

Dr. Seth Jeremy Goldwasser

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EDUCATION

University of Pittsburgh	PhD 2024
University of Pittsburgh	MA 2020
Auburn University	BA (Philosophy) 2016

EMPLOYMENT

University of Miami: Full-time Lecturer	08.15.2024 - Present
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AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Philosophy of Mind
Philosophy of Cognitive Science
Philosophy of Action
Social Epistemology
Philosophy of Biology

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Normative and Applied Ethics
Bioethics
Philosophy of Science
Epistemology

THESIS

Mental actions are things we do with our minds. Consider inferring, deliberating, imagining, remembering, calculating, and so on. I understand such actions in terms of dispositions. My account is a non-reductive alternative to standard causalist accounts of mental action. I call this alternative the *powers framework*. On the powers framework, habitual and skillful mental actions are expressions of an agent's rational tendencies and capacities, respectively, which expression infuses mental actions with practical intelligence. The intelligence exemplified by performing habitual and skillful mental actions arises from the agent's having shaped their tendencies and capacities through training and practice. By way of applying the powers framework, I provide accounts of imagining and episodic memory as types of skillful mental action. With respect to imagining, I argue that imagination is a power to construct representations and select their contents as a means to performing learned behaviors like pretending, engaging with fiction, imagining for its own sake, and so on. With respect to episodic memory, I argue that remembering, considered as a mental action, is a kind of imagining in which the agent constructs a representation and selecting its content as a means of performing the learned behavior of navigating her personal past.

Committee: Colin Allen, Robert Brandom, Kate Stanton, Wayne Wu (External).

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-reviewed Journal Articles

10. ‘Mental Kinds as Human Kinds: The Case from Declarative Memory’ with Alison Springle (forthcoming). *PSA: 2026: The 30th Biennial Meeting of the Philosophy of Science Association*
9. ‘An Action-First Account of Episodic Memory’ with Alison Springle (2025). *Philosophical Psychology*: 1-38. doi: 10.1080/09515089.2025.2544147
8. ‘In Defense of the Essentially Epistemic Nature of Episodic Memory’ with Alison Springle (2025). *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*: 1-23. doi: 10.1007/s13164-025-00774-z (Runner-up for the [Centre for Philosophy of Memory’s 2024 Philosophy of Memory Essay Prize](#)).
7. ‘Remembering is an Imaginative Project’ (2024). *Philosophical Studies* 181: 2897–2933. doi: 10.1007/s11098-024-02220-9
6. ‘Imagining as a Skillful Mental Action’ (2024). *Synthese* 204(38): 1-33. doi: 10.1007/s11229-024-04681-1
5. ‘Standard Aberration: Cancer Biology and the Modeling Account of Function.’ (2023). *Biology and Philosophy* 38(1):(4) 1-33. doi: 10.1007/s10539-023-09894-1
4. ‘Finding Normality in Abnormality: On the Ascription of Normal Functions to Cancer’ (2023). *Philosophy of Science* 90(5): 1214-1223. doi: 10.1017/psa.2023.32
3. ‘Trauma, Trust, and Competent Testimony’ (2023). With Alison Springle. *Philosophical Psychology* 37(1): 167-195. doi: 10.1080/09515089.2023.2247011
2. ‘Trusting Traumatic Memory: Considerations from Memory Science’ (2023). With Alison Springle and Rebecca Dreier. *Philosophy of Science* 90(5): 1060-1068. doi: 10.1017/psa.2023.31
1. ‘Memory as Skill’ (2022). *Review of Philosophy and Psychology* 14(3): 833-856. doi: 10.1007/s13164-021-00605-x (Winner of the [Centre for Philosophy of Memory’s 2021 Philosophy of Memory Essay Prize](#))

Book Manuscripts

1. *Constructing Memory: Functionalist Metaphysics with a Human Face* with Alison Springle (under review)

Book Chapters

1. ‘Heart’s a Mess (OR: On the Use of Function Ascription to Model the Heart)’ (forthcoming)
2. ‘PTSD & the Mnemic Mechanisms of AI-Mediated Trauma’; **Invited** to contribute to *Memory, Society, and Justice* (M. Carava & K. Puddifoot Eds.; Routledge) (forthcoming).

