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ORLA C PUTNAM

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research is centered around characterizing social communication in autism using multi-modal approaches such as eye tracking, natural language sampling, and observer report. Through this work, I aim to improve our understanding of how individuals with different neurotypes communicate across social contexts.

EDUCATION

PhD in Speech and Hearing Sciences

Expected 2025 University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Advisor: Dr. Clare Harrop

BS in Human Developmental Sciences

2018 University of California San Diego
Minor: General Biology

HONORS & AWARDS

Grants and Fellowships

- 2024 Ruth L. Kirschstein NRSA Predoctoral Fellowship (1F31DC021107-01A1): “Naturalistic Social Communication in Autistic Females: Identification of Speech Prosody Markers”
- 2023 Autism Science Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship
- 2022 UNC APPLES Course Enhancement Grant: EDUC400 “Autism in our Communities”
- 2022 NC TraCS Stakeholder Engagement Grant: “Gendered Experiences in Autism Research”
- 2021 NC Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disorders (NC-LEND) Fellowship
- 2020 UNC Graduate School Leadership Development Scholars Program Grant: “Understanding and Promoting Racial Equity in Allied Health Sciences”
- 2017 UCSD Chancellor’s Research Fellowship for Social Sciences

Scholarships

- 2020 Pilot International Maria Newton Sepia Memorial Scholarship
- 2020 Tri Delta Foundation Second Century Scholarship
- 2016 San Diego Foundation: Weissbuch Family Scholarship
- 2013 San Diego Foundation: Adrian Gonzalez Scholarship

Awards

- 2022 INSAR Student and Trainee Award
- 2021 Thomas S. Carsey Symposium Finalist
- 2021 Carolina Institute of Developmental Disabilities (CIDDD) Travel Award

PUBLICATIONS

Putnam, O. C., & Erickson, K. A. (In Press). The role of prosody in reading comprehension for individuals on the autism spectrum. *Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups*, 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1044/2023_PERSP-23-00170

Harrop, C., Tomaszewski, B., **Putnam, O.C.**, Klein, C., Lamarche, E., & Klinger, L. (2024). Are the diagnostic rates of autistic females increasing? An examination of state-wide trends. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, jcpp.13939. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.13939>

McFayden, T. C., Bristol, S., **Putnam, O.C.**, & Harrop, C. (2023). ChatGPT: Artificial intelligence as a potential tool for parents seeking information about autism. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2023.0202>

Goldblum, J. E., McFayden, T. C., Bristol, S., **Putnam, O. C.**, Wylie, A., & Harrop, C. (2023). Autism Prevalence and the Intersectionality of Assigned Sex at Birth, Race, and Ethnicity on Age of Diagnosis. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-023-06104-5>

Putnam, O. C., Eddy, G., Goldblum, J., Swisher, M., & Harrop, C. (2023). How autistic adults' priorities for autism research differ by gender identity: A mixed-methods study. *Women's Health*, 19, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17455057231160342>

McFayden, T. C., **Putnam, O.C.**, Grzadzinski, R., & Harrop, C. (2023). Sex Differences in the Developmental Trajectories of Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Current Developmental Disorders Reports*, 10(1), 80–91. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40474-023-00270-y>

Kan, D., Malone, K., **Putnam, O.**, & Hume, K. (2023). Current trends and theoretical approaches in autism research. In *Autism Spectrum Disorders: Advancing Positive Practices in Education, Fifth Edition* (pp. 482-509). Routledge, New York.

