

DIENSTAG, 18. FEBRUAR 2025

THE DEMOCRATIC SOUL IN PLATO AND WHITMAN

PROF. DR. DANIELA DOVER
(UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES)

DIENSTAG, 4. MÄRZ 2025

WAS BLEIBT VOM EMPIRISMUS?

JUN.-PROF. DR. DAVID WÖRNER
(UNIVERSITÄT STUTTGART)

DIENSTAG, 29. APRIL 2025

A NEW RELEVANCE OF THE ETHICS OF CARE

PROF. DR. SANDRA LAUGIER
(UNIVERSITÉ PARIS 1 PANTHÉON-SORBONNE)

DIENSTAG, 6. MAI 2025

ACTION FOR ETHICISTS

PROF. DR. SIMON-PIERRE CHEVARIE-COSSETTE
(UNIVERSITÉ DE NEUCHÂTEL)

Dienstag, 18. Februar 2025, 16.15 Uhr

The Democratic Soul in Plato and Whitman

Prof. Dr. Daniela Dover

ABSTRACT

In Books II–IV of the *Republic*, Plato famously proposes an analogy between the constitution of the Greek city-state and the constitution of the human soul. The methodological assumption that underlies the architecture of the *Republic* is that philosophical questions about topics that we might today group under the heading of ‘moral psychology’ – descriptive and normative questions about the workings of the human psyche – cannot be separated from questions of political philosophy. Daniela Dover argues that Plato was right to think that you cannot theorize the soul without at the same time theorizing the city, and vice versa. She goes on to ask: what happens if we retain the idea that there is a profound methodological insight embedded in the city-soul analogy, but, unlike Plato, we want to defend democracy as the best form of government?

ZUR PERSON

Daniela Dover is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Los Angeles. She received her PhD in Philosophy from New York University and her BA in Classics from Yale University. She is currently working on a book about how political and moral-psychological thinking interact in the context of critiques and defenses of democracy.

Dienstag, 4. März 2025, 16.15 Uhr

Was bleibt vom Empirismus?

Jun.-Prof. Dr. David Wörner

ABSTRACT

Ein Kernelement des Empirismus, wie er seit der frühen Neuzeit vertreten wurde, liegt in einer methodischen Forderung: Wenn wir unsere Begriffe klären wollen, müssen wir sie auf sinnlich Wahrnehmbares zurückführen. Wenn wir etwa versuchen, den Begriff der Gerechtigkeit, den Begriff des Menschen oder auch den Begriff der Zahl zu klären, dann müssen wir Bedingungen angeben, unter denen etwas unter den Begriff fällt – und wir müssen zumindest im Prinzip in der Lage sein, mittels unserer Sinneswahrnehmung zu prüfen, ob ein beliebiger Gegenstand diese Bedingungen erfüllt. Diese empiristische Forderung wurde besonders in der zweiten Hälfte des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts verschiedenen triftigen Einwänden ausgesetzt und gilt heute weitgehend als fehlgeleitet. Der Vortrag geht der Frage nach, was von der Forderung übrigbleibt, wenn wir die zentralen Kritikpunkte berücksichtigen: Gibt es einen Sinn, in dem wir Begriffe trotz aller berechtigten Kritik an Sinneswahrnehmung binden sollten? Oder sollten wir uns endgültig vom Erbe des Empirismus lösen?

ZUR PERSON

David Wörner studierte Philosophie an der Universität Zürich, wo er 2017 auch eine Dissertation zu John Lockes Begriff der Essenz verteidigte. Nach Forschungsaufenthalten an der Universität Hamburg und dem MIT hat er 2024 eine Juniorprofessur für Theoretische Philosophie an der Universität Stuttgart angetreten. Seine Forschungsschwerpunkte liegen in der Philosophie der frühen Neuzeit und der zeitgenössischen Metaphysik.

Dienstag, 29. April 2025, 16.15 Uhr

A New Relevance of the Ethics of Care

Prof. Dr. Sandra Laugier

ABSTRACT

The ethics of care is leading to profound changes in ethical and political thinking. By proposing to value moral characteristics such as attention to others, solicitude, it has helped to modify a dominant conception of ethics by placing vulnerability at the heart of morality. At the same time, the care perspective is ethical and political, based on an analysis of the historical conditions that have fostered a division of labor in which care activities have been socially and morally devalued. Care proposes bringing ethics back to the level of the «rough ground of the ordinary» (Wittgenstein). It is a practical response to specific needs, which are those of others. In her talk, Sandra Laugier focuses on how the ethics of care hence challenges traditional hierarchies in moral philosophy and expands the notion of ethics to encompass ordinary experiences and expressions, particularly those of women. By centering ethics around ordinary language uses and experiences, it operates a paradigm shift that emphasizes the significance of attention in human interactions and prioritizes the voices and experiences of caregivers, often invisibilized.

