

# Australasian Postgraduate Philosophy Conference

*23 - 26 September 2016*

*Canberra, Australia*

*Hosted by The Australian National University*

**[HTTP://BIT.DO/2016APPC](http://bit.do/2016APPC)**

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*Cover illustration:* Max Brückner, 'Vielecke und Vielfache, Theorie und Geschichte'  
*Booklet design:* Shang Long Yeo

# Welcome!

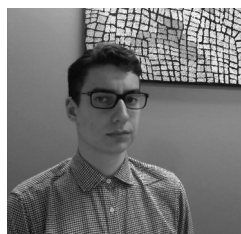
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Welcome to the 2016 Australasian Postgraduate Philosophy Conference, hosted by The Australian National University School of Philosophy in conjunction with the Australasian Association of Philosophy. This annual conference serves as an opportunity for postgraduate students to develop presentation skills and serious philosophical ideas in a peer group atmosphere. We hope you enjoy the extensive range of talks as well as the opportunity to meet fellow postgraduate students from all around the Australasian region.

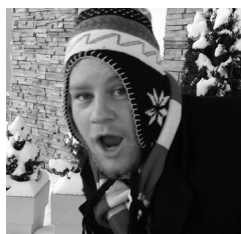
*Cheers,  
APPC Organising Committee*

# Conference Committee

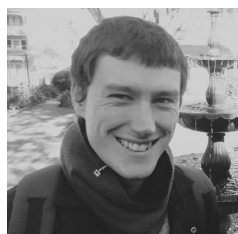
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**TOBY SOLOMON**  
*Committee Chair*



**JAMES WILLOUGHBY**  
*Treasurer*



**STEPHEN MANN**  
*Website Design*



**SHANG LONG YEO**  
*Program, Communications*



**VINCE REDHOUSE**  
*Social Events*

**HEATHER BROWNING**

**CARL BRUSSE**

**DEVON CASS**

*General Committee  
Members*

## Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which the conference is being held—the Ngunnawal people—and pay our respect to their elders past and present.

The committee would like to thank the Australasian Association of Philosophy and ANU School of Philosophy for generous funding and administrative assistance. In particular we must thank the Head of School, Christian Barry, and AAP Postgraduate Committee Chair, Jarrah Aubourg, for their help and support.

We would also like to thank The Australian National University for use of their facilities. Finally we must thank our keynote speakers Katie Steele, Rachael Brown, Monima Chadha and Frank Jackson.

# Keynote Speakers

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## KATIE STEELE

Katie Steele is interested in environmental philosophy and decision making, philosophy of probability, and choice theory. Her publications include: ‘Can free evidence be bad? Value of information for the imprecise probabilist’ and ‘The precautionary principle: a new approach to public decision-making?’. She is currently a lecturer at The Australian National University.

## RACHAEL BROWN

Rachael Brown works in the intersection of the philosophy of biology, philosophy of cognitive science, and philosophy of science. In 2015, she received the prestigious Sir Karl Popper Prize, for her paper “What Evolvability Really Is”. She has recently been appointed as a Lecturer at The Australian National University.

## MONIMA CHADHA

Monima Chadha is the Head of Philosophy at Monash University. She principally works in cross-cultural philosophy of mind. Her publications include ‘The Problem of the Unity of Consciousness: A Buddhist Solution’ and ‘An Independent, Empirical Route to Nonconceptual Content’.

## FRANK JACKSON

Frank Jackson is Emeritus Professor at The Australian National University. His publications include *From Metaphysics to Ethics: A Defence of Conceptual Analysis* and *Language, Names, and Information* and ‘Is the distinction between “is” and “ought” ultimate and irreducible?’.

# Keynote Speeches

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FRI 23 SEPT | 5:00PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE  
**THE ROLE OF 'FEASIBILITY' IN ETHICAL DEBATE**

*by* KATIE STEELE

Questions of feasibility arise in discussions of ethical/political initiatives, from, say, personal contributions to charity to international responses to climate change. But while we tend to speak confidently about feasibility and appeal to it in debates about the relative merits of proposals, on closer inspection it is not obvious what this concept means and how it is properly applied. Some seem to employ feasibility as a measure of the 'realism' of proposed values or principles, the undertone being that the greater the weight given to self-interest, the more realistic. Others take feasibility to be some kind of measure of success (say, the likelihood of realizing an action/outcome/goal under special conditions). Here I argue that the latter view, broadly speaking, is more general and fitting; I develop a version of this view that takes feasibility to be the likelihood that a concrete, relatively complex plan would be realized, once initiated. I argue that this view explains the various standard uses of feasibility, both where individuals and collectives are involved, and allows a clear and constructive role for feasibility in ethical debate.

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SAT 24 SEPT | 5:00PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE  
**WHY PHENOMENAL QUALITIES ARE SO HARD**

*by* FRANK JACKSON

There is something very attractive about a relational account of perceptual experience: it seems the best way to capture the phenomenal side of perceiving. Unfortunately, for reasons we will review, it cannot be right. I will argue that a certain, independently attractive account of perceptual content tells us what to put in its place.

# Keynote Speeches

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SUN 25 SEPT | 5:00PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE  
**DOES SELF-AWARENESS ENTAIL A SELF?**

*by* MONIMA CHADHA

The Abhidharma-Buddhist philosophers hold that consciousness entails self-awareness but self-awareness does not entail the existence of a self. Most Western philosophers argue, as do the Kashmir-Śaiva (Hindu) philosophers, that such a view is incoherent since self-awareness cannot but entail the existence of a self. Contemporary Buddhist philosophers respond either by rejecting that consciousness entails self-awareness, or by saying that self-awareness only entails momentary selves and these Buddhists would willingly endorse such minimal selves; so, the view is not incoherent. I reject both strategies used by contemporary Buddhist philosophers as misguided since they concede too much to the incoherence objection. I argue that the Abhidharma-Buddhist view that there is self-awareness without a self is coherent and can be defended against the objection raised by Kashmir-Śaiva philosophers.

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MON 26 SEPT | 5:00PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE  
**GETTING REAL ABOUT EVOLUTIONARY PLAUSIBILITY**

*by* RACHAEL BROWN

"Evolutionary plausibility" is seen as a desirable character of any cognitive theory, and is frequently invoked by both scientists and philosophers to arbitrate between competing theories in the cognitive domain. In this paper, I begin by arguing that, although the general desire for evolutionary plausible is justified, the narrow way in which it is usually cashed out in the cognitive sciences fails to confer much (if any) reason to prefer one theory over another. Drawing on styles of explanation in other parts of science, I then offer a taxonomy of the many different ways in which cognitive theories could be claimed to be "evolutionarily plausible". Cognitive scientists and philosophers, I argue, would benefit from considering this broader taxonomy when making claims about the evolutionary plausibility of their theories.



# Local Information

## CONFERENCE LOCATION

The conference will be held at the Hedley Bull Building, near the intersection of Fellows Road and Garran Road (location on map, photo below).



*Hedley Bull Building*

## FOOD + DRINK + NECESSITIES

See the map on the right for various locations (note also that there are two food courts in Canberra Centre). Good places to go for drinks include The Wig and Pen and Fellows Bar (near Hedley Bull building), and the stretch along City Walk and Garran Place (near Canberra Centre). For groceries and other necessities, head to the SPAR supermarket, or to Coles and Aldi in Canberra Centre.

## GETTING AROUND

The cheapest ways to get around Canberra are by bicycle or on the ACTION buses. For more information on buses, see <http://www.action.act.gov.au>. Be warned that on Sunday and Monday (Monday is a public holiday), buses will be infrequent and services end by about 6-7pm.

## ATTRACTIONS

The Floriade flower festival will be happening at Commonwealth Park, visit <http://www.floriadeaustralia.com> for info.

