

Zirui (Ray) Chen

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Baltimore, MD 21218

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EDUCATION

Johns Hopkins University 2023-present
Ph.D. Cognitive Science
Advisor: Michael F. Bonner

Johns Hopkins University 2022-2023
M.A. Cognitive Science
Advisor: Michael F. Bonner

Emory University 2018-2022
B.S. Neuroscience & Behavioral Biology, B.A. Computer Science (GPA=3.94)
Summa cum laude
Honors thesis: The global color of a scene is relevant for human visual scene discrimination.
Advisor: Daniel D. Dilks

PUBLICATIONS

Cheng, A., **Chen, Z.**, & Dilks, D. D. (2023). A stimulus-driven approach reveals vertical luminance gradient as a stimulus feature that drives human cortical scene selectivity. *NeuroImage*, 269, 119935.

TALK PRESENTATIONS

Chen, Z., & Bonner, M.F. (2023), Canonical Dimensions of Neural Visual Representation. *Annual Meeting of the Vision Sciences Society 2023*.

Chen, Z., Cheng, A., & Dilks, D.D. (2020), Characterizing an image property relevant for human cortical scene processing. *Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) Virtual Symposium 2020*.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Chen, Z., & Bonner, M.F. (2024), How to estimate noise ceilings for computational models of visual cortex. *Annual Meeting of the Vision Sciences Society 2024*.

Chen, Z., & Bonner, M.F. (2023), Canonical Dimensions of Vision. *Conference of Cognitive Computational Neuroscience 2023*.
Elmoznino, E., **Chen, Z.**, & Bonner, M.F. (2022), Latent dimensionality scales with the performance of deep learning models of visual cortex. *Conference of Cognitive Computational Neuroscience 2022*.

Chen, Z., Cheng, A., & Dilks, D.D. (2021), Uncovering the visual features relevant to human visual scene discrimination. *Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) Virtual Symposium 2021*.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Researcher, Bonner Lab, Johns Hopkins University 2022–present
Advisor: Michael F. Bonner

Universality of visual representations

Characterized the shared representations among artificial neural networks and studied how the alignment of visual features to such representations reflects their likelihood of being represented in visual cortex.

- Hypothesis formulation, analyses via various machine learning methods.

Research Assistant, Dilks Lab, Emory University 2019–2022
Advisor: Daniel D. Dilks

Global color as a cue for scene discrimination

Investigated the association between the global color information of natural scene stimuli and both the behavioral scene discrimination pattern and fMRI voxel-wise pattern in the scene-selective cortical region, parahippocampal place area (PPA).

- Hypothesis formulation, behavioral and fMRI experiment design and data collection, fMRI data preprocessing, representational similarity analysis.

Diagnostic image features for cortical scene selectivity

Analyzed the effect of vertical luminance gradient of images on neural responses to scenes in human scene-selective regions such as PPA.

- Stimulus design, image processing, univariate analysis of fMRI data.

Research Trainee, Psychology in the British Isles Program, Emory University

2019

Advisors: Irwin D. Waldman, Stephan Hamann

Demographic effects on cognitive development

Investigated how the development of executive functions in elementary school children is influenced by demographic factors.

- Behavioral data collection, statistical analysis.

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Computer Science

Analysis of Algorithms; Artificial Intelligence; Computational Linguistics; Data Structure and Algorithms; Machine Learning.

Mathematics

Differential Equations; Linear Algebra; Linear Optimization; Nonlinear Optimization; Multivariable Calculus; Numerical Analysis; Real Analysis.

Psychology/Neuroscience/Cognitive Science

Bayesian Inference; Behavioral Neuroscience; Brain Imaging; Cognition; Foundations of Cognitive Science; Neurobiology; Neuroeconomics: Decision Making; Perspectives in Neuroscience & Behavior; Predictive Modeling; Theory and Modeling of Information Coding in Neural Activity.

SKILLS

Programming languages

Python, MATLAB, R, Java, Bash, C, JavaScript, HTML/CSS, Swift.

Methods and tools

Machine learning (Sklearn), deep learning (PyTorch), fMRI pre-processing (FSL, fMRIPrep), image processing, experiment interface design (Psychtoolbox, MTurk).

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant, Johns Hopkins University

2023

Course: Probabilistic Models of the Visual Cortex

Professor: Alan Yuille

Teaching Assistant, Emory University

2021

Course: Non-Linear Optimization

Professor: Elizabeth Newman

Teaching Assistant, Emory University

2021

Course: Computer Architecture/Machine Level Programming

Professor: Shun Cheung