

## Alexander Porto

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### EDUCATION

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<b>Duquesne University (Dept. Psychology)</b> Ph.D. Clinical Psychology Anticipated Graduation: Dec. 2027/May 2028 Dissertation: <i>Foundational Properties of Communicative Systems</i> Committee: Alex Kranjec, Ph.D., Christine Cuskley, Ph.D., Marcus Perlman, Ph.D., Elizabeth Nickrenz, Ph.D. Pittsburgh, PA, USA	2022–present
<b>Duquesne University (Dept. Psychology)</b> M.A. Clinical Psychology Pittsburgh, PA, USA	2022–2023
<b>Universität Leipzig</b> M.Sc. Early Childhood Research (Focus: Developmental Psychology & Cognitive Anthropology) Thesis: <i>A Critical Theory of Childhood Research</i> Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Kristina Musholt, Prof. Dr. Patricia Kanngießer Leipzig, Germany	2018–2020
<b>Point Park University</b> B.A. Psychology Thesis: <i>Phenomenological Responses to Architectural Environments</i> Pittsburgh, PA, USA	2011–2015

### ACADEMIC POSITIONS & EMPLOYMENT

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

### PRACTICUM, PSYCHOTHERAPY & COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY EXPERIENCE

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<b>Doctoral Practicum</b> <i>Carnegie Mellon University, Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS)</i> Pittsburgh, PA Clinical Supervisors: Stella Yan, Ph.D., Shane Chaplin, Ph.D., Grace Wei, Ph.D., NCC Responsibilities: Provide individual psychotherapy to undergraduate and graduate students presenting with anxiety, depression, OCD, identity concerns, and adjustment issues within a brief therapy framework (14-session model); conduct intake assessments, treatment planning, and case conceptualization; interpret weekly outcome measures (CCAPS); conduct acute risk assessments and safety planning; serve diverse student populations including international students and LGBTQ+ individuals; collaborate as part of an interdisciplinary team with psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and university liaisons; utilize integrative interventions including psychodynamic (time-limited dynamic therapy), cognitive-behavioral (MBCT/CBT), and humanistic (Gestalt) approaches, as well as MI; participate in weekly group supervision and didactic seminars with fellow practicum trainees and doctoral interns.	Aug. 2025–May 2026
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**Doctoral Practicum**

Jan. 2022–May 2026

*Duquesne University, Rita M. McGinley Psychology Clinic  
Pittsburgh, PA*

Clinical Supervisors: Kevin Smith, Ph.D., Liz Pienkos, Ph.D., Lori Koelsch, Ph.D., Jessie Goicoechea, Ph.D.

Responsibilities: Provide long-term individual outpatient psychotherapy (18-36+ months) to community patients (ages 18-60) presenting with major depression, anxiety disorders, borderline personality disorder, substance use disorders, and adjustment difficulties; conduct comprehensive psychodiagnostic assessments for differential diagnosis utilizing objective and projective measures (MMPI-2, PAI, Rorschach R-PAS, NEO PI-R/FFI, TAT SCORS-G System, Sentence Completion, Bender-Gestalt, OQ-45); complete integrated psychological assessment reports and provide feedback sessions to clients; deliver psychotherapy using integrative approaches including intensive short-term dynamic psychotherapy, relational psychodynamic therapy, MBCT/CBT, DBT, and Gestalt therapy; serve diverse clients including male, female, and LGBTQ+ identified individuals; participate in group supervision during summer terms; present seminar-based case material; provide peer consultation.

**Community-Based Psychology Fellow**

2022–2023

*Duquesne University  
Pittsburgh, PA*

Responsibilities: Collaborated with ARYSE (a refugee resettlement organization) to develop culturally responsive mental health programming for refugee populations; conducted literature review on evidence-based interventions for trauma and acculturation stress; provided supervision and mentorship to undergraduate assistants in the design and presentation of community-based interventions; supported dissemination of program recommendations to community stakeholders and mental health practitioners.

