ELIZA WELLS

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Massachusetts Institute of Technology • Department of Linguistics and Philosophy
77 Massachusetts Avenue, 32-D942 • Cambridge, MA 02139

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

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

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Philosophy of Technology • Feminist Philosophy • 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   *expected 2024*

Dissertation: "Just Doing My Job: Normative Dimensions of Social Roles"

Abstract: "What should I do?" Often, our answers reference our social roles as lawyers, citizens, or parents. But 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 conflict between morality and the norms of their role. I argue that these are genuine normative conflicts. While many have attempted to explain role normativity in purely moral terms, I argue that social roles have distinctive value that can create good reasons to act immorally. Roles can also generate a form of exculpation that has been neglected by standard accounts of moral responsibility. While this may seem to let too many people off the moral hook, I conclude that role-occupants in fact have a moral responsibility to alter role norms that contribute to 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" (under review)

"The Normative Character of Social Roles"

"Role Responsibility for Structural Injustice"

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

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)

Moral Ignorance is Not Moral Indifference
*APA Eastern Division, Colloquium *2024*

TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS, *continued*

Role Responsibilities for Structural Injustice
*New Approaches to Business Ethics (NABE) Workshop	*2024*
Unable to deliver due to illness.	
*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, with comments by Sam Berstler	*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, with comments by Nick Kuespert	*2022*

Social Roles and Moral Psychology
*Michigan-MIT Graduate Workshop in Social Philosophy	*2021*

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

COURSE DEVELOPMENT
MIT Experiential Ethics (with Marion Boulicault and Sonia Maria Pavel)	*2022 - 2023*
MIT Experiential Ethics (with Marion Boulicault and Sophie Gibert)	*2021 - 2022*

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*
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*

TEACHING, continued

"Ethics of Language Encoding." *Systems Programming and Machine Organization,*   *2021*
    Eddie Kohler

INVITED GUEST LECTURES

"Responsible Career Choices." *Being, Thinking, and Doing: Ethics in Your Life,* Anni   *2023*
    Raty (MIT)

"Career Ethics: Hard Choices and Responsibility." *Being, Thinking, and Doing: Ethics*   *2022*
    in Your Life, Thomas Byrne (MIT)

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

CONFERENCES AND ORGANIZING

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 - present*
*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 Practical Ethics Club	*2016 - 2019*

WORK IN OTHER AREAS

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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

*"Introduction and Analysis of 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*

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