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

**SATURDAY, SUNDAY (24-25 SEPT)**

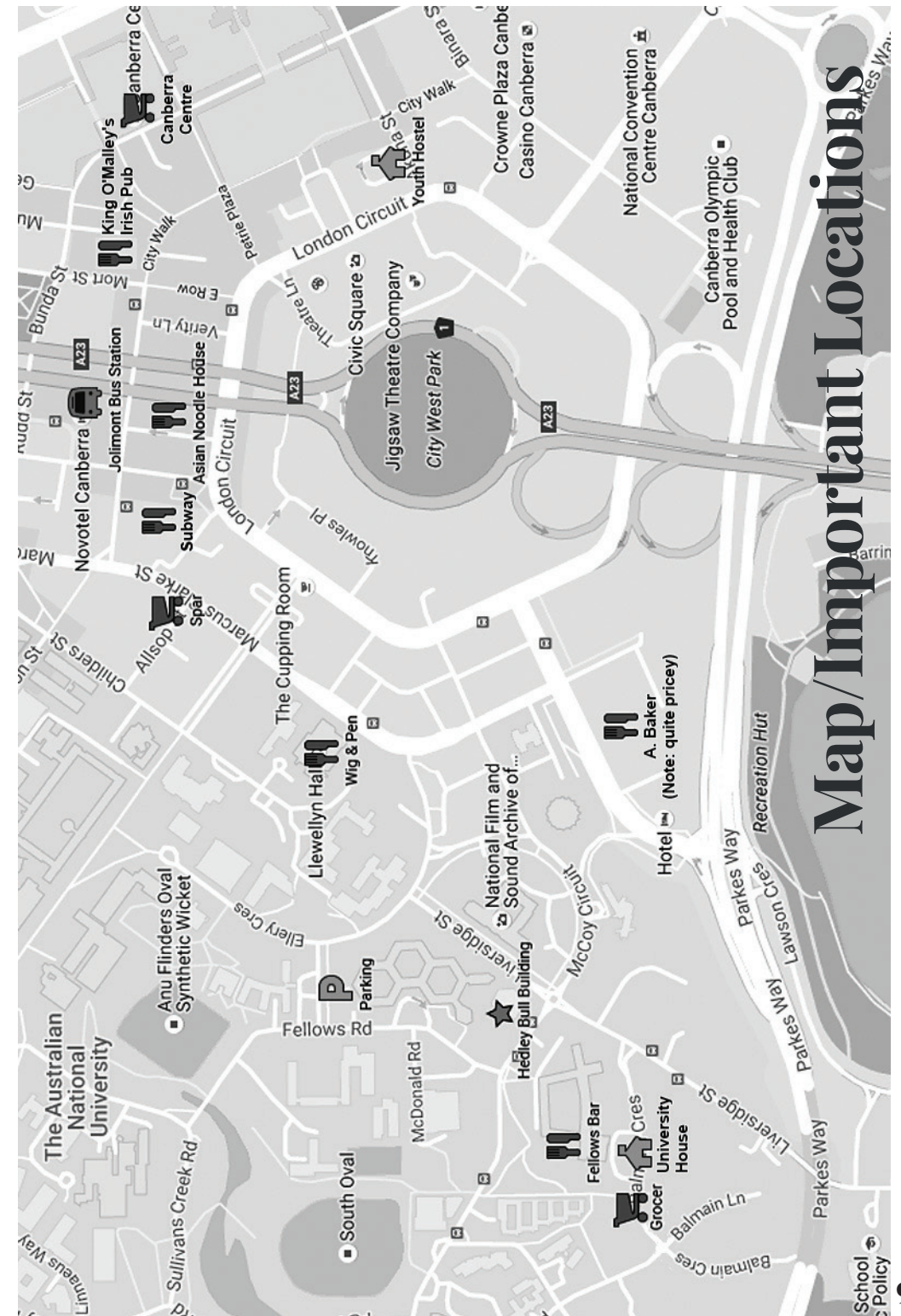
9:00AM-12:30PM - Shang (0474307520)

12:30PM onward - Toby (0468957414)

**MONDAY (26 SEPT)**

9:00AM-12:30PM - James (0475564110)

12:30PM onward - Toby (0468957414)



For an online version of this map, visit <http://bit.do/APPC2016MAP>

# Discussion Guidelines

## CHAIRING RESPONSIBILITIES

If you are giving a talk, you will be responsible for chairing the talk that happens immediately after yours in the same venue. If you have trouble chairing that talk, please speak with any of the organising committee. As the chair, you will keep time for the speaker (appropriate talk lengths for each session are listed below) - you are to cut off the speaker if they exceed the designated talk time (throw vegetables at them if necessary). After the talk, the chair will conduct the question-and-answer session in accordance with the hand-finger system (more on this below).

## TALK LENGTHS

Chairs are to keep time for speakers according to the appropriate times listed below, so as to make time for questions:

<i>Total Session Length</i>	<i>Talk Time</i>
Short (40mins)	20-25 mins
Medium (60mins)	30-40 mins
Long (1hr 20mins)	50-55 mins

## Q&A / HAND-FINGER SYSTEM

After the talk, the chair will ask all questioners to raise their hands, note down each questioner's name, and go through the list, calling on each questioner by name. To raise a new question at any point, raise your hand until the chair acknowledges you and adds you to the list. To follow up on an existing question by someone else, raise your finger. Follow-ups should pick up directly on the existing discussion, rather than being tangentially or distantly related (for follow-ups of that sort, raise your hand). The chair should try to pace things so that everyone who has a question can ask a question. In short discussion periods, or with a short time remaining, this may be difficult; disallowing fingers helps.

# Discussion Norms

## NORMS OF RESPECT

*Be nice.*

*Don't interrupt.*

*Don't present objections as flat dismissals (leave open the possibility that there's a response). Don't be incredulous. Don't roll your eyes, make faces, laugh at a participant, etc, especially to others on the side.*

*Don't start side conversations parallel to the main discussion.*

*Acknowledge your interlocutor's insights.*

*Object to theses, don't object to people.*

## NORMS OF CONSTRUCTIVENESS

*Objections are fine, but it's also always OK to be constructive, building on a speaker's project or strengthening their position. Even objections can often be cast in a constructive way.*

*If you find yourself thinking that the project is worthless and there is nothing to be learned from it, think twice before asking your question.*

*It's OK to question the presuppositions of a project or an area, but discussions in which these questions dominate can be unhelpful.*

*Remember that philosophy isn't a zero-sum game.*

## NORMS OF INCLUSIVENESS

*Don't dominate the discussion (partial exception for the speaker here!).*

*Try not to let your question (or your answer) run on forever.*

*It's OK to ask a question that you think may be unsophisticated or uninformed.*

*Don't use unnecessarily offensive examples.*

(These norms and some of the guidelines on the facing page were adapted from the list compiled by David Chalmers at <http://consc.net/norms.html>)

Sat (24 Sept)	Seminar Room	APCD Lecture Theatre	Lecture Theatre 2
9:00AM	Saurabh Bhattacharya	Lok-Chi Chan	Nicholas DiBella
9:40AM			
10:20AM		MORNING TEA	
10:50AM	Alessio Tacca	Grace Campbell	Annie Sandrussi
11:30AM	Katherine Diserens	Sidney Diamante	Joshua Kelleher
12:30PM		LUNCH	
2:30PM	David Allan	Lars Moen	Stephen Gadsby
3:10PM			
3:30PM	Declan Humphreys	Gemma Smart	
3:50PM			Devon Cass
4:30PM	Patrik Hummel	Toby Solomon	
		BREAK	
5:00PM	KEYNOTE - FRANK JACKSON (AT APCD LECTURE THEATRE)		
6:30PM			