ZUR PERSON

Sandra Laugier is Professor of Philosophy at Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. She has published on ordinary language philosophy (Wittgenstein, Austin, Cavell); the ethics of care; democracy and civil disobedience, gender studies, and popular culture. She is the translator of most of Stanley Cavell's work in French and an advisor for Cavell's *Nachlass*. Among her publications are *Why We Need Ordinary Language Philosophy* (2013), *Politics of the Ordinary* (2020), *TV-Philosophy* (2023).

Dienstag, 6. Mai 2025, 16.15 Uhr

Action for Ethicists

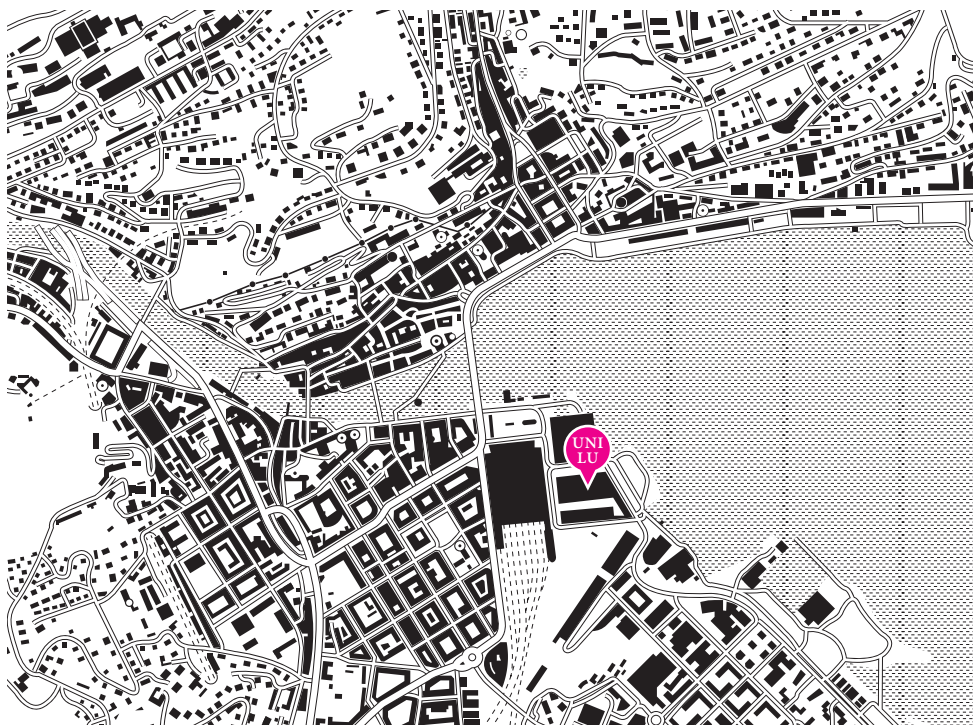
Prof. Dr. Simon-Pierre Chevarie-Cossette

ABSTRACT

Philosophers have traditionally conceived of actions as *events* which are somehow intentional. Recently, several philosophers have claimed that actions are simply *causings* of events. Since the view does not reference intention, some ethicists might frown. They shouldn't. The causing view offers at least four advantages for ethical theorising. (1) It makes better sense of the means-to-end relation. For, the view neither says that means are identical to ends nor that specific ways of Φ ing are means of Φ ing (as event theorists must say). (2) It yields a very clean classification of conduct: to act is to cause a change; to omit is not to cause a change; to prevent is to cause the absence of a change; to let something happen is not to cause the absence of a change. (3) This classification is in turn helpful for the debate in ethics about doing and allowing harm. It helps analyse tricky cases of doctors unplugging patients and raises new questions about ways of bringing harm about. (4) The causing view makes questions of responsibility and agency distinct in a helpful way. It helps dispelling the illusion that the only true objects of our responsibility are our acts.

ZUR PERSON

Simon-Pierre Chevarie-Cossette is the chair of practical philosophy at the University of Neuchâtel. His work, at the junction of ethics, epistemology, and action theory mainly concerns responsibility. His first book, *Qu'est-ce que la responsabilité?* and recent papers argue that responsibility is a duty to answer, and that blameless but responsible wrongdoing is possible. His dissertation challenges free will scepticism, in part by showing how sceptics face a problem with deliberation.



Im Forschungskolloquium präsentieren eingeladene Referent:innen philosophische Themen und stellen sie zur Diskussion. Die Veranstaltungen richten sich an Forschende, Studierende und an ein fachlich interessiertes Publikum.

Die Teilnahme ist kostenlos. Eine Anmeldung ist nicht nötig.

INFORMATION UND KONTAKT

Universität Luzern
Philosophisches Seminar
Frohburgstrasse 3
Postfach
6002 Luzern

philsem@unilu.ch
www.unilu.ch/philsem