

Janette Dinishak

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ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

2018 – present Associate Professor, University of California, Santa Cruz (UC Santa Cruz)
2014 – 2018 Assistant Professor, UC Santa Cruz
2012 – 2014 Visiting Assistant Professor, UC Santa Cruz
2010 – 2012 Lecturer, UC Santa Cruz

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Philosophy, University of Toronto, November 2008
Thesis title: *Wittgenstein and Köbler on Seeing and Seeing Aspects*
Committee: John V. Canfield (supervisor), Ian Hacking, William Seager
External Examiner: Gary Hatfield, University of Pennsylvania

Visiting Graduate Student, Philosophy Department, University of California, Los Angeles, 2004

B.A., Philosophy, UCLA, 1998-2000
Phi Beta Kappa, summa cum laude, Departmental Honors, College Honors

John Carroll University 1996-1998 (English and Philosophy)
Dean's List, American Values Scholar

AREAS OF RESEARCH *Areas of Specialization:* Philosophy of Psychology, Philosophy of Psychiatry,
Wittgenstein
Areas of Competency: Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Science, History of
Psychology, Disability Studies, Ethics

PUBLICATIONS

forthcoming. Understanding Others in the Face of Indeterminacy: Insights from Mothers of Nonspeaking Autistic Children. *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology*. (With invited commentaries.)

forthcoming. An Inclusive Developmental Science Requires Attention to Neurodiversity. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* (with Morton Gernsbacher and Nameera Akhtar)

2025. A Living Experiment in Concept Formation: Hacking on the Creation of a Language for Autistic Experience. *The Monist* 108(4), 437-453

2024. Reflections on Genuine Empathy: A Reply to van Grunsven and Roeser's 'AAC Technology, Autism, and the Empathic Turn'. *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*
2024. Can autie-biographies influence non-autistic readers' views of autism and autistic people? *Neurodiversity* 2. <https://doi.org/10.1177/27546330241249274> (with Nameera Akhtar)
2024. Autistic Space: Definition and History. *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Disability* (with Nameera Akhtar)
2024. Autistic Autobiography. *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Disability* (with Nameera Akhtar)
2023. Integrating Autistic Perspectives into Autism Science: A role for autistic autobiographies. *Autism*. 27(3), 578–587. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13623613221123731> (with Nameera Akhtar; first published online 2022)
2022. On Developing an Ear. Blog post; adapted for voice and read by Nameera Akhtar. *oxford public philosophy*. [link](#)
2022. Embracing the In-Betweenness of Aspect-Perception's Normative and Evaluative Dimensions. *Nordic Wittgenstein Review*. 11 (2022-2023). <https://www.nordicwittgensteinreview.com/article/view/3607/3>
2022. Still Infantilizing Autism? An Update and Extension of Stevenson et al. (2011). *Autism in Adulthood*: 4(3), 224-232. (with Nameera Akhtar and Jennifer L. Frymiare)
2022. Köhler, Wittgenstein, and the Live Bonds of Dynamical Reality. *Philosophia Scientiae*: 26-3, 21-36.
2021. Autistic Autobiography and Hermeneutical Injustice. *Metaphilosophy*: 52, 556–569.
2020. Experiencing social connection: a qualitative study of mothers of nonspeaking autistic children (with Vikram Jaswal, Christine Stephan, and Nameera Akhtar). *PLOS One*. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0242661>
2019. The Value of Giving Autistic Testimony a Substantial Role in the Science of Autism. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 42: E82.
2019. Autism, Aspect-Perception, and Neurodiversity. *Philosophical Psychology* 32:6, 874-897
2016. The Deficit View and Its Critics. *Disability Studies Quarterly* 36(4). <http://dsq-sds.org/article/view/5236/4475>
2016. On Social Feedback Loops and Cascading Effects in Autism: A Commentary on Warlaumont et al. (2014). (with Nameera Akhtar, Vikram Jaswal, and Christine Stephan). In *Psychological Science* 27(11): 1528-1530
2016. Philosophy of Psychology. (with Nico Orlandi). In McIntyre, L. and Rosenberg, A. (Eds.). *Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Social Science*. Routledge: 408-420
2016. Empathy, Like-mindedness, and Autism. In Risjord, M. (Ed.). *Normativity and Naturalism in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences*. Routledge, pp. 113-134
2014. “Blind” to the Obvious: Wittgenstein and Köhler on the obvious and the hidden In *History of the Human Sciences* 27(4): 59-76
2013. Wittgenstein on the Place of the Concept ‘Noticing an Aspect’. In *Philosophical Investigations* 36(4): 320-339

