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Kathleen Brelsford is a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Health Policy at Vanderbilt University's School of Medicine and faculty member of the Center for Biomedical Ethics and Society at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She received her B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Miami and an M.A. in Applied Anthropology from Northern Arizona University. She obtained her Ph.D. in Applied Anthropology and MPH in Community and Family Health from the University of South Florida.

Dr. Brelsford has more than 15 years of experience designing and conducting ethnographic research and analyzing mixed-method data on a variety of bioethical and health-related topics, such as HPV vaccine decision-making; HIV risk behaviors; adolescent drug and alcohol use; and research use of clinical records. She is particularly interested in reproductive health and maternal and child health and has collaborated on studies conducted with diverse stakeholder groups throughout the United States, as well as in Costa Rica, Kenya, the DRC, South Africa, and Canada. Dr. Brelsford is an expert on social science research methods, and enjoys developing innovative research designs using a wide array of methods, including participant observation, in-depth interviews, cognitive interviews, surveys, focus groups, structured elicitation techniques, deliberative dialogue, and social network analysis. She has taught university-level courses in social theory, research methods, and reproductive health and won awards for excellence in teaching.

Prior to joining Vanderbilt, Dr. Brelsford was the Senior Social Scientist in the Program for Empirical Bioethics at Duke University, where she took a lead role in the design, conduct, and analysis of several NIH-funded studies on research recruitment, informed consent, and confidentiality protections in large-scale genomic research.

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