

# Rachel Aumiller

The Department of English and Comparative Literature  
Columbia University in the City of New York  
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New York, NY 10027  
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## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- 2022 – present | Lecturer in English and Comparative Literature  
Affiliated Faculty, Institute for the Study of Sexuality and Gender  
Columbia University in the City of New York
- 2020 – 2022 | Fellow, ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry
- 2019 | Fellow, The New Institute, Hamburg
- 2017 – 2019 | Research Associate, Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies, Universität Hamburg
- 2014 – 2015 | U.S. Student Fulbright Scholar, Philosophy, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

## EDUCATION

- 2016 | Ph.D. Philosophy, Villanova University
- 2012 | M.A. Philosophy, Villanova University
- 2009 | B.A. Philosophy with Honors, Magna Cum Laude, Goucher College
- 2007 – 2008 | Visiting Student, Christ Church, University of Oxford

**Areas of Specialization:** 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Continental Philosophy | Social and Political Philosophy | Ethics

**Areas of Competence:** Feminism | Psychoanalysis | Gender and Sexuality | Aesthetics

**Topics:** sensation, affect, desire, subjectivity, relationality, intimacy, lived contradiction

**Doctoral Dissertation:** *The Laughing Matter of Spirit: A Young Hegelian Comedy*  
committee: Yannik Thiem (chair), Walter Brogan, James Wetzel

## AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2018 | Award for Best Submission by a Junior Scholar.  
Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy
- 2016 | The John Tich Research Award, Villanova University
- 2016 | Summer Research Award, Villanova University
- 2015 | The Augustinian Chair Award for Professional Development, Villanova University
- 2014 | Summer Research Award, Villanova University
- 2009 – 2012 | Graduate Assistantship in Philosophy and Theology
- 2009 | Phi Beta Kappa Honors Society

## PUBLICATIONS

### Books

- [1] Aumiller, Rachel. *The Laughing Matter of Spirit*. Diaeresis. (Chicago: Northwestern University Press). Forthcoming. (final manuscript due December 22)

### Edited Collections

- [2] Aumiller, Dolbear, Fleming, Vandeputte. (eds). *Walter Benjamin's 'Fate and Character'* Special Issue. *Diacritics*. under contract.
- [1] Aumiller, Rachel (ed). *A Touch of Doubt: On Haptic Scepticism*. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021).

### Articles/Chapters: Double-Anonymous Peer Review

- [10] Aumiller, Rachel. "Sturges Stuttered: the stammering truth of 'The Miracle of Morgan's Creek.'" Article in preparation for review with *Film-Philosophy*.
- [9] Aumiller, Rachel. "Before the Caress: the expansion of intimacy in suspension." article under review with *Hypatia: Journal for Feminist Philosophy*.
- [8] Aumiller, Rachel. "Erotic Suspension: a phenomenological method, an experience, and ethical responsiveness." *Thinking the Body, The Body as Unthinkable*. Eds. Rebekka A. Klein and Calvin D. Ullrich. Volume under review with Mohr Siebeck, Religion in Philosophy and Theology Series.
- [7] Aumiller, Rachel. "The Virtue of Erotic Curiosity." *Philosophy and Literature*. Vol. 46.1, (2022). 208-222.
- [6] Aumiller, Rachel. "The Aborted Object of Comedy and the Birth of the Subject: Plato and Aristophanes' Alliance." *The Object of Comedy*. Ed. Gregor Moder and Jamila Mascot. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020). 75-92.
- [5] Aumiller, Rachel. "Fantasies of Forgetting Our Mother Tongue." *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. Vol. 33. No. 3 (2019). 368-380. "Best Submission by a Junior Scholar."
- [4] Aumiller, Rachel. "The Lick of the Mother Tongue: Derrida, Augustine and Marx on the Touch of Language." *The Language of Touch: Philosophical Examinations in Linguistics and Haptic Studies*. Ed. Mirt Komel. (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019). 107-120.
- [3] Aumiller, Rachel. "Epoché as the Erotic Conversion of One into Two." *The Yearbook for the Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies in Scepticism*. Vol. 2. (2017). 3-13.
- [2] Aumiller, Rachel. "Antigone's Stance amongst Slovenia's Undead." *Studia ethnologica Croatica*. Vol. 29. (2017). 19-42.
- [1] Aumiller, Rachel. "Dasein's Shadow and the Moment of its Disappearance." *Human Studies: A Journal for Philosophy and the Social Sciences*. Vol. 40, Issue 1 (Spring 2016). 25-41.