Under Review

1. ‘Eugenics and Disability as Intrinsic Limitation: On the (Im)permissibility of the Use of Genetic Counseling and Genome Editing to Treat Disabilities with Genetic Factors’ (under review)

2. ‘Episodic Memory: Skillfully Imagining the Past’ (under review)
3. ‘Capacitism: A Defensible Epistemic Conception of Memory’ with Alison Springle (under review)

Works in Progress

1. ‘Monitoring and the Ability to Intervene are Necessary for Control Over Skillful Action’
2. ‘Ontological Disparities Between Cognitive and Biological Functions’

AWARDS & HONORS

Awards

- Runner-up for the Philosophy of Memory Essay Prize (run by The Centre for Philosophy of Memory at the Université Grenoble Alpes.) 2024
- Winner of an Early-Career Researcher Essay Award for the Issues in Philosophy of Memory 4 Conference. 2024
- Winner of the University of Pittsburgh’s History and Philosophy of Science Department Wesley C. Salmon Memorial Fund. 2023
- Philosophy of memory essay prize (run by the Centre for Philosophy of Memory at the Université Grenoble Alpes). 2021
- Christopher Young Memorial Essay Prize, Auburn University Philosophy Department. 2016
- Phelps Scholarship, Winthrop University 2011-2014
- LIFE Scholarship, State of South Carolina Commission on Higher Ed. 2011-2014

Honors

- Phi Beta Kappa 2016
- Phi Sigma Pi Honors Fraternity 2015
- Tau Sigma National Honor Society 2015
- Golden Key International Honor Society 2015

TALKS

- ‡ = invited
- * = cancelled
- † = poster presentation
- § = workshop
- ★ = symposium

2027

1. “Capacitism: A Defensible Epistemic Conception of Memory” Colloquium. American Philosophical Association (APA) Eastern Division with Alison Springle. Boston, MA.

2026

1. “A Puzzle about Perception & Episodic Memory” Colloquium. American Philosophical Association (APA) Eastern Division with Alison Springle. Baltimore, MA.
2. “Capacitism: A Defensible Epistemic Conception of Memory” Talk. Issues in Philosophy of Memory (IPM) 5, with Alison Springle. West Lafayette, IN.

2025

1. “A Puzzle about Perception & Episodic Memory” Talk. Issues in Philosophy of Memory (IPM) 4.5, with Alison Springle. Online.
2. “A Puzzle about Perception & Episodic Memory” Talk. The Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SSPP) 116th Annual Meeting, with Alison Springle. Mobile, Alabama.
3. ‡“Episodic Memory, Perception, and Nonconceptual Content” Invited talk as part of the Philosophy of Memory Organization (PhOMO)’s group session. American Philosophical Association (APA) Pacific Division with Alison Springle. San Francisco, CA.
4. “In Defense of the Essentially Epistemic Nature of Episodic Memory” Colloquium. American Philosophical Association (APA) Central Division Meeting with Alison Springle. Online.

2024

1. §“Ontological Disparities Between Cognitive and Biological Functions and What They Mean for Neurodiversity” Talk. The Templeton-Sowerby Joint Workshop on Function and Dysfunction in Medicine and Psychiatry. London, England.
2. “In Defense of the Essentially Epistemic Nature of Episodic Memory” Talk. Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SSPP) with Alison Springle. Cincinnati, Ohio.
3. “In Defense of the Essentially Epistemic Nature of Episodic Memory” Talk. Canadian Philosophical Association (CPA) meeting 2024 with Alison Springle. Montreal, Canada.
4. “In Defense of the Essentially Epistemic Nature of Episodic Memory” Talk. Issues in Philosophy of Memory 4 (IPM4) with Alison Springle. Geneva, Switzerland.
5. “In Defense of the Essentially Epistemic Nature of Episodic Memory” Talk. Society for Philosophy and Psychology 50th Annual Meeting (SPP) with Alison Springle. West Lafayette, Indiana.

2023

1. “Remembering is an Imaginative Project” Talk. Issues in Philosophy of Memory (IPM) 3.5. Online.
2. “Epistemic Arrogance & Epistemic Shame” Talk. Empirical Epistemology Conference with Alison Springle. Glasgow, UK.
3. “An Argument for Parity of the Interface Problem for Mental Action” Talk. PSA Around the World with Alison Springle. Online.
4. ★“Remembering is an Imaginative Project” as part of the Symposium on Voluntary and Involuntary Memory. 1st Annual Web Conference of the International Society for the Philosophy of the Sciences of the Mind with Santiago Arango-Muñoz, Marina Tarkas, Alison Springle, and Rebecca Dreier.
5. ‡“An Anscombean Account of Active Imagining” Invited Talk. 4th Annual Conference [Online/Virtual] for Imagination Domination (COVID). Online.