Putnam, O. C., Sasson, N., Parish-Morris, J., & Harrop, C. (2023). Effects of social complexity and gender on social and non-social attention in male and female autistic children: A comparison of four eye-tracking paradigms. *Autism Research*, 16(2), 315–326. <https://doi.org/10.1002/aur.2851>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Putnam, O.C., Eddy, G., LaPoint, S., Swisher, M.N., & Harrop, C. (April 2024) “I want to be seen and understood”: Priorities for autism research from autistic women, non-binary adults, and parents of autistic girls and women. *Accepted as a poster presentation at the annual Gatlinburg conference*

Putnam, O.C., Novak, M., Leavitt, M., McFayden, T.C., Cho, S., Ip, M.H.K., Lee, A., Karpinsky, M., Strang, J.F., Parish-Morris, J., & Harrop, C. (March 2024). Imitation of Prosody in a Sentence Recall Task: Evidence from Autistic and Non-autistic Children. *Accepted as a poster presentation at the annual Meeting on Language in Autism (MoLA) conference*

McFayden, T.C., **Putnam, O.C.**, Miller, J.S., Lee, A., Grzadzinski, R., Hazlett, H.C., Strang, J., Parish-Morris, J., & Harrop, C. (March 2024). Social Communication Profiles of Autistic Females Ages 4- to 8- Years. *Accepted as a poster presentation at the annual Meeting on Language in Autism (MoLA) conference*

M. H. K. Ip, **Putnam, O. C.**, Cho, S., Vurgun, U., Lyons, M., Knox, A., Hauptmann, A., Covello, M., Lee, A., Fulop, L., Russell, Al., Walker, K., Miller, J., Fiumara, J., Cieri, C., Fusaroli, R., Chatham, C., Liberman, M., Schultz, R. T., & Parish-Morris, J. (submitted). Prosodic similarities and variation in autistic and neurotypical children: A telephone-based study of verbal counting. *International Society for Autism Research Annual Meeting, Melbourne, Australia.*

Putnam, O.C., McFayden, T.C., & Harrop, C. (May 2023). The eye of the beholder: Sex differences in parent and teacher report of autistic traits on the Social Responsiveness Scale. *Poster presentation at the annual meeting of the International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)*

Tiede, G., **Putnam, O.C.**, & Walton, K. (May 2023). Examining validity of eye tracking for outcome measurement in social communication treatment for children with autism. *Poster presentation at the annual meeting of the International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)*

Putnam, O.C., Markfeld, J., Goldblum, J., Wright, S., Swanson, M., & Harrop, C. (November 2022). The Use of Language ENvironment Analysis (LENA) in Autism Research: A Systematic Review. *Oral presentation at the annual meeting of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association*

Putnam, O.C., Harrop, C., & Parish-Morris, J. (November 2022). Prosodic Characterization of School-Aged Autistic Children During Narration. *Poster presentation at the annual meeting of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association*

Putnam, O.C., Swisher, M.N., Niblack, T.A., Perry, C.M., & Harrop, C. (May 2022). Understanding the research priorities and perspectives of autistic female and nonbinary people. *Oral presentation at the annual meeting of the International Society for Autism Research*

Swisher, M.N., Chan, D.V., **Putnam, O.C.**, Harrop, C. (May 2022). The Role of Gender, Interests, and Diagnosis Age in Camouflaging ASD. *Poster presentation at the annual meeting for the International Society for Autism Research*

Harrop., C., **Putnam, O.C.**, Klein, C., Tomaszewski, B., Lamarche, E., & Klinger, L. (May 2022). Are the diagnostic rates of autistic females increasing? An examination of state-wide trends. *Oral presentation at the annual meeting of the International Society for Autism Research*

Klein, C.B., Harrop, C., **Putnam, O.C.**, Tomaszewski, B., Lamarche, E., & Klinger, L. (Anticipated 2022, May). Adaptive Behavior in School-Age Autistic Males and Females. Poster presentation accepted to the International Society of Autism Research (INSAR) Annual Meeting, Austin, Texas.