2013. (first author, with Nameera Akhtar) A Critical Examination of Mindblindness as a Metaphor for Autism. In *Child Development Perspectives* 7(2): 110-114

2013. Mindblindness: a troubling metaphor? In A. Perry and Chris Herrera (Eds.), *Ethics and Neurodiversity* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, pp. 67-85

2008. Review of Schwartz, R. *Visual Versions* (MIT Press 2006). In *Philosophical Psychology* 21(6): 847-850

PRESENTATIONS, INVITED LECTURES, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

“Autism and Epistemic Injustice: Knowledge, Credibility, and Understanding” (invited)

Oxford Philosophy Society

Oxford University

Online and In-Person, February 2026

“The Future of Autistic Space – what should we aim for?” (invited)

Panel on Autistic Space

Online Autscope, February 2026

“Learning About Autism from Autistic People” (invited)

Slugs & Steins, Alumni Association

UC Santa Cruz

Webinar, August 2024

With Nameera Akhtar

“A Rare Experiment in Concept Formation: Hacking on the Creation of a Language for Describing Autistic Experience” (invited)

Perspectives on the Philosophy of Ian Hacking

International Workshop

Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Online and In-Person, November 2023

“A Rare Experiment in Concept Formation: Hacking on the Creation of a Language for Describing Autistic Experience”

Too mad to be true II: The promises and perils of the first-person perspective

University of Ghent and Foundation for Psychiatry and Philosophy

Online and In-Person, May 2023

“Possible Applications of Concepts from Gestalt Psychology to Understanding Autism” (invited)

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Gestalt Psychology: Theoretical and Clinical Perspectives

International Workshop

The Philosophy and Psychology Academic Exchange, Kyoto University

Online, January 2023

“What Can Be Learned from Autistic Autobiographies: Evidence from Book Reviews”

Bay Area Autism Research Consortium, Annual Research Symposium

Stanford, November 2022

“Exploring the Ethical Significance of the Neurodiversity Movement” (invited)

Stanford Neurodiversity Project, Neurodiversity Special Interest Group

Webinar, October 2021

“The Neurodiversity Perspective of Autism: What It Is and How It Matters” (invited)
Slugs & Steins, Alumni Association
UC Santa Cruz
Webinar, August 2021

“Crippling UCSB: Roundtable on Disability Justice” (invited)
UC-Wide Interdisciplinary Panel on Disability
University of California, Santa Barbara (UC Santa Barbara)
Online, May 2021

“Embracing the In-Betweenness of Perceiving the Mental’s and Aspect-Perception’s Normative Dimensions”
(blind review)
International Workshop, New Perspectives on Wittgenstein on Expression
Centre for Ethics as Study in Human Value, at the University of Pardubice
Online, April 2021

“Borders”
Futurefarmers, Wandering Seminar: Fog Inquiry
Institute of the Arts and Sciences
UC Santa Cruz
February, 2020

“Autistic Autobiography” Ten Years Later (invited)
The Philosophy of Ian Hacking Conference, Keynote Speaker
Institute of Philosophy, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Hungary, March 2019

“Fog Inquiry: Perception, Neurobiology & Habits”
Futurefarmers, Wandering Seminar: Fog Inquiry
Sesnon Faculty Gallery, pop-up exhibition and performance
UC Santa Cruz
January, 2019

Comments on Alexander Stern’s “‘The Familiar Face of a Word’: Wittgenstein and Benjamin on the
Experience of Meaning”
Colloquium: Perception
American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting
San Diego, CA, March 2018

“Autism, Aspect-Perception, and Neurodiversity” (invited)
Graduate Research Weekend, Keynote Speaker
Department of Philosophy
UofT
Toronto, Canada, March 2018

“Autism, Aspect-Blindness, and Aspect-Perception” (invited)
Department of Philosophy
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada, February 2018

“Autism, Aspect-Blindness, and Aspect-Perception” (invited)

Institute of Philosophy, University of Iceland
Iceland Autism Society
Reykjavik, Iceland, September 2017

