

Aaron J. Dinkin

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Current position

Associate Professor, San Diego State University

Education

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia PA: Ph.D. in Linguistics, 2009
Dissertation: *Dialect Boundaries and Phonological Change in Upstate New York*
(supervisor: William Labov)
Linguistic Society of America Summer Institute, 2005, Cambridge MA
Harvard University, Cambridge MA: A.B. in Mathematics, 2002, *magna cum laude*
Commonwealth School, Boston MA: graduated 1998

Research interests

Sociophonetics and phonology; language variation and change; dialect geography;
English

Publications

- Dinkin, Aaron J. & Meredith Tamminga (to appear). **"Searching for homophony avoidance in English coronal stop deletion"**. *Phonology*.
- Dinkin, Aaron J. & Katie Carmichael (to appear). **"When PALMs are in your THOUGHTs, You Head South: Evidence for Diffusion of the Low-Back Vowel System from New York to New Orleans"**. *American Speech*.
- Dinkin, Aaron J. (2022). **"Adjusting to the New Normal(ization): Adapting Atlas of North American English Benchmarks to Lobanov-Normalized Data"**. *Penn Working Papers in Linguistics* 28.2:31–40.
- Dinkin, Aaron J. (2022). **"Generational Phases: Toward the Low-Back Merger in Cooperstown, New York"**. *Journal of English Linguistics* 50.3:219–246.
- Thiel, Anja & Aaron J. Dinkin (2020). **"Escaping the TRAP: Losing the Northern Cities Shift in Real Time"**. *Language Variation and Change* 32.3:373–398.
- Dinkin, Aaron J. (2020). **"The Foot of the Lake: A Sharp Dialect Boundary in Rural Northern New York"**. *American Speech* 95.3:321–355.
- ~~ (2018). **"It's No Problem to be Polite: Apparent-Time Change in Responses to Thanks"**. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 22.2:190–215. An earlier version appeared in *Penn Working Papers in Linguistics* 23.2:58–67 (2017).
- Maddeaux, Ruth & Aaron J. Dinkin (2017). **"Is Like Like Like?: Evaluating the Same Variant Across Multiple Variables"**. *Linguistics Vanguard* 3.1.
- Dinkin, Aaron J. & Robin Dodsworth (2017). **"Gradience, Allophony, and Chain Shifts"**. *Language Variation and Change* 29:101–127.
- Dinkin, Aaron J. (2016). **"Variant-Centered Variation and the Like Conspiracy"**. *Linguistic Variation* 16.2:221–246. Reprinted in Lignos, Constantine, Laurel

- Mackenzie, & Meredith Tamminga (eds.) (2018), *The Locus of Linguistic Variation* 71–96, Benjamins Current Topics 97, John Benjamins, Philadelphia.
- ~~ (2016). **“Phonological Transfer as a Forerunner of Merger in Upstate New York”**. *Journal of English Linguistics* 44.2:162–188.
- ~~ (2013). **“Settlement Patterns and the Eastern Boundary of the Northern Cities Shift”**. *Journal of Linguistic Geography* 1.1:4–30.
- ~~ (2013). **“What’s Really Happening to Short A Before L in Philadelphia?”** *American Speech* 88.1:7–31.
- ~~ (2012). **“Toward a Unified Theory of Chain Shifting”**. In Terttu Nevalainen & Elizabeth Closs Traugott (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of English* 748–760, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- ~~ (2011). **“Weakening Resistance: Progress Toward the Low Back Merger in New York State”**. *Language Variation and Change* 23.3:315–345. An earlier version appeared in *Penn Working Papers in Linguistics* 15.2:60–69 (2010).
- ~~ (2011). **“Nasal Short-a Systems vs. the Northern Cities Shift”**. *Penn Working Papers in Linguistics* 17.2:71–80.
- Labov, William, Maciej Baranowski, & Aaron Dinkin (2010). **“The Effect of Outliers on the Perception of Sound Change”**. *Language Variation and Change* 22.2:175–190.
- Dinkin, Aaron J. & Keelan Evanini (2010). **“An Elementary Linguistic Definition of Upstate New York”**. *Penn Working Papers in Linguistics* 16.2:36–45.
- Dinkin, Aaron J. (2008). **“The Real Effect of Word Frequency on Phonetic Variation”**. *Penn Working Papers in Linguistics* 14.1:97–106.
- Friesner, Michael & Aaron J. Dinkin (2006). **“The Acquisition of Native and Local Phonology by Russian Immigrants in Philadelphia”**. *Penn Working Papers in Linguistics* 12.2:91–104.
- Dinkin, Aaron J. (2005). **“Mary, Darling, Make Me Merry; Say You’ll Marry Me: Tense-Lax Neutralization in the Linguistic Atlas of New England”**. *Penn Working Papers in Linguistics* 11.2:73–90.

