

MAP
MINORITIES AND PHILOSOPHY

PHILOSOPHY AND/OF INCLUSION

WHAT CAN PHILOSOPHY DO FOR INCLUSION?

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Invited Speakers
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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS (alphabetic order)

Technological Acceleration and Pedagogies of Inclusion: on the Vicissitudes of the Contemporary University

Dr Ingrid Hoofd, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

In this talk, I argue that the main problematic of the contemporary university lies not so much in its submersion into the brutal logic of neoliberal globalisation; rather, it lies in the ways in which its founding ideals have spurred on as well as become usurped into the vicissitudes of technological acceleration. Under this regime, the university's demands for inclusivity, while seemingly progressive, remain marked by the humanist aporia – a call to universal emancipation that is at the same time thoroughly masculinist and Eurocentric – that grounds the university. The acceleration of these demands create what I call a 'speed-elitist' situation in which these Eurocentric and masculinist ideals have been displaced and dissimulated into the seemingly objective and neutral tools and techniques of acceleration. This expresses itself in the ways in which access to higher education and the latest communication tools get problematically presented as genuine emancipation and empowerment for the margins, while actually also posing a serious limitation on true radical thought and alternative forms of being in the world. In order to illustrate this double edged speed-elitist problematic, I will discuss the merits and demerits of various sympathetic calls for alternative and inclusive pedagogies in the contemporary university, such as 'bottom-up,' interactive, diversity-oriented, and student-centred learning

SELECTED SPEAKERS (alphabetic order)

Voting Rights and Absent Citizens: Democracy and Electoral Participation of People with Cognitive and Mental Impairment

Antonia Cioanca – CEU

The literature concerned with voting behavior has been frequently addressing individuals as 'abstract citizens', whereas recent empirical evidence shed light on a multitude of shortcomings related to (i) why people vote and (ii) how they vote in a certain way. Capacity and competency are said to be the first and foremost factors guiding political decision-making involved in casting a vote at the voting booth. However, certain vulnerable social groups are prohibited from the right to vote on the basis of such variously-defined concepts. The status of mental incapacity is determined through a legal decision and it is legally different from mental disability (Okwerekwu et al. 2018). Currently, on the grounds of having an 'impaired rationality', individuals with cognitive and mental disabilities are disenfranchised from the right to vote in most countries all over the world. However, the definitions and status varies significantly. The basis for determining this legal status relies on decisions made by psychiatrists and professionals alike (e.g. forensic psychiatrists); however, in addition to the initial problem accompanied by the variously defined concept of rational political decision-making involved in casting a vote, the lack of well-grounded knowledge and evidence about psychopathology deems to put forth an even more complex issue at stake. The main inquiry of this study relies on what are the competencies required in the act of voting, focusing on revisiting the concept of rational political decision-making in the context of people with cognitive and mental disabilities (Klein, 1971; Ennis, 1972). I argue that the problem at hand is not only a problem regarding voter turnout and the outcome of elections. Moreover, it is not about democratic responsiveness through voter turnout; it is not solely a discussion about the relevance or impact of a certain group in influencing the electoral results. My argument will revisit fundamental assumptions and statements built around the conceptualization of the concept of 'impaired rationality' in the context of people with mental disabilities and their right to vote. Fundamentally, the two main inquiries of this study will analyze several questions about voting and political decision-

making: (1) Is the prohibition of the right to vote of people with cognitive and mental disabilities an old shibboleth that supports state-sponsored discrimination? (2) Does this measure protect the interest of this specific social group? (3) 1 What does a rational political decision mean and, more specifically, what does it mean in the context a variety of different intellectual and mental disorders?

Grammatical Gender Trouble

Zuzanna Jusińska - University of Warsaw

Key words: grammatical gender, speech act theory, conversational implicatures, presupposition, common ground, feminist philosophy of language