### Articles/Chapters: Non-Anonymous Peer Review

- [7] Aumiller, Rachel. "Walking Away, Walking in Circles, Writing Lists." *A Case for Reduction*. Eds. Christoph F.E. Holzey and Jakob Schillinger. (Berlin: ICI Berlin Press, 2022).

- [6] Aumiller, Rachel. "Haptic Reductions: a sceptic's guide for navigating a touch of crisis." *A Case for Reduction*. Eds. Christoph F.E. Holzey and Jakob Schillinger. (Berlin: ICI Berlin Press, 2022).
- [5] Dolbear, Aumiller et al. "Hands Tied: on Maria Lassnig and Ayesha Hameed." *Another Gaze: A Journal for Film and Feminism*. Issue 5. (April 2021). 34-42.
- [4] Aumiller, Rachel. "The Crisis of (Not) Touching." Women in Philosophy Blog Series. The American Philosophical Association. August 2020.
- [3] Aumiller, Rachel. "Sensation & Hesitation: Haptic Scepticism as the Ethics of Touching." [introduction as editor]. *A Touch of Doubt: On Haptic Scepticism*. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020). 2-29.
- [2] Aumiller, Rachel. "Twice-Two: Hegel's Comic Redoubling of Being and Nothing." *Problemi International: Journal for Psychoanalytic Theory and Philosophy*. Vol 2. (Spring 2018). 253-278.
- [1] Aumiller, Rachel. "Censoring Emotional Discourse." *The Crisis and Humanities: Transdisciplinary Solutions*. Ed. Žarko Cvjić, Andrija Filipović, Ana Petrov. (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016). 8-15.

#### Works in Translation

- [6] Dolbear, Aumiller et al. "Hands Tied: on Maria Lassnig and Ayesha Hameed" (English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Korean). *Another Gaze: A Journal for Film and Feminism*. Issue 05. online edition. (April 2021)
- [5] Aumiller, Rachel. "Abortirani objekt komedije in rojstvo subjekta." [The Aborted Object of Comedy and the Birth of the Subject]. (Slovene). Trans. Aleš Mendizevec. *Problemi*. Vol 7-8 (2018). 99-120.
- [4] Aumiller, Rachel. "Polozaj Antigone Medu Slovenskim Besmrtnicima." [Antigone's Stance Amongst Slovenia's Undead] (Serbo-Croat). *Studia ethnologica Croatica*. Vol. 29. (2017). 19-42.
- [3] Aumiller, Rachel. "Dva krat dva." [Two Times Two: Hegel's Tetradic Dialectics] (Slovene) Trans. Maja Lovrenov. *Problemi*. Vol 9-10. (2016) 91-104.
- [2] Aumiller, Rachel. Do zadnjega smeha: Preston Sturges [To Die Laughing: Preston Sturges]. (Slovene) Ed. Ivana Novak. (Ljubljana: Slovenska Kinoteka, 2016).
- [1] Aumiller, Rachel. Hegel in Marx o gledališkem in historičnem prizorišču komedije." [Hegel and Marx on the Theatrical and Historical Stage of Comedy]. (Slovene) Trans. Lev Kreft. *Borec: A Journal for Slovene Philosophy and Culture*. Vol. 706-708. (Fall/Winter 2014). 140-159.

