

# Kevin Stowe | Curriculum Vitae

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I'm a doctoral candidate working towards a joint PhD with the Department of Linguistics and the Institute of Cognitive Science at the University of Colorado under the direction of professors Martha Palmer and Jim Martin. My primary research is in Natural Language Processing (NLP), particularly in automatic metaphor detection, lexical semantics, and machine learning. My dissertation research is on how to better represent syntactic information for automatic detection and interpretation of metaphors. I successfully defended my dissertation proposal, *Leveraging Syntax for Automatic Metaphor Processing*, in May of 2018 and plan on defending my dissertation in May of 2019.

I have also worked extensively with professor Leysia Palen in the Department of Computer Science, applying NLP technology to the understanding of social media data produced during natural disasters. We worked extensively with the National Atmospheric Research lab (NCAR) to analyze and interpret social media responses and reactions to natural disasters. This work culminated in the production of annotation schema and machine learning techniques for identifying vulnerable populations and studying their behavior on social media.

## Technical skills

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- **Programming Languages:** Proficient in Python and Java, with some experience in C++, Ruby, R, PHP, and SQL. Also web development experience with HTML, CSS, Javascript and PHP.
- **Framework Experience:** Extensive experience with machine learning and NLP toolkits, including SciKit-Learn, ClearNLP, Stanford Core NLP, Gensim, PyTorch and Keras.
- **Linguistic Background:** Traditional background in phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. My primary interests are in lexical semantics, pragmatics, formal logic, and metaphor interpretation.

## Education

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Current.....

- **University of Colorado, Boulder** **Boulder, Colorado**  
PhD Student, Linguistics. Advisor : Martha Palmer 2013–Present  
Fifth year PhD student in Linguistics and Cognitive Science. Preliminary examination in evaluating computational approaches to metaphor detection and interpretation.

Previous.....

- **Indiana University** **Bloomington, Indiana**  
MA, Linguistics 2009–2011  
Coursework in corpus linguistics, computational approaches to syntax, discrete mathematics and natural language processing.  
GPA : 3.5

- **Michigan State University** **East Lansing, Michigan**  
*BA, Linguistics* *2004–2009*  
 Coursework included core linguistics, advanced semantics and pragmatics, and German and Russian languages.  
 GPA : 3.1

## Research Projects

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- **Preliminary Examination Research : Metaphor Detection**

*adv: Martha Palmer & Jim Martin*

My doctoral dissertation for the University of Colorado is focused on using syntactic features to improve automatic metaphor detection. Drawing from evidence that metaphoric meaning can often be derived via syntactic features like argument structure, I've employed information from syntactic parses and lexical resources to improve deep learning models. These methods have proven effective, and I hope to continue to work on balancing linguistic analysis and deep learning to continue to improve state-of-the-art methods for figurative language.

- **Computational Language and Education Research Lab (CLEAR)**

*adv: Martha Palmer*

I work with Professor Martha Palmer on a variety of computational lexical resources, including VerbNet and PropBank. My responsibilities include ensuring compatibility with outside resources, implementation of new infrastructure, developing interface tools for other researchers, and improving the accuracy, consistency, and coverage of the resources. Our current work involves linking VerbNet with the Generative Lexicon and improving consistency among semantic predicates, and improving automatic classification with better annotation.

For more, see <https://verbs.colorado.edu/verbnet/>

- **Communicating Hazard Information in the Modern Environment (CHIME)**

*adv: Leysia Palen*

I also worked with the Empowering the Public with Information in Crisis (EPIC) lab at the University of Colorado along with the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR). This project aimed to identify relevant information from social media during natural disasters in order to assist first responders, government agencies, and affected populations. We developed improved machine learning classification for tweet relevance, as well building classification based on language and location for predicting evacuation behavior.

For more, see <http://epic.cs.colorado.edu/>

## Publications and More

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Primary Author.....

