

Alexander Porto

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Research Focus: social cognition, spontaneous semanticity, theoretical cognitive science, philosophy of mind & language

EDUCATION

Duquesne University, Ph.D. Clinical Psychology Dissertation: <i>Foundational Properties of Communicative Systems</i> Committee: Alex Kranjec, Christine Cuskley, Marcus Perlman, Elizabeth Fein	2022 — ongoing
Duquesne University, M.A. Clinical Psychology	2022 — 2023
Universität Leipzig, M.Sc. Early Childhood Research (Developmental Psychology & Cognitive Anthropology) Thesis: A Critical Theory of Childhood Research: Perspectives on Reification, Normativity, and Objectivity Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Kristina Musholt & Prof. Dr. Patricia Kanngießer	2018 — 2020
Point Park University, B.A. Psychology Thesis: Phenomenological Responses to Architectural Environments	2011 — 2015

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Universität Leipzig <i>Predoctoral Fellow</i> Project: The Production of Symbolic Communication During Language Acquisition	2021 — 2022
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Dept. Comparative Cultural Psychology <i>Guest Researcher</i> Project: The Production of Symbolic Communication During Language Acquisition	2021 — 2022
Universität Leipzig <i>Graduate Research Assistant</i> Project: Emotions & Social Cognition Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Robert Hepach	2019 — 2020
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Dept. Comparative Cultural Psychology <i>Research Internship</i> Project: Social Learning in Austronesian Cultures Supervisors: Dr. Roman Stengelin & Dr. Sarah Peoples	2019 — 2020

PUBLICATIONS

- Porto, A.**, Huckle, N., Basalyga, A., Santiago, J., Kranjec., A. (*forthcoming*). Glyph Norming: Human and Computational Measurements of Shape Angularity in Writing Systems. *Behavior Research Methods*. Preprint & Repository
- Porto, A.**, Basalyga, A., Huckle, N., Santiago, J., Fein, E., Kranjec., A. (2024). Sound Symbolism Across Diverse Writing Systems. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3xc6659p>.
- Brar, P., Pienkos, L., **Porto, A.**, Wood, H., Sarpal, D., Schreiber, J., Kalarchian, M., Kranjec, A. (2024). Methods and Models for Investigating Anomalous Experiences in Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders. *Philosophical Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515089.2024.2305232> .
Contributions: Wrote section on network modeling; general consulting on manuscript development
- Porto, A.** (under review—revisions in process). Probabilistic claiming as meta-comparative practice. [Link to draft]
- Porto, A.** (2023). A Picture Theory of Symbolic Development in Early Childhood. *Theory & Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09593543231192973>

Porto, A., Anderson, L., Kalinich, T., Deane, K. C., Vogel, L. C., & Zebracki, K. (2019). Understanding transition for youth with spinal cord injury: Youth and caregiver perceptions. *The Journal of Spinal Cord Medicine*, 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10790268.2019.1574437>

CONFERENCE & COLLOQUIUM PRESENTATIONS

(†) invited

(*) refereed

A lexical analysis of essays written using the ThoughtShuffler and Google search interfaces*

APA 2025

with Tilak, S., Pangaro, P., & Glassman, M.

August 2025

Naturalizing Negation†

Wittgenstein & the Formal Sciences IV,

part of UNESCO World Logic Day

January 2025

Naturalizing Negation: Responding to the Threefold Puzzle of Negation

Colloquium talk for Young Network for Wittgensteinian Philosophy

December 2024

Sound Symbolism Across Diverse Writing Systems*

COGSCI 2024

Cognitive Science Society

July 2024

Sound Symbolism Across Diverse Writing Systems*

IMPRS 4th Conference on Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Language Sciences

International Max Planck School for Language Sciences

June 2024

Sound Symbolism Across Diverse Writing Systems*

The Developing Communicators Conference 2024,

University of Oslo

— accepted; unable to attend

May 2024

Sound Symbolism Across Diverse Writing Systems*

15th Dubrovnik Conference on Cognitive Science: Memory, Space, Language

Center for Advanced Studies of Dubrovnik, Croatia

— accepted; unable to attend

May 2024

The Picture Theory of Symbolic Development in Early Childhood*

15th Dubrovnik Conference on Cognitive Science: Memory, Space, Language

Center for Advanced Studies of Dubrovnik, Croatia

— accepted; unable to attend

May 2024

Positive and Negative Predication: Distinction Through Unity*

Joint Meeting of the Interdisciplinary Coalition for North American Phenomenologists

