

AMELIA MARIE WIRTS

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT

Assistant Professor (2020–present)

Department of Philosophy, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Philosophy, August 2020

Department of Philosophy, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA

Dissertation: *Criminal Oppression: A Non-Ideal Theory of Criminal Law and Punishment*

Committee: David Rasmussen (Chair), Jorge L. A. Garcia, Paulo Barrozo, Charles Mills, and Erin Kelly

J.D., *summa cum laude*, 2017

Boston College Law School, Newton, MA

M.A. in Philosophy, 2012

Department of Philosophy, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA

B.A. in Philosophy, *summa cum laude* and departmental honors, 2009

B.A. in Communication Studies, *summa cum laude*, 2009

Concurrent degrees earned from the College of Arts and Sciences and School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Philosophy of Law

Social and Political Philosophy

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Philosophy of Race

Feminism

REFEREED ARTICLES

“Mixed Messages: How Criminal Law Fails to Express Feminist Values.” *Criminal Law and Philosophy*. Online First. (2024)

“What Does It Mean to Say ‘The Criminal Justice System is Racist’?” *American Philosophical Quarterly*. 60.4, 341–354 (2023).

“Discriminatory Intent and Implicit Bias: Title VII Liability for Unwitting Discrimination,” *Boston College Law Review*, 58, 809–562 (2017).

“A Defense of the Lifeworld: The Source of Normativity in a Democracy.” in “Symposium on Hugh Baxter’s *Habermas and the Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*.” *Philosophy and*

Social Criticism, 40.2, 215–223 (2014).

FULL-LENGTH INVITED PUBLICATIONS

“Is Crime Caused by Illness, Immorality, or Injustice? Theories of Punishment in the Twentieth and Early Twenty-First Centuries” In: Altman, M.C. (ed.) *The Palgrave Handbook on the Philosophy of Punishment* (2023).

SHORT INVITED PUBLICATIONS

Book Review of Tommie Shelby, *The Idea of Prison Abolition*. *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews* (2024)

“Incarceration” in Sellers, Mortimer & Kirste, Stephan (eds.). *Encyclopedia of the Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy*. Springer. (2023)

Book Review of Matthew C. Altman, *A Theory of Legal Punishment: Deterrence, Retribution, and the Aims of the State*. *Law and Philosophy*, 42, 205–210 (2023).

With José Jorge Mendoza. “The Undermining Mechanisms of ‘Rule of Law’ Objections: A Response to Song and Bloemraad” *The Ethics of Migration Policy Dilemmas Project*, Migration Policy Centre (MPC), European University Institute, 1-5 (2022).

Review of Alessandro Ferrara, *Democratic Horizon: Hyperpluralism and the Renewal of Political Liberalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014) in *Journal of Classical Sociology* 15.2, 226–23 (2015).

INTERVIEWS AND PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY

“What Want from Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Violence.” Annual Conference for Ending Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs, Lexington, KY, May 10, 2023.

[“The Limitations of the Criminal Law’s Ability to Express the Value of Women”](#) *APA Blog*. December 14, 2022.

“Are Police Forces Inherently Oppressive?” Interview with Prof. José Antonio Orosco, as a part of the Anarres Project for Alternative Futures. Interview appears on the Anarres Project’s [Youtube](#), September 1, 2021, and a [shorter version as a podcast episode](#), December 3, 2021.

[“Death Penalty Can Express Society’s Outrage – But Biases Often Taint the Verdict.”](#) *The Conversation*. Oct. 15, 2021.

[“Policing and Criminal Oppression.”](#) *APA Blog*. June 28, 2021.

INVITED TALKS

“What Want from Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Violence.” Annual Conference for Ending Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs (KASAP), Lexington, KY, May 10, 2023.

“Limits of Criminal Law Responses to Sexual Assault,” May 10, 2023, to Anti-Oppression Work Group, Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs (KASAP).

“The Limitations of the Criminal Law’s Ability to Express the Value of Women,” Philosophy of Crime and Punishment Seminar, Boston University, February 28, 2023.

“Law Enforcement and Systemic Oppression.” Ethics of Immigration Enforcement Symposium, The Rock Ethics Institute, Pennsylvania State University, March 18, 2022, State College, PA.

“Criminal Punishment and Gender-Based Violence: The Limits of Incarceration.” Ethics, Law, and Society Forum, Philosophy Department, September 10, 2021, Sonoma State University, online.

CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

“Police Legitimacy and Social Practices.” Radical Philosophy Association Panel, American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, April 16, 2025, San Francisco, CA.