- “Empathy and the Challenge of Neurodiversity” (invited)
The Humyn Experience
Brain, Mind, and Consciousness Society, University of California, Santa Cruz, April 2016
- “Autism, Aspect-Perception, and Deficit Explanations of Human Differences” (blind review)
British Society for the Philosophy of Science
Manchester, United Kingdom, July 2015
- “The Deficit View and Its Critics” (blind review)
Association for the Advancement of Philosophy and Psychiatry 27th annual meeting
Toronto, Canada, May 2015
- “The Deficit View and Its Critics” (invited)
Developmental Psychology Colloquium
Department of Psychology, UC Santa Cruz, May 2015
- “Fixing the Pathological Body” (invited)
Panel on the Pathologization of the Body
Science and Justice Program, UC Santa Cruz, April 2015
- “The Deficit View and Its Critics” (blind review)
Psychiatry beyond Scientism
VU Amsterdam, January 2015
- “The Cultural Fascination with Autism” (invited)
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
UC Santa Cruz, April 2014
- “Autism and the History of the Neurodiversity Movement” (blind review)
Rethinking developmental differences: What historical perspectives can tell us
Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) Biennial Meeting
Seattle, Washington, April 2013
- “Autism and Neurodiversity” (invited)
Center for Cultural Studies Colloquium
UC Santa Cruz, February 2013
- “Mindblindness: A Troubling Metaphor?” (blind review)
Social Political, and Ethical Perspectives on Autism
Bergen Community College, Ethics & Mental Health Speaker Series
New Jersey, April 2012
- “Autism and the Problem of Other Minds” (invited)
Developmental Psychology Colloquium
Department of Psychology, UC Santa Cruz, May 2011
- “Wittgenstein on Köhler’s Account of Visual Experience: Criticisms and Sympathies” (blind review)
Society for Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology, Poster Session

American Psychological Association Annual Convention
Toronto, Canada, August 2009

“Autism and Blindness”

WIDEN (Workshops for Inter-Discipline Exchange and Novelty)
University of Toronto, February 2009

“The Place of the Concept ‘Noticing an Aspect’” (blind review)

North American Wittgenstein Society
Pacific Division Meeting, American Philosophical Association
San Francisco, California, Spring 2008

“Thoughts on Mendelovici’s ‘Does Intentionality Supervene on Phenomenal Character?’”

University of Toronto, Graduate Conference, May 2008

“Frege’s Sense-Reference-Idea Taxonomy and Wittgenstein’s Aspects”

University of Toronto, Workshop Presentation, November 2007

“Wittgenstein on Seeing Aspects”

University of Toronto, Workshop Presentation October 2007

Guest Speaker, *Perspectives on Autism* (UC Santa Cruz, Nameera Akhtar) 2021

Guest Speaker, *Disability and Difference* (UC Santa Cruz, Danilyn Rutherford) 2017

Guest Lecturer, *Brain, Mind, and Consciousness* (UC Santa Cruz) 2016

Guest Lecturer, *Introduction to Philosophy* (UC Santa Cruz, Rasmus Winther) 2015

Guest Lecturer, *Philosophy of Biology* (UC Santa Cruz, Rasmus Winther) 2013

Guest Lecturer, *Philosophy of Psychology* (UC Santa Cruz, Rasmus Winther) 2012

Guest Lecturer, *Wittgenstein* (University of Toronto, Ian Hacking) 2004

Guest Lecturer, *Issues in Philosophy of Mind* (University of Toronto, Gurpreet Rattan) 2003

GRANTS

Inquiry Learning Pilot Project \$2000, 2023, UC Santa Cruz

Committee on Research (COR) faculty allowance \$2000, 2024, UC Santa Cruz

COR faculty allowance \$2000, 2022, UC Santa Cruz

COR travel grant \$700, September 2017, UC Santa Cruz

COR special research grant renewal, \$2070, June 2016, UC Santa Cruz

COR travel grant \$700, May 2015, UC Santa Cruz

COR special research grant \$4500, April 2015, UC Santa Cruz

Institute for Humanities Research, Research Cluster, “Working Group on the Study of Children,” \$5000, 2013-2015, UC Santa Cruz

ACADEMIC AWARDS

Teaching:

Dizikes Faculty Teaching Award in the Humanities, 2020-21, UC Santa Cruz

Stevenson Favorite Faculty Award, 2013, 2016, 2017, UC Santa Cruz

Scholarships and Fellowships:

Gordon Cheesborough Graduate Fellowship, University of Toronto, 2008

University of Toronto Fellowship, 2002-2005

Connaught Fellowship, 2001

Beatty Fellowship, 2000

American Values Scholarship, 1996-1998
John Carroll University Scholarship, 1996-1998