## PRESENTATIONS

[50 in total]

### Refereed Conference Papers

- [18] "Erotic Suspension: The Expansion of Intimacy in Isolation." Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. College Station, TX. October 13-15, 2022.
- [17] "Grasping Oneself by the Nothing: The Comedy of Negative Self-Reference and Resistance." Historical Materialism. London. November 7-10, 2019.
- [16] "Counting to Four with Hegel and the Ljubljana School of Psychoanalysis." Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. Pittsburgh. October 31-November 2, 2019.
- [15] "Dramatic Resistance: Benjamin on Satire and Partisan Frontline Theater." Historical Materialism. Panteion University. Athens. May 2-5, 2019.
- [14] "Fantasies of Forgetting our Mother Tongue." Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. State College. Oct 19, 2018. Best Submission by a Junior Scholar.
- [13] "The Laughter of the Damned." Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. Memphis. Oct. 20, 2017.
- [12] "Benjamin's Comic Temporality of Hell." Historical Materialism. BICAR and the American University of Beirut. Beirut. March 11, 2017.
- [11] "Spinoza on the Passions Belonging to Time." The American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division. Baltimore. January 8, 2017.
- [10] "The Repetition of Nothing in Tetradic Dialectics." Repetition/s Conference. Ljubljana. September 23, 2016.
- [9] "Censoring Emotional Discourse," Beyond the Crisis in the Humanities. Belgrade. April 25, 2015.
- [8] "The Censorship of Affect," Collegium Phaenomenologicum. Città di Castello. July 7, 2014
- [7] "Dasein's Shadow and the Moment of its Disappearance in Being and Time." The Heidegger Circle. Tampa. May 11, 2014.
- [6] "Marx on the Censorship of Laughter." The Philosophy and Literature Conference on Humor and Philosophical Practice. Purdue University. Purdue. March 28, 2014.
- [5] "Spinoza on the Temporal Passions." Duquesne Graduate Philosophy Conference. Pittsburgh. February 22, 2014.
- [4] "The (Narrative) Space of Conversion: Queer Spatial and Sexual Reorientation." The International Association of Philosophy and Literature Conference. Tallinn. May 30, 2012.
- [3] "Comic Anguish: Marx and Hegel on the Historical Stage of Comedy." Marx and the Aesthetic Conference. University of Amsterdam. Amsterdam. May 12, 2012.
- [2] "The Trace of the Animal in the Confessions of Man in Derrida's Circumfession." animal.machine.sovereign Conference. The State University of New York at Buffalo. Buffalo. April 15, 2011.

- [1] "The Comedy of Religion: Left Hegelian Comedy as Political Action." The Spirit of Capital Conference. The New School for Social Research. New York City. April 29, 2011.