The goal of this paper is a philosophical analysis of utterances in which grammatically gendered expressions occur. Grammatical gender is a noun class system which divides nouns into two or three classes - feminine, masculine and neuter - but it also manifests itself in other parts of speech whose forms have to be in agreement with the gender of the noun they refer to. A lot of Indo-European languages are grammatically gendered, but not all of them - English, for example, only has 'natural' gender which can be found in pronouns and gender-specific nouns. Using a grammatically gendered language we have to gender ourselves and others with almost every utterance - even if the information about someone's gender is not what we want to communicate, the language we speak forces us to do so. That happens not only because every animate noun has a grammatical gender supposed to correspond to sex/gender of the referent but also because forms of different parts of speech must agree with the gender of the noun used. In effect, the sex/gender of the referent is indicated not only by the noun used but by the forms of adjectives, verbs and articles that refer to it. I analyse utterances in which grammatically gendered expressions occur within theoretical frameworks of J.L. Austin and H.P. Grice. Within Grice's framework the analysis shows that often information about someone's gender being a part of what is said results in unintended conversational implicatures such as *that information about one's sex/gender is relevant in every context*. Within Austin's framework it shows that the occurrence of these expressions has consequences at locutionary (*change of content*), illocutionary (*performing an act of gendering a person as male or female*) and perlocutionary (*imposing obligatory gender binary*) levels of a speech act. I present a few commonsensical arguments against the outcome of this analysis and propose an approach to utterances in which grammatically gendered expressions occur that incorporates both the points raised by the analysis and by the arguments against it. The approach is based on the notions of presupposition and background and is well-suited not only for describing oppressive consequences of grammatically gendered language such as *the reinforcement of the belief that one's sex/gender is relevant in every situation* and *the reinforcement of the obligatory gender binary which is discriminatory against intersex, non-binary and genderqueer people* but also for modelling possible alternative and emancipatory linguistic practices which aim for more inclusive, feminist, pro LGBTQIA+ outcome.

Epileptic in the Academy

Maeve McKeown - St Hilda's College, University of Oxford

When people think of disability they picture a wheelchair or a white cane. They don't imagine a person continually thinking about how to avoid seizures. If you "look normal," people assume you are physiologically unburdened, when that's not necessarily the case. In this talk, I discuss my experiences as a person living with epilepsy in academia and the discrimination I've faced. I am a political theorist by training, but this talk uses political theory to illuminate my experiences, rather than to progress philosophy for its own sake. I want to shine a light on an under-explored hidden disability and to suggest practical changes.

My experiences of discrimination have been stark. After a massive seizure during my PhD, I had to take eight months off to recover from the head injury. My university demanded I pay back £7500 of my funding. Then I had four seizures in six months during a fixed-term postdoc. The university docked my pay for taking too many sick days and refused to extend my contract.

I place my experiences in the context of the “social model” of disability – the idea that disability is generated by the inhospitable social and material conditions, rather than a physiological incapacity. I argue that the social model has limited application to epilepsy, but it makes sense when the extreme pressures of academic employment are considered, because stress and sleep deprivation trigger seizures.

I also use Iris Marion Young’s concept of “structural injustice” to discuss the ways in which disabled academics are squeezed out of the system because they are unable to produce at the same rate as non-disabled academics. Our fragile bodies are not welcome in a context of hyper-productivity. Academia is not a level playing field. I don’t have the physical capacity to work as many hours as a healthy person due to the side-effects of my medication and the measures I take to avoid seizures. And there are periods in my life when I need to take time out to recover from seizures, which I am now being penalized for on the job market.

I propose two modest and achievable reforms. First, in the context of UK academia where academics have to produce five journal articles every five years for the Research Excellence Framework (the REF), I suggest that disabled academics be allowed to submit one less article. Second, I argue that there should be an institutional framework to support PhD students, postdocs, and other precariously employed academic staff, during periods of illness.

Not Passing the Buck: Responsibility in Cases of Racial Misidentification Shalom Shaleni Chalson – National University of Singapore

Keywords: philosophy of race, racial misidentification, responsibility, solidarity, passing

When individuals cross boundaries, and these experiences are ‘named’ or ‘thematized’, they are said to ‘pass’ as something they are not (Hom 2018: 33). A competing account of passing suggests that one passes when one is mistakenly taken to be a member of another mutually exclusive group and they allow that they be perceived as such (Mallon 2004: 646). In general, passing thus refers to a situation in which a member of group x is passively or actively mistaken as a member of group y, or presents themselves as such deliberately (Silvermint 2018: 3). I follow Silvermint in taking that passing may apply in a range of scenarios, including social class or nationality or gender, but like Hom and Mallon, I focus on the concept of race. In this paper, I consider if the racial passer has standing obligations to their formative group, or the group of which they are a member in actuality. Secondly, I consider if these obligations are accrued by virtue of their ability to pass. I begin by mapping the concept of race. I then attempt to define racial passing in relation to some historical, contemporary, and hypothetical examples. I next consider the case of the passer who does not ‘ask’ to pass. That is, I consider the obligations borne by a member of x who does not seek to be perceived as a member of y, but nonetheless has access to the same sets of benefits and burdens as a member of y, either completely or in part. I argue, in light of this case, that these individuals continue to have obligations to the groups of which they are members in actuality. The mechanism underlying these obligations, in my view, is a two-level solidarity which functions at the level of one’s race, firstly, and, secondly, at the level of humanity.