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Porto, A.**, Huckle, N., Basalyga, A., Santiago, J., Kranjec., A. (2025). Glyph Norming: Human and Computational Measurements of Shape Angularity in Writing Systems. *Behavior Research Methods*. <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-025-02682-7>

**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 submitted; draft available by request). Probabilistic claiming as meta-comparative practice.

**Porto, A.** (under review; draft available by request). Inference, Language, Situated Conceptualization.

**Porto, A.** (under review; draft available by request). Naturalizing Negation.

**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>

**PUBLICATIONS IN PREPARATION**

**Porto, A.**, Huckle, N., Basalyga, A., Cuskley, C., Perlman, M., Kranjec., A. (in preparation). Sound-Form Iconicity in Spontaneously Produced Drawings.

Status: Data collected; data analyzed; manuscript in development; abstract and data available by request.

**Porto, A.**, Pietschmann, J., Seiberth, L.C. (in preparation). Jumblese in Experimental Reconstruction: Nominalism, Picturing, and Representational Systems.

Status: Data collected; data analyzed; manuscript written; three workshop presentations given; in informal peer review; abstract and data available by request.

**Porto, A.**, Pietschmann, J., Seiberth, L.C. (in preparation). Jumblese, Picturing, and Representational Systems.

Status: Philosophical scoping review complete; manuscript written; two colloquium presentations; in informal peer review; abstract available by request.

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**CONFERENCE, WORKSHOP & COLLOQUIUM PRESENTATIONS**


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(†) invited

(\*) refereed

Porto, A. (2025, October). *Interlocutor: Rules, Functions & Categories—A Workshop on Wilfrid Sellars*<sup>†</sup> [Invited Respondent]. Universität Paderborn.

Porto, A., Pietschmann, J., Seiberth, L. C. (2025, April). *Jumblese, picturing, and representational systems*<sup>†</sup> [Invited presentation]. CO Haag—Universität Potsdam.

Porto, A., Tilak, S., Pangaro, P., Glassman, M. (2025, August). *A lexical analysis of essays written using the ThoughtShuffer and Google search interfaces*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation]. American Psychological Association Annual Convention.

Porto, A. (2025, January). *Naturalizing negation*<sup>†</sup> [Invited conference presentation]. Wittgenstein & the Formal Sciences IV, UNESCO World Logic Day.

Porto, A. (2024, December). *Naturalizing negation: Responding to the threefold puzzle of negation* [Colloquium]. Young Network for Wittgensteinian Philosophy.

Porto, A. (2024, July). *Sound symbolism across diverse writing systems*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation]. 46th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society.

Porto, A. (2024, June). *Sound symbolism across diverse writing systems*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation]. IMPRS 4th Conference on Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Language Sciences, International Max Planck School for Language Sciences.

Porto, A. (2024, May). *Sound symbolism across diverse writing systems*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation accepted]. The Developing Communicators Conference 2024, University of Oslo.

Porto, A. (2024, May). *Sound symbolism across diverse writing systems*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation accepted]. 15th Dubrovnik Conference on Cognitive Science: Memory, Space, Language, Center for Advanced Studies of Dubrovnik, Croatia.

Porto, A. (2024, May). *The picture theory of symbolic development in early childhood*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation accepted]. 15th Dubrovnik Conference on Cognitive Science: Memory, Space, Language, Center for Advanced Studies of Dubrovnik, Croatia.

Porto, A. (2024, May). *Positive and negative predication: Distinction through unity*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation]. Joint Meeting of the Interdisciplinary Coalition for North American Phenomenologists & The Society of Phenomenology and the Human Sciences, Duquesne University.

Porto, A. (2024, April). *The picture theory of symbolic development in early childhood*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation]. Midwinter Meeting of the Society for Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology, Duquesne University.

Porto, A., Flynn, C., Dall'Aglio, J. (2024, April). *Drawing connections: Ideas and applications of expressive activity in the clinic* [Conference Presentation]. Midwinter Meeting of the Society for Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology, Duquesne University.