### Invited Lectures

- [17] Book Presentation on *A Laughing Matter of Spirit* (Northwestern University). Humor as a Human Right: AHSN Humor Studies Conference. The University of Sydney. February 2023.
- [16] "Intimacy Beyond the Reach of the Caress." Thinking of the Body – The Body as Unthinkable. Ruhr Universität. Bochum. July 27, 2022.
- [15] "Earthings and Spacemen: The Masses of the New Elites." Radical Philosophy Talks. Spider Festival. Ljubljana. June 16, 2022.
- [14] "Radical Ecology and Ethics: Introducing Merchant's Eco-Feminism to Ecologists." Hochschule für nachhaltige Entwicklung Eberswalde. April 6, 2022.
- [13] "An Ethics of Self-Care for Our Collective Existence." Environmental Responsibility. Beyond Borders. Hamburg. August 29, 2021.
- [12] "Teaching Hegel into the Future: pedagogy, technology, and sensation." *Aufhebung*: International Association for Hegelian Studies. Goethe-Institut. Ljubljana. August 27, 2021.
- [11] "Testifying to Contradiction: Reassessing Accounts of Trauma." Preventing Secondary Victimization of Children through Statement Analysis. University of Ljubljana. August 25, 2021
- [10] "Between Isolation and Immersion: the ethics of caressing in the dark." Touched: Transdisciplinary Perspectives. Meeting of Touch, Arts, Affects. Sorbonne University. Paris. June 30, 2021
- [9] "Erotic Suspension: The Transformation of Desire in Isolation." Virtual Enjoyment Lecture Series. The Dormant Office. Amsterdam. February 27, 2021
- [8] "Postwar Slovenian Memorialization as Performative *Epoché*." Political Seminar Series for Max Weber Fellows on Art of Indignation in the age of (D)anger. Ljubljana. August 23, 2018.
- [7] "The Comic Slapstick of Revelation and Resistance: Walter Benjamin & WWII Comedy" Public Lecture Series in Jewish Philosophy. The University of Hamburg. Hamburg. June 25, 2018.
- [6] "Aborted Concepts: the merging of ancient comedy and skepticism." Concept(s): Hegel's Aesthetics. Ljubljana. January 13, 2018.
- [5] "Walking in Circles: the repetition of historical suspension (Antigone in postwar Yugoslavia)." *Aufhebung*: International Hegelian Association. Ljubljana. September 7, 2017
- [4] "The Young Hegelians on Comic Critique and Religious Affect." The May Day School: Capitalism and Religion. Ljubljana. April 28, 2016.

- [3] "Repeating Comedy Comically (or) Why Four is Funnier than Two." History as Tragedy, Comedy and Farce: Workshop on Benjamin, Marx, Hegel, and Lacan. The American University of Beirut. Beirut. March 31, 2016
- [2] "Finding Antigone amongst Slovenia's Undead." Socialist Monuments and Modernism International Symposium. Funded by Creative Europe Program of the European Union Project: Heroes We Love. MaMa. Zagreb. November 6, 2015.
- [1] "Sturges Stuttered: The Stammering Truth of Comedy." To Die Laughing: A Retrospective of Preston Sturges. Hosted by Slovenian Cinematheque. Ljubljana. October 20, 2015.

### Workshop Talks and Interviews

- [15] Book Interview On A Touch of Doubt: On Haptic Scepticism. Interview by Ari Barbalat for New Books Network podcast. Recorded on October 9, 2022.
- [14] "A Hesitant Caress: An Ethics of Intimacy with Irigaray." Naming Touch. ICI Berlin. June 28, 2022.
- [13] "Dwelling in Reduction: a skeptic's guide for times of disruption." A Case for Reduction. Public Workshop. ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry. November 22-23, 2021.
- [12] "Reduction as Movement-in-Suspension." *'Reduction as...'* Colloquium. ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry. June 21-22, 2021.
- [11] "Practices of Self-Reduction and Expansion through Musser's Surface Play." Reductive Experience Colloquium. ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry. March 9, 2021.
- [10] "Reductions of Touch and Sensual Excess." Internal Colloquium. ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry. November 11, 2020
- [9] "Burning Down the Comic Stage" Response to Meryl Lumba. "Women and Comic Heroines: A Look at Hegel on Aristophanian Comedy" The American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division. Philadelphia. January 8-11, 2020.
- [8] "The Body of Belief: Augustine's *Confessions* and Derrida's *Circumfession*." The Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies Internal Event. Hamburg. September 25, 2018.
- [7] "The Emergence of Religious Subjectivity in the Consummation of Ancient Comedy and Scepticism." The Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies Internal Workshop. Hamburg. April 12, 2018.
- [6] "Translating Touch into Concepts and Concepts into Art." On the Making of Haptic Cinema: artists and philosophers reflect on a collaborative international film project. Villanova University, Villanova: May 9, 2018. New School for Social Research, NYC: May 10, 2018. May 11, 2018.
- [5] "Framing the Skeptic as the Compulsive Toucher." Workshop on Touch and Doubt. The Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies. Hamburg. March 27, 2018.
- [4] "Epoché as the Erotic Conversion of One into Two." The Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies Internal Workshop. Hamburg. July 26, 2017
- [3] "Queering Conversion." Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Colloquium. University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia. April 2012.