Sun (25 Sept)	Seminar Room	APCD Lecture Theatre	Lecture Theatre 2
9:00AM			
9:40AM	Charlotte Holzke	Yana Canteloupe	Mariangela Zoe Cocchiaro
10:20AM			Aaron Baird
10:50AM		MORNING TEA	
11:30AM	Benjamin Grieve-Johnson	Jennifer Munt	Adrian Moore
12:30PM	<To Be Confirmed>	Chad Stevenson	Elena Gordon
		LUNCH	
2:30PM			
3:10PM	<To Be Confirmed>	Kate Phelan	Miguel Segundo Ortin
3:30PM			
3:50PM	Jeremy Strasser	Shang Long Yeo	Naoyuki Kajimoto
4:30PM			
		BREAK	
5:00PM	KEYNOTE - MONIMA CHADHA (AT APCD LECTURE THEATRE)		
6:30PM			

Mon (26 Sept)	Seminar Room	APCD Lecture Theatre	Lecture Theatre 2
9:00AM			
9:40AM	Heath Williams	James McGuire	Ten-Heng Lai
10:20AM		James Willoughby	Max Fedoseev
11:00AM	Alan Jurgens	Heather Browning	Vince Redhouse
		MORNING TEA	
11:30AM	Samuel Khoo	Chris Cousens	Duncan Martin
12:30PM	Anco Peeters	Dominic Dimech	Adam Piovarchy
1:30PM		LUNCH	
2:30PM			
3:10PM	Oliver Gordon	Tanter Kai	Lucy Mayne
3:30PM			
3:50PM	AAP PGSC AGM		
4:30PM			
		BREAK	
5:00PM	KEYNOTE - RACHAEL BROWN (AT APCD LECTURE THEATRE)		
6:30PM			



## 24<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Saturday)

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9:00AM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **REASON, ACTION AND MORALITY: TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE AGENTIAL VIEW ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE**

*Saurabh Bhattacharya*

Civil disobedience is an act. It is committed by an agent. The agent, before or while committing the act, must have some reason to act in that manner. One way of analysing the ethical status of the action could, therefore, be in first focusing on the relation between the process of reasoning and the end-result of action, and then gauging the moral status of the reason that leads to action. By progressing in this manner, it may be possible to conclude that if an agent's reasoning is the primary cause for her act of civil disobedience, and if the process of reasoning can be viewed as ethical, then the resulting action, by extension, can also be ethically justified. I am using a standard syllogistic structure for my thesis here, which may be presented thus:

P1: All actions (A) have at least one major causal reason (CR)

P2: Some CR gain an ethically normative status (CRe) when they satisfy certain criteria

P3: All A that result from CRe may be considered ethical

P4: Civil disobedience (CD) is a form of A

C: All CD that result from CRe may be considered ethically justified

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9:00AM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **FOUR META-METHODS OF THE STUDY OF QUALIA**

*Lok-Chi Chan (co-authored with Andrew James Latham)*

In this paper, we describe four broad 'meta-methods' (as we shall call them) employed in scientific and philosophical research of qualia. These are the theory-centred meta-method, the property-centred meta-method, the argument-centred meta-method and the event-centred meta-method. The theory-centred meta-method understands qualia as some theoretical entities picked out by our folk psychological theories. The property-centred meta-method understands qualia as some metaphysical properties we immediately observe in our introspection (e.g., intrinsic, non-causal, ineffable). The argument-centred meta-method understands qualia as what are described by arguments for non-physicalism or responses to these arguments. Lastly, the event-centred meta-method understands qualia as some events susceptible to scientific explanation. We, from a perspective of pragmatic considerations and of the custom of scientific practices, argue that the event-centred meta-method is the most promising route to a comprehensive scientific conception of qualia relative to the other meta-methods because of the flexibility of ontological and methodological assumptions it can provide. We also reveal the hidden influences of the different meta-methods and show why consideration of meta-methods has value for the study of consciousness.

## 24<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Saturday)

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9:00AM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **PROBABILISTIC PROOF OF AN EXTERNAL WORLD**

*Nicholas DiBella*

I present a novel probabilistic argument against skepticism about the external world. As I will argue, there are many more ways for there to exist an external world (for all I know with certainty) than there are ways for there not to exist an external world (for all I know with certainty). Since the number of ways in which a given proposition can be true (for all I know with certainty) has important bearing on how confident I should be in that proposition, I will argue that I should be much more confident that there exists an external world than not. In particular, I will argue that I should be at least 99.99999% confident that an external world of some sort exists.

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10:50AM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **WHO IS THE SCEPTIC?**

*Alessio Tacca*

Epistemology, at least from modern times on, has repetitively aimed to secure knowledge from the threat of scepticism. But what is scepticism really? How does it work? Why is it a threat for knowledge? Actually, is it a real threat for knowledge?

This paper aims to answer these questions and clarify the main differences between the forms of scepticism: Pyrrhonism, Academic scepticism and its modern developments (Descartes' and Hume's). Some responses to scepticism will also be analysed in order to show their strengths and their weaknesses.

It is argued that scepticism should not be seen as a theory or a philosophical view, but as a crucial moment of a dialectical process. Therefore, at least in some forms, scepticism in epistemology is not only undefeatable but also necessary.



## 24<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Saturday)

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10:50AM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **AN EXPLORATION OF APOLOGIES AND FORGIVENESS IN LIGHT OF JEAN AMERY'S RESENTMENT**

*Grace Campbell*

In his Holocaust memoir "At the Mind's Limit", Amery delivers a defence of resentment. Throughout his life, he steadfastly clung to his feelings of resentment towards the Germans after his liberation from Auschwitz. He explicitly dismisses Hannah Arendt's political polemics which encourage forgiveness to instead focus on his personal anger and subjective experience as a victim.

Amery accepts that engaging in forgiveness may provide psychological closure and healing. However, he rejects a schema which privileges this healing to instead embraces a system which values pain and injury as a valid testament to atrocities. In light of this, I will explore what it means to give an apology and ask for forgiveness for wrongdoing.

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10:50AM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **THE PROBLEM OF EMPATHY**

*Annie Sandrussi*

The problem of empathy has been typically founded on subjectivist theories of human being. Empathy was adopted into philosophy by the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl, who interpreted it as the solution to the problem of the foreign ego. Among phenomenologists, whose discipline is foundational to the concept of empathy, there is contention about the notion of empathy as an account of human being with one another. The 20th century philosopher Martin Heidegger was particularly critical of the basis of the problem of empathy.

In my paper, my aim is to show that the notion of empathy is better based on approaches to human selfhood that by-pass the traditional subject-object binary. Specifically, I argue that Heidegger's attempt to overcome ego theories of the self provides an ideal framework for positing empathy as a phenomenon of interpersonal understanding. I explore Husserl's notion of empathy as a relation of egos, in order to highlight how this historical root of the problem of empathy is a misrepresentation of human selfhood. I then argue that Heidegger's notion of the Self as based in human being (Dasein) as 'Being-with' (Mitsein) renders obsolete the problem of empathy as it has been typically posed. Finally, I suggest that Heidegger's notion of Dasein allows thinking about the formation of selfhood as a reciprocal and communal process and thus overcomes the solipsistic challenges to interpersonal understanding.

## 24<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Saturday)

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11:30PM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **ARENDT V TRUMP: MAKING POLITICAL EPISTEMOLOGY GREAT AGAIN**

*Katherine Diserens*

Hannah Arendt's insights into 'the political' can help us to understand the significance of the 2016 USA election. Is Donald Trump destroying or reviving the revolutionary founding of the republic? Is his populism a democratisation of political power, or does he undermine the capacity of the population to actualise its humanity in political thought and action? And even if we can make some judgments about these issues, what could the citizen philosopher do about it?

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11:30PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **CONSCIOUSNESS - OUT ON A LIMB?: THE OCTOPUS AND THE EVOLUTION OF COGNITION**

*Sidney Diamante*

It has been proposed that consciousness evolved to enable an organism to demarcate between itself and the world. This capacity, in turn, gives rise to further adaptive functions attributed to the proprioceptive aspects of consciousness. One of the major claims regarding the adaptive role of consciousness is that it is a major player in cognitive motor control.

