



Worldly Matters: Issues in Applied and Socially Engaged Philosophy
6th International Graduate Conference of the Department of Philosophy of Central European University

Conference Programme

Friday, April 1

9.15 – 9.45	CEU Tour
	Coffee
10.00 – 10.50	Bryan Ross (University of Leeds) <i>Regan and the Problem of Innocent Attacker: Falling Prey to the Predation Argument</i> Comments by Attila Mráz
10.50 – 11.40	Niclas Rautenberg (University of Hamburg) <i>The Kantian Emigrant: Why Kant's Natural Duty Does Not Legitimize a Restricted Right to Emigration</i> Comments by Yuliya Kanygina
	Break
12.00 – 12.50	Jennifer Ware (The Graduate Center, CUNY) <i>Joking and Believing</i> Comments by Dávid Bartha
	Lunch
14.00 – 14.50	Constantin Mehmel (University of Warwick) <i>Gadamer in Dialogue: A Phenomenological Account of Impaired Intersubjectivity in Depression</i> Comments by Dávid Bitter
14.50 – 15.40	Thomas Bonnín (University of Exeter) <i>Philosophers Engaging with Scientists: Ideals and Practice</i> Comments by Michele Luchetti
	Break
16.00 – 17.30	Keynote address Heather Douglas (University of Waterloo) <i>Trusting Expertise</i>
19.30	Conference dinner

Saturday, April 2

9.45	Coffee
10.00 – 10.50	Alison Toop (University of Leeds) <i>Is Marriage Compatible with Political Liberalism?</i> Comments by Miklós Zala
10.50 – 11.40	Ada Aust (No current affiliation) <i>Disabled Desires: On Moral Challenges of a Practical Entitlement of a Human Right to Sexuality for Persons with Severe Mental Impairments</i> Comments by Viktor Ivanković
	Break
12.00 – 12.50	Pilar Lopez-Cantero (University of Manchester) <i>Can't Dope me Love: Why Neuroenhancement Should Not be used to Avoid Divorces</i> Comments by Marko Konjović
	Lunch
14.00 – 15.30	Keynote address Emma Bullock (Central European University) <i>Valid Consent and Moral Transformation</i>
	Break
15.50 – 16.40	Benedetta Romano (LMU Munich) <i>The Epistemic Relevance of Emotions in the Political Context</i> Comments by Errol Ball
16.40 – 17.30	Daniel Căpărescu (University of Bucharest) <i>Mill, Freedom of Speech and Representation of Muhammad</i> Comments by Işık Sarihan

Venue: Oktober 6 utca 7, Room 102

Keynote Addresses

Emma Bullock (Central European University, Hungary)*Valid Consent and Moral Transformation*

Valid consent is often treated as having a special moral power, its presence transforming assaults, rapes, and other sorts of wrongs or harms into morally permissible interactions. In this paper I explore three conditions that are typically required for valid consent (voluntariness, informedness and decisional capacity) and give reasons to doubt that any of them are necessary conditions for morally effective consent. As such, invalid consent can be morally transformative.

I end the paper by suggesting that valid consent is not sufficient for moral transformation in morally intolerable situations. I argue that this paternalistic conclusion cannot be avoided by proposing that in such situations consent is likely to be invalid (as is sometimes argued), since I will have already shown that invalid consent can be morally effective.

Heather Douglas (University of Waterloo, Canada)*Trusting Expertise*

We cannot all be experts on every topic. The spread of knowledge is too vast and too deep. A division of epistemic labor is woven into our society. But this division poses the problem of whom to trust regarding knowledge claims, particularly when putative experts disagree or when much hangs on the decision. In this talk, I will discuss the challenge of assessing expertise for the non-expert, and on what bases trust should be built, for either individual experts or expert communities. Because experts sometimes disagree, we need to be able to do both. I will argue that neither assessment is easy, although both are more feasible than becoming an expert oneself.

Graduate Presenters

Ada Aust (No current affiliation, Germany)*Disabled Desires: On Moral Challenges of a Practical Entitlement of a Human Right to Sexuality for Persons with Severe Mental Impairments*

The paper addresses the issue of a human right to sexuality for individuals with severe mental impairments living in residential homes. In residential homes the matter of sexuality still causes unease and is handled in diverse ways. Due to the high dependency of these individuals on others, it is argued that residential homes and their carers ought to assist these individuals in engaging with the right to sexuality. Furthermore, the paper seeks to raise morally-relevant questions in regard to the practical entitlement to the right to sexuality in form of the organisation of active sexual assistance by carers in residential homes. It will be concluded that an ethical discussion is required by the virtue of the complexity of the issues involved which need to be taken into account to make a decision that portrays the best-possible balancing act between, on the one hand, the high risk of abuse and vulnerability, and, on the other hand, the right to sexuality and selfdetermination of these individuals.