Grants and Bursaries:

SGS Doctoral Completion Grant, University of Toronto, 2004-2006
Travel Grant (UCLA), University of Toronto, 2004

PEDAGOGY RESEARCH and TRAINING

Indigenous Philosophies, Research Scholars Program, with Rob Mata, Cultivamos Excelencia Project, HSI grant, Winter, Spring 2026, UC Santa Cruz

Humanities EXPLORE Undergraduate Research Program, mentor for Jack Anderson and Jaxon Elsner's research on TEQ Deck: Technology. Ethics. Questions. Spring, Summer 2025, UC Santa Cruz

Teaching and Learning Center, Project REAL: Course Redesign for Equity, Spring 2024, UC Santa Cruz

University of California, Office of the President Inquiry Learning Pilot Project, Summer 2023- Spring 2024

Teaching and Learning Center, Faculty Fellow, 2019-2021, UC Santa Cruz

Institute for Humanities Research, Research Cluster, 2017-2018, "Teaching and Learning in the Humanities Now," UC Santa Cruz

Institute for Humanities Research, Research Cluster, 2015-2016, "Contemplative Pedagogy," UC Santa Cruz

Teaching in Higher Education, (advanced graduate student seminar on teaching), 2004, University of Toronto

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Courses Taught

PHIL 11	Introduction to Philosophy (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 22	Ethical Theory (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 80S	The Nature of Science (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 124	Other Minds (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 135	Philosophy of Psychology (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 140	History of Ethics (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 190	Philosophy and Disability (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 190	Philosophy and Psychiatry (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 190	Wittgenstein (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 190	Philosophy of Science: Autism (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 270 (graduate)	Research Seminar (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 233 (graduate)	Aspect Perception and Gestalt Psychology (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 233 (graduate)	Philosophy and Psychiatry (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 290 (graduate)	Wittgenstein's <i>Philosophical Investigations</i> (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 290 (graduate)	Wittgenstein as Philosophical Psychologist (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 290 (graduate)	Scientism, Anti-Scientism, Epistemologies of Ignorance (UC Santa Cruz)
PHIL 203 (graduate)	Autism (UC Santa Cruz)
C36 (3 rd year)	British Empiricism (University of Toronto)
C95 (3 rd year)	Topics in Philosophy of Mind (University of Toronto)
PHL326	Wittgenstein (University of Toronto)

Independent Studies, Directed Readings

Graduate and undergraduate, on topics including aspect-perception, autism, disability, emotions, epistemology of other minds, Gestalt psychology, Ian Hacking, Indigenous philosophies, narrative, neurodiversity, Nietzsche, transhumanism, selfhood, social cognition, suicide, Wittgenstein

Online Teaching

PHI 200	Mind and Machine (Ashford University)
PHI 107	Philosophy of Human Conduct (Ashford University)
PHI 103	Informal Logic: Critical Thinking (Ashford University)

Other Teaching Experience

Tutor, January - June 2013	(one-to-one tutor for autistic teenager)
Respite Worker, June 2009 - September 2010	
Lindamood-Bell Clinician, December 2009 - April 2010	(one-to-one tutor for children and adults with learning difficulties associated with dyslexia, expressive language disorders, and autism)
Tutor, December 2009 – April 2010	(one-to-one tutor for undergraduate and graduate students in Humanities, including Philosophy)

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & SERVICE

Service to the UC Santa Cruz Philosophy Department:

Graduate Program Director, 2023-present
Minorities and Philosophy (MAP) faculty advisor, 2018-present
Climate Committee, 2020-2023
Diversity Liaison, Faculty Search, 2019
Undergraduate Program Director, 2018-2023
Interim Personnel Director, Spring 2023
Pedagogy of Philosophy Course (service role), 2014-2015
Grad Colloquia Prep Course (service role), 2013-2014
Graduate Admissions, Applications Review, 2012-present

Service to UC Santa Cruz:

Associate Director, Center for Public Philosophy, 2020-present
Steering Committee, The Humanities Institute, 2020-2023,
Advisory Committee, The Humanities Institute Director Recruitment, Fall 2021
Vice Chancellor of University Relations Search, Senate Executive Subcommittee,
March 2020
Assembly Representative to the UC Academic Senate, 2018-2020
Senate Executive Committee, 2018-2020
Meaningful Meals, Cowell-Stevenson Collaborative, April 2020
Educational Opportunity Programs Bridge Program faculty dinner, February 2015
Philosophy of Social Science Roundtable, Chair, March 2013
Ethics Bowl, judge, high school and university debates, 2012-present
Philosophy Alumni Panel, February 2012, Cowell College (panelist)
Autism Speaks-U, campus faculty advisor, 2012-2013

