

# ALEXANDRA RETT

Department of Psychology, UC San Diego  
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## EDUCATION

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- 2025  
(Expected)            **PhD Candidate, Developmental Psychology**  
University of California, San Diego  
Advisor: Dr. Caren Walker
- 2018                    **MAc, Developmental & Communication Science**  
University of Waterloo, Canada  
Advisor: Dr. Katherine White
- 2017                    **BSc, Honours Psychology, Co-op; minor in Biology**  
University of Waterloo, Canada  
Honors Thesis Advisor: Dr. Stephanie Denison

## AWARDS

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| NSERC Postgraduate Scholarship: PGS-D (\$63000)  | 2019 - 2022 |
| Travel Award for Development 2018<br><i>A Canadian Conference on Developmental Psychology</i>                      | 2018        |
| Honours Thesis Award, University of Waterloo<br><i>1 of 19 awards for outstanding Honours Thesis in Psychology</i> | 2017        |
| NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award (\$4500)  | 2016        |
| University of Waterloo President's Scholarship   | 2012        |
| Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) Scholarship, Brampton   | 2012        |

## PUBLICATIONS

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- Retz, A.**, Amemiya, J., Hwang, B., Goldwater, M., & Walker, C.M. (2024). Children's Recognition of Causal System Categories Across Superficially Distinct Events. *Developmental Psychology*.
- Retz, A.**, & White, K. S. (2022). Children treat grammatical errors differently for native and non-native speakers. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13.
- Walker, C.M., **Retz, A.**, Bonawitz, E. (2020). Design Drives Discovery in Causal Learning. *Psychological Science*. 31(2), 129-138.
- Labbé, C., Leung, Y., Silva Lemes, J. G., Stewart, E., Brown, C., Cosio, A. P., Patel, D., Liang, M., Gill, G., **Retz, A.**, . . . Howell, D. (2017). Real-world EQ5D health utility scores for patients with metastatic lung cancer by molecular alteration and response to therapy. *Clinical Lung Cancer*, 18(4), 388-395.e4.

## PEER REVIEWED CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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**Rett, A.,** Goldwater, M., & Walker, C.M. (2025). Reasoning about similar causal structures among mechanical systems. *Proceedings of the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*. San Francisco, CA: Cognitive Science Society.

**Rett, A.,** Amemiya, J., Goldwater, M., & Walker, C.M. (2021). Children's Use of Causal Structure When Making Similarity Judgments. *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*. (Virtual Meeting) Vienna, Austria: Cognitive Science Society.

**Rett, A. & Walker, C. M.** (2020). Knowing when to quit: Children consider access to solutions when deciding whether to persist. *Proceedings of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*. (Virtual Meeting) Toronto, CA: Cognitive Science Society.

**Rett., A.,** Bonawitz, E., & Walker, C. M. (2019). The Design of the Learning Environment Shapes Preschoolers' Causal Inference. In A. Goel, C. Seifert, & C. Freska (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 41st Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*. Montreal, CA: Cognitive Science Society.

## CONFERENCE TALKS & POSTER PRESENTATIONS

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**Rett, A.,** Burke, A., & Walker, C. M. (May, 2025). Do preschoolers integrate social cues with access to solutions when deciding whether to persist? **Conference Talk** presented at the 2025 meeting of the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Minneapolis, MN.

**Rett, A. & Walker, C. M.** (March, 2024). How access to solutions influences children's persistence. **Poster** presented at the 2024 meeting of the Cognitive Development Society, Pasadena, CA.

**Rett, A.,** Amemiya, J., Goldwater, M., & Walker, C.M. (2022). Children's recognition of shared causal structure in mechanical systems. **Flash Talk** presented at the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Toronto, Canada.

**Rett, A.,** Amemiya, J., Goldwater, M., & Walker, C.M. (2022). Children's use of causal structure when making similarity judgments. **Conference Talk** presented at the 2022 meeting of Cognitive Development Society, Madison, WI.

**Rett, A.,** Amemiya, J., Goldwater, M., & Walker, C.M. (2021). Children's use of causal structure when making similarity judgments. **Poster** presented at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (virtual).