Thomas Bonnín (University of Exeter, United Kingdom)*Philosophers Engaging with Scientists: Ideals and Practice*

What happens when philosophers of science directly engage with scientists? One philosopher strongly arguing for such an attitude, calling for philosophers to take part as arbiters in scientific communities, is Werner Callebaut. At its best, this collaboration would bring together the best of both worlds, mixing the theoretical and practical abilities of philosophers and scientists, to produce knowledge of the highest quality. Unfortunately, a more negative picture emerges out of the case study I analyze in this paper. An interdisciplinary collaboration of scientists, philosophers and historians, joined in a project named 'Questioning the Tree of Life', aimed at assessing

the status of one of biology's most famous model. I argue that this collaboration both acted as a direct vindicator of the ideas of the scientific protagonists, uncritically endorsed by philosophers, adding a quite contestable and superficial philosophical analysis. Endorsing the framework proposed by scientists also diverts philosopher's attention to other scientific approaches that are worthy of attention. The analysis of this case study therefore enables us to counterbalance Callebaut's optimism by stating the numerous pitfalls in which his preconized philosophical attitude can lead.

Daniel Coposescu (University of Bucharest, Romania)

Mill, Freedom of Speech and Representation of Muhammad

The publication of 12 caricatures depicting the prophet Muhammad by a Danish newspaper in 2005 caused a massive controversy, spanning more than 3 years, which included diplomatic crises, widespread protests that on occasion resulted in violence, death threats and, not least of all, academic debate. The conflict raised a great deal of questions: from the status of Muslim minorities in liberal-democratic Western States to the nature and scope of liberal principles and how best to ensure a better functioning of multicultural societies. This paper argues that John Stuart Mill's concepts of living truths and dead dogmas can help shed light on the lack of constructive debate between those deeply offended by the publication of the cartoons and the voices that defended the principle of free speech.

Constantin Mehmel (University of Warwick, United Kingdom)

Gadamer in Dialogue: A Phenomenological Account of Impaired Intersubjectivity in Depression

This paper attempts to sketch a phenomenological account of impaired intersubjectivity in depression. Depression, I propose, can be framed as a 'dialogical' illness in that it fundamentally alters the way one relates to other people and the presupposed shared background. I therefore argue that

depression entails what I call a reformed 'experience of the Other'. In order to understand how depression alters the phenomenology of intersubjectivity, I draw on Gadamer's phenomenology of understanding via the fusion of horizons, and thus on his emphasis on transformation through dialogue. I begin by sketching a Gadamerian perspective of an intact dialogue between two people. The rest of the paper is then dedicated to understanding the deviating forms of dialogue that occur in depression.

Pilar Lopez-Cantero (University of Manchester, United Kingdom)

Can't Dope me Love: Why Neuroenhancement Should Not be used to Avoid Divorces

Broken hearts could be a matter of history if current ongoing research on the application of oxytocin to enhance relationship succeeds. The so-called 'love drugs' could be used to drive people away from toxic relationships, to get over a break-up or, on the contrary, to preserve love. Defenders of relationship neuroenhancement have argued that this would result in less divorces that now cannot be avoided with traditional methods, and added that parents would actually have a duty to use 'love drugs' in order to avoid harm to children. Here I argue that not only there is no basis for such a parental obligation, but that relationship neuroenhancement could be pernicious due to it leading to unauthentic love. Given the importance of the topic for the public and policy-makers, the debate should be reformulated and properly framed in the light of these objections.

Niclas Rautenberg (University of Hamburg, Germany)

The Kantian Emigrant: Why Kant's Natural Duty Does Not Legitimise a Restricted Right to Emigration

The effects of increased emigration of high-skill citizens from developing to developed countries are of central concern in the migration debate. There is a wide range of literature circling around the moral justifiability of restricting the citizen's right to exit in order to mitigate the negative

consequences of migration, e.g. “brain drain”. A new contribution to this debate is put forward by political scientist Anna Stilz. In a forthcoming paper, Stilz argues that citizens have a natural duty towards their state of origin which prohibits them to renounce their civic obligations and binds them to compensate for their departure. I want to question this argument. By taking into account Onora O’Neill’s Kantian constructivism, I aim to show that people owe their loyalty to *some* political authority of which the state is only one potential form, given certain empirical background conditions. Since, in our world, the most worrying threats to our basic rights are impossible to be mastered by states alone, we also do not owe them some naturally derived allegiance. Instead, the global character of these threats also requires global co-operation. Without it, freedom in the Kantian sense is unattainable.