Kan, D., **Putnam, O.C.**, Hume, K.A., Steinbrenner, J.R. (January 2022). Impact of school programming on autistic high school students' social behavior and social relationships. *Poster presentation at the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Orlando, FL and Virtual Meeting.*

Harrop, C., **Putnam, O.C.**, Sasson, N., & Parish-Morris, J. (October 2021). Sex Differences in Visual Attention in Autism Spectrum Disorder: Evidence of Differential Social and Nonsocial Attention in Females With Autism Spectrum Disorder Across Four Paradigms. *Symposium at the annual meeting for the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.*

Goldblum, J., **Putnam, O.C.**, & Harrop, C. (May 2021) The impact of demographic variables and comorbidities on the timing of ASD diagnosis and access to services: Data from a large national survey. *Poster presented at the annual meeting of the International Society for Autism Research (INSAR).*

Putnam, O.C., Blanco, N., Sloutsky, V.M. (October 2019) Decision-making in early childhood: Young children shift from perseverance to systematic exploration. *Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Cognitive Development Society (CDS).*

Putnam, O.C., Posid, T., Clark, S., & Sloutsky, V.M. (October 2019). The Effects of Pattern Training on Pre-Algebraic Training in Preschoolers. *Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Cognitive Development Society (CDS).*

Putnam, O.C., & Pierce, K. (July 2017). Sex Differences in an Autism Spectrum Disorder Diagnosis. *Presented as a talk at the annual San Diego Summer Research Conference*

OTHER INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Putnam, O.C. (February 2023) What is autism? *Guest lecture presented to undergraduate students in the UNC Chapel Hill Department of Psychology*

Putnam, O.C. (September 2022) Recognizing and supporting autism in girls. *Presentation given at an inservice workshop for Speech Language Pathologists at Small World Therapies: Orange County, NC.*

Putnam, O.C., (March 2020) Applying to graduate school: Finding your research interests and where to do that work. *Guest lecture presented to undergraduate students in the UC San Diego Department of Human Development.*

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Assistant, UNC-Chapel Hill

2020 – Present

Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences

Harrop Lab (PI: Clare Harrop, PhD)

- Ongoing projects:

- Sex and Gender in Autism (SAGA) study (Research assistant; PIs: Clare Harrop, Julia Parish-Morris, & John Strang): Work as lead assessor on longitudinal autism study; Develop and adapt assessments of natural language sampling and gender measurement for young autistic children

- Sex Differences in Speech-Prosody of Autistic Children (Pre-dissertation project): Compute and test for differences in prosodic markers (pitch and speech rate) in audio samples of narrative speech from autistic and non-autistic children.
- Gendered Experiences in Autism Research (GEAR) study: (PIs: Orla Putnam and Clare Harrop): Lead stakeholder engagement project on autistic women and non-binary adults' views on autism research and priorities for future research
- Completed projects:
 - Collaboration with UNC TEACCH Autism Program (PI: Laura Klinger): Data analysis on rates of autism diagnosis in females over time
 - LENA Systematic Review (PI: Orla Putnam): Lead a systematic review with collaborators at UNC, Vanderbilt University, and UT Dallas to examine how Language ENvironment Analysis has been used in autism research
 - Collaboration with BEE lab: LENA data analysis (Research assistant; PI: Cathi Propper & Sarah Short); work with LENA team to understand longitudinal LENA data
 - Liminal project (Coordinator; PIs: Julie Austen and Clare Harrop): Coordinated recruitment and weekly meetings of trans autistic youth stakeholders to develop mission and goals for healthcare improvement in north carolina

Lab Manager, The Ohio State University

2018 – 2020

Department of Psychology

The Cognitive Development Lab (PI: Vladimir Sloutsky, PhD)

- Projects and Roles:
 - Infant Decision-Making (Independent Project): Developed a digital paradigm to assess whether infants explore or exploit novel and rich stimuli
 - The Development of Cognition study (Lab manager; PI: Vladimir Sloutsky): Managed longitudinal data maintenance, RA training, and assessments on language and cognition. Coordinated studies in local schools and daycares.

