

Joseph O'Brien

Curriculum Vita

Contact Information

UCSD Department of Philosophy
Ridge Walk Academic Complex Bldg. 1
Arts & Humanities Room 0436

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[Personal Website](#)

Country of Citizenship: United States

Last Updated: 08/2025

Areas of Research

AOS Philosophy of Science, Epistemology (Social/Formal)

AOC Digital Ethics, Machine Learning, Perception, Logic

Education

University of California, San Diego (La Jolla, CA)

Ph.D., Philosophy Department

2023 - Current

William & Mary (Williamsburg, VA)

B.S., Philosophy and Data Science, *Algorithms Concentration*

2019 - 2023

Thesis: "Seeing What We Can't: evaluating implicit biases in deep learning satellite imagery models trained for poverty prediction"

Publications

[2] O'Brien, J.D., Rubin, H., Wong, K. and Fazelpour, S., 2025. Epistemic Monocultures and the Effect of AI Personalization. In *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (Vol. 47).

[1] Runfola, Dan, Anthony Stefanidis, Zhonghui Lv, Joseph O'Brien, and Heather Baier. "A multi-glimpse deep learning architecture to estimate socioeconomic census metrics in the context of extreme scope variance." *International Journal of Geographical Information Science* (2024): 1-25.

Miscellaneous

["Evaluation of the Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on GEF Activities"](#) 63rd Global

Environmental Facility Council Meeting to the United Nations Council (2022) Coauthor

["Water Management Policy in Afghanistan After the Fall of the Afghan Government"](#) - Tearline.mil (2023) Contributing Researcher

["Environmental Impacts of Conflict in Ukraine: Exploring Attacks on Oil Refineries and Watershed Degradation"](#) - Tearline.mil (2023) Contributing Researcher

Selected Talks

“A Critical Examination of the Interpretability Paradigm”

- EASST-4S 2024 Amsterdam: Making and Doing Transformations (July 2024)

“The Signal-Noise Distinction in Statistical Modeling”

- UCSD Science Studies Graduate Student Symposium (April 2024)
- UCSD Graduate Philosophy Colloquium (May 2024)
- Philosophy of Statistics Early Career Summer Workshop, University of Minnesota (August 2024)
- 2024 Philosophy of Science Association Biennial Meeting Poster Session (November 2024)

“Epistemic Monocultures and the Effect of AI Personalization”

- UCSD Graduate Philosophy Colloquium (November 2024)
- UCI Workshop on Self-Assembling Games (January 2025)
- UCSD Science Studies Graduate Student Symposium (May 2025)
- CogSci 2025: annual meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (August 2025)

Service

Graduate Representative, UCSD Philosophy Department	August 2024 - Current
Corrupt the Youth, San Diego Chapter, Assistant Director (Philosophy outreach organization offering in-school programs for high school students)	August 2024 - Current
Volunteer and Instructor	January 2024 - Current
Organizer, Perception Reading Group, UCSD	August 2024 - Current

TA Experience

PHIL 14: Intro to the Nature of Reality - Fall 24 (UCSD, TA)
PHIL 120: Symbolic Logic - Fall 24 (UCSD, TA)
PHIL 10: Introduction to Logic - Winter 25 (UCSD, TA)
PHIL 174: Data Ethics - Spring 25 (UCSD, TA)
PHIL 28: Ethics in Society II - Summer 25 (UCSD, TA)

Fellowships and Awards

First-year fellowship, University of California, San Diego, 2023-2024 (\$30,000)
geoFellows award, Commonwealth Cyber Initiative, 2023 (\$500)
Honors Fellowship, Charles Center, William & Mary, 2022 (\$4,000)