

Royal Institute of Philosophy Birmingham Branch

The Birmingham Branch of the [Royal Institute of Philosophy](http://www.royalinstitutephilosophy.org/index.php) (<http://www.royalinstitutephilosophy.org/index.php>) organises two events a year which address philosophical issues that are of interest to the general public or attempt to bridge existing gaps between academic disciplines.

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Forthcoming events

Public lecture on progress in philosophy

Tuesday 3 June, 2014, ERI Building, Room G51

17.00-19.00 "Philosophical progress and reasonable optimism"
Daniel Stoljar (ANU)

Can there be progress in philosophy? On the one hand, it is often thought that philosophical problems are perennials for which it is pointless to expect a solution. On the other hand, professional philosophy seems to have organized itself, perhaps unconsciously, around the opposite view: how else to explain the panoply of books, papers, journals, conferences, graduate programs, websites etc.? Who is right? And what turns on who is right?

This paper defends a reasonable optimism about philosophical progress. Optimistic, because I argue that we have answered philosophical questions in the past and therefore should expect to do so in the future. Reasonable, because the sort of optimism I have in mind does not extend to all kinds of problem reasonably thought of as philosophical nor even to every instance of those kinds of problem.

Workshop on time and well-being

Friday 6 June, 2014, ERI Building, Room G51

13.00-14.20 "The passing of momentary well-being"
Ben Bramble (University of Vienna)

14.20-14.40 Tea and coffee break

14.40-16.00 "What is child well-being?"
Anna Alexandrova (Cambridge)

16.00-16.20 Tea and coffee break

16.20-17.40 "Improving the past"
Antti Kauppinen (Trinity College, Dublin)

Philosophers are interested in well-being as a measure of how well a person's life is going. It used to be assumed that you could evaluate how well someone's life is going at any given moment, for example, simply by considering whether they are experiencing pleasure. It was also assumed that, if we want to know how well someone's life is going over a long period of time, all we need to do is to add together their momentary levels of well-being. Some of the most interesting recent work in value theory and philosophy of happiness and well-being have challenged these assumptions by exploring temporal aspects of well-being in more detail. The presentations at this workshop introduce some of the new exciting ways of thinking about well-being and time. They consider questions such as: Can future events affect your current level of well-being? How do events contribute to the value of your life-story? How should we understand well-being during different stages of human life? For example, when is a child's life going well? What is the relationship between momentary well-being and lifetime well-being? Is lifetime well-being a function of momentary levels of well-being, or can we understand momentary well-being only in the context of lifetime well-being?

The workshop is open to all audiences, and there is no attendance fee (refreshments will be free, but drinks and dinner will not be included). For enquiries, please email Dr Jussi Suikkanen (j.v.suikkanen@bham.ac.uk (<mailto:j.v.suikkanen@bham.ac.uk>)).

Previous events

Public lecture on perception

Thursday 27 March, 2014, ERI Building, Room 149

5pm-7pm: John O'Dea (University of Tokyo, Komaba): *Why, and in what sense, things look different in the shade: solving the puzzle of constancy*

Human enhancement: three perspectives

Friday 31 of May, 2013, ERI Building, Room 149

Programme

13.00-14.20 "Enhancement, human identity, and authenticity"
Alexandre Erler (Oxford)

14.20-14.40 Tea and coffee break

14.40-16.00 "Smarter, stronger, faster, better – a brave new world"
Georgia Testa (Leeds)

16.00-16.20 Tea and coffee break

16.20-17.40 "Is 'human enhancement' a useful moral category?"
Simon Rippon (Central European University)