

Dr. Kayla G. Bohannon

Department of Philosophy
University of Kentucky
Office: 1431 Patterson Office Tower, Lexington, KY 40506
Email: kgbohannon@gmail.com | (912) 253-2986
Website: kgbohannon.com

Academic Employment

2022-present Teaching Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Kentucky

Education

2022 PhD, Philosophy, University of Kentucky
Dissertation: *The Ideal Religious Community: Articulating the Possibility of Collaborative Community within Religious Contexts*
Committee: Brandon Look, Arnold Farr, Eric Sanday, Jane Calvert (history)

2018 MA, Philosophy, University of Kentucky

2015 BA, Philosophy, Georgia Southern University

Areas of Specialization

Social & Political Philosophy
19th Century European Philosophy, esp. Kant & Hegel

Areas of Competence

Feminist Philosophy
Applied Ethics

Selected Presentations

- 2020 “The Inescapable Gaze: The Social Constitution of Clothing Choices,” at the philoSOPHIA Society for Continental Feminism 14th Annual Conference, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee. May 14. (event cancelled due to COVID-19)
- 2019 Invited comments on Jeffrey Jackson’s “Populism within Subjectivity: Adorno and Melanie Klein” and Noelle McAfee’s “How Group Identities Become Pathological,” at the Populism and Affect Conference, Lexington, Kentucky. November 9.
- 2019 “Democracy, Populism, & Repression: Making (Some) Sense of the Donald Trump Phenomenon,” at the International Herbert Marcuse Society Biennial Conference, University of California, Santa Barbara, California. October 12.
- 2019 “Politics & Privilege: On Republican Women,” at the University of Kentucky Gender and Women’s Studies Annual Conference, Lexington, Kentucky. September 28.
- 2018 “Equivocation and the Marginalization of Social Justice Groups,” at the North American Society for Social Philosophy Annual Conference, Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan. July 21.
- 2017 “Why Limiting Abortion to Instances of Rape is Problematic,” at the North American Society for Social Philosophy Annual Conference, Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois. July 15.

Teaching

University of Kentucky, instructor of record

Fall 2022 *PHI 100*: Introduction to Philosophy: Knowledge & Reality (x2)

Teaching Assistant: Hyomeen Keem

PHI 305: Healthcare Ethics

Teaching Assistant: Tara Toth

Spring 2022 *PHI 130*: Introduction to Philosophy: Morality & Society (x2)

Fall 2021 *PHI 100*: Introduction to Philosophy: Knowledge & Reality

PHI 305: Healthcare Ethics

Spring 2021 *PHI 245*: Introduction to Philosophy of Religion

PHI 334: Business Ethics

Winter 2020 *PHI 334*: Business Ethics (half-term online)

Fall 2019 *PHI 305*: Healthcare Ethics (x2)

Summer 2019 *PHI 334*: Business Ethics (half-term online)

Spring 2019 *PHI 334*: Business Ethics (x2)

Fall 2018 *PHI 334*: Business Ethics (x2)

Summer 2018 *PHI 334*: Business Ethics (half-term online)

Spring 2018 *PHI 130*: Introduction to Philosophy: Morality & Society (x2)

Fall 2017 *PHI 100*: Introduction to Philosophy: Knowledge & Reality (x2)

University of Kentucky, teaching assistant

Spring 2017 *PHI 100*: Introduction to Philosophy: Knowledge & Reality (grader for Brandon Look)

Fall 2016 *PHI 120*: Introduction to Logic (grader & recitation leader for Julia Bursten)

Professional Service

2019-2020 President, UK Philosophy Graduate Student Association

2019 Camp Counselor, UK Philosophy Summer Camp

2019 Mentor, Forté Foundation Undergraduate Mentorship Program

2019 Referee, UK Philosophy Graduate Student Association Annual Conference

2017-2021 Microteaching leader (incoming TA orientation)

2017-2018 Secretary, UK Philosophy Graduate Student Association

Professional Development

2022 American Association of Philosophy Teachers, Teaching & Learning Seminar

2018-2019 Inclusive Pedagogies Graduate Student Learning Community

2018 Grad Degree Plus Certificate: Foundations of Instructional Practice

2015 University of California San Diego Summer Program for Women in Philosophy

Awards & Recognitions

2020 University of Kentucky Dean's Competitive Fellowship

2020 Research Assistantship, University of Kentucky Social Theory Program

2019	UK College of Arts & Sciences Outstanding Teaching Award
2019	Finalist, UK Grad Teach Live
2018	UK Graduate Student Congress Travel Award
2016	Madeline Breckinridge Teaching Award

