0.05/5$) threshold.

SVM Kernel	All Samples %	Males %	Females %
Linear	54.0	50.0	66.7
Quadratic	62.5	58.3	79.2*
Cubic	60.4	41.7	66.7
RBF	50.0	58.3	70.8
MLP	54.2	54.2	66.7

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Figure 1.

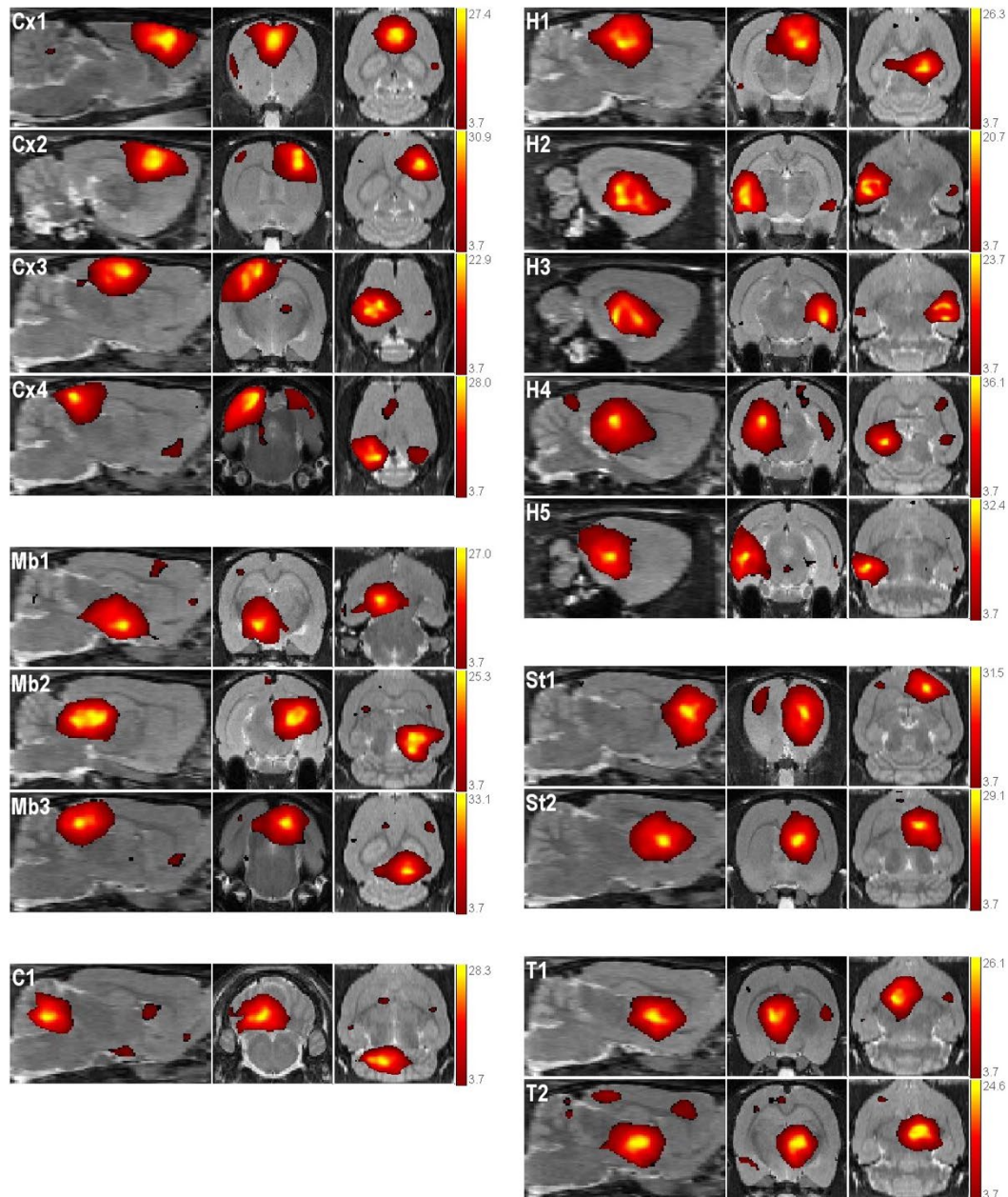


Figure 1. Retained independent components. Independent components in sagittal, coronal, and axial views. Independent component time courses were used to assess FNC. The anatomic location of the peak component t-value determined grouping into cortical (Cx), midbrain (Mb),

hippocampal (H), striatal (St), cerebellar (C) and thalamic (T) networks. Reprinted with permission (Rodriguez, Davies, et al., 2016).

