

**Nate W. Olson – *Curriculum Vitae***  
nolson@stanford.edu

**AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION**

Ethics, Bioethics, Social and Political Philosophy

**AREAS OF COMPETENCE**

Philosophy of Law, Metaethics, History of Ethics, Philosophy and Literature

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellow, Thinking Matters, Stanford University, 2013-present

Lecturer, Thinking Matters, Stanford University, 2012-3

**EDUCATION**

Georgetown University (2005-2012): Ph.D., Philosophy, 2012; M.A., Philosophy, 2007

Dissertation: *Ties that Bind: Respect and Relationship-Based Responsibilities*

Committee: Henry S. Richardson (chair), Judith Lichtenberg, David Luban, and Mark C. Murphy

St. Olaf College (1998-2002): B.A., Philosophy and English, 2002, *summa cum laude* with Distinction in Philosophy

**PUBLICATIONS** (\* designates peer-reviewed publications)

“Fiduciary Obligations in Medical Research.” *APA Newsletter on Philosophy and Law* 14:1 (2014): 5-11.

“Conceptualizing Ancillary Care Obligations in Health Systems Research.” *American Journal of Bioethics* 14:2 (2014): 46-47.\*

Review of Simon Keller’s *Partiality*. *Ethics* 124:3 (2014): 622-626.

**WORK IN PROGRESS**

“Medical Researchers’ Ancillary Care Obligations: A Relationship-Based Approach” (revise and resubmit)

“Turning Respect Toward Relationships” (in preparation)

“Partiality and the Moral Value of Relationships” (in preparation)

**PRESENTATIONS** (\* designates refereed presentations)

“Medical Researchers’ Ancillary Care Obligations: A Relationship-Based Approach”

-American Society for Bioethics and Humanities Conference, October 2014\*

-Oakland University Philosophy Department, January 2014

-Stanford University Center for Biomedical Ethics Brown Bag Series, November 2013

“Fiduciary Obligations in Medical Research,” Philosophy and Law Conference, Northern Arizona University, April 2014

“Why Must I Be My Brother’s Keeper? Recognition Respect and Relationships,” Rocky

Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado, Boulder, August 2012 (poster)\*  
“Naturalism, Promising, and Wronging Another,” Baltimore-Washington Graduate Student  
Conference, Johns Hopkins University, April 2008\*

### COMMENTS

On Mark Budolfson’s “Are Theories of Institutional Legitimacy Relevant to Real-World  
Politics? Questioning the Assumed Connections Between Legitimacy, Authority, and  
Obligation,” Philosophy and Law Conference, Northern Arizona University, April 2014

On Chris Melenovsky’s “The Practice-Dependent (Yet Personal) Wrong of Breaking  
Promises,” Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, University of Colorado, Boulder, August  
2012

On Roksana Alavi’s “Utilitarianism, Integrity, and Moral Agency,” Rocky Mountain  
Ethics Congress, University of Colorado, Boulder, August 2011

### AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellowship, Stanford University, 2013-present

Graduate School Scholarship, Georgetown University, 2005-12

Engelhard Teaching Fellowship, Georgetown University, Fall 2006 and Fall 2011

School of Foreign Service Graduate Assistantship, Georgetown University, 2007-8

Phi Beta Kappa, St. Olaf College, 2002

National Merit Scholar, 1998

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

#### *At Stanford University:*

##### *As Teaching Fellow/Lecturer (leading discussion sections and tutorials):*

*Bioethical Challenges of New Technology*, David Magnus, Winter 2013-5

*Evil*, Christopher Bobonich and Adrian Daub, Fall 2014, Spring 2014, and Spring 2013

*Inventing Government*, Josiah Ober, Spring 2015

*Constituting Justice*, Pamela Karlan and Rob Reich, Fall 2012

#### *At Georgetown University:*

##### *As Instructor (full responsibility for teaching and designing course):*

*Global Justice* (Spring 2011 and Fall 2010)

*Introduction to Ethics* (Summer 2010)

*Personal Identity and the Self* (Spring 2010 and Summer 2009)

*Ethics and Pluralism* (Fall 2009, Fall 2008, and Summer 2008)

##### *As Teaching Assistant:*

*Introduction to Ethics*: Karen Stohr (Spring 2009), Alisa Carse (Fall 2006), Terry Pinkard  
(Fall 2005, Spring 2006, and Fall 2011)

*Political and Social Thought*: Mark Murphy (Spring 2008), Terry Pinkard (Fall 2007)

*Introduction to Philosophy*: John Reuscher (Spring 2007), Wilfried Ver Eecke (Spring  
2012)

**Other Teaching Experience:**

Graduate Teaching Associate, *Philosophy and Literature*, Summer Humanities Institute (for high school students), Stanford University, Summer 2013, with Lanier Anderson and Joshua Landy

Seventh and eighth grade English Language Arts instructor and Teach for America Corps Member, Pointe Coupee Central High School, Morganza, Louisiana, 2002-4

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND ACTIVITIES**

**Bioethics:**

Book Review Editor, *American Journal of Bioethics*, 2014-present

Participant, Center for Integration of Research on Genetics and Ethics/Stanford Center for Biomedical Ethics Seminar, 2012-present