Book reviews

- Dinkin, Aaron J. (2024). **“Sociophonetics on the Silver Screen”**. Review of Boberg, Charles (2021): *Accent in North American Film and Television*. *American Speech* 99.1:91–100.
- Dinkin, Aaron J. (2021). Review of Stanford, James (2019): *New England English: Large-Scale Acoustic Sociophonetics and Dialectology*. *Journal of English Linguistics* 49.3:338–341.

Conference presentations

Handouts are available at <http://ling.upenn.edu/~dinkin>.

Invited keynote address

- Dinkin, Aaron (2014). **“Two Types of Dialect Features and Two Types of Dialect Boundaries”**. Presented at TULCON 7, Toronto.

Other conference research presentations

- Dinkin, Aaron (2024). **“Changes in Dialect and Dialect Perception in Cooperstown, New York”**. Presented at the American Dialect Society annual meeting 2024, New York.

- Dinkin, Aaron (2022). **"Local Attitudes and Dialect Change in a Tourist Town"**. Presented at the American Dialect Society annual meeting 2022, Washington, D.C. (online).
- Carmichael, Katie & Aaron Dinkin (2022). **"Making a Merger: Social and Linguistic Factors in the Low Back Merger in New Orleans English"**. Poster presented at the American Dialect Society annual meeting 2022, Washington, D.C. (online).
- Dinkin, Aaron & Katie Carmichael (2021). **"Grandfawther's Mardi Graw: The PALM vowel in New Orleans"**. Poster presented at NWAV 49, Austin, Tex. (online).
- Dinkin, Aaron (2021). **"Adjusting to the New Normal(ization): Adapting *Atlas of North American English* Benchmarks to Lobanov-Normalized Data"**. Presented at NWAV 49, Austin, Tex. (online).
- Dinkin, Aaron (2019). **"Generational Phases: The Low Back Vowels in Cooperstown, New York"**. Presented at NWAV 48, Eugene, Ore.
- ~~ (2019). **"Low Back Merger Encroaching at a Stable Dialect Boundary in Northern New York"**. Presented at the American Dialect Society annual meeting 2019, New York.
- ~~ (2018). **"Revisiting the Inland North Fringe"**. Presented at NWAV 47, New York.
- Forrest, Jon, Aaron Dinkin & Robin Dodsworth (2017). **"Word Frequency in a Contact-Induced Change"**. Presented at NWAV 46, Madison, Wisc.
- Thiel, Anja & Aaron Dinkin (2017). **"Escaping the TRAP: Losing the Northern Cities Shift in Real Time"**. Presented at NWAV 46, Madison, Wisc.
- Dinkin, Aaron (2017). **"Changing Phonology, Stable Borders: The Low Back Merger in Northern New York"**. Presented at the Canadian Linguistic Association annual conference 2017, Toronto.
- ~~ (2016). **"It's No Problem to be Polite: Apparent-Time Change in Responses to Thanks"**. Presented at NWAV 45, Vancouver, B.C.
- Severance, Nathan, Keelan Evanini, & Aaron Dinkin (2016). **"Examining the Reliability of Automated Vowel Analyses Using FAVE"**. Presented at NoWPhon 2, Eugene, Ore.
- Maddeaux, Ruth & Aaron Dinkin (2015). **"Is Like Like Like?: Evaluating the Same Variant Across Multiple Variables"**. Presented at NWAV 44, Toronto.
- Severance, Nathan, Keelan Evanini, & Aaron Dinkin (2015). **"Examining the Performance of FAVE for Automated Sociophonetic Vowel Analyses"**. Presented at NWAV 44, Toronto.
- Dinkin, Aaron (2015). **"The Like Conspiracy: Avoiding Accountability"**. Presented at Penn Linguistics Conference 39, Philadelphia.
- Dinkin, Aaron & Robin Dodsworth (2014). **"Gradience, Allophony, and the Southern Shift Trigger"**. Presented at Methods XV, Groningen.
- Dinkin, Aaron (2014). **"A Phonological Variable in a Textual Medium: (ing) in Online Chat"**. Presented at CVC 8, Kingston, Ont.
- ~~ (2013). **"Linguistic and Non-Linguistic Regions in Perceptual Dialectology"**. Poster presented at NWAV 42, Pittsburgh.
- ~~ (2013). **"Changing Roles of Regional Boundaries and Isoglosses"**. Presented at the American Dialect Society annual meeting 2013, Boston.
- ~~ (2012). **"Cooperstown, New York as a Site of New-Dialect Formation"**. Presented at NWAV 41, Bloomington, Ind.
- Dinkin, Aaron, William Labov, & Ingrid Rosenfelder (2011). **"What's Really Happening to Short A Before L in Philadelphia?"** Presented at NWAV 40, Washington, D.C.
- Dinkin, Aaron (2011). **"Toward a Unified Theory of Chain Shifting"**. Presented at Methods XIV, London, Ont., and at NWAV 40, Washington, D.C.
- ~~ (2010). **"Nasal Short-a Systems vs. the Northern Cities Shift"**. Presented at NWAV 39, San Antonio, Tex.

