Durham University
Department of Philosophy

Shaped by the past, creating the future

Dr. Christopher Cowie
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Curriculum Vitae

- **Academic Employment**

2020-present Associate Professor in Philosophy, University of Durham.
2017-2020 Assistant Professor in Philosophy, University of Durham.
2015-17 Junior Research Fellow, University of Cambridge.
2010-14 PhD in Philosophy, University of Cambridge.

Visiting Positions/Scholarships

2023 Harvard University. Visiting Fellow.
2020 Stanford University. Visiting Fellow.
2012 Princeton University. Visiting Student Researcher.

- **Publications**

Single-Author Monographs

- *Morality and Epistemic Judgment: The Argument from Analogy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (2019).
  *Reviews: *Ethics* (Richard Rowland); *NDPR* (Terence Cuneo and Spencer Case); *Journal of Moral Philosophy* (Jared Liebergen); *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* (Alex Murphy).
- *The Repugnant Conclusion: A Philosophical Inquiry*. Routledge. (2020).

Durham University
Department of Philosophy

Edited Collections

- *Companions in Guilt Argument in Metaethics*. Routledge. (2019). (Edited with Richard Rowland).
  *Review: NDPR (Luke Elson).

Journal Articles

- What is a Biosignature and Why Does it Matter? A Philosophical Analysis. Forthcoming at *Philosophical Problems in Science*: *Astrobiology Special Issue* (ed.) Persson and Sekrst.
- Methodological Conservatism in the Assessment of Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena. Forthcoming in *Ergo*.
- A New Case for Moral Skepticism: The Argument from Paradox. *The Journal of Philosophy* 123(8): 465-492. (2026).
- Comparing astrobiologists' confidence in extraterrestrial life claims for K2-18 b and Cheyava Falls. *Nature Astronomy* 10: 774-776 (2026).
- Review of Richard Joyce 'Morality: From Error to Fiction'. *Ethics* 135(4): 787-791 (2025).
- Optimism in the Search for Extraterrestrial Life: A Philosophical Perspective. *The Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 125(1): 25-44 (2025).
- New Work on Biosignatures. *Mind* 133(530): 452-471 (2023).
- Confidence of Life Detection: The Problem of Unconceived Alternatvies. *Astrobiology* 23(11): 1202-1212 (2023). Co-authored.
- Why Moral Paradoxes Support Error Theory. *The Journal of Philosophy*. 120(9): 457-483. (2023).
  *Reply: Lewis Williams. Why Moral Paradoxes Actually Support Moral Nihilism (And Why That Matters). *Journal of Philosophy* (2025).
- Arguing about Extraterrestrial Intelligence. *The Philosophical Quarterly* 73(1): 64-83. (2023).
- What Are Paradoxes? *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* 9(1): 154-

Durham University
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171 (2023).

- A New Argument for Moral Error Theory. *Nous* 56(2): 276-294. (2022).
- The 'Oumuamua Controversy: A Philosophical Perspective. *Nature Astronomy* 5: 526-7. (2021).
- Do Constitutive Norms on Belief Explain Moore's Paradox? *Philosophical Studies* 177(6), 1685-1702. (2019).
- Companions in Guilt Arguments. *Philosophy Compass*. October (2018).
- Poorer without it? The Neglected Role of Natural Environment in Poverty and Wellbeing. *Sustainable Development* 26(1): 83-98. (2018). (Co-authored).
- Does the Repugnant Conclusion Have Any Probative Force? *Philosophical Studies*: 174(12): 3012-3039. (2017).
- Is the Norm on Belief Evaluative? A Response to McHugh. *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 98(S1). (2016). (Co-authored).
- Good News for Moral Error Theorists: A Master Argument Companions in Guilt Strategies. *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 94(1): 115-130. (2016).
  *Reply: Ramon Das. Bad News for Moral Error Theorists: There is No Master Argument Against Companions in Guilt Arguments, *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 95(1).
- Conservatism in Metaethics: A Case Study. *Metaphilosophy* 46(4): 605-619. (2015).
- Why Companions in Guilt Arguments Won't Work. *The Philosophical Quarterly* 64 (256): 407-422. (2014).
  *Reply: Ramon Das. Why Companions in Guilt Arguments Still Work: Reply to Cowie, *The Philosophical Quarterly* 66: 262 (2016)
  *Reply: Richard Rowland. Rescuing Companions in Guilt Arguments. *The Philosophical Quarterly* 66: 262 (2016).
- In Defence of Instrumentalism About Epistemic Normativity. *Synthese* 191(16): 4003-4017. (2014).

