

RACHEL ARKELL

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PROFILE

- Currently completing a South Eastern Network for Social Sciences (SeNSS) ESRC funded Socio-Legal Studentship (PhD), having completed a Master of Arts (MA), Master of Laws (LLM), and Bachelor of Laws (LLB).
- Current Research Associate at the BPAS Centre for Reproductive Research and Communication.
- Research interests include: Medical law and ethics; feminist legal theory; the politics of reproductive justice & bodily autonomy; the intersections of civil liberty & religious liberty discourses; aesthetic approaches to law.

EDUCATION

- Oct 2020 – ongoing **University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent – Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Candidate in Socio-Legal Studies.**
- I have been awarded a 1+3 fully funded SeNSS (ESRC) socio-legal PhD studentship. This is to be conducted collaboratively with the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS).
 - The title of the project is: “Communicating the risk of taking medicines to (potentially) pregnant women post-Montgomery: A Socio-Legal exploration.”
- Sept 2019 – Oct 2020 **University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent – Master of Arts (MA) in Methods of Social Research.**
- Achieved the award of Distinction in final degree result, obtaining a 79% grade average.
 - Received basic training in both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, including basic training in SPSS software, interview, and ethnographic techniques.
 - **Dissertation:** “An analysis of contemporary policy discourse on sodium valproate use during pregnancy: Does the legitimization of prescription medication affect the construction of ‘risk’ and ‘responsibility’ during pregnancy”: Awarded a grade of **85%**.
- Sept 2015 – Sept 2018 (part-time) **University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent – Master of Laws (LLM) in Medical Law and Ethics with Law and the Humanities.**
- Achieved the award of Distinction in final degree result, obtaining a 77% grade average.
 - Awarded a ‘Head of School Prize’ for outstanding student work.
 - **Dissertation:** ““A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing” Locating the Conscientious Objection (Medical Activities) Bill 2017-2019”: Awarded a grade of **78%**.
- Sept 2010 – June 2014 **University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent – Bachelor of Laws (LLB) in European Legal Studies**
- Achieved the award of Upper Second-Class Honours in final degree result.
 - Completed certified training in legal database software, including LexisNexis and Westlaw.
 - Completed a year abroad at **Universiteit van Amsterdam, The Netherlands**, completing all compulsory modules for the **LLM in Public International Law** (55 ECTS credits) and gaining a 72% grade average.
- July 2013 **Universiteit van Amsterdam, The Netherlands – Columbia Summer Program in American Law**
- Completed a certified summer program, with scholarship, run by Columbia Law School, New York. The program provided a comprehensive introduction to American Law through an intensive one-month course.

RESEARCH EMPLOYMENT

- Jan 2019 – ongoing **British Pregnancy Advisory Service – Research Associate at the Centre for Reproductive Research and Communication.**
- Working primarily with the Research Team and External Affairs department, my responsibilities have primarily included: writing original manuscripts and policy briefings, aiding in the response to public consultations, and submitting conference contributions.
 - To date, my research has largely focused on the ethical and legal implications of policy attempts of regulating maternal behaviour. This has extended to widespread issues associated with maternal consumption of prescription medication and alcohol. I mainly engage in desk-based, qualitative methodologies.

RESEARCH AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Guest Lecturing – Postgraduate LLM Module, University of Kent

- I have experience guest lecturing for PG students on the topic of ‘Regulating Pregnant Women and Maternal Behaviour’ as part of a module on Reproductive Justice.

Peer Reviewing – Bioethical and Legal Articles

- I have experience partaking in peer review of manuscripts for *BioSocieties* (Journal, Springer Palgrave).

Supervision– Master’s in Public Health, Imperial College London

- I have experience of supervising (second supervisor) to a systematic review of conscientious objection among health care practitioners – a thesis submitted in fulfilment of a Master’s in Public Health.

WORKSHOP, ROUNDTABLE AND CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS

- March 2021 **UCL Qualitative Health Research Network Conference – Negotiating trust: exploring power, belief, truth, and knowledge in health care.**
- Accepted abstract title: “Embedding mistrust: An exploration of the emerging UK policy frameworks on alcohol and pregnancy.” Co-authored with Professor Ellie Lee (University of Kent) and Ms. Clare Murphy (BPAS).
 - This abstract has been selected for a pre-recorded (poster equivalent) presentation.
- Jan 2021 **Centre for Reproductive Research and Communication Roundtable – Alcohol and Pregnancy.**
- Organised and chaired the first Centre for Reproductive Research and Communication (closed) Roundtable on Alcohol and Pregnancy, which was attended by prominent sociological and legal academics across England.
- Nov 2020 **Parenting and the State: State intervention in the age of the family – Workshop, Budapest.**
- Presented original research co-authored with Professor Ellie Lee (University of Kent) and Ms. Clare Murphy (BPAS) and contributed to discussions throughout the two-day (closed) workshop.
 - Paper title: “After ‘the choice to drink’: The precautionary principle and the ‘managed woman’ in a UK guideline on alcohol and pregnancy.”
- July 2020 **Institute of Medical Ethics Annual Conference – Maintaining Trust in Medicine in a “Post Truth” World.**
- Accepted abstract title: “An Unreliable Witness: pregnant women, alcohol, and the quest for biomarkers within a narrative of risk.”
 - This abstract has been selected for an oral presentation.
 - Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this conference has been postponed to July 2021.
- Nov 2019 **British Sociological Association Postgraduate Student Regional Event – Reproduction and Risk.**
- Presentation title: “An Unreliable Witness: pregnant women, alcohol, and the quest for biomarkers within a narrative of risk.”

SELECTED PUBLIC WRITING

- Sept 2020 **[“Mandatory recording of pregnant women’s drinking is just one more attempt to police our bodies”](#)**
Opinion Piece, HuffPost Online
- Aug 2020 **[“NICE Draft Quality Standards on Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder”](#)**
Public Briefing, British Pregnancy Advisory Service
- Aug 2020 **[“NICE Draft Quality Standards on FASD: A Misplaced Focus?”](#)**
Guest Blog Post, Journal of Medical Ethics
- April 2020 **[“NICE Draft Quality Standards on FASD: a precautionary approach gone too far?”](#)**
Guest Blog Post, WRISK Project
- Jan 2019 **[“Women’s Health Cross-Party Group 2019 Report: National Review of Abortion Services”](#)**
Report co-authored with Rachael Clarke, BPAS for the Welsh Assembly’s Women’s Health Cross-Party Group