**Rett, A. & Walker, C. M.** (2020). Knowing when to quit: Children consider access to solutions when deciding whether to persist. **Poster** presented at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (virtual).

**Rett, A.,** Geller, E. H., & Walker, C. M. (October, 2019). Is getting it wrong right?: Comparing prompts to explain and predict in children's causal reasoning. **Poster** presented at the 2019 meeting of the Cognitive Development Society. Louisville, KY.

- Rett, A., Bonawitz, E., Choi, K., & Walker, C. M.** (July, 2019). "I Never Even Considered That!": Investigating explanations for adults' failures to learn conjunctive causal rules. **Poster** presented at the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society. Montreal, CA: Cognitive Science Society.
- Rett, A., Bonawitz, E., Choi, K., & Walker, C. M.** (July, 2019). When evidence alone is not enough: Facilitating the generation of unusual causal hypotheses. **Poster** presented at the 2019 meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology, San Diego, California.
- Rett, A. & White, K.** (March, 2019). Who knows what to call this toy? Children's learning from native and foreign-accented speakers. **Poster** presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Baltimore, Maryland.
- Rett, A. & White, K.** (March, 2019). Children's attention to errors in native and foreign-accented speech. **Poster** presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Baltimore, Maryland.
- Rett, A., Khanna, S., White, K., & Denison, S.** (2018). Hearing the difference: Four-year-olds' question asking behaviour when learning novel words. **Poster** presented at Development 2018: A Canadian Conference on Developmental Psychology, St. Catharines, Ontario
- Rett, A. & White, K.** (2018). Children's attention to errors in native and non-native speech. **Poster** presented at Graduate Psychology Discovery Conference, Waterloo, Ontario

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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- Teaching Assistant, Department of Psychology, UC San Diego** 2019 - 2025  
 Courses: *Research Methods; Laboratory in Psychological Research Methods; Developmental Psychology; Cognitive Development in Infancy; General Psychology: Developmental Foundations; General Psychology: Social Foundations; General Psychology: Biological Foundations*
- Teaching Assistant, Department of Psychology, University of Waterloo** 2017 - 2018  
 Psych 207: Cognitive Processes (Winter 2018)  
 Psych 101: Introductory Psychology (Fall 2017)

## SERVICE & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

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### Reviewing

Journals (ad hoc): *Child Development, npj Science of Learning, Cognitive Science Society*

### Campus-Based Service

Psychology Department Outreach Volunteer 2021  
 Co-Coordinator, Psychology Colloquium Talk Series, UCSD 2019-2020

### Undergraduate Student Mentees

Shanthi Kuppa (Honors Thesis)  
 Iliana Kleiner (Psyc 199 & B.S. paper supervision)  
 Brendan Hwang (Psyc 199 & B.S. paper supervision)

Silvana Mendoza (Psyc 199)  
Nazgol Behdinan (Psyc 199 & B.S. paper supervision)  
Amy Bennett (Psyc 199 & B.S. paper supervision)  
Lacey O'Neal (Psyc 199)

### **Professional Memberships**

Cognitive Development Society; Cognitive Science Society; Society for Philosophy and Psychology;  
Society for Research in Child Development

## **ADDITIONAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

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<b>Research Fellow</b> <i>Center for Advanced Design Research and Evaluation (CADRE)</i>	2025
<b>Community Testing Coordinator</b> <i>Developmental Learning Lab, University of Waterloo</i>	2017
<b>Research Assistant</b> <i>Developmental Learning Lab, University of Waterloo</i> <i>Besner Lab, University of Waterloo</i>	2015-2017 2014-2015
<b>Undergraduate Student Researcher (NSERC USRA)</b> <i>Infant Studies Group, University of Waterloo</i>	2016
<b>Research Analyst</b> <i>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Waterloo Region</i>	2016
<b>Clinical Research Assistant</b> <i>Dr. Geoffrey Liu's lab; Princess Margaret Cancer Centre</i>	2015