

Keith Buhler
Department of Philosophy
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY 40506
keith.buhler@uky.edu
keithbuhler.com

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Philosophy, University of Kentucky, 2016
M.A. Philosophy, University of Kentucky, 2014
M.A. Eastern Orthodox Theology, University of Lebanon, 2012
B.A. Humanities, Biola University, 2004

DISSERTATION

Title: *Becoming What We Are: Virtue and Practical Wisdom as Natural Ends in Recent Neo-Aristotelian Ethics*
Committee: David Bradshaw (Chair), Dan Breazeale, Stefan Bird-Pollan, Mark Kightlinger

AREA OF SPECIALIZATION

Ethics

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Philosophy of Mind, Ancient Philosophy, Philosophy of Religion, Bioethics

WORKS IN PROGRESS

1. "Organic Naturalism: Teleological Realism in the Foundation of Ethics" (submitted for initial review)
2. "The Case for Agnosticism about Causal Closure" (submitted for initial review)

PRESENTATIONS

1. "Natural Teleology without Theology in Thomas Nagel's *Mind and Cosmos" Society of Christian Philosophers, University of San Diego, 2016.

2. "Fairy Tale Nihilism: The Empty Hero in *Kung Fu Panda* and *The Great and Powerful Oz*", Faith and Film Conference, Baylor University, 2014.
3. "Is the Cosmos Causally Closed?" Ian Ramsey Centre, Oxford University, 2014.
4. "Socratic Therapy," SOPHIA Conference, Spring Branch, TX 2014.
5. "Virtue and Imaginative Resistance," Midsouth Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College; and South Carolina Society of Philosophers, University of South Carolina, 2014.

UNIVERSITY TEACHING

University of Kentucky, Lexington KY

1. Business Ethics (upper division, Fall 2016)
2. Health Care Ethics (upper division, Spring 2015 and Fall 2016)
3. Introduction to Philosophy (2013-2014)
4. Ethics (Fall 2013)
5. Logic (Spring 2013)

Asbury University, Wilmore KY

6. Philosophy of Religion (upper division, Summer 2016)
7. Philosophy of C.S. Lewis (upper division, Fall 2016)
8. Virtue Ethics and Wisdom (upper division, Spring 2016)
9. Introduction to Philosophy (2014-2017)

Biola University, La Mirada, CA

10. Philosophy of Science (as TA, summer 2004)

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHING

11. 20th Century British Literature (Veritas Academy, KY 2013)
12. Plato on Being and Knowing (Torrey Academy, CA 2011)
13. Aristotelian Logic (Torrey Academy, CA 2009-2010)
14. Foundations of American Thought (Torrey Academy, CA 2009-2012)
15. Ancient and Medieval Literature (Torrey Academy, CA 2008-2012)
16. 20th Century British Literature (Torrey Academy, CA 2007-2012)
17. Great Books Tutor, GATE Program (Willow School of Long Beach, CA 2001-2002)

English Second Language

19. ESL Teacher (Etum Academy, CA 2010-2012)
20. ESL Teacher (Biola University Abroad, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 2001)

COMMENTS AND SERVICE

1. Comments on David Skowronski's "Inductive Reasoning in Naturalism and Supernaturalism." Society of Christian Philosophers, University of San Diego, 2016.
2. Comments on Andrew Greenlee's "Combating the Normativity Challenge to Virtue Ethics," Mid-south Philosophy Conference, Rhodes College, 2014.
3. Session Chair, Ian Ramsey Centre Conference, Oxford University, 2014.
4. Referee for Kentucky Graduate School Conference submissions, 2013.

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

1. Director of High School Studies (Veritas Academy, 2013-2014)
2. Master Tutor (Torrey Academy, 2010-2012)
3. Lecturer (Wheatstone Academy, 2006-2011)
4. Assistant Director (Wheatstone Academy, 2004-2005)

INVITED PUBLIC TALKS

1. "Morality: Rule-following or New Life?," Wesleyan Society, Lexington KY, 2014.
2. "Reading Great Books in Classical Education," Veritas Academy, La Mirada, CA 2013.
3. "The Goodness of the Tao: CS Lewis' *Abolition of Man*," Torrey Academy, 2012.
4. "Is Vainglory Pride? Dorothy Sayers' *Gaudy Night*," Torrey Academy, 2012.
5. "Hope and the Cycle of Desire," Hope Academy, 2011.
6. "The Art of Conversation: Conversation with Art," Wheatstone Academy, La Habra, CA 2011.
7. "The Virtue of Constancy," Hope Academy, Yorba Linda, CA 2009.
8. "Life Experience as a Text: Learning From Initiatives," Biola University, CA 2007.