Porto, A. (2024, April). *The picture theory of symbolic development in early childhood*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation]. Conference of Multimodality in Early Interactions for ECRs, University of Warwick.

Porto, A. (2022, October). *Reified childhood: Social reification during child development*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation]. Emory Symposium for Psychoanalysis & Politics, Emory University.

Porto, A., Anderson, L., Zebracki, K., Deane, K., Vogel, L. (2018, June). *Barriers in accessing adult healthcare for transitioning youth with spinal cord injury*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation]. 57th Annual Scientific Meeting of the International Spinal Cord Society.

Porto, A., Anderson, L., Zebracki, K., Deane, K., Vogel, L. (2018, May). *Barriers in accessing adult healthcare for transitioning youth with spinal cord injury*<sup>\*</sup> [Conference presentation]. 72nd Annual Meeting of the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine.

Porto, A. (2015, April). *Phenomenological responses to architectural environments* [Conference presentation]. Eighth Annual Meeting of the Society for Humanistic Psychology (APA Division 32).

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**TEACHING**


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**Statistics for the Psychological Sciences**

Spring 2025

*Duquesne University (Dept. Psychology)*

Responsibilities: Designed new course for the department using R programming and open-source textbooks to create an undergraduate-appropriate intro to statistical programming for psychology; developed syllabus; delivered lectures; administered and graded portfolio exams.

<b>Research Methods in Psychology</b> <i>Duquesne University (Dept. Psychology)</i> Responsibilities: Developed syllabus; delivered lectures; administered exams; graded coursework; provided undergraduate research mentorship.	Fall 2024, Fall 2025
<b>Introduction to Psychology</b> <i>Duquesne University (Dept. Psychology)</i> Responsibilities: Developed syllabus; delivered lectures; administered exams; graded coursework.	Fall 2023, Spring 2024
<b>Psychological Disorders (Teaching Assistant)</b> <i>Duquesne University (Dept. Psychology)</i> Supervisor: Russ Walsh, Ph.D. Responsibilities: Graded coursework and exams.	Spring 2023
<b>Laboratory in Psychology (Teaching Assistant)</b> <i>Duquesne University (Dept. Psychology)</i> Supervisor: Alex Kranjec, Ph.D. Responsibilities: Provided undergraduate research mentorship; graded coursework.	Fall 2022
<b>Empirical Methods in Early Childhood Research II (Teaching Assistant)</b> <i>Universität Leipzig (Dept. Early Childhood Research)</i> Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Robert Hepach Responsibilities: Supervised master's students in research planning, design, and statistical analysis.	Spring 2020

**AWARDS, FUNDING & HONORS**

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<b>Graduate Student Award for Excellence in Teaching</b> Duquesne University (Dept. Psychology) Honorarium: \$250.00	2025–2026
<b>Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Award</b> Universität Leipzig Research funding: 15,600.00€	2021–2022
<b>Full Scholarship</b> Capra Course: The Systems View of Life (Schumacher College & Fritjof Capra)	2019–2020
<b>Dean's List Honors</b> Point Park University (Dept. Psychology)	2013, 2015

**SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP & ADDITIONAL SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITY**

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<b>Academic Consultant</b> <i>Laboratory for Cybernetics</i> Carnegie Mellon University, School of Architecture	2025–present
<b>Organizing Member</b> #NewMacy In-Person Meetings Carnegie Mellon University, School of Architecture <i>jointly organized with Paul Pangaro</i>	2024–2025
<b>Visiting Student</b> University of Pittsburgh (Dept. Philosophy) <i>Sellars as a Metaphysician: Norms and Nature, Appearance and Reality</i> Invited by Robert Brandom, Ph.D.	Fall 2023
<b>Full Member</b>	Young Network for Wittgensteinian Philosophy
<b>Student Member</b>	Cognitive Science Society
<b>Full Member</b>	American Society for Cybernetics
<b>Reviewer</b>	Journal of Humanistic Psychology
<b>Reviewer</b>	Topics in Spinal Cord Injury Rehabilitation