Figure 2.

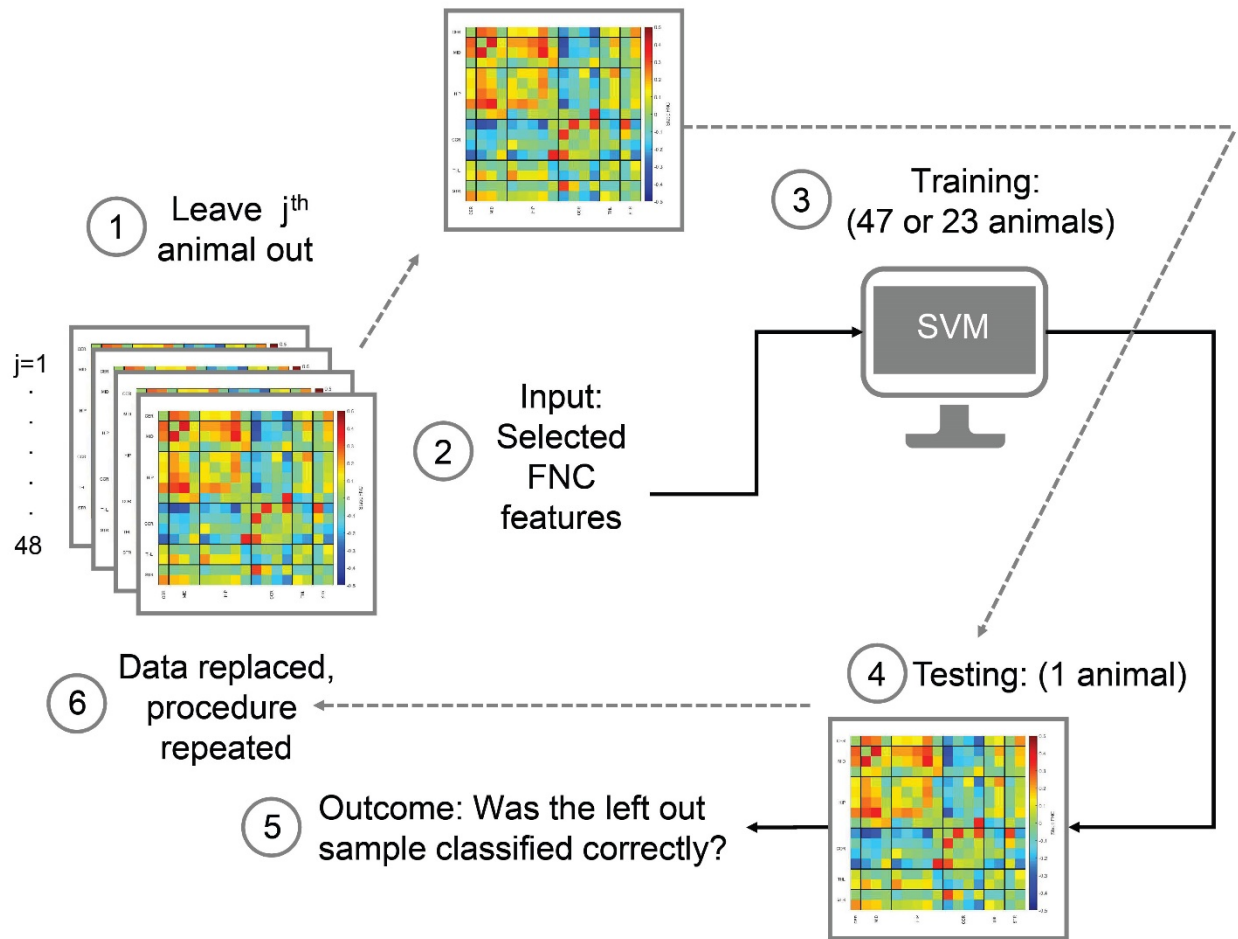


Figure 2. Schematic for the machine learning workflow. FNC matrices represent the 136 pairwise correlations between independent component time-courses (blue=negative correlations, red=positive correlations) for each subject. The number of iterations was dependent on the number of animals in the sample. For each iteration, (1) the connectivity matrix from the j^{th} subject was left out, (2) the remaining matrices (47 in the case for all animals,