Graduate Coursework

Social & Political Philosophy:

- Critical Social Thought (2017- Arnold Farr) *
- Feminist Philosophy (2018- Anita Superson) *
- Materiality in Contemporary Social Theory (2018- Ted Schatzki)
- Frankfurt School Critical Theory (2018- Arnold Farr)
- Populism (2019- Carol Mason, Yanira Paz, Stefan Bird-Pollan, Carlos de la Torre)
- Fascism (audit) (2019- Stefan Bird-Pollan)

History of Philosophy:

- Proseminar in Metaphysics & Epistemology (2016- David Bradshaw, Brandon Look, Clare Batty)
- Self-Consciousness (2016- Stefan Bird-Pollan)
- Marxist Existentialism (2016- Arnold Farr)
- Proseminar in Value Theory (2017- Eric Sanday, Stefan Bird-Pollan, Arnold Farr)
- Phenomenological Directions (2017- Bob Sandmeyer) *
- Heidegger, Philosophy, & Nazism (2018- Natalie Nenadic)
- Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit (2018- Stefan Bird-Pollan)

Contemporary Analytic Philosophy:

- Symbolic Logic (2017- Meg Wallace) *
- Philosophy of Perception (2017- Clare Batty)
- Philosophy of Religion (2017- David Bradshaw) *
- Philosophy of Mind (2018- Clare Batty) *

* denotes upper-level undergraduate course

References

Brandon Look (dissertation co-chair)

look@uky.edu

(859) 489-3725

Professor of Philosophy, University of Kentucky

Arnold Farr (dissertation co-chair)

arnold.farr@uky.edu

(267) 252-3630

Professor of Philosophy, University of Kentucky

Eric Sanday (dissertation committee member)

eric.sanday@uky.edu

(859) 940-2494

Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of Kentucky

Julia Bursten (teaching reference)

jrbursten@uky.edu

(614) 571-4216

Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of Kentucky

Dissertation Abstract

*The Ideal Religious Community:
Articulating the Possibility of Collaborative Community in Religious Contexts*

My dissertation seeks to explain a certain instability that characterizes many contemporary religious communities. Why are people abandoning organized religion at an unprecedented rate? And why do so many religious people behave in vicious ways, even as they claim to preach a message of love? These phenomena are related, and they are both usually explained on epistemological grounds. According to many of religion's recent critics, religious belief requires the suspension of rational thought, and those who abandon it have simply seen the light of reason. Meanwhile, those who remain religious do so despite the testimony of their reason, and the harms they commit against others are dismissed as a product of irrationality. However, this explanation is insufficient. Real-world data show that people leave their religions behind for a host of reasons, many of which have nothing to do with belief. These individuals recount broken relationships, disagreements over social and political issues, and feeling disconnected from their communities and their gods—despite still believing many of their religions' basic tenets. Furthermore, belief in a non-existent deity is not directly correlated with the kinds of viciousness for which religion is often criticized. Many people believe objectively false things, but do not weaponize those beliefs to harm others. Therefore, we should not criticize religion in terms of its claims' truth or falsehood, because these criteria do not successfully explain the problems above.

Instead, we should recognize the decline of religion as an alienation of the individual from her community. I argue that communities are strongest when their members recognize their own interests as aligning with those of the group. This synthesis of interests enables community members to trust and support one another, even in the face of difference. Meanwhile, communities experience instability when their members understand their own interests as alienated from those of the group. This perceived alienation is the product of a misunderstanding of the relationship between the universal and the particular. I draw from the work of Friedrich Nietzsche and Immanuel Kant to demonstrate two particular ways in which religious communities can mischaracterize this relationship. In both cases, the result is a community where individuals find themselves unable to form relations of thick trust with subjects beyond themselves. In my final chapter, we see that Hegel suggests a distinct way of doing religion—what he calls folk religion—that overcomes the problems highlighted by Nietzsche and Kant. Such a religion not only unites its adherents with their god, but also with one another. My project therefore ends on an optimistic note: religion is not something that necessarily must produce alienation and conflict. It is possible to create a religious community that fosters meaningful relationships among its members.