However, the evolved motor control function attributed to consciousness is challenged by an organism whose cognitive architecture stands out due to its uniqueness: the octopus. Octopus arms are particularly interesting, due to the extent of their functional independence and motor control responsibilities.

While the octopus is an accepted candidate for consciousness, much of its cognitive motor control operations may not be conscious at all. In this paper, I examine how the nervous system and cognitive architecture of the octopus affect evolutionary and adaptive claims regarding consciousness.

## 24<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Saturday)

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11:30PM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **WHY REJECT UNRESTRICTED COMPOSITION?**

*Joshua Kelleher*

Although General Extensional Mereology is the standard theory of part-whole relations, philosophers disagree as to the status of its principle of Unrestricted Composition, according to which any two distinct things compose a third, also distinct, thing.

In this paper I argue against the principle of Unrestricted Composition, by showing that, under reasonable assumptions, the principle has the effect of making mereology inconsistent with set theory. In fact, the principle of Unrestricted Composition allows for the existence of mixed fusions, namely composites of class and individual parts, i.e. parts with members and parts without. Contrary to Lewis (1991), I argue that mixed fusions are classes. It is from this result that it can be demonstrated that two classes can be set-theoretically identical while being mereologically distinct, because mixed fusions as classes will have the same members as the classes that are parts of them. This leads to a direct violation of standard set theory's Axiom of Extensionality (applied to classes), that two classes with all of the same members are the same class. The principle of Unrestricted Composition is therefore to be rejected.

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2:30PM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **CHARLES TAYLOR ON HUMAN SUBJECTIVITY: A PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE**

*David Allan*

Charles Taylor's phenomenological account of human nature is in line with the conception of human life expounded in psychoanalysis. This paper uses Taylor's phenomenology to provide a metathereotical foundation for psychoanalysis effectively establishing a position that is a point of overlap between the two – a view that is simultaneously both philosophy and psychoanalysis, and that can adequately deal with the problem of self-deception. It will address Taylor's non-reductionist phenomenological view that human experience cannot be adequately explained in scientific terms. The ideas of Taylor's that will be explored are language and its relation to human agency, our background assumptions and how they are brought into focus and consciously examined, 'the logic of the language of our emotions', and the moral dimension of our desires and how they relate to the good. Taylor's concepts will be 'fleshed out' using the ideas of various psychoanalysts in order to provide an empirical application of Taylor's ideas with a particular emphasis on applying them in clinical analysis which is a practice that sees the search for truth as opposing self-deception.

## 24<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Saturday)

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2:30PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **WEAKNESS AS DOMINATION**

*Lars Moen*

The paper applies republican freedom as non-domination to the self. It argues that domination not only happens in social relations, but also within the minds of individuals. Self-domination occurs when strong desires motivate the agent to act in ways with which he or she does not identify. To act non-arbitrarily, and therefore freely, agents must deliberate upon his or her motivational set and form a self-constitution that expresses the agent's will and identity. An action is free insofar as it accords with the self-constitution. According to this account of freedom, weakness of will can happen at two stages. First, strong desires may disturb the deliberation process and lead people to make a self-constitution with which they do not identify. Second, desires may divert them from acting upon their self-constitution. At both stages, desires dominate the self, thus making it unfree.

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2:30PM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **MODERNISING O'SHAUGHNESSY'S LONG-TERM BODY IMAGE HYPOTHESIS**

*Stephen Gadsby*

Experience of our bodies has a spatial dimension: when we flex our arm we specifically experience the flexing of an arm shaped thing. Nevertheless, as O'Shaughnessy (1980) recognised, the somatosensory system is incapable of supplying spatial content on the body. To solve this representationally hungry problem, he posited the existence of a long-term body image.

The function of this body representation was to store spatial content on the body, updating this content through three routes: changeless-innate (e.g. fingers), developmental-innate (e.g. growing) and experience acquired (e.g. hump, corpulence). Most modern models of body representation largely overlook O'Shaughnessy's work. In this paper I attempt to modernise the long-term body image hypothesis, showing its compatibility with current models of body representation and using it to account for evidence of body representation distortion in Anorexia Nervosa.

## 24<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Saturday)

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3:10PM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **VARIETIES OF FALSE PLEASURE**

*Declan Humphreys*

Pleasure is considered a driving force in many moral philosophies. Mill promoted a positive balance of pleasure over pain; Kant held that a certain pleasure accompanies moral actions; and Aristotle saw the virtuous life as necessarily being one of pleasure. While pleasure plays an important role in these philosophies, and in desire and decision making, there are few who would argue that all pleasures should be pursued all of the time. This paper will consider why certain pleasures may be considered less desirable than others, and whether we can attach the label of 'false' to some pleasures if they have a less than positive impact on an individual or others around. A brief history of the notion of false pleasure will be examined, and a working taxonomy of false pleasures, primarily based on the writings of Plato and Aristotle, will be outlined. This taxonomy will attempt to reconcile the views of Plato and Aristotle, regarding false or undesirable pleasure. This will be broken into four parts; false pleasures of: belief; experience; consequence; and morality. It is hoped that the taxonomy of false pleasure proposed will provide clear insight into how we may be deceived by the promise or allure of certain pleasures; which may in turn impede our experience of a moral or good life.

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3:10PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **"HELLO MY NAME IS GEMMA AND I'M ADDICTED TO LOVE."**

*Gemma Smart*

In this era of online and app based dating and sex, suggestions that use of such services could become disordered have cropped up in both the media and academic work. Both 'sex addiction' and 'love addiction' have an established history in the Twelve Step framework, neither love nor sex are considered addictive targets within clinical Psychiatry. Drawing on a combination of my analysis of Internet Gaming Addiction and my own experiences, this paper critically examines the claim that love and sex, particularly when coupled with apps like Tinder and Grindr can be 'addictive'. The pathologisation of complex, but normal behaviour is a common thread in the critique of Psychiatry by Philosophy. The narrative of addiction provided by the psychosciences encourages people to self-define as disordered – both individually and within communities. This paper touches on the issues of identity, selfhood and relationships both within and outside of the gamification of dating and sex. I argue that by pathologising certain kinds of sexual encounters and dating styles the psychosciences are in part postulating a homogeneous conception of appropriate interpersonal relationships, which is both inaccurate and potentially harmful.

## 24<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Saturday)

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3:50PM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **EVIDENCE ABOUT THE PRINCE AND THE COBBLER**

*Patrik Hummel*

Body-switch thought experiments have been provided by Locke, Williams, Shoemaker, and others. In such cases, a person's body and her consciousness or psychology come apart, and intuitions on where she goes supposedly tell us which criterion of personal identity is correct. I claim that much of the intuitive pull of these cases rests on a conflation between a) objects of rational future-directed concern and b) the person's I-related (in Lewis' terms) future selves. I then argue that intuitions pertaining to a) are unlikely to be reliable about b). In doing so, I will draw a few analogies to evolutionary debunking arguments in metaethics according to which evaluative attitudes are unlikely to be reliable with respect to (some) moral truths.

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3:50PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **DECIDING WHAT TO DO**

*Toby Solomon*

When we deliberate about whether or not to do something we assume that we can do it or not. We also assume that what we do depends, at least probabilistically, on our decision-making. To satisfy these assumptions is to have an influential will. In this paper I will argue that understanding decision-making as an action with a constitutive aim—settling what one will do—will allow us to answer important questions like: Are these assumptions merely natural facts about human decision-makers, or are they also rational requirements of decision-making? Is having an influential will compatible with determinism? Thus making progress in the debate surrounding the Belief in Abilities Thesis: the thesis that to rationally deliberate one must believe of each of the actions under consideration that one has the ability to perform it.