[2] “De-conversions.” Faith and Philosophy Symposium. Villanova University. Villanova. April 2012

[1] “Beauty, Necessity and the Material World: A Response to Iris Murdoch’s The Sovereignty of Good.” Villanova Philosophy and Theology Colloquium. Philadelphia. October 2009.

## FUNDED COLLABORATION

**Das Zukunftsbuch: Multidimensionale Dialektik**  
Goethe-Institut Ljubljana and Berlin, Exzellenzprojekt  
2020-2021 | Project co-creator with Urban Srimpf et al.

**VERBUM SAT** - *Developing forensic statement analysis standards to fight CAE: A victim centered approach.* University of Ljubljana, The European Commission for Justice  
2019-2021 | Contributing Researcher

**Jewish Skepticism**  
The Maimonides Centre, Universität Hamburg  
2017-2019 | Research Associate, Con. Grant Writer, Subproject Leader “Haptic Skepticism”

**Haptic Cinematography: Touching Concepts – Conceptualizing Touch**  
The Slovenian Research Council | USA, Germany, Slovenia  
2017–2018 | Project Director and Creator

**The Language of Touch: Linguistic Perspectives in Haptic Studies**  
The University of Ljubljana, The Slovenian Research Council, Finalist for ERC starting grant  
2016-2019 | Researcher and Contributing Grant Writer

## COURSES TAUGHT

[11 courses, 20 sections in total]

### 2022- | Columbia University in the City of New York

**Feminist Theory** | Spring 2023  
upper-level course for the Institute for the Study of Sexuality and Gender, 4 credits

**Literature Humanities** | Fall 2022, Spring 2023  
European literature and philosophy masterpieces for Core Curriculum Program, 4 credits

### 2021 | Goethe-Institut, Ljubljana and Hamburg

**Hegels Herr-Knecht-Dialektik: Die Visualisierung der Macht** | Spring 2021  
A guided reading seminar that compares the German text with three translations  
six-part intensive online meetings, 20 hours, 14 students

### 2017-2020 | Universität Hamburg, Germany

**Existential Ontology and Ethics** | Spring 2020  
*Sartre’s Being and Nothingness* and *de Beauvoir’s Ethics of Ambiguity*  
online graduate philosophy seminar, 4 credits, 24 students

**Twentieth-Century Continental Philosophy** | modified for Spring 2020

Philosophy as a Response to Global Crisis and Trauma  
graduate philosophy seminar, 4 credits

**Environmental Ethics | Fall 2019**

A Marxist-Feminist Approach to Sustainability  
graduate philosophy seminar, 4 credits, 29 students

**The Ego and the Skin | Spring 2019**

Feminist and Psychoanalytic Philosophies of the Formation of Self through Touch  
graduate philosophy seminar, 4 credits, 33 students

**Repetitions and Revolutions | Spring 2018**

Hegelian and Post-Hegelian Philosophies of History  
graduate philosophy seminar, 4 credits, 10 students

**The Comedy of Politics | Fall 2017**

Political Philosophy and Aesthetics on Propaganda and Satire  
graduate philosophy seminar, 4 credits, 15 students

**2012-2016 | Villanova University, USA**

**Introduction to Ethics: The Good Life | Fall 2016 (2 sections)**

The (Unorthodox) History of Virtue Ethics from Antiquity to the Present  
undergraduate core course, 3 credits, ~ 50 students total

**Introduction to Philosophy: Knowledge, Reality, Self | Fall 2012 (1 section), Spring 2013 (2 sections), Fall 2013 (2 sections), Spring 2014 (3 sections)**

The History of Western Philosophy: told through dialogues, soliloquies, and manifestos  
undergraduate core course, 3 credits, ~ 200 students total

**OTHER TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**Mentorship**

Master's Thesis Advisor | Tjark Lüneberg. "The Lacanian Interpretation of the Freudian Death Drive and the Pathology of Perversions," Universität Hamburg, 2021.

