



**Name: Emma Amyot**

**Degree: BSc Psychology & Minor in Biology**

**Year of Study: 4<sup>th</sup> Year**

**Supervisor: Dr. Annie Duchesne**

**Research Program: Honours**

**Title: “The effects of context on emotional facial expression processing”**

The vast majority of research on emotional expression has focused on caricatured facial and bodily portrayal of the basic emotions (Ekman, 1992). In daily life, emotions are often not experienced as distinct, isolated, canonical facial expressions. Rather, they are typically much more ambiguous and occur in a complex multisensory context.

When we think about context we often focus on our external environment – time, location, space. It’s not often that we consider language as a contextual cue. Further, it’s not often that we consider how contexts in multiple modalities may have a differential and interactive influence on how we construct and activate personal concepts, including our perception of emotional facial expressions (EFEs).

The current research project aims to manipulate the visual and semantic contextual cues in which different EFEs are perceived – both intense and more ambiguous EFEs. Using EEG and behavioural paradigms we will observe how context impacts participants’ neural and behavioural responses to the stimuli. We hope that this research may provide insight into the nature of emotions and their potential to be embodied concepts.