ELIZA WELLS

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Harvard University • Edmond & Lily Safra Center for Ethics
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AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Social and Political Philosophy • Moral Philosophy (Theoretical and Applied)

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Feminist Philosophy • Philosophy of Technology • Philosophy of Religion

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EMPLOYMENT

Assistant Professor of Philosophy, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada　　*2025 -*

Fellow-in-Residence*,* Edmond & Lily Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard　　*2024 - 2025*
　　University, Cambridge, MA

EDUCATION

PhD in Philosophy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA　　*2024*
　　Dissertation: "Just Doing My Job: Normative Dimensions of Social Roles"
　　Abstract: "What should I do?" Often, our answers make reference to our social roles: we ask
　　what we should do as lawyers, citizens, or parents. But this confronts us with problems.
　　Consider a would-be whistleblower, a wife challenging the gendered division of household
　　labor, or the conflicted police officer Javert from *Les Misérables*. These agents feel there is a
　　genuine conflict between the norms of their roles and moral considerations. Philosophical
　　orthodoxy downplays social roles as a background feature of our moral lives: either their
　　importance can be explained in moral terms, or they are mere conventions that can and often
　　should be discarded. I argue that this yields phenomenologically and theoretically impoverished
　　accounts of the normative world. Taking roles seriously prompts revision to orthodox views of
　　role-occupants' reasons for action, blameworthiness, and responsibility for structural injustice.
　　Committee: Sally Haslanger (chair), Kieran Setiya, and Tamar Schapiro

MA in Religious Studies, Stanford University, Stanford, CA　　*2019*

BA in Philosophy *with Distinction***,** Stanford University, Stanford, CA　　*2019*
　　Interdisciplinary Honors in Ethics in Society
　　Thesis: "Care, Individuals, and Institutions"
　　Advisor: Barry Maguire

WORKS IN PROGRESS

"Social Roles and Exculpatory Ignorance" (R&R)

WORKS IN PROGRESS, *continued*

"The Normative Character of Social Roles"

"Role Participation in Structural Injustice"

"Caring Institutions and Justice"

"Social Philosophy for Tech Ethics Pedagogy" (with Sonia Maria Pavel)

"Social Roles and Corruption" (with Milan Mossé)

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Co-Director, MIT Experiential Ethics Program   *2022 - 2023*
  Administratively ran program; developed expanded syllabus, lesson plans, and assignments; selected, trained, and supervised interdisciplinary teaching staff.

Assistant Director, MIT Experiential Ethics Program   *2021 - 2022*
  Participated in administration, course development, and training and advising teaching staff.

Co-Director, Philosophy in an Inclusive Key Summer Institute (PIKSI-Boston)   *2021, 2022*
  Co-designed syllabus for week-long diversity institute of seminars, colloquia, and professional development workshops; selected participants; selected and trained teaching fellows; led sessions and participated in panels; coordinated logistics and administration.

Graduate Fellow, Embedded EthiCS @ Harvard   *2021 - 2022*
  Designed and taught ethics modules in computer science classes, working with philosophy and computer science faculty.

Graduate Teaching Fellow, MIT Experiential Ethics   *2021*
  Primary instructor for a small discussion group.

AWARDS AND HONORS

Graduate Woman of Excellence Honoree, MIT   *2023*
  Awarded biannually in recognition of leadership, service, dedication to mentorship, and drive to improve the student experience.

Presidential Fellowship for Graduate Studies, MIT   *2019*
  Funding for first year of doctoral studies.

Mothershead Prize for Outstanding Work in Moral and Political Philosophy, Stanford   *2019*
  Awarded to one graduating senior in Philosophy.

Phi Beta Kappa, Stanford   *2019*

Major Grant, Stanford   *2018*
  Competitive grant for independent research funding.

Chappell Lougee Scholarship, Stanford   *2017*
  Competitive grant for independent research funding.