6. †“An Argument for Parity of the Interface Problem in the Case of Mental Action” Poster. Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SPP) with Alison Springle. Pittsburgh, PA.
7. “Remembering as a Mental Action and the (Dis)continuism Debate” Talk. Annual Canadian Philosophical Association Meeting (CPA). Toronto, Canada.
8. “Remembering as a Mental Action and the (Dis)continuism Debate” Talk. Ohio Philosophical Association Annual Meeting (OPA). Wooster, OH.
9. “Remembering as a Mental Action and the (Dis)continuism Debate” Talk. Harvard-MIT Graduate Student Conference. Cambridge, MA.
10. “Monitoring and the Ability to Intervene are Necessary for Control over Skillful Action” Talk. Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SSPP). Louisville, KY.
11. “Monitoring and the Ability to Intervene are Necessary for Control over Skillful Action” Colloquium. American Philosophical Association (APA) Central Division Meeting. Denver, CO.
12. “Finding Normality In Abnormality: On the Ascription of Normal Functions to Parts of Cancers” Colloquium. American Philosophical Association (APA) Eastern Division Meeting. Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

2022

1. “Trusting Traumatic Memories” Talk. Issues in Philosophy of Memory 3 (IPM3), with Alison Springle and Rebecca Dreier. Durham, NC.
2. “Finding Normality in Abnormality: Function Ascription in Cancer Research” Talk. Ohio Philosophical Association Annual Meeting (OPA). Akron, Ohio.
3. † “Ontological Disparities Between Cognitive and Biological Functions” Poster. Joint Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SPP) and the European Society for Philosophy and Psychology (ESPP), with Alison Springle, Alessandra Buccella, and Tom Wysocki.
4. “A Pushmi-Pullyu Psychology” talk. Joint Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SPP) and the European Society for Philosophy and Psychology (ESPP), with Alison Springle, Nimra Asif, Alessandra Buccella, and Tom Wysocki. Milan, IT.
5. “Trusting Traumatic Memories” talk. Joint Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SPP) and the European Society for Philosophy and Psychology (ESPP), with Alison Springle and Rebecca Dreier. Milan, IT.
6. †“Normality, Causal Judgments, and Conjoined Cases” poster. Joint Meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SPP) and the European Society for Philosophy and Psychology (ESPP), with Tomek Wysocki, Alessandra Buccella, and Alison Springle. Milan, IT.
7. ‡“Imagination as skill: (Re)construction for action” Talk. Simulationism 2022, hosted by the Center for Philosophy of Memory. Grenoble, France.
8. “The Cure Is Worse Than the Disease: On the Concepts of Health and Disability” Talk. PERITIA: The Ethics of Trust and Expertise. Online.

9. “Finding Normality In Abnormality: On the Ascription of Normal Functions to Parts of Cancers” Talk. Rotman Graduate Student Conference. London, Ontario, Canada.
10. “The Cure Is Worse Than the Disease: On the Concepts of Health and Disability” Talk. Concordia University Graduate Philosophy Conference. Online.
11. “The Cure Is Worse Than the Disease: On the Concepts of Health and Disability” Talk. Great Lakes Philosophy Conference. Online.
12. †“The Cure Is Worse than the Disease: On the Notion of Health and Disability” Poster. American Philosophical Association (APA) Central Division Meeting. Chicago, IL.
13. “The Cure Is Worse than the Disease: On the Notion of Health and Disability” Talk. 31th Annual Association for Practical and Professional Ethics (APPE) International Conference. Online.