Chapters in Books and Collections

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- A What Now Problem for Moral Realists. Forthcoming in W. Kalf and B. Verbeek (eds). *The Now What Question* (Routledge).
- Contemporary Work on Debunking Arguments in Morality and Mathematics. In C. Cowie and R. Rowland (eds). C*ompanions in Guilt Argument in Metaethics*. (2019).
- Constitutivism about Epistemic Normativity. In Robin McKenna and Christos Kyriacou (eds). *Epistemic Realism and Antirealism: Approaches to Metaepistemology*. McKenna, Robin & Kyriacou, Christos. Palgrave Macmillan. (2019). (Co-authored).
- Metanormativity as a Method. In Jussi Suikkanen (ed). *Methodology and Moral Philosophy*. Routledge. (2019).

- **Scholarships, Fellowships and Prizes**

Major Funding Awards

- Junior Research Fellowship. University of Cambridge. 3 years (2015-18).
- AHRC Doctoral Scholarship. University of Cambridge. 3 years (2010-13).
- AHRC Doctoral Preparation Scholarship. Kings College London. 2 years (2007-09).

Minor Funding Awards

- British Society for Philosophy of Science. Workshop Funding Grant. (2026).
- Discretionary Merit Award. University of Durham (2022).
- Global Engagement Grant. University of Durham (2020).
- Senior Scholarship for First Class Work. University of Cambridge (Consecutive years 2011, 12).

Conferences Organised

- Argument and Evidence in the Search for Extraterresatrial Life. Durham. (2026).
- International Astronomical Union. Durham Philosophy Panel. (2024).

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Department of Philosophy

- Durham-Leeds Moral Philosophy Workshop. (2021-ongoing annual).
- Companions in Guilt Arguments. The Australian Catholic University at Rome. (2017).

- **Notable Invited Talks**

- Title tbc. *University of Zurich* (2027).
- Epistemology in Astrobiology. *The Leverhulme Centre for Life in the Universe.* Experimental Centre for Astrophysics, University of Cambridge (2026).
- Does Modelling Welfare as a Vector Solve the Axiological Paradoxes? *The Practical, Political and Ethical, at The Royal Institute of Philosophy* (2026)
- Knowledge and Eliminative Reasoning in the Search for Extraterrestrial Life. *UK Astrobiology Institute at the University of Edinburgh* (tbc).
- Knowledge and Eliminative Reasoning in the Search for Extraterrestrial Life. *University of Vienna* (2025).
- Knowledge and Eliminative Reasoning in the Search for Extraterrestrial Life. *Lund and the European Astrobiology Institute* (2025).
- Optimism in The Search for Extraterrestrial Life. *Trinity College* (2025).
- Vector Measures of Welfare and Axiological Paradox. *LSE: Choice Group* (2024).
- Should We Be Optimistic About Extraterrestrial Life?. *Aristotelian Society* (2024).
- Moral Paradox and Moral Skepticism. *UCL* (2024).
- Moral Paradox and Metaethics. *Oxford University Moral Philosophy Seminar* (2024).
- Can There be a Moorean Argument Against Moral Realism? *Frankfurt Metaethics Workshop* 2023).
- Can There be a Moorean Argument Against Moral Realism? *MIT Ethics Seminar* (2023).
- What Are Biosignatures? *Leverhulme Centre for Life in the Universe, Cambridge University*. (2023).

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- Nonconsequentialism and Longtermism. *Global Priorities Institute, University of Oxford* (2022).
- Significance. *Stanford University WIP Seminar* (2020).
- A New Argument for Error Theory. *Stockholm University Metaethics Workshop* (2020).
- Probability for Error Theorists. *Epistemology Seminar, University of Oxford* (2019).
- Moral Theory and Population Axiology. *Santa Fe Institute analytical Demography Workshop* (2018).
- The Repugnant Conclusion. *Moral Sciences Club, University of Cambridge* (2016).

- **Service, Teaching and Administration**

Service

- Associate Editor at *Analysis*. 2026 onwards.

Teaching

Durham 2017-

- Ethics and Values (1st year); Moral Theory, Political Philosophy, (2nd year); Philosophy of Science, Issues in Contemporary Ethics (3rd year); Contemporary Issues in Ethics (MA); PhD supervision.

Cambridge 2013-17

- Mind and Matter, Formal Logic (1st year); Reasons and Relativism, Knowledge and Skepticism (2nd year); Metaethics, Consciousness (3rd year); MA supervision.

Invited External Lecturer/Graduate Seminar

- University of Edinburgh.

External Graduate Student Panel/Examiner

- Oxford; UCL, KCL, Boulder-Colorado, Birkbeck College.

Administrative

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Durham 2017-

- Deputy Head of Department, Director of Research, Director of Research Cluster, Director of Teaching Cluster, Impact Officer, Admissions Tutor, Student Experience Officer.

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