Benedetta Romano (LMU Munich, Germany)

The Epistemic Relevance of Emotions in the Political Context

The epistemic characterization of emotion as a source of knowledge has raised two main issues in the philosophical debate: first, whether knowledge about properties, facts or beliefs disclosed by emotions is likewise justified by emotions; and second, whether emotional experiences are essential for achieving the knowledge they bring about. My proposal intends to transpose these questions to the political context, that is, to consider emotional reactions in response to political facts, and to investigate how they may provide political knowledge about those facts. In other words, I will try to define the epistemic features of those emotions, whose intentional objects have political significance. By reflecting on the interaction between emotions and beliefs, I will sustain a coherentist solution for the epistemic justificatory power of emotions. Moreover, by examining empirical studies on the contribution of emotional responsiveness to political sophistication, and by appealing to the substantial difference between emotional and non-emotional apprehension of evaluative properties, I will argue that only the

knowledge which emotions provide allows us to map our own values in the political discourse. As this is a fundamental feature of political cognition, I will conclude that emotions are not only relevant, but also essential in the political context.

Bryan Ross (University of Leeds, United Kingdom)

Regan and the Problem of Innocent Attacker: Falling Prey to the Predation Argument

According to Tom Regan (2004), animals have a right not to be killed. The ‘Predation Argument’ holds that if humans are often guilty of violating this right, then predators, too, violate the rights of other animals when they kill and eat them. This entails, the argument continues, that we should intervene to prevent predation and, as such, is often seen as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the animal rights position. I argue that Regan’s attempted defence of this problem is unsuccessful, before going on to provide a more robust defence of his position. On Regan’s view, predation does not involve injustice because the wolf is not a moral agent and thus cannot violate the rights of others. On the view I present, however, intervening with predation in the wild *would* involve injustice and for much the same reason: namely, that as a moral *patient* the wolf does not violate another’s rights and, as such, would have *its* rights violated if attacked in an act of other-defence by a moral agent. However, this reveals an apparent tension in Regan’s account when dealing with the permissibility of defending oneself from an animal attack. To resolve this tension he must discard at least one of two prior commitments. However, making use of the self-defence literature on defending oneself against a (human) innocent attacker, I argue that neither commitment can be easily amputated without causing Regan serious problems; rejecting the Permissibility Claim leads to positing an unintuitive duty of martyrdom, while rejecting the Agency Requirement causes him to fall prey to the Predation Argument once more. He is therefore faced with a serious dilemma.

Alison Toop (University of Leeds, United Kingdom)

Is Marriage Compatible with Political Liberalism?

This paper examines four arguments that claim marriage, as a political institution, is incompatible with political liberalism. These arguments are drawn from Elizabeth Brake (2012), Clare Chambers (2013) and Tamara Metz (2010). My responses suggest that none conclusively show the political institution of marriage to be incompatible with political liberalism. Argument 1 claims that the political institution of marriage violates the principles of neutrality and public reason. I question the scope of these principles and whether a violation really occurs. Argument 2 alleges that marriage involves the state in unjustified discrimination. I consider whether there are grounds for the differential treatment, and question whether this treatment is derogatory, or leads to negative consequences. Argument 3 argues that marriage is ineffective for its maintained purpose of protecting caregiving relationships. My reply suggests marriage could be particularly good at this task, and considers the risk of alternative proposals. Argument 4 is concerned that marriage involves regulating belief (not solely action). My response considers whether such a distinction can be made, and suggests that the intention of the state is paramount. Whilst unsuccessful, these arguments do highlight necessary features of a political liberal defence of marriage, which I draw out in the conclusion.

Jennifer Ware (CUNY, United States)

Joking and Believing

I will demonstrate that some jokes that make use of negative stereotypes have psychological effects that are morally problematic, and these effects are not necessarily eliminated in circumstances where the joke teller has neutral or even good intentions. In particular, I will utilize the Spinozan account of belief formation to explore the consequences of simply understanding jokes that make use of morally problematic stereotypes or appeal to discriminatory attitudes. The risk that individuals will form

passive beliefs that they do not then revise is increased if those individuals are under cognitive load, and it seems merely being an audience member for the telling or reading of a joke is itself cognitive load inducing. My hope is that this and future experimental and philosophical evaluations of humor will provide a better understanding of when jokes warrant offense and moral condemnation. Furthermore, such evaluations of humor may allow for a better understanding of how jokes about sensitive topics may be made without causing harm or perpetuating damaging stereotypes.