

Nuhu Osman Attah

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AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

[1] Philosophy of AI & ML (incl. Ethics of AI) [2] Philosophy of Mind & Cognitive Science (incl. Psychology & Neuroscience) [3] General Philosophy of Science

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

[1] History of Science (esp. History of Psychology) [2] Logic, Informal Logic & Critical Thinking [3] Medical Ethics/Bioethics [4] Islamic Philosophy

EMPLOYMENT

Assistant Professor, *University of South Carolina* (deferred to January 2027)

Research Fellow, *Australian National University*, March 2025 —

Project: Australian Research Council Grant ARC DP240100400, 'Finding equivalence between natural and artificial intelligences' (PIs: Colin Klein [School of Philosophy, ANU]; Andrew Barron [School of Natural Sciences, Macquarie University])

EDUCATION

University of Pittsburgh, August 2018 – December 2024

(PhD) History and Philosophy of Science.

DISSERTATION: "Talking Machines: Philosophical Essays on Large Language Models"

(Committee: Edouard Machery (co-chair), Colin Allen (co-chair), Cameron Buckner, James Woodward, Sandra Mitchell).

Rutgers University – Newark, September 2014 – May 2018

(BA) Philosophy & (BA, Honors) Psychology (Cognitive Neuroscience).

THESIS: "The Effect of Psychosocial Stress on Unconscious Cognition"

(Advisors: Elizabeth Tricomi, PhD; Dina Mattern, MSc).

PAPERS & CHAPTERS

1. **Attah, N.O.** "Argument Diagrams: Three Constructive Problems", in *'Informal Logic and Critical Thinking in Practice'*, Springer-Verlag: Argumentation Library Series, Eds. Jeffrey Buechner & Joseph Forte. (Forthcoming).

2. **Attah, N.O.** “Talking Machines”, in *‘Introducing Philosophy of Mind, Today’*, Eds. Devin Curry & Louise Daoust. (Forthcoming).
3. **Attah, N.O.** “Do Language Models Lack Communicative Intention?” *Synthese* 205(187) (2025).

COMMENTARIES

1. **Attah, N.O. & Machery, E.**, “Is Evidence of Language of Thought-like Properties Evidence of a Language of Thought Architecture?” *Behavioral & Brain Sciences* 46(e264) (2023) [Response to Quilty-Dunn, Porot, & Mandelbaum, “The Best Game in Town: The Re-Emergence of the Language of Thought Hypothesis Across the Cognitive Sciences” *Behavioral & Brain Sciences* 46(e261)].
2. **Attah, N.O., Di Marco, M., & Plutynski, A.**, “Microbiomes: Proportional Causes in Context” *Biology & Philosophy* 35 (2020) [Response to Lynch et. al., “How causal are microbiomes? A comparison with the Helicobacter pylori explanation of ulcers” *Biology & Philosophy* 34 (2019)].

REVIEWS

1. **Attah, N.O.** Review of “*Empire of AI*” (Rebecca Hao). *Journal of Public Policy and Management* (Forthcoming).

PRE-PRINTS

[Papers I am unlikely to send to a journal but which I have made available on institutional preprint archives]

1. The Work of Art in the Age of Automated Production [[PhilSci Archive](#)]

WORKS IN PROGRESS

1. Paper on comparative methodology in AI Research
2. (With Colin Klein) Paper on representation in (latent) diffusion neural networks.
3. (With Colin Allen et al.) Book on history and philosophy of Mathematical Psychology

REFEREED PRESENTATIONS

A. Philosophy of AI/ML (incl. Ethics of AI)

1. “Do Diffusion Models Represent?” Australian Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Nov 2025.
2. “The Logic of the AI Effect.” Diverse Intelligences Summit, University of St. Andrews, July 2023.
3. “Do Language Models Lack Communicative Intention?” SPP 2023 Poster Session, June 2023. (Accepted, not presented)
4. “Do Language Models Lack Communicative Intention?” NYU Philosophy of Deep Learning Conference 2023.
5. “The Work of Art in the Age of Automated Production: On Generative AI and Human Creativity.” Nov 22, Conceptual Engineering and AI Workshop. Delft Institute for Data Ethics.
6. “Artificial Intelligence, Real Intelligence, and the Logic of the Moving Goalpost “Problem” of the AI Effect.” 2022, Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology.

B. History and Philosophy of Mind & Cognitive Science (incl. Psychology & Neuroscience)

1. “The Normative Contours of Reality: A Case Study from Schizophrenia.” The Sense of Reality, *Institut Jean-Nicod*, Paris, Sep 2024.

2. “On Two Dubious Empirical Assumptions of (Consumer-Based) Teleosemantics.” 2023, Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology.
3. “The Unreasonable Ineffectiveness of Mathematics in Psychology.” Nov 2022, PSA 2022 Poster Session (with Dr. Colin Allen, Brendan Fleig-Goldstein, Mara McGuire, and Dzintra Ullis).
4. “On First-Person Mnemicity Judgments,” Jul 2019, Issue in Philosophy of Memory 2, Center for Philosophy of Memory, Université Grenoble-Alpes.
5. “The Autonomy Thesis and the Limits of Neurobiological Explanation,” Nov 2018, PSA 2018 Poster Session.

