

LEENA TWAL

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EDUCATION

University of Rochester, Rochester, NY (*August 2022 - Present*)

Degree: Ph.D., Developmental Psychology

Advisor: Melissa Sturge-Apple, Ph.D.

Expected Graduation: May 2027

Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI (*September 2015 - April 2018*)

Degree: B.A., Psychology, Summa Cum Laude

Major: Psychology *Minor:* French Language

Major GPA: 3.92 *Overall GPA:* 3.89

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Rochester Center for Research on Children and Families [Melissa Sturge-Apple, Ph.D](#)

University of Rochester, Mount Hope Family Center

Graduate Research Assistant (*2022 - Present*)

ABC Growing Kids Study [Julie Lumeng, M.D.](#)

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Research Technician (*2020 - 2022*)

- Roles include writing sections of the study manual, writing and adapting study protocols to be done remotely over Zoom, working with data collection tools like ASA24, assisting with IRB application and the study's REDCap pages, recruiting participants and running virtual Zoom visits (consenting participants, explaining study activities to 5 year olds and their parents, assisting with collecting anthropometric measurements, running different behavioral protocols over Zoom), training new research associates, overseeing data collection and peer reviewing data, and coding study data

Simply Dinner Study [Julie Lumeng, M.D.](#), [Holly Brophy-Herb, Ph.D.](#)

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Research Technician Associate (*2019 - 2020*)

- Roles include managing study equipment and taking supply inventory, overseeing participant recruitment through UM Health Research, running detailed at-home visits with children ages 3-5 and their parent (consenting participants, administering questionnaires, collecting parent and child anthropometric measurements), training new research associates, compensating participants, overseeing data collection and peer reviewing, and transcribing and coding video recordings

Michigan Neurogenetics and Developmental Psychopathology Lab [Luke Hyde, Ph.D.](#)
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Volunteer Postbaccalaureate Research Assistant (2019)

- Roles include transcribing video recordings, checking structural and functional MRI image alignment, reviewing data entry into REDCap system, collecting data during family visits with subjects (twins from the Michigan Twin Registry and their Primary caregivers), assisting lab managers and post-doctoral researchers

Race and Facial Affect Study [Dean Purcell, Ph.D.](#)

Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI

Undergraduate Thesis Project (2017 - 2018)

- Roles include seeking IRB approval and completing the IRB application, writing the consent and debriefing forms, writing the instruction scripts for research assistants, training research assistants, recruiting participants through SONO systems, running experiment protocol with participants, reviewing and coding data, completing statistical analysis of data, and leading weekly lab meetings

Child Development Laboratory [Lakshmi Raman, Ph.D.](#)

Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI

Volunteer Research Assistant (2017 - 2018)

- Roles include writing vignettes to read to participants, conducting experiment sessions with both college students and preschool children ages 3-4, contacting daycare directors to plan data collection time, transcribing data collection sessions, coding data, completing statistical analysis of data, and meeting with director Dr. Raman weekly

Facial Affect Laboratory [Dean Purcell, Ph.D.](#)

Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI

Volunteer Research Assistant (2016 - 2017)

- Roles include recruiting participants through SONA, administering the experiment protocol with participants (college students), assisting with coding data and data analysis, attending weekly lab meetings, and conducting literature reviews about the subject matter

PRESENTATIONS

Purcell, D. G., **Twal, L. R.**, & Stewart, A.L. (2019). Impact of Facial Affect on Race Judgment. Poster presented at the 60th annual meeting of the Psychonomic Society, Montreal, QC

Purcell, D. G., **Twal, L. R.**, & Stewart, A.L. (2018). *Affect Congruency With Full Color Angry and Happy Faces*. Poster presented at the 59th annual meeting of the Psychonomic Society, New Orleans, LA

Twal, L. R., (2018, May) *An Exploration of Facial Affect*. Poster Session presented at Meeting of Minds Conference, Dearborn, MI

