



TCU's EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Faculty Thoughts: Naomi Ekas



The first day of spring was March 20, 2021. As I look outside the window of my office (aka my house) I can see trees awash in white and pink flowers and my oak trees are sprouting buds. The TCU campus is also showing signs of rebirth as flowers begin to bloom and the fall schedule is released. While many people see January 1st as a fresh start, I think that Spring is a much better time. Indeed, research shows that people are more likely to start a new habit on the first day of spring as opposed to a random day of the year (excluding January 1). For myself, the warm weather, sunshine, and colorful eruption of flowers all contribute to this sense of rebirth and possibility. As Dr. Broom discussed last month, I have also experienced this sense of heaviness all year. However, the brightness of spring coupled with the distribution of vaccines has given me a renewed sense of optimism (maybe I'll see my family in Canada this summer after more than 18 months). I hope all of you can take a moment to pause and appreciate the rebirth taking place all around us right now. I hope you can harness all the light and color to power through the rest of this semester.

Publications

- Adams, Z.W., Taylor, B.G., Flanagan, E., Kwon, E., Johnson-Kwochka, A.V., Elkington, K.S., Becan J.E., & Aalsma, M.C. (2021). Opioid use disorder stigma, discrimination, and policy attitudes in a national sample of U.S. young adults. *J Adolesc Health*. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33579622/>
- Papini, M.R. (2021). *Comparative psychology. Evolution and development of brain and behavior*. Taylor & Francis. <https://www.routledge.com/Comparative-Psychology-Evolution-and-Development-of-Brain-and-Behavior/Papini/p/book/9781138788152>
- Witherby, A.E., Tauber, S.K., & Dunlosky, J. (2021). Why do emotional stimuli influence judgments of learning? Theory, evidence, and future directions. In D. Moraitou and P. Metallidou (Eds.) *Trends and prospects in metacognition research across the life span - A tribute to Anastasia Efklides* (pp. 3-24), Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature Switzerland AG. <https://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783030516727#aboutAuthors>

Grants

- Centanni, T. (2021-2024). *Anatomical and functional consequences of dyslexia-gene DCDC2 knockout in a rat model*. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, NICHD. Amount: \$310,956.

Awards

Sarah Hill has been selected as the College of Science and Engineering's nominee for the Deans Research and Creative Activities Award.

Department of Psychology's Senior Scholars for 2021 are Payton Aydelott and Quynh Nguyen.

Filippi, M.J., Ekas, N.V., Kouros, C., Hymel, J., & Alanis, A. (2021). *Parenting children with autism spectrum disorder during the COVID-19 pandemic*. Poster presentation and winner of the Student & Early Career Council Poster Award from the Society for Research in Child Development.