## 24<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Saturday)

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3:30PM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **SOCIAL EQUALITY AND THE VALUE OF LAW**

*Devon Cass*

The social, or 'relational', conception of equality holds that the chief sense in which we value equality involves the quality of social relations. This conception of equality, though celebrated in much recent work, remains under analysed. In this paper I give an account of the role of law in realizing social equality. While some hold the law plays a merely inhibiting function, I argue law also plays a crucial role in both defining and expressing relations of social equality.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Sunday)

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9:00AM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **HONESTY AND HINGE PROPOSITIONS**

*Charlotte Holzke*

I present a neo-Aristotelian account of intellectual honesty by considering what it means to be honest with reference to the right objects. I take these right objects to be true propositions, which make up our beliefs and knowledge. I argue that these rest on Wittgenstein's hinge propositions, which I split into two levels: global and local hinge propositions. Taking 'hinge proposition' to refer to a proposition which must be accepted as true in order for individuals to go about their lives, I propose using 'global hinge proposition' to refer to such propositions which must be accepted as true globally. A 'local hinge proposition', on the other hand is a proposition which is accepted as true by some individuals, and used by them as a basis on which to build other knowledge. These local hinge propositions are generally defined by the communities in which they are formed, be they cultural, linguistic, or religious. An honest agent needs to ensure that their local hinge propositions are in line with the global ones, and that their beliefs do not conflict with either lot. This is particularly interesting because I propose that certain global hinge propositions ground empirical enquiry and dedication to the evidence.

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9:00AM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **INTELLIGIBILITY: TWO CONTEXTS FOR DISCUSSION**

*Yana Canteloupe*

My paper is one response to the question: what counts as a condition of something's being intelligible? The response is made using the context of riddles and of an encounter with goodness, contrasting the characterisation of two alleged conditions for intelligibility - 'to get it' and 'to go on' - shared by these contexts. Of especial interest is the relevance of tension, as characterising an intelligible relation with goodness, and the relevance of the body in the condition 'to go on' in encounter with goodness.



## 25<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Sunday)

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9:00AM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **NOT AGREEING TO DISAGREE?**

*Mariangela Zoe Cocchiaro*

What is the most rational way to handle a disagreement between two epistemic agents in the peers' disagreement scenario? The two standard ways to deal with it are the steadfast view and the conciliatory view. While the former view allows the peers to stick to their guns, the latter view requires them to change their minds. Some support for the conciliatory view seems to come from economics in the form of the agreement theorem (Aumann, 1976), according to which the peers have to converge upon a common belief; if they do not, they are illogical. However, this theorem holds if and only if the agents have common knowledge of each other's beliefs and if they are provided with common priors, i.e. if their credence functions assign the same numerical credence to the same event, for any event. It follows that if the agents are provided with the same evidence (as the traditional peers' disagreement case suggests) they cannot end up disagreeing and then Aumann's result is meaningless, as Kelly claims.

In this talk I argue for the shift from the notion of ideal disagreement to the notion of ordinary disagreement as the issue at stake, a shift which leads to reconsidering the importance of the agreement theorem in favor of the conciliatory view.

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9:40AM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **PUTTING KNOWLEDGE IN CONTEXT**

*Aaron Baird*

In what way does context bear on the question of whether or not a person knows something? Contemporary contextualists argue that the question of whether or not a person knows something is always to be assessed according to some set of contextually variable standards, and that these standards are fixed in part by features localised to the context of the person attributing knowledge. This means that Mabel could simultaneously and correctly be said to know that there's a goldfinch in the garden according to one set of standards, and be said not to know that same thing according to a different set of standards. Contextualists purport to find support for their account in our ordinary ways of speaking about knowledge, with at least one prominent contextualist describing his account as an exercise in 'ordinary language philosophy'. In this talk I problematise some of the key methodological assumptions underlying the contextualist treatment of knowledge. I also argue that insights found in the work of ordinary language philosopher J.L. Austin have the potential to undercut the motivation for a contextualist treatment of knowledge altogether.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Sunday)

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10:50AM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **TOWARD A THEORY OF TECHNOLOGY**

*Benjamin Grieve-Johnson*

A phenomenological theory of technology posits that our understanding of technology should not be limited to viewing artifacts as separate from society. In this view, the existence of technological artifacts is concomitant with our technological attitude toward the world: it is this orientation toward a technological world that gives rise to technological problems and their solutions. This is not to say, however, that technological artifacts are limited to their immediate use-value, or the problem with which they were first associated with solving. Once in place, technology changes the way in which we see the world as much as it changes the world itself.

With this as a starting point, I aim to explore the complex way in which technology acts as both our access to the world and society, and at the same time as a force that distances us from our own, specific emplacement in the world. This "distancing" effect of technology, I will argue, is not a side effect or coincidence of adopting particular technological artifacts, but fulfils an intrinsic part of our nature as technological beings. As such, the power of technology as an apparatus of escapism should be seen as one of its fundamental purposes.

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10:50AM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **UNIQUENESS AND BAYESIANISM**

*Jennifer Munt*

The Uniqueness thesis holds that simply possessing a body of evidence determines what is rational to believe. In this paper, I will argue that a reconstruction of White's endorsement of Uniqueness can consistently affirm the evidential support argument with a three-place evidential relation that is relative to a uniquely determined prior probability distribution. Secondly, I will argue that the dispute between White (2005; 2010) and Kelly (2010) should be reframed from a disagreement on whether we should accept a two-place or three-place evidential relation, to a dispute that is motivated by a much broader debate in Bayesian epistemology concerning the permissibility of priors.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Sunday)

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10:50AM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **NATURE AND MIMESIS: AN AESTHETIC APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF MORAL KNOWLEDGE**

*Adrian Moore*

In naturalistic philosophy the problem of moral knowledge centers on the question of the abstracted or concrete quality of moral facts, or as Michael Huemer contends, between intuitionists and reductionists (further divided into objectivist and relativist). Challenging Huemer and this classic conception of moral facts, this presentation will seek to resolve this conceptual conflict through non-dual phenomenology, a philosophical process by which theoretical contradictions or conflicts are reconceived as an interdependent polarity. Drawing on the Neo-Hellenic philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche and Albert Camus, non-dual phenomenology will be discussed as an ethic that seeks to reconcile these deviations of form into a “natural median” built on the model of the natural world’s tendency towards harmony in its many processes such as entropy or natural selection. Further, if morality is derived from experience of nature (a synthesis of the above defined moral realism) then it follows that an individual in an unnatural environment with contrived experiences will develop a non-natural morality. Using the aesthetic interplay between matter and symbolism, through art as the echo of our internal world, and in the model of harmony provided by nature, non-dual phenomenology offers a fourth dimension of inquiry into moral facts beyond theology, reason or utility.

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11:30PM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **<TO BE CONFIRMED>**

<This talk is to be confirmed, check back with the schedules at the conference.>

## 25<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Sunday)

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11:30AM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **WHAT IS BAD FOR YOUR LIFE COULD BE GOOD FOR YOU**

*Chad Stevenson*

In recent work I have (rightly or wrongly) argued the concept of well-being can actually be split in twain, with ‘Doing-well’ in one hand and ‘Going-well’ in the other. I call this the Bipartite Distinction. Supposing I am correct, what are we to make of such a distinction? In this talk I ponder one possible interpretation: well-being, properly understood, should be limited to only one half of the Bipartite Distinction, namely Doing-well. Shelley Kagan has argued something similar – that there is a difference between ‘Me’ and ‘My Life’ – so I consider his idea and what kind of work we can do for each other. If this radical interpretation turns out to be true, it will mean that what is good for your life wont necessarily be good for you (and what is good for you wont necessarily be good for your life).