24 for males or females) underwent feature selection via absolute t-value threshold which served as input for (3) training one of five SVM binary-classification kernels. The computational model developed during training is then (4) tested on the left out FNC data and decisions were (5) verified as correct or incorrect. Finally, the j^{th} subject data is replaced (6) and the procedure repeated leaving the next animal out. The procedure was repeated until all classification decisions were gathered and verified. Correct classification decisions out of 48 (all animals) or 24 (males or females) comprise accuracy rates. Dotted lines represent the workflow of the leave-one-out cross validation procedure, while the solid line represents the machine learning workflow of training and testing.

Figure 3.

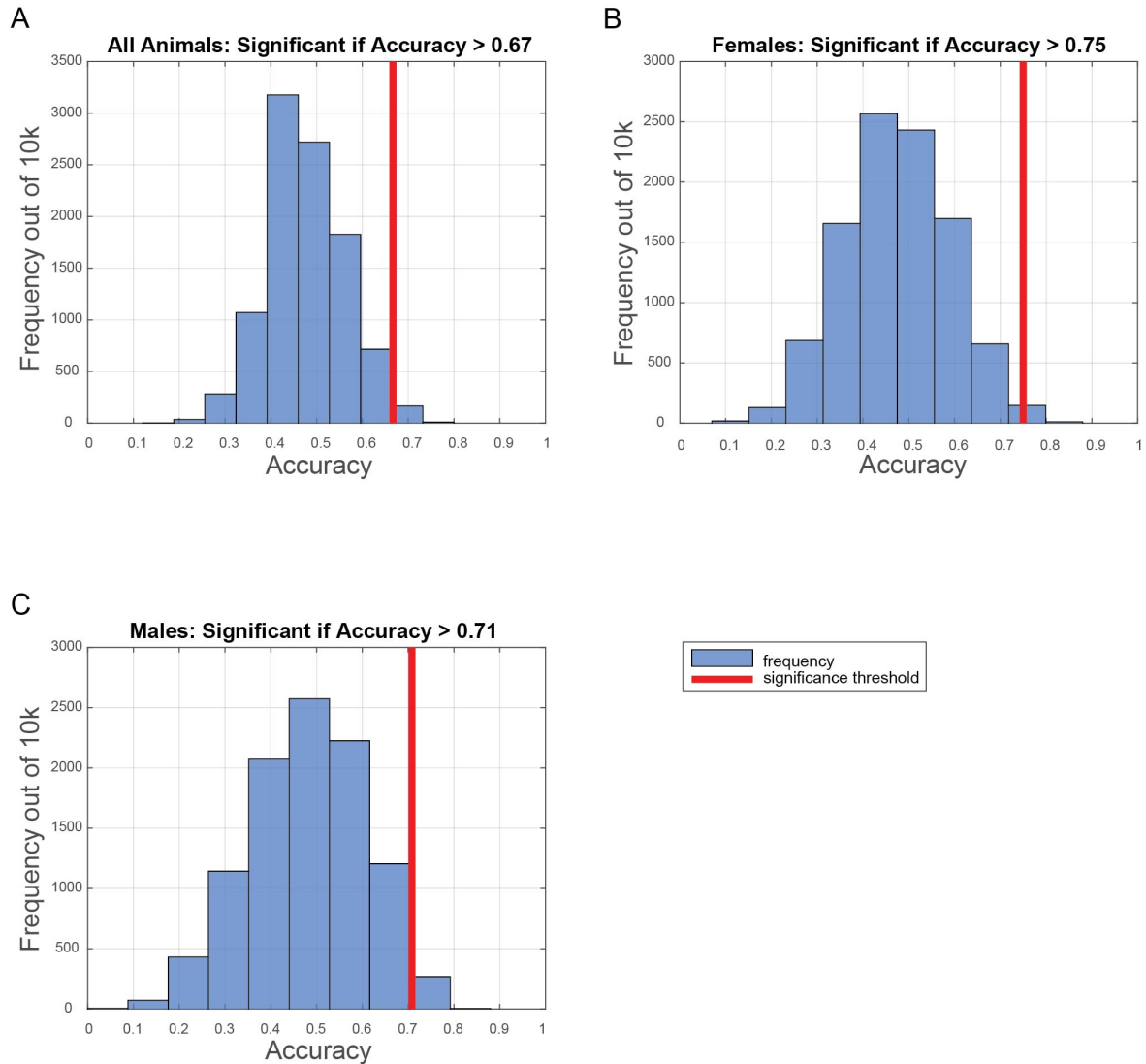


Figure 3. Null-model classification accuracy histograms. Histograms illustrate the SVM classification accuracies after prenatal condition labels were randomized and subjected to 10,000 iterations of LOOCV. The resulting distribution of accuracy rates under the null model provided the basis for calculating the probability of obtaining an accuracy rate equal to or greater than the observed SVM classification accuracy rates for A) all animals, B) females, and