COURSEWORK

Ethics

1. S2016 Seminar on Post-Kantian Ethics: Fichte and Hegel on Right. Dan Breazcale.
2. F2015 Seminar on Metaethics and Motivation. Anita Superson.
3. S2014 Seminar on Ethics and Bodily Autonomy. Anita Superson.
4. S2013 Seminar on Metaethics and Normative Language. Tim Sundell.
5. F2015 Metaethics (Dissertation residency). David Bradshaw.
6. S2014 Ethical Naturalism (Independent study). David Bradshaw.
7. F2014 MacIntyre and After Virtue (Independent study). David Bradshaw.
8. F2012 Ethics from Hobbes to Feminism. Anita Superson.

Ancient Philosophy

9. S2016 Seminar on Plato's Forms and the Death of Gods (audit). Eric Sanday

10. S2014 Seminar on Plato's *Philebus* and *Timaeus*. Eric Sanday.
11. S2013 Seminar on Plato's *Parmenides*. Eric Sanday.
12. S2013 Aristotle and Aristotelians on Mind (Independent study). David Bradshaw.
13. F2012 Ancient Greek Metaphysics. Eric Sanday.

Philosophy of Mind

14. F2013 Seminar on Mind and Imagination. Clare Batty.
15. S2009 Philosophy of Mind. JP Moreland (Biola).
16. F2012 Seminar on Kantian Idealism. Stefan Bird-Pollan.
17. F2013 Seminar on Metaphysical Naturalism. David Bradshaw.

Professional Development

18. F2016 Preparing Future Faculty, Morris Grubbs.
19. F2012 Proseminar on Teaching Philosophy, David Bradshaw.

Other

20. S2013 Philosophy of Religion. David Bradshaw.
21. F2013 Symbolic Logic. Tim Sundell.
22. F2008 Metaphysics of Substance and Property. JP Moreland (Biola).

LANGUAGES

Reading proficiency in Ancient Greek

Speaking fluency in Spanish

Basic HTML and CSS Basic LaTeX and Markdown

AFFILIATIONS

Torrey Honors Institute (Academic Honors Society) 2004-present

American Philosophical Association, 2014-present

International Society for MacIntyrean Enquiry, 2015-present

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Becoming What We Are: Virtue and Practical Wisdom as Natural Ends in Recent Neo-Aristotelian Ethics

This dissertation defends and augments the ethical naturalism of Philippa Foot against that of John McDowell. Foot and McDowell are united in the affirmation that virtue is 'natural goodness' for human beings. They are also united in endorsing scientific naturalism. Nevertheless, they are divided in their rival conceptions of 'nature.' I defend Foot's view of natural goodness by appealing to "generic propositions," a little-utilized feature of linguistic theory. Generic life forms and organic functions are just as scientifically respectable as other naturalistic concepts. Human beings are best understood as practical, rational primates. It follows that the ethical and rational norms defining a good human life are a subset of natural norms which

can be known as such from an “external” scientific point of view as well as from an “internal” ethical point of view.

I also articulate neo-Aristotelian accounts of virtue and practical reason according to which all practical, rational animals necessarily pursue the (perceived) good and avoid (perceived) evil in every action they undertake. In short, virtue and practical wisdom are natural ends for human beings. Even on scientific naturalism, what we are partially determines what we are to become: since we are practical rational animals capable of reasoning, we ought to become practically wise, despite varying abilities and life circumstances.

While the normative force of my view is clear, I secure its naturalistic credentials by examining three influential conceptions of ‘nature.’ I criticize McDowell’s conception, and show how my view is consistent with either of the remaining two. I call my view “recursive naturalism,” for practical reasoning, which is natural to human beings, is part of the natural world even though we reason about the world, ourselves, and our own reasoning.

REFERENCES

-
- | | |
|---|---|
| David Bradshaw, Professor of Philosophy
University of Kentucky, 1415 Patterson, Lexington KY.
dbradsh@uky.edu / 859.257.7107 | John Reynolds, President, The Saint Constantine School
6000 Dale Carnegie Lane Houston, TX.
jmnreynolds@saintconstantine.org / 832.975.7075 |
| Stefan Bird-Pollan, Professor of Philosophy
University of Kentucky, 1417 Patterson, Lexington KY.
stefanbirdpollan@uky.edu / 859.257.4376 | Chris Bounds, Chair, Philosophy and Religion
Asbury University, One Macklem Drive, Wilmore KY.
chris.bounds@asbury.edu / 859.257.7109. |
-