- (in submission) Stowe, Kevin; Moeller, Sarah; Michaelis, Laura; Palmer, Martha. Linguistic Analysis Improves Neural Metaphor Detection. Submitted to *Association of Computational Linguistics (ACL)*, 2019. Florence, Italy.
- Stowe, Kevin; Palmer, Martha; Anderson, Jennings; Kogan, Marina; Palen, Leysia; Anderson, Kenneth M.; Morss, Rebecca; Demuth, Julie; Lazrus, Heather. Developing and Evaluating Annotation Procedures for Twitter Data during Hazard Events. in *Proceedings of the Joint Workshop on Linguistic Annotation, Multiword Expressions and Constructions (LAW-MWE-CxG-2018)*, held with the International Committee on Computational Linguistics Conference (COLING). pg 133-143. 2018. Santa Fe, New Mexico, US.
- Stowe, Kevin; Anderson, Jennings; Palmer, Martha; Palen, Leysia; Anderson, Kenneth M. Improving Classification of Twitter Behavior During Hurricane Events. in *Proceedings of the Workshop on Natural Language Processing for Social Media (SocialNLP)*, held with the 56th Meeting of the Association of Computational Linguistics (ACL). pg 67-75. 2018. Melbourne, Australia

- o Stowe, Kevin; Palmer, Martha. Leveraging Syntactic Constructions for Metaphor Identification and Interpretation. in *Proceedings of the Workshop on Figurative Language Processing*, held with the 16th Meeting of the North American Association of Computational Linguistics (NAACL). pg 17-26. 2018. New Orleans, Louisiana, US
- o Stowe, Kevin; Paul, Michael J.; Palmer, Martha; Palen, Leysia; Anderson, Kenneth M. Identifying and Categorizing Disaster-Related Tweets, in *Proceedings of the International Workshop on Natural Language Processing for Social Media* at the Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP). pg 1-6. 2016. Austin, Texas, US

#### Contributing Author.....

- o Demuth, Julie L. et al, "sometimes da #beachlife ain't always da wave": Understanding People's Evolving Hurricane Risk Communication, Risk Assessments, and Responses Using Twitter Narratives, accepted to *Weather, Climate, and Society*. 2018.
- o Palmer, Martha et al, The Pitfalls of Shortcuts: Tales from the word sense tagging trenches. in *Essays in Lexical Semantics and Computational Lexicography - In Honor of Adam Kilgariff*. M. Diab, A. Villavicencio, M. Apidianaki, V. Kordoni, A. Korhonen, P. Nakov, M. Stevenson (editors). Springer series Text, Speech and Language Technology. Springer, 2018.
- o Morss, Rebecca et al, Hazardous Weather Predication and Communication in the Modern Information. in *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*. 2016. 98, pg 2653-2674
- o Anderson, Jennings et al; Far Far Away in *Far Rockaway*: Responses to Risks and Impacts during Hurricane Sandy through First-Person Social Media Narratives, in *Proceedings of ISCRAM*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2016.
- o Bonial, Claire; Stowe, Kevin; Palmer, Martha. Renewing and Revising SemLink, in *The GenLex Workshop on Linked Data in Linguistics*, pg 9-17, 2013. Pisa, Italy

#### Presentations.....

- o The Syntax and Semantics of Metaphor. For the Graduate Student Open House, University of Colorado, Mar 25th, 2019.
- o Modern Computational Approaches to Metaphor. For LING 7800, Computational Lexical Semantics, instr. Martha Palmer. Nov 9th, 2018.

#### Program Committees.....

- o Program Committee Member, Conference on Computational Natural Language Learning (CoNLL), 2017, Vancouver, Canada
- o Program Committee Member, Corpus Linguistics Fest, 2016, Bloomington, Indiana, <http://cl.indiana.edu/clif16/>

#### Other.....

- o Sponsor, Computer Science Senior Project, Computational Language and Education Research Website Development, 2019
- o Student Volunteer, North American Association of Computational Linguistics (NAACL) 2015, Denver, Colorado
- o Computer science tutor for Linguistic students, particularly in the aim of improving basic programming skills. Primarily in Python and C++, with other support as required.

## Previous Employment

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- **FindMyAudience (<https://findmyaudience.wordpress.com/>)** **Boulder, Colorado**  
*NLP Consultant* *May 2015–October 2015*  
I worked for FindMyAudience, a technology startup, to identify possible audiences for authors and publishing companies. Together we developed methods for identifying book similarities and consumer interests from social media and other sources using continuous word representations and latent semantics models.
- **Avaya Labs** **Westminster, Colorado**  
*NLP Researcher* *Summer 2013*  
As a research intern, I did analysis of social media data (Twitter and Facebook) using machine learning algorithms, particularly clustering, to determine trends in user interactions with public company sites. We identified differences in positive and negative reactions to a variety of companies using topic modelling on social media, allowing for better interaction between companies and their customers.
- **Jackson National Life** **Okemos, Michigan**  
*Software Developer* *2011-2012*  
I started as a software trainee and became a developer. Studying Java and SQL, I worked to promote new branches of company business and provide support to company staff.