C) males (i.e. p-values). Significance is set at a Bonferroni corrected level $\alpha = 0.05/5$ ($\alpha = 0.01$) to correct for the five different kernels tested.

Figure 4.

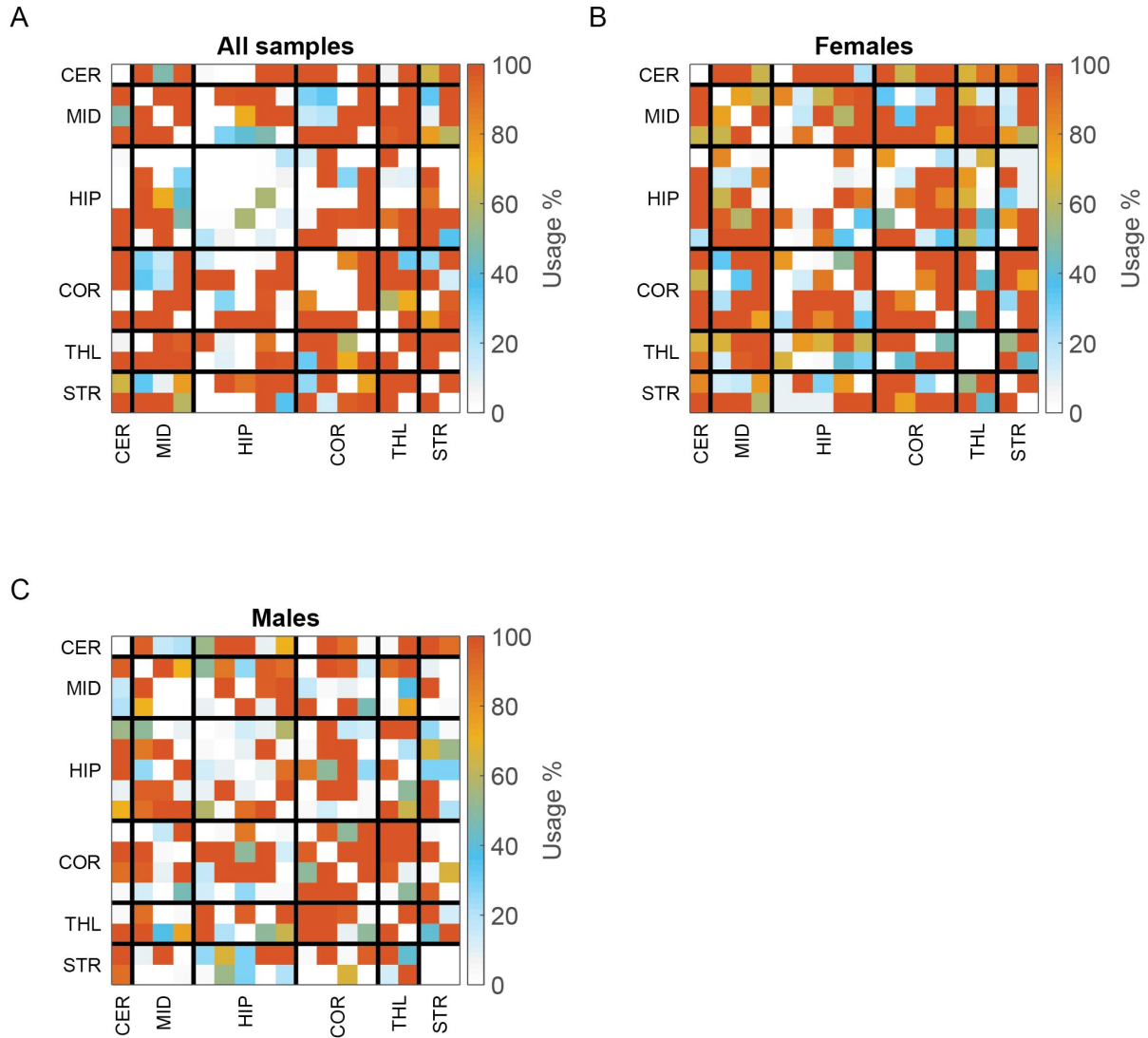


Figure 4. Usage percentages. Cells display usage percentage of FNC values as features in all iterations of LOOCV for (A) all animals (48 iterations), (B) females (24 iterations), and (C) males (24 iterations). Cells within a network are ordered numerically, for example, the use percentage of the first hippocampal component is displayed along the first row of the HIP grouping that is

predominantly characterized by a row of white cells in panel A. Component labels correspond to striatal (STR), thalamic (THL), cortical (COR), hippocampal (HIP), midbrain (MID), and cerebellar (CER) networks. LOOCV, leave-one-out-cross-validation.

Figure 5.