Service to the Profession:

Journal referee for *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, *International Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, *Journal of the History of Analytic Philosophy*, *Journal of Philosophical Research*, *Journal of Social Philosophy*, *Neurodiversity*, *Philosophical Psychology*, *Philosophy*, *Psychiatry*, & *Psychology*

Referee for SAGE publishing, new neurodiversity journal proposal, 2021
Referee for Ethical and Responsible Research in STEM, National Science Foundation
Fall 2020

Being in the World, UCLA Alumni Careers Panel, March 2023, UCLA

Editorial Work: John V. Canfield, 2006 (edited manuscript *Becoming Human*, published 2007)
Gurpreet Rattan, 2007 (edited papers for publication)

Research Assistance: Ian Hacking, 2006-2011 (autism, philosophy of science, technology)
Diana Wertz, Stanford Medical School, July 2009 (medical ethics)
Gurpreet Rattan, 2004 (theories of truth, meaning holism)

DISSERTATION COMMITTEES AT UC SANTA CRUZ

Philosophy Committees:

PhD Dissertation Committee Co-Chair, 2025-present, Somreeta Paul

PhD Dissertation Committee, 2022-present, James Read

PhD Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Committee Chair, 2023-present, Karl Fisse

PhD Qualifying Exam Committee Chair, 2023-present, Tate Krogstad

PhD Qualifying Exam Chair, Winter 2026-present, Ansley Avis

PhD Qualifying Exam Committee, Winter 2026-present, Rini Kusyuniati

PhD Qualifying Exam, and Dissertation Committee, 2024-present, Chelsea Qu

PhD Qualifying Exam, and Dissertation Committee, 2024-present, Terri Peszle

PhD Qualifying Exam Committee Co-Chair, 2023-2024, Somreeta Paul

PhD Qualifying Exam Committee, 2024-2025, Enoch Yim

PhD Qualifying Exam, and Dissertation Committee, 2022-2026, Phil Groth

PhD Dissertation Committee, 2024-2026, Dustin Gray

PhD Qualifying Exam, and Dissertation Committee, Chair, 2018-2022, Alyssa Maples

PhD Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Committee, 2018-2021, Mariana Imaz-Sheinbaum

PhD Qualifying Exam Committee, 2019, Alea Grundler

PhD Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Committee, 2018-2020, Aaron Franklin

PhD Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Committee, 2017-2018, Brett Dinovo

PhD Qualifying Exam, 2017, Sean Hunter

PhD Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Committee, 2014-2019, David Donley

PhD Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Committee, 2014-2019, Nikos Knightly

PhD Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Committee, 2012-2017, Lourdes Mercedes Ortiz-Bautista

Non-Philosophy Committees

PhD Qualifying Exam, and Dissertation Committee, 2025-present
Education Department
Yasmine Pandjaitan

PhD Qualifying Exam, and Dissertation Committee, 2025-present
Computational Media
K Kritika

MASTERS THESIS COMMITTEES AT UC SANTA CRUZ

Masters Thesis Committee Chair, 2025-present
Department of Philosophy
Rudi Perez

Masters Thesis Committee, 2021
Department of Philosophy
Gavin Beretvas

Masters Thesis Committee, 2021
Department of Philosophy
Andrey Friedman

Masters Thesis Committee Chair, 2020
Department of Philosophy
Brian Blanchette

Masters Thesis Committee, 2014
Department of Philosophy
Sawyer Hardie

EXTERNAL DISSERTATION COMMITTEES

PhD Dissertation Committee Co-Chair, 2025-present, UC Santa Barbara
Comparative Literature Program
Shanna Killeen

PhD Field Exam, and Dissertation Committee, 2019-2025, UC Santa Barbara
Comparative Literature Program
Shanna Killeen

UNDERGRADUATE ADVISING AT UC SANTA CRUZ

Senior Thesis, Advisor, 2025-2026
Department of Philosophy
Charissa Ziegler

Digital Research Fellow, Faculty Mentor, 2020-2021
Center for Digital Scholarship
William Bortin

Senior Thesis, Reader 2017-2018
Department of Psychology
Noa Lewin