Observer, Stanford Hospital Ethics Committee meetings, 2012-present

Expert Consultant, Middle School Bioethics Expedition, Two Rivers Public Charter School, Washington, DC, May 2013

Participant, Joint Seminar in Bioethics, George Washington University, National Institutes of Health (NIH), and Georgetown University, Fall 2007

**Teaching Development:**

Participant, Thinking Matters Pedagogy Workshops, Stanford University, 2012-present

Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship (CNDLS) Apprenticeship in Teaching Program, Georgetown University, 2008-11 (completed Fall 2011)

Participant, Philosophy Graduate Student Teaching Group, Georgetown University, 2009-11

Participant, School of Foreign Service Political and Social Thought Summer Institute, Georgetown University, Summer 2007

**Other Activities:**

Course Coordinator for *Evil and Inventing Government*, Thinking Matters, Stanford University, 2014-5

Technology Coordinator for *Bioethical Challenges of New Technology*, Thinking Matters, Stanford University, Winter 2014

Member, Boothe Prize Committee (for excellence in first-year writing), Thinking Matters, Stanford University, Fall 2013

Co-coordinator, Special Obligations Reading Group, Georgetown University, 2009-10

Graduate Student Coordinator, prospective graduate students recruitment efforts, Philosophy Department, Georgetown University, Spring 2007

Member, Philosophy Department Speakers Committee, Georgetown University, Spring 2007

Participant, Graduate Student Writers' Workshop, Georgetown University, 2005-12

**GRADUATE COURSES** (\* designates audited course)

**Ethics**

Methods of Bioethics, Tom Beauchamp\*

Deontic Pluralism, Margaret Little\*

Virtue Ethics, Karen Stohr

Explaining Moral Norms, Mark Murphy

Kantian Ethics, Karen Stohr

**Political and Legal Philosophy**

Law and Philosophy: Promises and Other Relationship-Based Obligations,

Henry Richardson and Gregory Klass\*

Contemporary Political Philosophy, Judith Lichtenberg

Ethics Proseminar, Henry Richardson  
Moral Reasoning, Henry Richardson  
Exceptions and Explanations, Mark Lance  
and Margaret Little

Rawls, Henry Richardson\*  
Distributive Justice, Madison Powers  
Topics in Political Philosophy, Henry  
Richardson

***History of Philosophy***

Aristotle, Alfonso Gómez-Lobo  
Hegel, Terry Pinkard  
Hume, Tom Beauchamp

***Metaphysics and Epistemology***

Metaphysics Proseminar, Alexander Pruss  
Epistemology Proseminar, James Mattingly  
Pragmatist Epistemologies, William Blattner  
Contextualist Epistemology, Wayne Davis

**REFERENCES**

Prof. Henry S. Richardson  
Department of Philosophy  
Georgetown University  
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Prof. Judith Lichtenberg  
Department of Philosophy  
Georgetown University  
jl537@georgetown.edu

Prof. Mark C. Murphy  
Department of Philosophy  
Georgetown University  
murphym@georgetown.edu

Prof. David Luban  
Georgetown University Law School  
luband@law.georgetown.edu

Prof. Karen Stohr (teaching)  
Department of Philosophy  
Georgetown University  
kes39@georgetown.edu

Prof. David Magnus  
Director, Stanford Center for Biomedical Ethics  
dmagnus@stanford.edu

Dr. Ellen Woods (teaching)  
Associate Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education  
Director of Thinking Matters  
Stanford University  
woods@stanford.edu

## DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

### *Ties that Bind: Respect and Relationship-Based Responsibilities*

We commonly think we have special obligations to our friends and family members. For instance, if someone's brother were to move to town, we would likely think that she ought to at least offer her help, though we would not expect her to extend the same offer to someone she did not know. Yet such intuitions have proven difficult to justify. Traditional, impartialist ethical theories allow for only two types of explanations of special obligations: transactional and derivative. That is, according to impartialists, all special obligations either stem from transactions, such as voluntarily receiving benefits, or derive from duties everyone possesses, such as a duty to maximize good. Neither type of explanation, however, fits with our intuitive understanding of many of our special obligations to our friends and family members, especially our ongoing, open-ended obligations to look after their welfare, what I refer to as our "special responsibilities" for them. In my dissertation, I provide a novel justification of the idea that these responsibilities are actually relationship-based, that is, stem from the relationships themselves.

The main portion of my argument consists in the development and defense of my Respect View of special responsibilities. Two claims form its core. First, we have a duty to respect the value of the relationships we share with our friends and family members. Second, satisfying our special responsibilities for them is required to fulfill this duty. I argue that the Respect View both sticks closer to our intuitions than traditional, impartialist views and, unlike other relationship-based views, provides a compelling explanation of them. In the final chapter of the dissertation, I justify our commonsense belief that many of our relationships with our friends and family members are valuable by identifying three sources of value: mutually valuing a relationship, a relationship's history, and social conventions. When combined with the Respect View, this chapter's argument establishes the conclusion that many of us have relationship-based responsibilities for our friends and family members.