“Problem of Punishing the Disadvantaged.” North American Society for Social Philosophy, Social Philosophy Workshop Series. December 2, 2024. Virtual.

“Racist Ideology and the Problem of Punishing the Disadvantaged.” Philosophy Seminar Series, Collegio Del Maino, Universita Di Pavia, November 13, 2024, Pavia, Italy.

“The Criminal Law’s Proclivity to Legitimize Oppression.” North American Society for Social Philosophy International Conference, July 13, 2024, Omaha, NE.

“Punishment’s Tendency to Legitimize Oppression.” Workshop on Philosophy of Criminal Law and Punishment, University of Washington, April 19, 2024, Seattle, WA.

“Does the Criminal Justice System by Nature Function to Oppress?” Invited Panel on Philosophy and Incarceration. American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, March 21, 2024, Portland, OR.

“Norm Change and Gender-Based Violence: The Role of Criminal Law,” PPE Society Panel, American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, February 22, 2024, New Orleans, LA.

“The Role of Functional Critique: A Response to Tommie Shelby.” University of Toronto Law School Workshop on Philosophy of Punishment, Toronto, ON. September 22, 2023.

“Norm Change and Gender-Based Violence: The Role of Criminal Law” The North American Society for Social Philosophy 40th International Social Philosophy Conference, Portland, OR July 14, 2023.

“Mixed Messages: Why Feminist Interventions in Criminal Law Cannot Improve Social Norms,” 6th Annual Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Conference, New Orleans, LA, November 3, 2022.

“Mixed Messages: Why Feminist Interventions in Criminal Law Cannot Improve Social Norms,” Colloquium on Law, American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, April 14, 2022, Vancouver, BC.

“Police Practice as Criminal Oppression” American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, Invited Symposium: Policing and the Police, March 8, 2021, online.

“Defining and Defending Criminal Oppression: The Social Construction of ‘Criminals’” Paper accepted to Social Ontology 2020 - The 12th Biennial Collective Intentionality Conference. July 2020. (I was unable to attend because the schedule changed due to COVID)

“‘Criminal’ as Oppressed Group,” North American Society for Social Philosophy International Conference, July 2019, San Francisco, CA.

“Himpathy and Intersectionality: Toward a Feminist Prison Abolitionism,” American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, Society for Analytical Feminism Group Panel, April 2019, Vancouver, Canada.

“‘Himpathy’ and Intersectionality: A Non-Ideal Theory Approach to Feminist Praxis,” Clough Graduate Workshop, Boston College, October 2018, Chestnut Hill, MA.

“Discriminatory Intent and Implicit Bias: Title VII Liability for Unwitting Discrimination,” Clough Graduate Workshop, Boston College, November 2016, Chestnut Hill, MA.

“The Role of Restorative Laws in Eliminating Oppression and Legitimizing Political Structures,” Society for Analytical Feminism Conference, September 2016, Lowell, MA.

“Legitimacy, Oppression, and the Violence Against Women Act,” Hypatia Conference, May 2015, Villanova, PA.

“Beyond Legitimacy: Deliberative Democracy and Justice,” North American Society for Social Philosophy’s Annual International Social Philosophy Conference, July 2014, Ashland, OR.

“The Principle of the Secular Rationale in Political Deliberation,” American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting, Personalist Discussion Group, December 2013, Baltimore, MD.

“An International Duty of Restitution,” The Oxford Program on Ethics, Law, and Armed Conflict’s Workshop, “Human Rights—In and After Conflict,” Merton College, March 2013, Oxford, UK.

“The Role of Normative Principles in Non-Ideal Theory: A Critique of Amartya Sen’s Comparative Approach in *The Idea of Justice*,” Northern New England Philosophical Association Conference, October 2012, Lowell, MA.

“The Duty of Restitution: Immigration and National Borders,” at the American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, Radical Philosophy Association Group Session, April 2012, Seattle, WA.

COMMENTARY PRESENTATIONS

Commentator for Book Symposium for Barrett Emerick and Audrey Yap, Not Giving Up on People. American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, April 15, 2025, San Francisco, CA.

Commentator for “The Irrationality of Racial Profiling” by Tiffany Gordon and Tyler Hildebrand and “On Property, Housing Necessity and the Policing of Urban Spaces” by Erika Brandl, at Policing, Policy, and Philosophy Initiative (3PI) Virtual Symposium, March 1, 2024.

Commentator for “Weapons of War and the Dual-Loyalty Dilemma” by Lu-Vada Duford, Submitted Colloquium on Ethics, War and Rescue. American Philosophical Association, Central Division Meeting, Feb. 23, 2022, Chicago, IL.