C. General Philosophy of Science

1. “For Topological Explanations and Against Mechanistic Fundamentality.” 2020/2021, PSA 2020/2021 Poster Session. (Accepted, not presented)

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

1. “Factfulness and Metalinguistic Agency in Humans and Language Models”, ANU School of Philosophy Seminar Series, June 2025.
2. “Three Questions About Mathematical Psychology,” (with Dr. Colin Allen, Brendan Fleig-Goldstein, Mara McGuire, & Dzintra Ullis), Keynote Address, June/July 2021, Society for Mathematical Psychology/International Conference on Cognitive Modeling.
3. Commentary on “Epistemic Feelings, Heuristics, and the Lima Problem,” Mar 2020, Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology.
4. “Some Problems for Structural Interpretations of Argument Trees,” Jan 2020, Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking (AILACT) Panel, Eastern APA.

PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY

1. “The Ghazalian turn is the beginning, not the end, of Islamic Philosophy.” *Traversing Tradition*, September 2025. [\[link\]](#)
2. “AI models might be drawn to ‘spiritual bliss’. Then again, they might just talk like hippies.” *The Conversation*, May 2025. [\[link\]](#) [\[extended version\]](#)
3. “AI Art and the Existential Trivialization of Creativity” *Public philosophy talk to the UU Humanist Association*, Pittsburgh, 7 May 2024.

TEACHING

1. Primary Instructor, *Philosophy of Science*, ANU, Semester 1, 2026.
2. Primary Instructor, *Logic & Critical Thinking*, ANU, Semester 2, 2025.
3. Primary Instructor, *Morality & Medicine*, University of Pittsburgh, Fall 2024.
4. Primary Instructor, *Automation & The Human Future*, University of Pittsburgh, Spring 2024.
5. Primary Instructor, *Problem Solving: How Science Works*, University of Pittsburgh, Fall 2023.
6. Primary Instructor, *AI & Philosophy of Science*, University of Pittsburgh, Spring 2022.
7. Primary Instructor, *Principles of Scientific Reasoning*, University of Pittsburgh, Fall 2021.
8. Teaching Assistant, *Mind and Medicine*, University of Pittsburgh, Spring 2020.
9. Teaching Assistant, *Morality and Medicine*, University of Pittsburgh, Fall 2019.
10. Teaching Assistant, *Introduction to Psychology*, Rutgers University – Newark, Fall 2016.

SERVICE

A. Administrative Service

Organizer, ANU School of Philosophy Seminar Series, July 2025—February 2026

Philosophy of Science Association, International Relations Committee

September 2024 —

Archive Manager, PhilSci Archive

September 2023 — August 2024

September 2019 — August 2020

Consultant to the Archive Manager, PhilSci Archive

September 2020 — August 2023

HPS Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences Graduate Student Organization Representative

January 2019 – January 2022

Copy Editor, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2017

B. Reviewing and Conference Service

PSA 2026 Program Committee (Area: AI & Data Science)

Reviewer for *Mind & Language*, *Philosophy Compass*, *AI & Ethics*, *Philosophy & Technology*

Reviewer, “Prediction and Punishment: Cross-Disciplinary Workshop on Carceral AI” (2024), Center for Philosophy of Science, University of Pittsburgh.

Symposium Chair, PSA 2022.

Reviewer, Pitt-CMU Graduate Student Philosophy Conference 2020.

Organizing Committee, Pitt-CMU Graduate Student Philosophy Conference 2019.

C. Advising, Mentorship and Other Voluntary Service

Research Mentor for Patrick Hoare (Master’s Student, Bielefeld University)

Graduate Mentor, Pittsburgh Summer Program in Philosophy of Science for Underrepresented Groups

Summer 2019, Summer 2020, Summer 2021, Summer 2022, Summer 2024

ACADEMIC GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS, & FELLOWSHIPS

Diverse Intelligences Summer Institute Fellow (2023)

Wesley C. Salmon Memorial Research Fund (2022)

APA Diversity Institute Alumni Travel Fund (2022)

Research grant for a book on History and Philosophy of Mathematical Psychology (2020 — present)

Lipkin Scholarship, RU-N (2018)

Dean’s Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (2016)

Chancellor Scholarship, RU-N (2014-2018)

HONORS & AWARDS

Phi Beta Kappa, Rutgers University — Newark (Inducted 2017).

National Society of Collegiate Scholars (Inducted 2017).

Charles I. Biederman Award (Best Graduating Student in Philosophy, RU-N) (2018).

Rutgers University — Newark Honors College (2014 — 2018).

REFERENCES

Edouard Machery

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Department of History and Philosophy of Science
Director, Center for Philosophy of Science
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
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Colin Allen

Distinguished Professor
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