Twal, L. R. & Raman, L., (2018, May) *Do Children Recognize the Impact of Physical and Sedentary Activities on Weight?* Poster Session presented at Meeting of Minds Conference, Dearborn, MI

Twal, L. R., (2018, March) *An Exploration of Facial Affect*. Oral Presentation presented at National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Edmond, Oklahoma

Twal, L. R., (2018, March) *An Exploration of Facial Affect*. Poster Session presented at the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters (MASAL) Conference, Central Michigan University, MI

Twal, L. R., (2017, November) *An Exploration of Facial Affect: How anger inferiority is influenced by race*. Poster of undergraduate honors thesis presented at Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Poster Session, Oakland University, MI

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Psychology of Human Motivation *Department of Psychology*
University of Rochester, Rochester, NY (Spring Semester 2023)

Course Professor: Chris Niemiec, Ph.D.

Graduate Teaching Assistant:

Holds weekly office hours, leads weekly discussion-sections, grades papers for upper-level writing section of course, grades weekly reflection papers, grades exams, assists students with studying and writing papers

Social and Emotional Development *Department of Psychology*
University of Rochester, Rochester, NY (Fall Semester 2022)

Course Professor: Laura Elenbaas, Ph.D.

Graduate Teaching Assistant:

Holds weekly office hours, grades exams, grades papers for upper-level writing section of course, assists students with studying and writing papers

Psychological Statistics *Department of Psychology*
Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI (Winter Semester 2017)

Course Professor: Rebecca Malatesta, Ph.D.

Teaching Assistant:

Holds weekly office hours, assists students with homework and SPSS use, organizes and leads review sessions, grades homework, creates study guides

UNDERGRADUATE HONORS THESIS

Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI (2017-2018)

An Exploration of Facial Affect: How anger inferiority is influenced by race

Honors Thesis Advisor: Dean Purcell, Ph.D.

Objective: This study was an extension of Dr. Purcell's previous work researching how facial affect has an effect on reaction time and percent accuracy of participant responses. Anger inferiority occurs when an angry stimulus interferes with behavior, increasing response time and decreasing accuracy. In contrast with this, some research has found that angry African American male faces speed responding to anger or threat. The purpose of conducting this research was to use African American angry faces to see if they would interfere with behavior in the same way as Caucasian angry faces.

Study Design: Participants were shown sequences of two faces portraying either angry or happy expressions. The stimuli chosen were pictures of African American and Caucasian females and males, each expressing happy or angry expressions. Participants were asked to indicate if the two faces showed the same or different expressions by pressing a key on a keypad.

Results/Discussion: Results showed that there is a very strong main effect of anger inferiority, meaning response time increased and percent of correct responses decreased when an angry face was presented. This effect occurred regardless of race or gender of stimuli. There is an interaction present between race of participants with race, gender, and affect of stimuli. Angry expressions appear to cause the greatest delay in reaction time when stimuli are Caucasian females, which leaves room for further investigation as to why that is.

HONORS AND CERTIFICATIONS

2018-2015	Oakland University Dean's List
2018-2015	Oakland University Honors College
2018-2015	Oakland University Distinguished Scholar
2018	<i>Behavior Analyst Certification Board</i> Registered Behavioral Technician
2018	<i>Crisis Prevention Institute, INC.</i> Nonviolent Crisis Intervention
2018-2017	Honors College Merit Award Recipient
2018-2016	<i>MI Competitive Scholarship</i> Recipient
2016-2015	<i>J Alford Jones Scholarship</i> Recipient
2015	<i>Mental Health First Aid USA</i> Mental Health First Aid Training

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Autism Home Support Services *Ann Arbor, MI (2018-2019)*

ABA (Applied Behavioral Analysis) Therapy Registered Behavioral Technician:

- Provides one-on-one therapy to children of all ages on the ASD spectrum, engages in approved therapy techniques to enhance social, educational, and communication skills, communicates with family members of children, as well as with the Board Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA), to complete individualized therapy plan best suited for children, performs data collection to study effectiveness of each treatment, and works in-home with clients adapting to each household's unique home environment