& The Society of Phenomenology and the Human Sciences

Duquesne University

May 2024

The Picture Theory of Symbolic Development in Early Childhood*

Midwinter Meeting of the Society for Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology

Duquesne University

April 2024

Drawing Connections: Ideas and Applications of Expressive Activity in the Clinic

Midwinter Meeting of the Society for Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology

Duquesne University

April 2024

The Picture Theory of Symbolic Development in Early Childhood*

Conference of Multimodality in Early Interactions for ECRs

University of Warwick

April 2024

Reified Childhood: Social Reification During Child Development*

*Emory Symposium for Psychoanalysis & Politics
Emory University*

October 2022

Barriers in accessing adult healthcare for transitioning youth with spinal cord injury*

*72nd Annual Meeting of the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine
— with Anderson, L., Zebracki, K., Deane, K., & Vogel, L.*

May 2018

Barriers in accessing adult healthcare for transitioning youth with spinal cord injury*

*57th Annual Scientific Meeting of the International Spinal Cord Society
— with Anderson, L., Zebracki, K., Deane, K., & Vogel, L.*

June 2018

Phenomenological Responses to Architectural Environments

Eighth Annual Meeting of the Society for Humanistic Psychology (APA Div. 32)

April 2015

TEACHING**Statistics for the Psychological Sciences**

Duquesne University

Spring 2025

Research Methods in Psychology

Duquesne University

Fall 2024

Introduction to Psychology

Duquesne University

Fall 2023, Spring 2024

Psychological Disorders (Teaching Assistant)

Duquesne University

Spring 2023

Laboratory in Psychology (Teaching Assistant)

Duquesne University

Fall 2022

Empirical Methods in Early Childhood Research II (Teaching Assistant)

Universität Leipzig

Spring 2020

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE**Doctoral Practicum**

2022 — 2025 (387.25 hours)

Duquesne University

Rita M. McGinley Psychology Clinic

Clinical Supervisor: Liz Pienkos, Ph.D.

Community-Based Psychology Fellow

2022 — 2023

Duquesne University

Project: Program development (literature review, undergrad mentorship) for community-engaged service and research in partnership with ARYSE

AWARDS & FUNDING**Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Award**

Universität Leipzig

2021 — 2022

Research funding: 15,600€

Full Scholarship

Capra Course: The Systems View of Life (Schumacher College & Fritjof Capra)

2019 — 2020

et cetera

Academic Consultant	2025—ongoing
<i>Laboratory for Cybernetics</i>	
Carnegie Mellon University, School of Architecture	
Organizing Member	#NewMacy In-Person Meetings
Carnegie Mellon University, School of Architecture	
<i>jointly organized with Paul Pangaro</i>	
Visiting Student	University of Pittsburgh, Dept. Philosophy (2023)
<i>Sellars as a Metaphysician: Norms and Nature, Appearance and Reality</i>	
Invited by Robert Brandom	
Member	Young Network for Wittgensteinian Philosophy
Member	Cognitive Science Society
Member	American Society for Cybernetics
Reviewer	Journal of Humanistic Psychology
Reviewer	Topics in Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation

et cetera, et cetera

- **Programming:** R, Python (PyGaze, PsychoPy), SPSS, Pure Data, OpenPose, GitHub, OpenMusic, Jupyter Notebooks, ChucK, lab.js, HTML, Qualtrics, L^AT_EX
- **Languages:** English (Native Language), German (CEFR B2-C1), French (CEFR A2)

COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Alexander Kranjec
 Paul Pangaro
 Christine Cuskley
 Marcus Perlman
 Luz Christopher Seiberth
 Julio Santiago
 Robert Hepach
 Alexander Basalyga
 Nikolai Huckle
 Joost Pietschmann
 Shantanu Tilak

REFERENCES

Dr. Alexander Kranjec

Department of Psychology, Duquesne University
 email: kranjeca@duq.edu

Prof. Dr. Kristina Musholt

Department of Philosophy (Chair of Cognitive Anthropology), Leipzig University
 email: kristina.musholt@uni-leipzig.de

Prof. Dr. Patricia Kanngiesser

School of Psychology, University of Plymouth
 email: patricia.kanngiesser@plymouth.ac.uk

Prof. Dr. Robert Hepach

Oxford Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford
 email: robert.hepach@psy.ox.ac.uk