- ~~ (2010). **"The Present-Day Dialectological Status of the Hudson Valley"**. Presented at the 55th Conference of the International Linguistic Association, New Paltz, N.Y.
- ~~ (2010). **"Phonological Transfer as a Forerunner of Merger in Upstate New York"**. Presented at the American Dialect Society annual meeting 2010, Baltimore.
- Dinkin, Aaron & Michael Friesner (2009). **"Transmission or Diffusion?: NYC-like Short A in Southeast Florida and the Hudson Valley"**. Presented at NWAV 38, Ottawa.
- Dinkin, Aaron & Keelan Evanini (2009). **"An Elementàry Linguistic Definition of Upstate New York"**. Presented at NWAV 38, Ottawa.
- Dinkin, Aaron (2008). **"Weakening Resistance: Progress Toward the Low Back Merger in New York State"**. Presented at NWAV 37, Houston.
- ~~ (2008). **"Fading In and Out of the Inland North"**. Presented at Methods XIII, Leeds.
- ~~ (2008). **"Settlement Patterns and the Eastern Boundary of the Northern Cities Shift"**. Presented at the American Dialect Society annual meeting 2008, Chicago.
- Dinkin, Aaron & William Labov (2007). **"Bridging the Gap: Dialect Boundaries and Regional Allegiance in Upstate New York"**. Presented at Penn Linguistics Colloquium 31, Philadelphia.
- Dinkin, Aaron (2007). **"The Real Effect of Word Frequency on Phonetic Variation"**. Presented at Penn Linguistics Colloquium 31, Philadelphia.
- Labov, William, Maciej Baranowski, & Aaron Dinkin (2006). **"The Effects of Outliers on the Perception of Sound Change"**. Presented at NWAV 35, Columbus, Ohio.
- Dinkin, Aaron (2006). **"Unnatural Classes and Phonological Generalization in Dialect Formation"**. Presented at NWAV 35, Columbus, Ohio.
- ~~ (2006). **"An Experimental Study on the Interpretability of Ostensible Subject-Control Promise"**. Presented at the LSA Summer Meeting, East Lansing, Mich.
- ~~ (2006). **"'Sporadic' Syncope and Latin Phonology's Wicked Stepmother"**. Presented at Penn Linguistics Colloquium 30, Philadelphia.
- Friesner, Michael & Aaron Dinkin (2005). **"Russian Immigrants in Philadelphia as Native English Speakers and Philadelphians"**. Presented at NWAV 34, New York.
- Dinkin, Aaron (2005). **"Marry-Merry-Mary Merger in New England: Further Analysis"**. Presented at Methods XII, Moncton, N.B.
- ~~ (2004). **"Mary, Darling, Make Me Merry; Say You'll Marry Me: Tense-Lax Neutralization in the *Linguistic Atlas of New England*"**. Poster presented at NWAV 33, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Conference workshop presentation

- "Rapid and Anonymous Study: Responses to Thanks"**. Presented as part of workshop "Teaching Variation: From the Classroom into the Field", organized by Kara Becker and Kirk Hazen, at NWAV 48, Eugene, Ore., 2019.

Funded research grants

New-Dialect Formation and the Loss of the Northern Cities Shift in Cooperstown, New York.

- University Grants Program, San Diego State University 2018–19.
- Critical Thinking Grant, San Diego State University, 2019.

Local Attitudes and Dialect Change in Cooperstown, New York.

- College of Arts & Letters Microgrant, San Diego State University, 2021.