MORC, Inc. *Troy, MI (2018)*

ABA Therapy Behavioral Technician Aide:

- Undergoes extensive training to become certified in working one-on-one with children on the ASD spectrum, engages in approved therapy techniques to teach skills for children, communicates with family members, as well as with the BCBA, to complete therapy plan best suited for children, completes payments and documents client charges into company system, performs data collection to document effectiveness of each treatment, works with clients and at a center, engaging with other staff and clients in group activities, but has experience conducting therapy sessions in-home with clients

RELEVANT VOLUNTEER AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Graduate Liaison Committee - DEI Subcommittee *University of Rochester (2022-present)*

- Student-led organization that meets monthly to discuss issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the psychology department. Co-chair of the Fundraising Subcommittee, where students plan events to raise money for different DEI-related initiatives

Psychology Department DEI Committee *University of Rochester (2022-present)*

- Member of the Psychology department's DEI committee, where issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the department are discussed. Current active voting member on the committee.

Secretary for International Allies *Oakland University (2016-2018)*

- Secretary of the student-run organization that helps connect international students with domestic students. Roles include helping to organize monthly meetings, planning events for club members, communicating with club members, designing event flyers, and coordinating with other student-run organizations

Student Program Board *Oakland University (2017-2018)*

- Member of the University-run organization that enhances campus life by planning campus-wide events for all Oakland University students

Basic Social Skills Program Volunteer through OUCares *Oakland University (2018)*

- Helps children (ages 5-12) with ASD interact with peers, work on patience and focus, and have fun making arts and crafts

Assistant Yoga Instructor through OUCares *Oakland University (2017)*

- Aids and encourages children and adults who have various special needs (ages 8+) to engage in yoga activities, with an emphasis placed on teaching social skills while children learn the important of health and fitness

The Social Club through Birmingham Family YMCA *Birmingham, MI (2017)*

- Helps adults with various special needs interact in a social setting, chaperones field trips that help members engage with strangers and practice social skills outside of the YMCA, assists with running movie nights, supervises adults swimming in the pool

Student Liaison for Psi Chi *Oakland University (2015-2016)*

- Roles include helping to organize monthly meetings, communicating with club members, making announcements to different psychology classes, and communicating with different professors in the department

RELEVANT SKILLS

- Experience teaching young children, high school students, and college-age students in both formal classroom settings as well as social and informal settings
- Formal training in *SPSS* and *R* computer statistical program
- Experience with ASA24, dietary food recall program
- Experience using REDCap as a data entry system
- Experience writing academic theses and literature reviews
- Experience presenting poster sessions and oral sessions at local, state-wide, and national level conferences
- Familiarity with many psychological research methods

REFERENCES

Melissa Sturge-Apple, Ph.D., Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education for University of Rochester's Arts, Sciences, & Engineering Department, Professor of Child Development, Co-Director of *Rochester Center for Research on Children and Families (RCRCF)*; *University of Rochester, Phone: 585-275-8711, Email: melissa.sturge-apple@rochester.edu*

Julie Lumeng, M.D., Associate Dean for Research for University of Michigan Medical School, Assistant Vice President for Research-Clinical and Human Subjects Research at University of Michigan, Executive Director for Michigan Institute for Clinical and Health Research (MICHR), Thomas P. Borders Family Research Professor of Child Behavior and Development, Professor of Paediatrics, Former Associate Chair for research in Department of Paediatrics, and Former Director of Center for Human Growth and Development; *University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Phone: 734-936-4185, Email: jlumeng@umich.edu*

Holly Brophy-Herb, Ph.D., Professor at Michigan State University, Associate Editor of the *Infant Mental Health Journal*, recipient of Extension's Key Partner award, co-founder of the Michigan Infant-Toddler Research Exchange, Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Michigan State University
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Dean Purcell, Ph.D., Professor at Oakland University, Studies Visual Perception and Psychology, Honors College Thesis Advisor
Oakland University, Rochester Hills, Phone: 248-421-4056, Email: purcell@oakland.edu