What does “moving away from Eurocentrism” mean for academic philosophy? Bodi Wang - TU Dortmund University

Keywords: Eurocentrism, non-western philosophy, hermeneutics, comparative philosophy

Attempts to systematically introduce Chinese philosophy to Anglo-European academy have at least begun in the 1960s, but there has been little success. Chinese philosophy outside of East Asia is hardly visible in academic philosophy. This happens not only to Chinese philosophy, but also to other philosophies such as Japanese, Islamic, and Buddhist. Eurocentrism is not a discovery in Anglo-European academic philosophy. In 2016 some scholars even made a provocative suggestion that philosophy department should change their name to “Department of European and

American Philosophy". However, despite the critiques, a more practical question remains, namely what does it mean for academic philosophy to move away from Eurocentrism? There are two representative attitudes among the denials of non-western philosophy: one considers philosophy only as descendent of Greek tradition (Heidegger), the other, although he does not deny that philosophy may also exist outside of Greek tradition, nevertheless denies Chinese philosophy as philosophy but thoughts (Derrida). Both attitudes seem to imply certain understandings of philosophy that non-western philosophy—according to them—fails to meet. In this paper, I intend to argue that moving away from Eurocentrism means that academic philosophy shall, at least, consider two tactics, one conceptual and one practical. The conceptual tactic refers to a general question that somehow remains opaque within the discipline of academic philosophy: what is the object of this study? Is philosophy only restricted to passing down one's own predecessors' theories of rationality, truth and logic? If so, then academic philosophy can hardly justify itself as emancipatory. The second aspect refers specifically to the practice of philosophy. Academic philosophy has long faced the problem of being confined within the ivory tower. Its highly abstract content makes it less accessible for most people. However, the recent "interdisciplinary-turn" of academic studies—such as political philosophy, social philosophy and philosophy of law—has revived philosophy's potential in dealing with practical problems. Hence the question, might philosophy be also helpful in shaping intercultural, transnational conversations? I believe the answer is affirmative. Comparative philosophy, for example, could serve as a model of how such a conversation would look like. I shall take Chinese philosophy as an example of non-western philosophy in the paper.

Just Theorising Workshop

Rosa Vince, Nadia Mehdi – University of Sheffield, PhDs Students

Key words: inclusion, injustice, marginalisation, responsible theorising, social difference

Many of us working in applied philosophy deal with areas that are politically sensitive and socially important, what we need is the skills to theorise in those areas, in a way that is in line with our commitments to responsible research, and fair treatment of those we theorise about. This workshop aims to fill the gap in resources, by providing a space for researchers to discuss and consider how best to improve our practices, drawing on the limited existing literature on how to write across social difference.

Specific problems we hope to address include the problem of speaking for others, how best to approach including others within our research, whether retreating from theorising about the injustices affecting others is a defensible position, and how we can best amplify the voices of those speaking for themselves and more.

In this session we will be utilising a collection of short passages from key texts on these topics which can help us to think through the many pitfalls accompanying work which looks towards marginalised, oppressed, and otherwise Other groups to which one does not belong, as well as those to which we do belong. The format involves us, as the organisers, speaking briefly (2 minutes) to introduce a particular question, and facilitating 10 minutes discussion on that, before repeating the process with 2 further questions, motivated by the passages. We end the session with some recommendations for reading on this and ways that participants might like to run similar events in their departments. We expect that our participants will benefit enormously from this workshop and that the discussions had will aid in all of us becoming better researchers of marginalised groups. Being able to theorise responsibly and responsively with marginalised groups is of upmost importance if we want our work to be useful, avoiding harms.

We are also aiming to document the discussions held by either recording the sessions (with permission from our participants) or taking notes in the hope that this can help us produce a written piece that summarises the main points of broad agreement that the group reaches. We have eventual aims, dependent on funding, to put together a resource pack so that others can put on similar training at their own institutions. In this way we hope that the workshop will benefit a wider community of researchers, making them think about the methodology they employ.