Previous faculty positions

University of Toronto, Assistant Professor, 2013–2017

Swarthmore College, Visiting Assistant Professor, 2010–2013

Phonetics laboratory coordinator, 2008–2013

Instructor, 2009

University of Pennsylvania, Instructor, 2013

Classes taught

San Diego State University:

Sociolinguistics (2017–present)

Studying the Speech Community (2020–present)

Language, Culture, and Society (2020–present)

Dialects of English (2021–23)

Historical Linguistics (2017–present)

Fundamentals of Linguistics (2020–present)

Introduction to Language (2018–19)

English Grammar (2018–21)

University of Toronto:

Sociolinguistic Patterns (2013–2015)

Historical Linguistics (2014–2017)

Introduction to General Linguistics (2015)

Introduction to Language (2016–2017)

English Words (2014–2017)

English Grammar (2016)

First-Year Seminar: Language and the Internet (2013)

First-Year Seminar: The Language of Names (2014)

Graduate Seminar: Deconstructing the Linguistic Variable (2014)

Swarthmore College:

Language, Culture, and Society (2009–2012)

Introduction to Language and Linguistics (2010–2013)

Senior Thesis Research Seminar (2011)

University of Pennsylvania:

Introduction to Sociolinguistics (2009–2013)

Ph.D. dissertation co-supervised

Thiel, Anja (2019). *A Northern City Going Elsewhere: Apparent and Real-Time Sound Change in Ogdensburg, New York*. University of Bern.

M.A. theses supervised

Hammer, Nicholas (in progress). “Indexing Coastal Identity with Vowel Fronting: A Sociolinguistic Study of the San Diego Speech Community.” San Diego State University.

O’Boyle, Brianna (2024). “From Wiki or ChatGPT? Perceptions of AI-Generated Text”. San Diego State University.

Casillas, Xico (2023). “Assessing the Temporal Behavior of Semantic Neologisms in Comparison to Lexical Neologisms”. San Diego State University.

- Meslin, Savannah (2017). "It's All About How You Feel and Who You Know: The Effects of Bilingual Identity and Social Contact on the Voice Onset Time of Ottawa Bilinguals". University of Toronto.
- Mellesmoen, Gloria (2016). "Front Vowel Phonology of British Columbia English". University of Toronto.
- Schmirler, Katherine (2015). "Algonquian Compounds: Productivity, Genetic Relationships, and Quadrupeds". University of Toronto.
- Maddeaux, F. J. Ruth (2014). "Me Myself & I: The Role of the Untriggered Reflexive in the English Pronominal System". University of Toronto.

Undergraduate theses supervised

- Anderson, Carolyn (2013). "'I Talk It and I Feel It': Language Attitudes of Moroccan University Students". Swarthmore College.
- Armstrong, Charles (2013). "Vox Evocative: Pinpointing a Possible Sociological Strategy for the Typing of the Phonatory and Articulatory Features of a Singing Genre". Swarthmore College.
- Lee, Seyeon Lauren (2013). "Korean Heritage Language Education in Philadelphia". Swarthmore College.
- Allen, Kristen (2012). "I'm Just Talkin' With My Generation: The Crucial Role of the First Peer Group in Modeling Initial Lexical Consensus". Swarthmore College.
- Glewwe, Eleanor (2012). "Translating French Slang: A Study of Four French Novels and Their English Translations". Swarthmore College.
- Hasychak, Lara (2012). "Italian Vowels". Swarthmore College.
- Ingber, Jesse (2012). "Language Rights and their Enforcement". Haverford College.
- Letts, Allison (2012). "The Intersection of the Phonologies of Standard American English and African American Vernacular English as Seen Through Orthography." Haverford College.
- McCafferty, Kathryn (2012). "Linguistics of White Racism: Racist Discourse Strategy in U.S. Politics". Swarthmore College.
- Obiajulu, Christina (2012). "Lyrical Insight: Looking at Changes in AAVE Through Slave Spirituals, Blues and Rap". Swarthmore College.

PhD dissertation committees

- Nesbitt, Monica (2019). *The Influence of Economic Change on Local Phonology*. Michigan State University.
- Smith, James G. (2018). *Sociophonetic Variation and Change of Northern Ontario Vowels*. University of Toronto.
- Gardner, Matt Hunt (2017). *Grammatical Variation and Change in Industrial Cape Breton*. University of Toronto.
- Gardiner, Shayna (2017). *Yours, Mine & Ours: What Ancient Egyptian Possessives Can Tell Us About Language Change and Stable Variation*. University of Toronto.
- Brook, Marisa Alana (2016). *Syntactic Categories Informing Variationist Analysis: The Case of English Copy-Raising*. University of Toronto.
- Denis, Derek (2015). *The Development of Pragmatic Markers in Canadian English*. University of Toronto.