## COMPETENCIES & LANGUAGES

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- **Psychological Assessment:** MMPI-2, PAI, CCAPS, BDI/BDI-Y, BAI/BAI-Y, HAM-A, GAD-7, NEO PI-R/FFI, TAT SCORS-G System, Rorschach R-PAS, Sentence Completion, Bender-Gestalt, OQ-45
- **Therapeutic Modalities:** Time-Limited Dynamic Therapy, Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy, Relational Psychodynamic Therapy, MBCT/CBT, DBT, Motivational Interviewing, Gestalt Therapy, Systemic Therapy
- **Clinical Competencies:** Intake Assessment, Treatment Planning, Case Conceptualization, Risk Assessment, Crisis Intervention, Integrated Psychological Report Writing, Assessment Feedback Sessions, Interdisciplinary Collaboration
- **Research Methods:** Experimental Design, Mixed-Methods Research, Computational Modeling, Data Analysis (Bayesian and Frequentist), Philosophical Analysis, Literature Review, Manuscript Development
- **Supervision & Training:** Undergraduate Research Mentorship, Master's Student Supervision, Peer Consultation, Group Peer Consultation
- **Programming:** R, Python (PyGaze, PsychoPy), jsPsych, SPSS, Pure Data, OpenPose, GitHub, OpenMusic, Jupyter Notebooks, ChucK, lab.js, HTML, Qualtrics, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X
- **Languages:** English (Native Language), German (CEFR C1), French (CEFR A2–B1)

## ACTIVE RESEARCH

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### Dissertation Research: Foundational Properties of Communicative Systems

Committee: Alex Kranjec, Ph.D., Christine Cuskley, Ph.D., Marcus Perlman, Ph.D., Elizabeth Nickrenz, Ph.D.

Academic Status: Proposal Approved Spring 2025

Publication Status: Studies 1 and 2 have been published.

Time-frame: Aug. 2023–present (defense anticipated Spring 2027)

Brief Abstract: I provide a framework for experimentally reconstructing the evolution of language. I open the dissertation by building a bridge between cognitive linguistics and key movements in the history of philosophy of language. In five experiments, I then validate this bridge using state-of-the-art, cross-methodological techniques from computational cognitive science, linguistics, and philosophical analysis. ([Link to description](#))

### Research Practicum: Situated Phenomenological Psychopathology

Supervisor: Liz Pienkos, Ph.D.

Time-frame: Aug. 2025–Dec. 2026

Note: Research independently developed and designed

Description: Philosophical research studying psychopathology from the point of view of phenomenology, embodied social cognition, and philosophy of language.

Anticipated Outcome: Manuscript submitted for publication

### Independent Research: Where does vision go? Folk Psychological Conceptualizations of the Sense Modalities

Co-PI: Alex Kranjec, Ph.D.

Time-frame: July 2025–May 2026

Description: Experimental multi-method (behavioral and eye-tracking) research studying how people think about the sense modalities.

Anticipated Outcome: Manuscript submitted for publication

### Independent Research: Naming, Verbing, and Symbolizing in Artificial Language Acquisition

Time-frame: May 2025–Dec. 2025

Description: Experimental behavioral research contributing to ongoing debates about category learning and word classes.

Anticipated Outcome: Manuscript submitted for publication

## COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

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Alexander Kranjec

Christine Cuskley

Marcus Perlman

Luz Christopher Seiberth

Julio Santiago

Robert Hepach

Alexander Basalyga

Nikolai Huckle

Joost Pietschmann

Paul Pangaro

Liz Pienkos

Shantanu Tilak

## REFERENCES

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**Dr. Alexander Kranjec**

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

**Dr. Liz Pienkos**

Department of Psychology, Duquesne University  
email: pienkose@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.kanngieser@plymouth.ac.uk

**Prof. Dr. Robert Hepach**

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