Workshop on Experimental Philosophy: Methods and new Directions
18 – 19 November 2016
and
Conference on Experimental Moral Psychology and Philosophy
20 November 2016

Jointly organized by the Einstein Group and the Experimental Philosophy Group Germany

Venue
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Berlin School of Mind and Brain
(Humboldt Graduate School)
Luisenstraße 56, Haus 1
10117 Berlin
Festsaal & Room 220

PROGRAM

Friday, 18 November 2016

13.00 – 13.15   Welcome & Introduction

13.15 – 14.15   Keynote **Justin Sytsma** (Wellington): Are religious philosophers less analytic?

Coffee break

14.45 – 15.45   **Justin Sytsma**: The theory of experimental philosophy

Short coffee break

16.00 – 17.00   **Justin Sytsma**: The practice of experimental philosophy

Short coffee break

17.15 – 18.15   **Jesse Prinz** (New York, Berlin): TBA

Short coffee break

18.30 – 19.30   **Jesse Prin**z: TBA

9.00 – 9.30	FESTSAAL	ROOM 220
	Philipp Huebl	**Cecilea Mun**
	Choosing the lesser evil. How to put up with the consequences of our actions	Challenging intuitions on emotions
9.30 –10.00	**Rodrigo J. Díaz**	**Laura Kaltwasser**
	Partiality and impartiality: Which one do we value more?	On the relationship of emotional abilities and prosocial behavior

Short coffee break

10.15 – 10.45	**Veselina Kadreva et al.**	**Gina Eickers**
	First vs. third person moral dilemmas. Bio-signal based research.	Stereotypes in social interaction: Asymmetries in mental state and action attribution
10.45 – 11.15	**Hanno Sauer**	**Susanne Kroeger**
	Vindicating arguments	Moral philosophy at the intersection of neuroscience and moral experimental psychology

Short coffee break

11.30 – 12.45   **Roland Bluhm** and **Kevin Reuter** (Bern): Corpus Studies

Lunch break

13.30 – 14.45   Blitz Talks

1. **Robin G. Loehr**: Biased experts: Experimental philosophy as a psychology of philosophy
2. **Monika Bystroňová**: Folk blaming and punishment: New connections
3. **Anita Keshmirian**, **Yasaman Rafiee** and **Javad Hatami**: Using the internet and morality: An exploratory research on the relationship between using the internet and moral decision making
4. **Yasaman Rafiee**, **Anita Keshmirian**, **Javad Hatami** and **Bahar Sadeghi Abdollahi**: The effect of menstrual cycle on women's moral decision making in fertility ages, based on dual process theory
5. **Hyo-Eun Kim**: Pain and moral judgment
6. **Jan Horský**: "Walking the walk": Moral judgment & moral decision-making
7. **Brian Jabarian**: Moral and markets: How do they go together?
8. **Haim Cohen:** Moral Judgments: Belief-like or desire-like?
9. **Michaela Košová**: (Inter)personal Identity
10. **Adriana Alcaraz**: Where's grounded our sense of Self?: Phenomenal selfhood, full-body illusions and dreams
11. **Adrianna Smurzyńska**: Analogy and other minds – the experimental study
12. **Sanna Hirvonen**: Do speakers believe that judgments of taste are subjective?
13. **Alexander Dinges**: Knowledge and availability
14. **Grzegorz Gaszczyk**: Empirical study on selfless assertions
15. **Katalin Tihanyi**: The challenge of testing referential intuitions
16. **David Merry**: Experiments for Lucretius
17. **Joerg Fingerhut** and **Aenne A. Brielmann**: Ideal proportions and beauty: Natural and artistic beauty do not align

14.45 – 15.15   Poster Session

Short coffee break

15.30 – 16.45   **Alex Wiegmann** (Göttingen): Statistics

Short coffee break

17.00 – 17.30	FESTSAAL **Robin Kopecky** Between moral psychology and philosophy: Methodological and philosophical problems of using thought experiments	ROOM 220 **Nora Heinzelmann** Delay discounting and weakness of will
17.30 – 18.00	**Carme Isern-Mas, Antoni Gomila** Looking into the sense of justice	**Benjamin Fischer, Damar Hoogland** and **Björn Jorges** Do scientific convictions serve as buffer against death anxiety?

Short coffee break

18.15 – 19.15   Keynote **Jesse Prinz** (New York, Berlin): The moral self

Sunday, November 20, 2016

10.00 – 10.45   **Lara Pourabdolrahim** (Berlin): When the bad effect is a murder: A unifying account for moral life-death dilemmas*

10.45 – 11.30   **Kevin Reuter** (Bern): No knowledge required: On the norms of assertion*

Short coffee break

11.45 – 12.30   **Pascale Willemsen** (Bochum): I must although I can't!? A pragmatically grounded two-level theory of 'ought implies can'*

12.30 – 13.15   **Alexander Wiegmann** (Göttingen): Morally irrelevant factors and moral intuitions*

Lunch break

14.30 – 15.30   **Adina Roskies** (Hanover, New Hampshire): Moral enhancement: Can and should we do it?