2021

1. “A Modeling Account of Function: On Ascribing Normal Functions to Self-Maintaining Pathologies” Talk. 8th Tarbiat Modares University Philosophy Conference.
2. “The Cure is Worse Than the Disease: On the Concepts of Health and Disability” Talk. Georgia Philosophical Society 2021 Online Conference on Philosophical Perspectives on Rights, Obligations, and Freedom. Online.
3. “The Cure is Worse Than the Disease: On the Notions of Health and Disability” Talk. Binghamton University 5th Annual Graduate Philosophy Conference. Online.
4. “The Cure is Worse Than the Disease: On the Concepts of Health and Disability” Talk. Society for Christian Bioethicists Inaugural Conference. Online.
5. “Fake News and Function in Model Pathologies: How Dis- and Misinformation Keep Us Dumb” as part of The Inhumanity of Fake News Panel. The 6th Public Philosophy Network Conference: Engagement, Policy, and Practice. Online.
6. “The Cure is Worse Than the Disease: On the Notions of Health and Disability” Talk. The 22nd Annual Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum Conference. Online
7. “The Cure is Worse Than the Disease: On the Notions of Health and Disability” Talk. The 75th Mountain-Plains Philosophy Conference. Online.
8. “Fake News and Function in Model Pathologies” Talk. Social Ontology 2021, hosted by the International Social Ontology Society. Online.
9. ‡ “Memory as Skill” Talk. Issues in Philosophy of Memory 2.5 (IPM2.5). Online.
10. †“Function in Addiction and Pathology” Poster. Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SPP) with Alison Springle and Jason Kay. Princeton, NJ.
11. “Emotions, Attitudes, Ethics, and Instructions” Talk. Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SPP) with Alison Springle and Jason Kay. Princeton, NJ.
12. †*“Realistic Perspectives of Function” Poster. Society for Philosophy and Psychology (SPP) with Alison Springle and Jason Kay. Princeton, NJ. POSTPONED

13. “Function and Modeling Systems” Talk. 9th Annual University of Calgary Philosophy Graduate Conference. Online.
14. “Function and Model Pathologies: How Fake News Keeps Us Dumb” Talk. The Philosophy Graduate Student Association at the University of Tennessee 4th Philosophy Conference. Online.
15. “Skills and Conceptions: How We Know-How.” Talk. New Mexico Texas Philosophical Society. Online.

2020

1. †*“Function in Addiction and Pathology” Poster. The Society for Philosophy and Psychology, 46th Annual Meeting.
2. * “Fake News and a Notion of Function” Talk. 2020 Great Lakes Philosophy Conference.
3. * “Fake News and a Notion of Function” Talk. 2020 Joint Meeting of the North Carolina Philosophical Society and the South Carolina Society for Philosophy.

2019

1. “Imagination and a Diachronic Hylomorphic Account of Empirical Cognition in Kant’s First Critique” Talk. Virginia Philosophical Association Annual Meeting. Virginia Beach, VA.

2018

1. “Practical Knowledge: Practical Reasoning, Reliable Judgment, and Reliable Execution of Intention” Talk. Illinois Philosophical Association Annual Meeting. Normal, IL.
2. “Practical Knowledge: Practical Reasoning, Reliable Judgment, and Reliable Execution of Intention.” Talk. Central States Philosophical Association 2018 Meeting. Buffalo, NY.
3. “Mental Action and Control in the Case of Remembering” Talk. ENFA 7—Seventh National Meeting in Analytic Philosophy. Lisbon, Portugal.
4. “Achieving Practical Knowledge: A Taxonomic Virtue-Theoretic Approach” Talk. IV FINO Graduate Conference in Mind, Language and Cognition; Kinds of Reasoning. Vercelli and Novara, Italy.

2017

1. “Achieving Realism with a Complete Science” Talk. Undergraduate Conference in Philosophy, University of North Texas. Denton, TX.
2. “Metaphors for Tripping Track Reality Better Than Your Vision” Talk. MidSouth Undergraduate Philosophy Conference. Memphis, TN.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Miami

WRS 106-B2: First-Year Writing II	Fall 2025
WRS 106-C1: First-Year Writing II	Fall 2025
WRS 106-D1: First-Year Writing II	Fall 2025
PHIL110-A: Critical Thinking	Spring 2025