National Merit Scholarship   *2015*

TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS (*=refereed, † =invited)

Caring Institutions and Structural Injustice
  Workshop on Care and Love as the Basis of Morality, Harvard University   *2024*

TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS, *continued*

The Normative Character of Social Roles

† Ethics Institute Speaker Series, Northeastern University	*2024*
† University of Manitoba	*2024*
† University of California, Santa Cruz	*2024*
† Le Moyne College	*2024*

Moral Ignorance is Not Moral Indifference

*APA Eastern Division, Colloquium	*2024*

Role Responsibilities for Structural Injustice

*APA Central Division, Colloquium	*2024*
*International Social Philosophy Conference	*2023*
*Michigan-MIT Graduate Workshop in Social Philosophy	*2023*

Social Philosophy for Tech Ethics Pedagogy (with Sonia Maria Pavel)

*teXne: Technology Ethics Exchange of the NorthEast	*2023*

Social Roles and Exculpatory Ignorance

MITing of the Minds Alumni Conference	*2023*
*Taking Responsibility Workshop at the René Descartes Lectures	*2022*
*Cambridge Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) International Conference	*2022*
*Vienna Forum for Analytic Philosophy (WFAP) Graduate Conference	*2022*
*Center for Ethics, Philosophy, and Public Affairs (CEPPA) Graduate Conference	*2022*

Social Roles and Moral Psychology

*Michigan-MIT Graduate Workshop in Social Philosophy	*2021*

Comments

† On Rouven Symank, "Social Solidarity and Structural Injustice." Workshop on Solidarity in Times of Fracture	*scheduled for 2024*

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

MIT Experiential Ethics (with Marion Boulicault, Sophie Gibert, and Sonia Pavel)	*2022, 2023*

TEACHING AT MIT

Feminist Thought, Sally Haslanger	*Spring 2023*
Guest lecture: "Care Economics"	
Bioethics, Robin Scheffler and Haley Schilling	*Fall 2022*
Guest lecture: "Feminist (Bio) Ethics of Care"	
Minds and Machines, E.J. Green	*Spring 2022*
Guest lecture: "The Chinese Room"	
Problems of Philosophy, Caspar Hare	*Fall 2021*
Experiential Ethics (as teaching fellow)	*Summer 2021*
Ethics, Tamar Schapiro	*Spring 2021*

TEACHING EXPERIENCE, continued

Philosophy of Religion, Jack Spencer	*Fall 2020*
Guest lecture: "Religious Dissent"	

MODULES IN EMBEDDED ETHICS AT HARVARD

"Hardware Backdoors and Responsibility." *Computing Hardware*, Vijay Reddi	*2022*
"Designing Usable Programming Languages ." *Programming Languages*, Nada Amin	*2022*
"Thinking Responsibly about AI Systems." *Artificial Intelligence*, Ariel Procaccia	*2021*
"Privacy and the Ethics of Client-Side Scanning." *Cryptography*, Boaz Barak	*2021*
"Ethics of Language Encoding." *Systems Programming and Machine Organization,* Eddie Kohler	*2021*

INVITED GUEST LECTURES

"Responsible Career Choices." *Being, Thinking, and Doing: Ethics in Your Life* (MIT)	*2022, 2023, 2024*
"The Ethics of Care." *Introduction to Moral Philosophy,* Barry Maguire (Stanford)	*2019*

PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING

Kaufman Teaching Certificate Program, MIT	*2023*

    Interactive workshop series focused on evidence-based teaching techniques. Topics included: designing a course, preparing a lesson plan, assessing and providing feedback to students, and creating an effective and welcoming classroom climate.

SERVICE

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Co-organizer, MIT Minorities in Philosophy (MAP)	*2023 - 2024*
Co-director, Philosophy in an Inclusive Key Summer Institute (PIKSI-Boston)	*2021, 2022*
First-Year Mentor, MIT Philosophy	*2021 - 2024*
Mentorship Events Organizer, MIT Philosophy	*2020 - 2022*
Graduate Representative to the Committee on Department Life, MIT Philosophy	*2020 - 2021*

CONFERENCES AND ORGANIZING

Referee for *Philosophical Studies*	
Co-organizer, Harvard Workshop on Love or Care as the Basis of Morality	*2024*
Co-organizer, Michigan-MIT Graduate Workshop in Social Philosophy	*2021, 2022, 2023*
Referee, Harvard-MIT Graduate Conference	*2022, 2023*
Organizer, MIT Reading Groups (*=founder)	
*Feminist Philosophy	*2023*
*David Owens' *Bound by Convention*	*2023*
*Philosophy & Literature	*2021 - 2024*
*Elizabeth Barnes' *The Minority Body*	*2021*
Social, Historical, Aesthetic, Political, and Ethical Theory	*2020 - 2022*
Graduate Representative to the Faculty, MIT Philosophy	*2020 - 2021*
Co-founder and president, Stanford Ethics Bowl and Practical Ethics Club	*2016 - 2019*