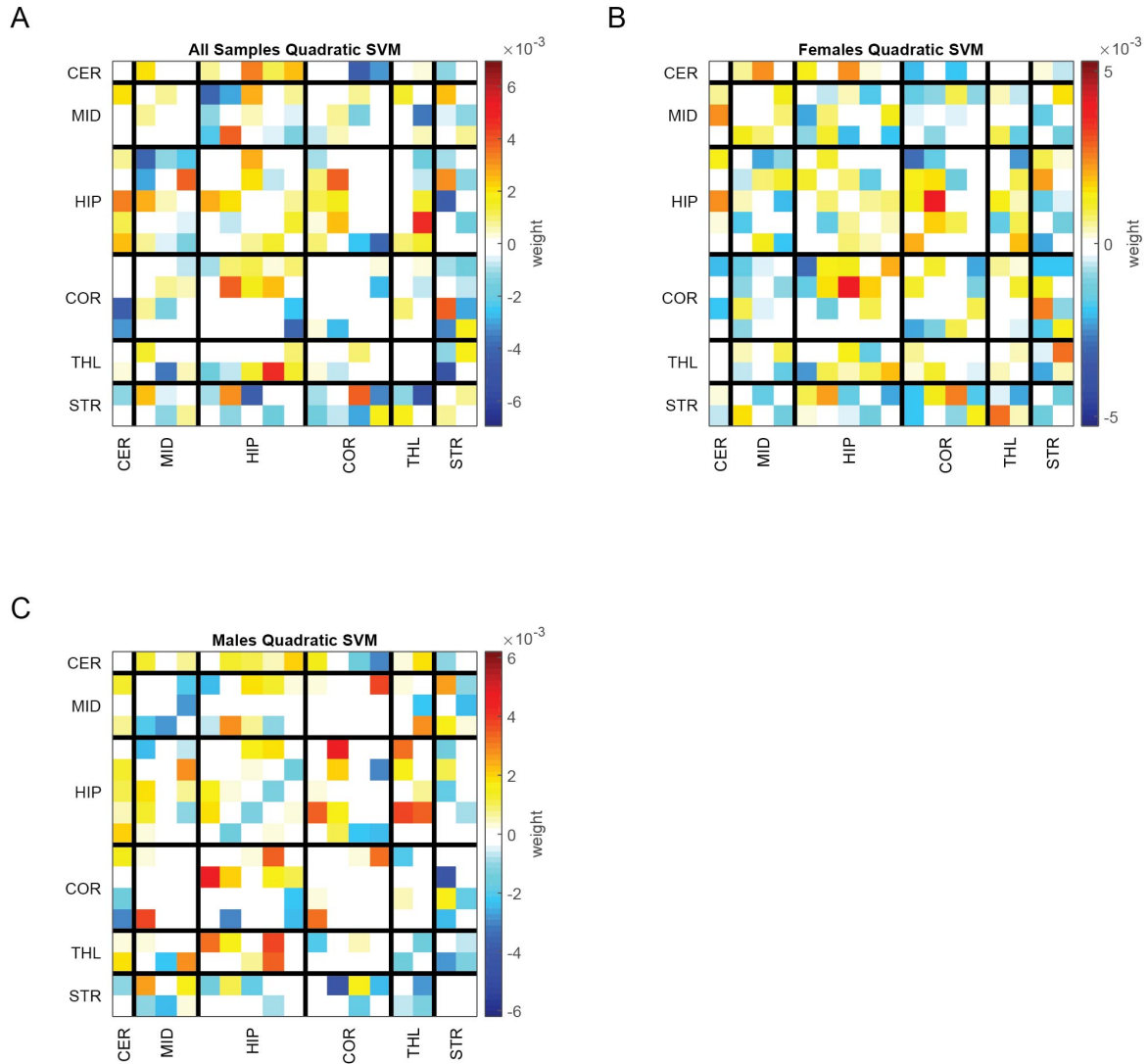
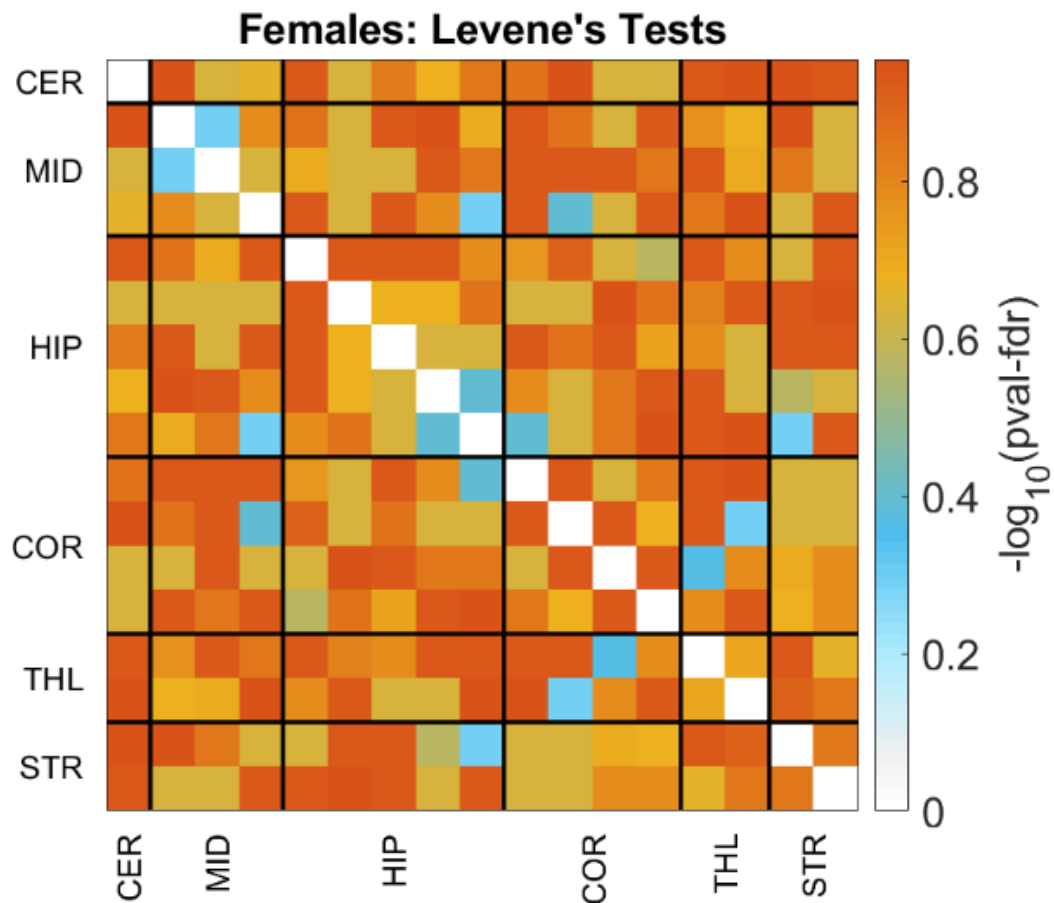


Figure 5. Mean QSVM weights. Cells display mean weights for pairwise correlation values used in quadratic SVM classification decisions for (A) all animals, (B) females, and (C) males. Component labels correspond to striatal (STR), thalamic (THL), cortical (COR), hippocampal (HIP), midbrain (MID), and cerebellar (CER) networks. SVM, support vector machine.

Supplementary Figure 1.



Supplementary Figure 1. Levene's tests for homogeneity of variance. False discovery rate (FDR) corrected p-values resulting from a series of Levene's tests of homogeneity of variance between female PAE and SAC FNC values. Component labels correspond to striatal (STR), thalamic (THL), cortical (COR), hippocampal (HIP), midbrain (MID), and cerebellar (CER) networks.