Invited research presentations

- “Changing Phonology, Stable Borders: The Low Back Merger in Northern New York”**. San Diego State University, 5/2017.
- “Variant-Centered Variation and the *Like* Conspiracy”**. University of Rochester CLS Colloquia Series, 2/2016.
- “Gradience, Allophony, and Chain Shifts”**. Michigan State University linguistics colloquium, 2/2014, and University of Toronto speaker series, 4/2014.
- “Two Types of Dialect Features and Two Types of Dialect Boundaries”**. CUNY Graduate Center Sociolinguistics Lunch, 10/2012.
- “Dialect Patterns and the Paths of Settlement”**. Penn Humanities Forum interdisciplinary panel on Travel and Language, 11/2006.

Invited panelist

- “Getting Students Involved in Research”**. Mellon 23 linguistics faculty workshop, Swarthmore College, 10/2009.

Professional service

Editorial board, *Language Variation and Change*: 2023–present

Peer reviewer:

journals: *Language Variation and Change*, *Language*, *Journal of English Linguistics*, *American Speech*

conferences: NWAV, International Conference of Phonetic Sciences, American Dialect Society, Penn Linguistics Colloquium

granting agencies: National Science Foundation (US), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Canada)

Conference organizing committee:

NWAV 44 (2015); NWAV 36 (2007); Penn Linguistics Colloquium 31 (2007)

Moderator, San Diego State University Student Symposium (2024)

Editorial staff, *Penn Working Papers in Linguistics*: 2004–2008

College of Arts and Letters diversity committee (San Diego State University), 2021–present

Linguistics department library liaison (San Diego State University)

Linguistics department committees (San Diego State University): advisory committee, diversity committee, curriculum committee, budget committee, RTP committee, peer review committee (various years)

Committee member: undergraduate theses (Swarthmore College); M.A theses (San Diego State University, University of Toronto); Ph.D. qualifying papers (University of Toronto)

Teaching mentor for graduate student instructors (University of Toronto)

Graduate-undergraduate liaison, Penn Linguistics Club: 2005–2008

Honors and awards

San Diego State University Language, Culture, and Society program, **Outstanding Faculty Award**, 2024

San Diego State University College of Arts and Letters, **Excellence in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Award**, 2022

American Dialect Society, **Audrey Duckert Memorial Travel Award**, 2013

Linguistic Society of America, **Language in the USA Fellowship**, 2005

University of Pennsylvania, **William Penn Fellowship**, 2003–2007

University of Pennsylvania, **Harrison Fellowship**, 2003–2004

Phi Beta Kappa, 2001

Harvard College **Detur Prize**, 1999

Harvard College **John Harvard Scholarship** 1999–2002

Commonwealth School **Flaming Banana**, 1995

Memberships

Linguistic Society of America

American Dialect Society

Selected media interviews

“Upstate’s Changing Dialects”, *First Person*, North Country Public Radio, 12/30/2022.

“Accents”, *Deeply Human*, BBC World Service, 2/19/2022

“Accents Changing—As We Speak”, *First Person*, North Country Public Radio, 6/25/2021

“New York & Other Northern Dialects”, *Oh, I See* podcast, 2/9/2021

“Say What? Midwest Speaks a Different Language than East Coast”, *Des Moines Register*, 6/8/2013

“North American English Dialects”, *Talk of Iowa*, Iowa Public Radio, 1/17/2013

“Changing Dialects in the Great Lakes Region”, *The Daily Circuit*, Minnesota Public Radio, 8/28/2012

“American English Shift: Northern Vowels on the Move”, *Patt Morrison*, Southern California Public Radio, 8/21/2012

“Vowel Movement: How Americans Near the Great Lakes are Radically Changing the Sound of English”, *Slate.com*, 8/21/2012

Other activities

Theater: acting, dialect coaching, and music-directing. Underground Shakespeare Company 2004–2013; Pennsylvania Players 2004–2009; and others.

The Harvard Noteables: member 1998–2002, music director 1999–2001.

MIT Mystery Hunt: participant 2000–present; winning team 2005 and 2010; puzzle writer and editor 2006 and 2011; editor-in-chief 2011.