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11:30PM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **HUMEAN FICTIONS: A PATH TO WORKING OUT THE GOOD FROM THE BAD**

*Elena Gordon*

There is a tendency amongst commentators of Hume’s Treatise to treat fictions as a homogenous group of ideas or beliefs that fall short of truth aptness. Donald Baxter (2008), for instance, argues that Hume’s many discussions of fictions in the Treatise indicate their inherent falsity. Others, such as Annette Baier (1991), have claimed that fictions are not necessarily false, but lack the veracity necessary to determining their truth or falsity. By contrast, I argue that such lines of thought have clouded the fact that there is a very important difference between ‘good’ fictions and ‘bad’ fictions for Hume, independent of questions about their truth aptness. In this paper, I provide a novel interpretation to approaching fiction in Hume’s Treatise by relying upon features of the Humean imagination. First, I show that philosophical fictions (of substance, for example) are particularly objectionable to Hume because they arise from ‘irregular’ features of the imagination. Second, I argue that vulgar fictions (about space and time, for example) are epistemically permissible for Hume because they arise from ‘regular’ and ‘irresistible’ features of the imagination. I suggest that this distinction clarifies the relationship between the imagination and fiction for Hume.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Sunday)

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2:30PM | SEMINAR ROOM

<TO BE CONFIRMED>

<This talk is to be confirmed, check back with the schedules at the conference.>

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### 2:30PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

#### **SOCIAL DETERMINATION AND THE POSSIBILITY OF EMANCIPATION**

*Kate Phelan*

As men have seen women as just feminine beings, they have treated them as such, affording them only those opportunities necessary to fulfilling their feminine natures. Feminists, wanting to call this treatment oppressive, insist that men's image of a woman as just a feminine being is false. Taking from Richard Rorty, let us call this the realist approach to arguing that men's treatment of women is oppressive. But this approach is challenged by another argument. This argument, made by Catharine MacKinnon, is that by virtue of their epistemic authority, men make women be just what their image of a woman is. This argument is often considered dismal and unhelpful, and therefore largely rejected. But, in this paper, I show that the view of the realist approach as fruitful and the argument made by MacKinnon as dismal and unhelpful has things quite the wrong way around. I begin by outlining MacKinnon's argument, and showing that this argument undermines the realist approach. I then explain why we should abandon the realist approach and embrace MacKinnon's argument. Finally, I show that this forces a dilemma upon us, one until the resolution of which feminism will remain paralysed.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Sunday)

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2:30PM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

#### **DOES ECOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY NEED TO BE RECTIFIED? RADICAL ENACTIVISM VS. THE ECOLOGICAL APPROACH**

*Miguel Segundo Ortin*

Radical Enactivism (Hutto & Myin 2013) has opened a new, provocative line of thought about mind and cognition in nonrepresentational ways. However, in contrast with classic, autopoietic enactivism, REC attempts to be consistent with other enactivist-friendly approaches such as ecological psychology if "RECTified", that is, if sanitized of some alleged representational and cognitivist vestiges (Hutto 2015; Myin 2016). Their arguments focus on the way the Gibsonians use the concept of specification regarding their notion of information and meaning. In my talk I analyse the arguments provided by Hutto and Myin with in order to check whether ecological psychology actually needs to be sanitized or, by contrast, if it constitutes a trully nonrepresentational account of perception.

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3:30PM | SEMINAR ROOM

#### **A SUBJECTIVIST GUIDE TO OBJECTIVE CAUSAL MODELS**

*Jeremy Strasser*

The triumph of causal decision theory should have convinced us all that we need to represent causal relations in the world, in addition to relations of evidential probabilistic dependence. Over the past 25 years theories of causal modelling has been developed significantly. However, causal models have been developed to primarily interact with objective probabilities such as frequencies, sample distributions and chances. If we represent the world with a causal model and a subjective probability function, what are the mutual coherence constraints on this representation?

## 25<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Sunday)

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### 3:30PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE **DEFENDING SELECTIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL DEBUNKING ARGUMENTS**

*Shang Long Yeo*

Psychological debunking arguments appeal to the psychological origins of certain moral judgments to argue that such judgments are unreliable. In “Debunking debunking”, Regina Rini (2016) argues that \*selective\* psychological debunking arguments – which target only a subset of our moral judgments – are vulnerable to a regress challenge. Roughly, she argues that in order to show that a psychological process does not track the moral truth, we need to rely on the truth of some independent set of first-order moral judgments. But how do we know that this independent set is itself reliable and not vulnerable to debunking? We need to check if it is the result of a psychological process that \*does\* track the moral truth, which relies on a yet further independent set of moral judgments, whose reliability might need to be checked too, and so on – generating a regress and preventing the debunking argument from reaching its conclusion. In this talk, I explore Rini’s challenge and how it might be mitigated. In doing so, I hope to explore possible avenues for successful psychological debunking.

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### 3:30PM | LECTURE THEATRE 2 **HOW SHOULD WE INTERPRET ETERNALISTS’ CLAIM ABOUT THE DIRECTION OF TIME?**

*Naoyuki Kajimoto*

Eternalism is one of the most popular theories in philosophy of time. According to it, there is no ontological difference between the past and the future. Most eternalists also hold that there is no temporal passage, that is, there is no moving now.

One of the most serious problem for eternalists is that contrary to eternalists’ claim, there are some differences between the temporal direction towards the future, and the temporal direction towards the past. Therefore, eternalists need to give an account of these differences without appealing to the passage of time. Most eternalists try to solve this problem by arguing that one of the temporally asymmetric phenomena such as causation or the increasing entropy account for the the direction of time.

However, there is a problem here. What do eternalists mean by ‘account for’? Do they mean just that the direction of time supervenes on one of the temporally asymmetric phenomena, or that the direction of time is identical with one of the temporally asymmetric phenomena? In this talk, I will consider the benefits/costs of these different approaches to ‘accounting for’ the asymmetry.

## 26<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Monday)

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### 9:00AM | SEMINAR ROOM **SOME REFINEMENTS TO THE CONCEPT OF AWARENESS OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

*Heath Williams*

Much contemporary discussion concerns the nature and extent of our awareness of consciousness (e.g. Crane et al, 2016). Drawing on primary and secondary Husserlian phenomenological sources, my paper gives a nuanced depiction of the concept of awareness of consciousness. I argue that, firstly and most basically, because of intentional directedness, we are not explicitly aware of consciousness, but, instead, we’re aware of the objects which consciousness is directed towards. This basic point needs to be nuanced by the acknowledgement of a prereflective and implicit form of phenomenal awareness of consciousness.

A further nuance is that, we might become explicitly aware of consciousness via an act which has a very special structure: an act of reflection. Following Zahavi (2014), I show that we avoid some pitfalls commonly associated with the reflective theory of awareness of consciousness, if the theory of the structure of reflective acts is itself nuanced, and when such a theory is coupled with the notion of prereflective awareness. I end by showing how a nuanced concept of awareness bears on discussions about which sort of intersubjective processes of consciousness we are supposed to be aware of.

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### 9:00AM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE **UNFIT FOR THE PRESENT: SELLING MORAL ENHANCEMENT**

*James McGuire*

Much of the recent literature on moral enhancement focuses on bioenhancement: biological interventions (e.g. pharmaceuticals, brain stimulation, and genetic engineering) as tools to alter—for the better—the moral dispositions of imperfect agents. Indeed, sometimes the terms ‘moral enhancement’ and ‘moral bioenhancement’ are used almost interchangeably. Because of this deep association between the two, there is a risk of the former being discarded, without due consideration, by those rejecting the latter. Moreover, there looms a legitimate concern of dialogic saturation—too narrow a focus on bioenhancement may lead to neglecting other potential means of intervention, namely, social kinds. In an attempt to salvage moral enhancement from the burden of bioenhancement, I will present an alternative that has recently come to be known as moral technology: social tools that may be utilised to the end of developing better moral citizens. I will close by arguing that moral technology is an attractive enhancement option and avoids major pitfalls that may have rendered bioenhancement unpalatable to some.