Master's Thesis Advisor | Erika Rotärmel. „Diskussion der moralischen Vertretbarkeit von aktiver Sterbehilfe und assistiertem Suizid bei Kindern mit Einwilligungsfähigkeit anhand ausgewählter Kriterien.“ Universität Hamburg, 2021.

**Summer Schools**

Text Seminar Leader. Collegium Phaenomenologicum, *Cosmology and Cosmopolitanism*. Città di Castello, (planned for July 24-28, 2023).

**Teaching Training**

Columbia University Core Curriculum Weekly Lecture Series on Pedagogy | 2022-24

Certificate of Mentored Teaching | 2012-2013

For successful completion of seminars on university teaching with observation of class performance | The Villanova Institute for Teaching and Learning



Teaching Assistantship | 2012-2013

Villanova University | Professor John Immerwahr | Introduction to Philosophy Courses

## ORGANIZED CONFEERENCES

Naming Touch: perspectives on haptic experience and language from anthropology, philosophy, and psychoanalysis. ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry. June 28-29, 2022

Suspending Touch: Haptic Skepticism for Life During a Pandemic. ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry. May 20, 2021

The Making of Haptic Cinema: workshop series as part of the collaborative international film and philosophy project. Universität Hamburg: March 27, 2018. Villanova University: May 9, 2018. New School for Social Research: May 11, 2018

Haptic Cinema: An international project in cinematography and philosophy of touch and language. Project Director. USA. Slovenia. 2017-2018

A Touch of Doubt: On Haptic Scepticism. The University of Hamburg. March 27-28, 2018

Apocalyptic Politics. Villanova's 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Philosophy Conference. April 12-13, 2013

## EDITORIAL POSITIONS

Managing Editor | 2017-2019

Studies and Texts in Scepticism (Berlin: De Gruyter).

Assistant Editor | 2010-2011

Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy

Assistant Managing Editor | 2007

Poet Lore: North America's oldest literary journal

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Referee. Book Selection Advisory Committee. Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. 2021-2023

Referee. for scientific journals and publishers including: Epochē, Political Theology, Journal for Speculative Philosophy, De Gruyter, Social Theory and Practice

Book Exhibit Coordinator. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting of The Society of Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. Philadelphia: October 2011

Graduate Assistant to Local Host. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting of Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. Philadelphia: October 2011

## LANGUAGES

**English:** native speaker

**Latin:** advanced C1; graduate exams; translation courses; undergraduate concentration

**German:** intermediate B2.2; intensive courses in Hamburg and Berlin; private lessons

**French:** adequate for research A2; graduate translation exams; undergraduate courses

**Slovene:** adequate for research A1; intensive course in Ljubljana

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Aufhebung International Hegelian Association  
The American Philosophical Association  
Historical Materialism  
The International Association of Philosophy and Literature  
Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy  
Touch, Arts, Affects Society

## REFERENCES

Professor Yannik Thiem  
Department of Religious Studies  
Columbia University  
relationship: doctoral dissertation advisor  
[yannik.thiem@columbia.edu](mailto:yannik.thiem@columbia.edu)

Professor Walter Brogan  
Department of Philosophy  
Villanova University  
relationship: doctoral dissertation reader  
[walter.brogan@villanova.edu](mailto:walter.brogan@villanova.edu)

Professor Alenka Zupančič  
Institute of Philosophy  
Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts  
relationship: Fulbright sponsor  
[alenka.zupancic@guest.arnes.si](mailto:alenka.zupancic@guest.arnes.si)

Professor Mladen Dolar  
Department of Philosophy  
University of Hamburg  
relationship: Fulbright supervisor / collaborator  
[mladen.dolar@ff.uni-lj.si](mailto:mladen.dolar@ff.uni-lj.si)