PHIL110-B: Critical Thinking	Spring 2025
PHIL130-K: Contemporary Moral Issues	Spring 2025
PHIL130-GH: Contemporary Moral Issues	Spring 2025
PHIL101-C: Introduction to Philosophy	Fall 2024
PHIL101-D: Introduction to Philosophy	Fall 2024
PHIL110-F: Critical Thinking	Fall 2024
PHIL110-G: Critical Thinking	Fall 2024
<i>Independent Teaching at University of Pittsburgh</i>	
PHIL1400: Mental Action	Spring 2023
PHIL0300: Introduction to Ethics	Summer 2021
<i>Teaching Assisting at University of Pittsburgh</i>	
PHIL0300: Introduction to Ethics	Fall 2023
PHIL0300: Introduction to Ethics	Fall 2022
PHIL0610: Philosophy and Science	Spring 2020
PHIL0462: Introduction to Philosophy of Mind, Writing Intensive	Fall 2019
PHIL0300: Introduction to Ethics	Spring 2019
PHIL0450: Theories of Knowledge & Reality	Fall 2018

SERVICE

Reviewer for <i>Ergo</i>	2025
Reviewer for <i>Philosophical Psychology</i>	2025
Reviewer for <i>MIND</i>	2025
Reviewer for <i>Synthese</i>	2025
Reviewer for <i>The European Journal of Philosophy</i>	2025
Reviewer for <i>Synthese</i>	2025
Reviewer for <i>Asian Journal of Philosophy</i>	2025
Reviewer for <i>Biology & Philosophy</i>	2025
Reviewer for <i>Synthese</i>	2024
Reviewer for <i>Acta Analytica</i>	2024
Reviewer for <i>Review of Philosophy and Psychology</i>	2024
Reviewer for <i>Erkenntnis</i>	2024
Reviewer for <i>Philosophy of Science</i>	2024
Reviewer for <i>Philosophy and the Mind Sciences Journal</i>	2023
Reviewer for <i>Philosophical and Phenomenological Research</i>	2022
Reviewer for <i>Philosophical Psychology</i>	2022
Faculty Advisor for the University of Miami Ethics Society	2025-2026 ¹
Consultant at University of Miami's Writing Center	2025
Member of the Diversity Committee for the Society for Philosophy and Psychology	2023-2024
Organizer for Philosophy Department Speaker Colloquium and Horowitz Lecture	2022-2024
Grünbaum Librarian	2022-2024
Mentor and Teaching Assistant for University of Pittsburgh's <i>Open Doors Summer Academy</i>	2023
Department Representative for the Graduate Student Organization	2018-2019

¹Parental and bereavement leave taken during the 2025–2026 academic year.

Chair of the Pitt-CMU Graduate Student Philosophy Conference Committee	2019
Member of the Pitt-CMU Graduate Student Philosophy Conference Committee	2018
Undergraduate Philosophy Mentor	2017-2018

GRADUATE COURSEWORK

Metaphysics and Epistemology

- Philosophy of Action (McDowell)
- Mental Action (Wu)
- Pre-MA Directed Study: Teleonaturalism & Function (Allen)
- Metametaphysics (Gallow)
- Pre-MA Directed Study: Mental Action (Wu)

Philosophy of Science

- Philosophy of Science (Norton)
- Philosophical Foundations of Cognitive Science (Allen)

Historical Philosophy

- Studies in Aristotle (Lennox)
- Studies in Kant, 1st *Critique* (Engstrom)
- Wittgenstein (Ricketts)

Historical Philosophy (Cont.)

- Studies in Kant, 2nd *Critique* (Engstrom)

CNBC Courses

- Introduction to Parallel Distributed Processing (Plaut)
- Cognitive Neuroscience (Olson)
- Systems Neurobiology (Turner)

Core/Proseminars

- Ethics (Lewinson and Thompson)
- Advanced Logic (Caie)
- Metaphysics and Epistemology (Gallow)
- Teaching Philosophy (Berry)
- German Reading 1 (Waeltermann)
- German Reading 2 (Waeltermann)

Audited Courses

- Topics in Philosophy of Language (Shaw)
- Topics in Philosophy of Language (Brandom)
- Philosophy of Biology (Woodward)
- Philosophy of Wilfrid Sellars (Brandom)
- Philosophy of Mind, Self-reference (McDowell)
- Philosophy of Psychiatry (Fuller)
- Artificial Intelligence and Philosophy of Science (Allen)
- Perception (Gupta)
- Bias (Dorst)
- Math, Models, and Measurements in the Neural, Behavior, and Cognitive Sciences (Allen)
- Philosophy of Mind (McDowell)

LANGUAGES

Spanish (Proficient)
 German (Reading)

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

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