Clinical Research Assistant, The Ohio State University

2018 – 2020

Department of Psychology

The Family and Early Intervention Lab (PI: Katherine Walton, PhD)

- Projects:
 - Reciprocal Imitation Training study (Assessor; PI: Katherine Walton): Trained, measured, and administered RIT training to young children. Assisted with data collection of other behavioral assessments.
 - Validating Eye Tracking as Measurement of Joint Engagement (Research assistant; PI: Gabrielle Tiede): Develop eye tracking stimuli and areas of

interest for joint engagement analysis; Code parent-child interaction videos for joint engagement

Research Assistant, University of California San Diego

2016 – 2018

Department of Neurosciences

The UCSD Autism Center of Excellence (PI: Karen Pierce, PhD)

- Projects:
 - Sex differences in an ASD diagnosis (Independent Project): Tested for sex differences in infant attention to an eye tracking paradigm designed for early detection of autism. Tested relationships between social attention and clinical measures.
 - ACE longitudinal eye tracking (Research assistant; PI: Karen Pierce): Administered a battery of eye tracking assessments to infants and toddlers as part of a larger longitudinal study. Assisted PI in development of novel eye tracking stimuli. Assisted PI in area of interest development for measurement of joint attention

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Consultant, UNC – Chapel Hill

Spring 2023

Department of Psychology

PSYC 058H: First Year Seminar “The Psychology of Mental States and Language Use”

Undergraduate Level

- Develop & present a guest lecture
- Assist students with development of research questions and study design
- Assist students with data analysis

Course Instructor, UNC – Chapel Hill

Fall 2022

School of Education

EDUC 400 “Autism in Our Communities”

Undergraduate Level

- Develop course syllabus, rubrics, and course discussion material
- Facilitate class discussions
- Complete course grading
- Coordinate and supervise service-learning experiences of UNC students with local autistic adults, families with autistic children, and organizations dedicated to service with the autism community

Teaching Assistant, UNC – Chapel Hill

Fall 2021

Division of Allied Health Sciences

SPHS 530 “Introduction to Phonetics”

Undergraduate Level

- Graded tests and quizzes on the principles of phonetics

- Scores phonetic transcriptions of students using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

Spring 2021

Division of Allied Health Sciences

SPHS 701 “Introduction to Research in Speech and Hearing”

Graduate Level

- Guided master’s level students through the process of conducting a systematic review
- Gave class lectures on various research topics
- Created in-class quizzes on class material
- Assisted students in creating posters for conference presentations; assisted in grading final posters and presentations

Instructional Assistant, University of California San Diego

Spring 2018

Department of Human Development

HDS 181: “Experimental Projects in Human Development Research”

Undergraduate Level

- Taught students how to navigate literature searches and databases
- Assisted students in quantitative experiment design and data analysis
- Created and graded course exams
- Graded course papers

After School Teacher, OpenMinds Education, La Jolla CA

2017 – 2018

All Hallows Academy

Elementary School

- Created after-school activities and curriculum for elementary school students
- Supervised students and facilitated group activities
- Trained and supervised new staff
- Coordinated contact with teachers and parents

AVID Tutor, San Dieguito Union High School District

2016 – 2017

Torrey Pines High School

- Provided guidance and assistance to students experiencing academic difficulties and/or who were at high risk of not completing high school
- Provided in-class assistance to students learning English as a second language (ESL): Provided English-to-Spanish translations and adapted/developed course materials to help ESL students read and retain course content

SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

2023 – Present UNC Division of Health Sciences Research Advisory Committee

Student Representative

2021 – 2022 NC LEND Fellow (Leadership and Education in Neurodevelopmental Disorders)

Trainee and Fellow

2021 – 2022 UNC Allied Health Ambassador

Committee Leader

2021 – 2021 HEELS 2 Transition
Program Implementation Consultant

2020 – Present SPHS Graduate Professional Development Committee
Student Representative

2019 – 2020 Next Chapter Book Club – Ohio State Nisonger Center
Book Club Facilitator

2015 – 2019 Girl Up: United Nations Foundation, UCSD Chapter
President

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA)
- Daylong Audio Recordings of Children’s Linguistic Environments (DARCLE) New Investigators Group
- International Society for Autism Research (INSAR)

REVIEWING

2023 – Present Ad Hoc Peer Reviewer
Autism Research
Autism

2022 – Present Masters in Speech Language Pathology Admissions Reviewer