



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychology

## **Exploring Determinants of Reinforcer Effectiveness in Persons with Neurodevelopmental Disorders**



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Instructional and therapeutic arrangements for persons with neurodevelopmental disorders rely on the identification and use of effective consequences. Behavior analysts have devised numerous useful procedures for identifying reinforcers in this population but have perhaps paid less attention to the conditions under which reinforcers remain effective and how their use alters that effectiveness. I will describe several lines of research from my lab designed to identify how varying contexts or use histories can influence reinforcer value. I will focus most directly on: 1) behavioral economic concepts related to stimulus substitutability, 2) the “continuity” of reinforcement, and 3) the relation between historical effort and subsequent value.



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**Friday, October 5, 2018**  
2 p.m.  
**1720 Chemistry**