GRADUATE COURSEWORK (at MIT unless otherwise indicated. *=audit)

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Global Justice, Gender & Development, Sally Haslanger and Libby McDonald	*Fall 2023*
Topics in Political Philosophy: Responsibility for Justice, Gina Schouten (Harvard)	*Fall 2023*
Rawls and His Critics, Gina Schouten (Harvard) and Tommie Shelby (Harvard)	*Spring 2021*
Political Philosophy: Political Concepts, Bernardo Zacka	*Fall 2020*
Feminist Philosophy, Sally Haslanger	*Spring 2020*
Social Dimensions of Scientific Knowledge, Helen Longino (Stanford)	*Spring 2018*

MORAL PHILOSOPHY

Topics in Moral Philosophy: Kant's Moral Theory, Tamar Schapiro	*Fall 2020*
Modern Moral Philosophy and the History of Ethics, James Doyle (Harvard) and Kieran Setiya	*Fall 2019*
Aristotle's Moral Theory, Terrence Irwin (Oxford) and Chris Bobonich (Stanford)	*Winter 2019*
Virtue Ethics, Chris Bobonich (Stanford)	*Spring 2018*

EPISTEMOLOGY, METAPHYSICS, AND LANGUAGE

Applied Epistemology, Elise Woodard	*Spring 2023*
Topics in Philosophy of Language: Insincerity, Sam Berstler	*Fall 2021*
Topics in Epistemology: Self-Knowledge, Caspar Hare and Roger White	*Spring 2021*
Topics in Metaphysics, Brad Skow	*Fall 2020*

OTHER

Topics in Philosophy of Action: Agency, Tamar Schapiro	*Spring 2020*
Proseminar II: Contemporary Analytic Philosophy, Alex Byrne and Roger White	*Spring 2020*
Proseminar I: Early Analytic Philosophy, Sally Haslanger and Steve Yablo	*Fall 2019*
Topics in Aesthetics, Brad Skow	*Fall 2019*

WORK IN OTHER AREAS

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

PUBLICATIONS (*=peer-reviewed; † =invited)

*"'Weaned from Milk': Agency and Authority in Francine Bennion's 'A Latter-day Saint Theology of Suffering'." In *Latter-day Eloquence: Two Centuries of Mormon Oratory*, Ben Crosby and Isaac Richards (eds.). University of Illinois Press, forthcoming.

† "Feminist Ethics of Care as Latter-day Saint Ethics." In *The Restoration of Latter-day Saint Thought: Essays on Mormon Philosophy, Theology, and Scripture*, Rosalynde Welch, Joseph Spencer, and Nathan B. Oman (eds.). University of Illinois Press, forthcoming.

*"Quoted at the Pulpit: Women and Authority in Fifty Years in General Conference." *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought,* vol 55, no. 4 (Winter 2022).

PRESENTATIONS (*=refereed)

Feminist Ethics of Care as Latter-day Saint Ethics

*LDS Philosophy Project Conference	*2022*
*LDS Philosophy Project Workshop	*2021*

OTHER WORK, *continued*

SERVICE

*Theology Feature Editor***,** Exponent II Magazine   *2021 - present*

EMPLOYMENT IN COMPUTER SCIENCE

Computation Summer Scholar, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, CA   *2016*
Data Visualization Research Assistant, Center for Spatial & Textual Analysis, Stanford, CA   *2015 - 2016*
Software Development Intern, Ender Labs, Salt Lake City, UT   *2015*

REFERENCES

For confidential letters of recommendation, please reach out to Christine Graham (cgraham@mit.edu).

Sally Haslanger • shaslang@mit.edu • Ford Professor of Philosophy and Women's and Gender Studies • MIT Department of Linguistics and Philosophy

Kieran Setiya • ksetiya@mit.edu • Professor • MIT Department of Linguistics and Philosophy

Tamar Schapiro • tamschap@mit.edu • Professor • MIT Department of Linguistics and Philosophy

Sam Berstler • berstler@mit.edu • Assistant Professor • MIT Department of Linguistics and Philosophy

E.J. Green (teaching) • egreen77@jh.edu • Miller Associate Professor • William H. Miller III Department of Philosophy, Johns Hopkins University