Critic for Author-Meets-Critics on Matthew Altman’s A Theory of Legal Punishment: Deterrence, Retribution, and the Aims of the State; Commentator on “The Value of Retribution.” by Matthew Altman. Northwest Philosophy Conference, November 12-13, 2021, Portland, OR.

Commentator on “What We Owe to Ourselves,” by Emmalon Davis, American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, January 2019, New York, NY.

“Problem of Pluralism, Constructivism, and the Political Right to Justification,” Author-Meets-Critics Roundtable with Rainer Forst, Philosophy and Social Science Colloquium at the Institute of Philosophy at the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, May 2014, Prague, Czech Republic.

Critic on Author Meets Critics Panel for Hugh Baxter’s *Habermas: The Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, North American Society for Social Philosophy International Conference, June 2012, Boston, MA.

Commentator on “Misguided Systems Theory in Habermas’ Legal Theory,” by Kevin Gray, American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division Meeting, December 2011, Boston, MA.

WORKSHOP AND CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

Organized Workshop on Philosophy of Criminal Law and Punishment, University of Washington, April 19, 2024, Seattle, WA.

COURSES TAUGHT AS PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR***At University of Washington***

Philosophical Issues in the Law (PHIL 114)
Winter 2024, Autumn 2022, Winter 2022, Spring 2021

Philosophy of Crime and Punishment (PHIL 314)
Spring 2025, Autumn 2023, Winter 2023, Winter 2021

Philosophy of Law (PHIL 414)
Winter 2025, Winter 2024, Autumn 2022, Spring 2022, Autumn 2020

Rawls and His Critics: Theories of Justice (PHIL 401)
Spring 2024

Philosophy Honors Capstone (PHIL 401): Punishment, Responsibility, and Justice
Winter 2022

Graduate Seminar in Legal Philosophy (PHIL 514): Ethics and Political Philosophy of Policing
Spring 2025

Graduate Seminar in Legal Philosophy (PHIL 514): Social Norm Change and The Law
Spring 2023

Graduate Seminar in Legal Philosophy (PHIL 514): Theorizing Punishment in Unjust Societies
Autumn 2021

At University of Massachusetts, Lowell

Introduction to Philosophy (PHIL 2010) (Two Sections)
Fall 2019

At Worcester State University

Race, Gender, and the Law (PH 151)
Fall 2019

Philosophy of Law (PH 238)
Spring 2019

Introduction to Ethics: Human Conduct and Values (PH 130)
Fall 2013

At Boston College

Philosophy of Law (PL 500, grad/undergrad/law)

Fall 2013 (took over as instructor due to faculty illness November 3)

Philosophy of the Person 2: Justice, Autonomy, and Equality (PL 70)

Spring 2012

Philosophy of the Person 1: Justice, The Individual and The Community (PL70)

Fall 2011

LEGAL EXPERIENCE***Law Clerk for Judge Harris L Hartz***

United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, Albuquerque, NM

August 2017–August 2018

I conducted legal research, composed bench memoranda and draft opinions on federal law, civil and criminal procedure, and jurisdiction.

Napolitano Summer Intern

Prosecution and Judicial Appeals Department

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, Boston, MA

May 2016–August 2016

I assisted in briefing full commission opinions and prepared discrimination cases for prosecution.

Employment Law Intern

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Economic Justice,* Boston, MA

August 2015–December 2015

I assisted in briefing a federal appellate Title VII, racial employment discrimination case against the Boston Police Department.

* Renamed Lawyers for Civil Rights in 2018

Intern for Judge Indira Talwani

United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Boston, MA

June 2015–August 2015

I conducted research and composed bench memoranda and draft opinions in diverse legal areas including federal civil procedure, immigration, and anti-discrimination law.

SERVICE***Departmental Service***

Graduate Placement Committee (2023-present)

Colloquium Committee Co-Chair (2020-2023)

University Service

Program on Ethics, Core Member, University of Washington

Professional Service

Founder and Organizer of the Philosophy of Criminal Law and Punishment Working Group

Editorial Board, *Philosophy and Social Criticism*

Pacific Regional Coordinator, Radical Philosophy Association

Book Proposal Referee

Broadview Press

Article Manuscript Referee

Journal of the American Philosophy Association, American Philosophical Quarterly,

Journal of Philosophy of Disability, Philosophy and Social Criticism

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Philosophical Association

American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy

North American Society for Social Philosophy

Society for Analytical Feminism

3PI: Policy, Policing, and Philosophy Initiative

Radical Philosophy Association

Massachusetts Bar, Member (BBO #698776, inactive status)