## 26<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Monday)

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9:00AM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **THREATENING REVOLUTION**

*Ten-Herng Lai*

I argue that we have a duty to participate in a joint threat against the government. This duty is based on the duty to do our part in preventing governmental domination. This duty demands that we participate in a fair amount of political dissent, so as to demonstrate that we have the willingness and capacity to revolt against and remove the government, should it step outside its legitimate boundaries. I will anticipate and reply to a few possible objections: such a duty is too demanding, such a duty conflicts with the duty to obey the law, and such a duty demands that we commit ourselves to intend to do wrong.

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9:40AM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **DOES THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY TELL US YOU ARE PROBABLY WRONG?**

*James Bernard Willoughby*

How confident should you be in your new, shiny, ground-breaking philosophical theory? One way you might approach the question is to look at the history of philosophy. Why?---if hair dressers gave bad haircuts nineteen out of twenty times in the past, you would infer the next one is probably going to be bad, even if you are a hairdresser. In this talk, I will look at whether history tells philosophers that they give bad haircuts. I will argue that, despite what most philosophers think, it is not at all clear what our history says about how confident we should be in our current philosophical theories.

## 26<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Monday)

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9:40AM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **IMMANENCE, SOCIAL STRUCTURES, AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

*Max Fedoseev*

This talk takes up some methodological questions relating to the task of social critique. Engaging with the tradition of critical theory and also relying on some recent literature on the embeddedness of normative perspectives in social practices and structures, I argue that the currently dominant approach, which by and large relies on moral philosophy, cannot as a rule be successful in bringing about social change. To achieve the latter, I argue, the critic must engage with normative resources internal to her object and consider how social practices and structures enable and constrain action and are resistant to change. I will use the environmental crisis as an example of a social problem that the proposed approach may help address.

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10:20AM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **A CRITIQUE OF ANALYTIC THEORY-THEORY ACCOUNTS OF SOCIAL COGNITION**

*Alan Jurgens*

This talk introduces the positions of canonical and contemporary mindreading accounts of social cognition. It then presents two means for proponents of inferential (Theory-Theory) accounts of social cognition to defend their claims. These two means are the claims that: (1) social cognition is necessarily inferential, which advocates a type of analytic inferentialism; and (2) a kind of inference to the best explanation inferentialism of social cognition is our best means of explaining social cognition. Claim (1) is then examined as it is proposed by Frank Jackson's Analytic Theory-Theory account, and shown to have serious problems. These problems demonstrate that holding this position is less tenable than claim (2). The talk will attempt to show that inference to the best explanation is the best means for mindreading proponents to defend their position. As such, they should give up defending analytic inferentialism about social cognition.

## 26<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Monday)

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10:20AM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE  
**MANAGEMENT EUTHANASIA AND ANIMAL WELFARE**

*Heather Browning*

In February 2014, a zoo in Copenhagen euthanized a young male giraffe; then going on to use the carcass for a public autopsy and eventually as food for their lions. This attracted a storm of controversy. Those against argued that it was horrific to kill a healthy animal and use the body in such a way. Those in favour responded by pointing out that the giraffe did not suffer and that the limited resources of zoos created a necessity to make such tough decisions. This debate is not new within the zoo industry, with the problem of management euthanasia, or 'culling', being quite widely discussed. Here, I will examine both sides of this discussion – from the 'rights' and the 'welfare' positions - before pointing out a new way of seeing the welfare position and analysing some of the possible trade-offs that may be acceptable in these cases.

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10:20AM | LECTURE THEATRE 2  
**SECESSION AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES**  
*Vince Redhouse*

Indigenous peoples within the geopolitically defined state of Australia have a right to separate and the Australian state has a duty to aid them in doing so. Because democratic states are made up of complex systems of institutions which represent diverse and competing interests, simply demanding from that the Australian government act on their duty is not enough to motivate their support for secession. Thus, in the second half of the talk I will discuss some ways in which the Australian government might be incentivised to support secessionist claims.

## 26<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Monday)

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11:30AM | SEMINAR ROOM  
**CONCEPTUALISING LOGIC**

*Samuel T. X. Khoo*

There are many different logical systems: classical logic, intuitionistic logic, paraconsistent logic(s), and so on. Given this plurality of logical systems, how should we think of logic? Is it continuous with the other sciences, or does it have a special status? Is logic grounded in the world, or in something else? I present a new argument for conceptualising logic as not grounded in the world, and draw out the implications of this view for some questions in the philosophy of logic.

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11:30AM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE  
**TAKING HATE SPEECH OUT OF CONTEXT**  
*Chris Cousens*

'Context' is often used as a technical term in philosophy of language, and plays a role in various pragmatic theories. However, these do not always capture every-day instances of the term, and this paper explores one of its most common uses: the appeal to context. These are typically used to defend transgressive speech, such as slurs, from censure. The implied wrong in 'taking words out of context' is shown to rest on the assumption that each event or utterance has a single, objective context in which it should be interpreted. This 'naive' sense of context struggles to explain why certain facts should, or should not, be considered a part of context. An alternative way to understand context, that models context-sets as determined by the judgements we seek to make rather than as a fact about the world, can overcome this concern. This not only improves the accuracy of some philosophical uses of context, but also provides a systematic way to challenge appeals to context that seek to defend hate speech.

## 26<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Monday)

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11:30AM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **A COLLECTIVIST ACCOUNT OF GROUP VIRTUE**

*Duncan Martin*

According to some authors of a collectivist persuasion, certain social groups are capable of possessing properties like agency and responsibility, just as individuals are. In this paper, I defend a collectivist account of group virtue, which holds that certain social groups are also capable of cultivating and possessing virtues and vices. On my view, virtues and vices are taken to be, among other things, dispositions to reliably act in certain ways. To get this account off the ground, I adopt and defend Margaret Gilbert's accounts of collective intention and collective action, and use these to form the basis of an account of group agency. With this account in hand, I go on to argue that certain groups are capable of reliably acting in certain ways, thereby providing support to my claim that such groups are capable of cultivating virtuous and vicious dispositions. Finally, I consider and respond to a few objections to this approach.

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12:30PM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **FREE WILL PUT TO THE TEST: OPERATIONALIZING HARRY FRANKFURT'S CONCEPT OF FREE WILL**

*Anco Peeters*

Can a non-Cartesian concept of free will be empirically corroborated? Often in the neuroscience and psychology literature, free will research has centred on a Cartesian conception of volition, meaning that "freely voluntary acts"—in the words of Benjamin Libet (1983)—are based on a conscious decision making process (Dennett, 2004). Several experiments have shown that the role of consciousness in this is highly problematic: unconscious processes seem to play the key role in our actions, while our consciousness is just there along for the ride (e.g., Wegner, 2002). Because of this it is sometimes concluded that free will does not exist. I will argue that Harry Frankfurt's (1971) influential conception of free will is an alternative to the Cartesian approach, and can be operationalized for empirical investigation by combining it with Slors' (2015) account of conscious intending. If I am correct and Frankfurt's theory can be prepared for potential falsification, we will have a philosophically plausible and scientifically relevant alternative to the Cartesian approach on free will.

## 26<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Monday)

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12:30PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **ON THE PRIMACY OF THE VULGAR FOR HUME'S VIEW OF EXTERNAL EXISTENCE**

*Dominic Dimech*

I argue that the relevancy of what Hume calls "the philosophical system" (T 1.4.2.46-48) for assessing Hume's position on external objects is minimal. Garrett (2015) and Kail (2007/2010) both think Hume's considered view on external objects is some qualified version of the philosophical system. I argue that even if it can be shown that Hume thinks there is justification (pragmatic or otherwise) for this view, a quandary still arises for Hume because the incontrovertibly problematic "vulgar" view of objects is the one that has psychological force for him. I establish this point through a reading of T 1.4.2 ("Of scepticism with regards to the senses") together with EHU 12 ("Of the Academical or Sceptical Philosophy"). I suggest that insofar as sceptical worries about actual beliefs are more vexing than sceptical worries about potential beliefs, Hume's position is susceptible to a very serious sceptical worry.

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12:30PM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **BLAMING THE EXCUSED: CAUSAL RESPONSIBILITY AND REACTIVE ATTITUDES**

*Adam Piovarchy*

Recently, Doris and Murphy (2007) have argued that the soldiers involved in committing atrocities at Abu Ghraib prison and in the My Lai massacre may have been cognitively degraded, and if so should be excused for their actions. Talbert (2009) has responded that even if this argument is successful, on a reactive attitudes approach to moral responsibility the soldiers are still responsible for their actions as they are appropriate targets of our reactive attitudes. In this paper, I will resolve this tension. I will argue that Talbert has misdiagnosed the target of our reactive attitudes. By reflecting on arguments regarding William's (1981) lorry driver I argue reflection on our moral practices reveals that mere causal responsibility is sufficient for the imposition of new duties of reparation. If an agent fails in these new duties, they thereby display poor quality of will to the victim, and are thus fitting targets of the reactive attitudes.

## 26<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Monday)

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2:30PM | SEMINAR ROOM

### **NOTIONS OF 'FIRST-PERSON AUTHORITY'**

*Oliver Gordon*

Pragmatist philosophers have become increasingly interested in the socially embedded nature of knowledge, language, subjectivity and even phenomenological experience. This move away from what Hilary Putnam labels 'methodological solipsism' (reversing the evaluative valence of a term initially utilised by Jerry Fodor) has been developed by a number of philosophers in terms of Wilfrid Sellars' notion of the 'logical space of reasons' as a space of linguistic communication and interaction—what we might call 'second-personal space'. Discarding the Cartesian first-person perspective in favour of a view of social interaction as the fundamental subject matter of philosophical enquiry allows for the reimagining and supposed dissolution of a number of traditional philosophical problems. But there is a question as to how the kind of 'first-person authority' that we ordinarily attribute to individuals is to be conceived within second-personal space. In this paper I investigate what exactly different philosophers are referring to when they appeal to the notion of 'first-person authority'. I ask whether there is one phenomena that this notion captures or whether (pragmatist) philosophers might be referring to a range of related, yet by no means identical phenomena in their various appeals to (or rejections of) the notion of 'first-person authority'.

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2:30PM | APCD LECTURE THEATRE

### **SUBATOMIC INFERENCES**

*Tanter Kai*

Inferentialism is a theory in the philosophy of language which claims that the meaning of expressions ought to be understood in terms of their inferential roles or relations, instead of notions like truth and reference (Brandom 2000, Peregrin 2014). In doing so it naturally lends itself to a proof- rather than model-theoretic semantics. Most work in proof theory has been focused on logical constants, with relatively little work on the semantics of atomic sentences and subatomic terms. In this talk I will extend Dag Prawitz's (1970, 1971, 1973) undeveloped account, to show how inference rules can be given for names and predicates, and which meet standard proof-theoretic requirements. What results is a compositional semantics, similar to meaning postulates in the model-theoretic tradition.

## 26<sup>TH</sup> Sept (Monday)

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2:30PM | LECTURE THEATRE 2

### **JUDGEMENT, MOTIVATION, AND MEAT**

*Lucy Mayne*

Many people, including many philosophers, think eating meat is morally bad and/or morally wrong. Many of these same people also regularly eat meat. Given that many of these people seem to have made a sincere moral judgement against meat eating and also seem to have at least some motivation to comply with that judgement, what can account for this disconnect between judgement and action? I will argue that many of the common explanations for this phenomenon, such as weakness of will or prioritisation of aesthetic pleasures, are shallow explanations that cannot explain the disparity between behaviour in this case and other cases where these people do act in accordance with their moral judgements. I will further argue that underpinning these and other plausible explanations of this discrepancy is the influence of social norms, and that these norms influence both moral judgements and strength of motivation.





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Questioners (hands)

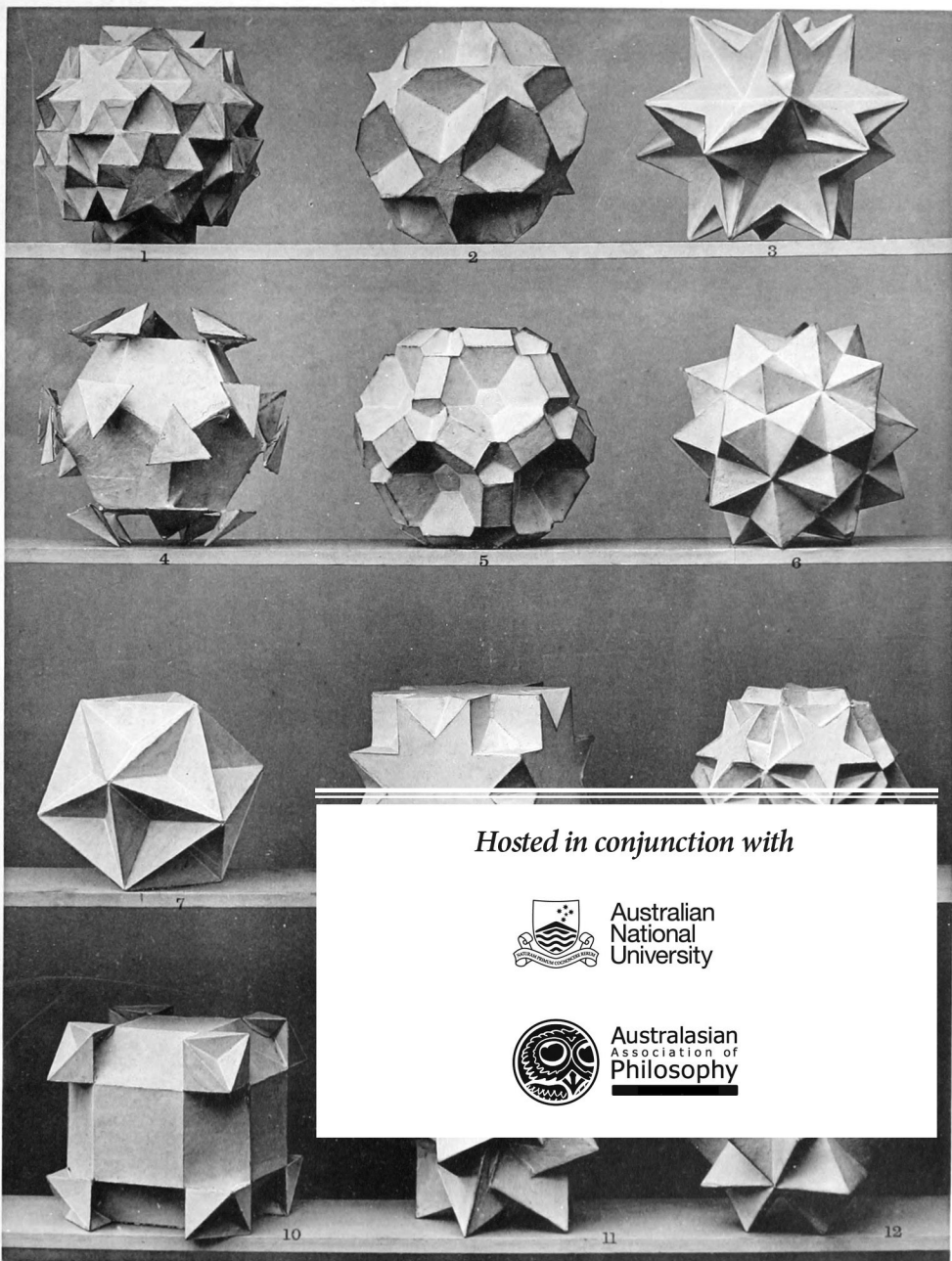
Follow-Ups (fingers)

# Notes

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# Notes

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