Coffee break

16.00 – 17.30   **Katharina Anna Helming** (Leipzig) and **Maureen Sie** (Leiden): Sharing responsibility. The importance of tokens of appraisal

17.30 – 18.30   **Julia Christensen** (London): Moral dilemmas reloaded

*Participation restricted to workshop attendants and Mind and Brain students

ABSTRACTS

Friday

Keynote Justin Sytsma: Are religious philosophers less analytic?

Some researchers in philosophy of religion have charged that the sub-discipline exhibits a number of features of poor health, prominently including that "partisanship is so entrenched that most philosophers of religion, instead of being alarmed by it, just take it for granted" (Draper and Nichols, 2013, 421). And researchers in experimental philosophy of religion have presented empirical work that supports this contention, arguing that it shows that confirmation bias plays a notable role in the acceptance of natural theological arguments among philosophers (De Cruz, 2014; Tobia, 2015; De Cruz and De Smedt, 2016). But while these studies indicate that there is a correlation between religious belief and judgments about natural theological arguments, they do not establish that causation runs from belief to judgment as has been claimed. In this paper I offer an alternative explanation, suggesting that thinking style is a plausible common cause. I note that previous research has shown a significant negative correlation between analytic thinking style and both religious belief and religious engagement in the general population (Shenhav, Rand, and Greene, 2012; Gervaise and Norenzayan, 2012; Pennycook et al., 2012, 2013; Jack et al., 2016). Further, other research has shown a significant positive correlation between analytic thinking style and training in philosophy that is independent of overall level of education (Livengood et al., 2010). Pulling these threads together, I hypothesize that there is an especially strong correlation between thinking style and religiosity among philosophers. This hypothesis is tested by looking at a sample of 524 people with an advanced degree in philosophy. The results support the hypothesis, showing a medium-large negative correlation between analytic thinking style and religious engagement that is roughly twice as strong as has been reported for the general population ($r=-0.39$ among men, $r=-0.34$ among women). And the correlation is even stronger if we restrict to Christian theists and non-theists ($r=-0.61$ among men, $r=-0.62$ among women).

Saturday

Philipp Huebl: Choosing the lesser evil. How to put up with the consequences of our actions

Studies in the Knobe-paradigm may be flawed, because they have a forced-choice design. In follow-up experiments in German, I varied the dimensions of forced answers. After replicating the initial findings, I presented subjects with more options (e.g. "the CEO expected harm"). Multiple selections were possible. Ascription of "intentionally" dropped below 18 percent in harm cases, and below 7 percent in help cases, while "putting up with the consequences of her actions" ("billigend in Kauf nehmen") was at about 90 percent for help and 83 percent for harm cases. In a third run, subjects were given the forced choice between "intentionally" and "putting up with the consequences". Now, ascription of "intentionally" dropped below 7 percent in both, help and harm cases. This shows that the forced-choice design affects the answers of subjects. If replicated for other languages, it indicates that the Knobe effect is neither robust nor directly related to attributions of moral blame or praise. The results raise methodological concerns about forced-choice questionnaires.

Laura Kaltwasser: The role of emotions in moral behavior and the new age of sentimentalism in social neuroscience

Recent work in social neuroscience emphasizes the role of emotions in moral decisions and cooperation behavior. A plethora of behavioral experiments stresses the influence of emotions such as anger, disgust, awe or gratitude on moral reasoning. Moreover the sensibility to the distress of others, reflected in the ability to recognize fear and sadness, is associated with prosocial behavior in socio-economic dilemmata. On the physiological side, evidence points in the direction that brain areas associated with emotion and social cognition (mPFC, posterior cingulate, STS/TPJ) exhibit increased activity while participants consider personal moral dilemmas. In my talk I would like to present work of my PhD on the relationship of emotional abilities and cooperation behavior. Moreover I would like to embed these empirical findings in a discussion about the new age of sentimentalism in social neuroscience.

Veselina Kadreva, Evgeniya Hristova, Maurice Grinberg: First vs. Third Person Moral Dilemmas. Bio-signal Based Research

Recent findings in the field of moral psychology suggest that moral judgment results both from emotional processing and deliberate reasoning. In the current research multimodal data is collected and analyzed: moral judgments, skin conductance (as a somatic index of affective processing), and response times (as providing information on a deliberation process). The experimental study uses artificial situations that pose moral dilemmas – a human life have to be sacrificed in order to save more lives. Strictly controlled stimuli are used in order to compare judgement for first vs. third person framing of moral dilemmas exploring the interaction of this factor with two important factors in moral judgement: physical directness of harm and inevitability of death. Results reveal that impersonal and inevitable dilemmas are judged as more permissible compared to personal and avoidable dilemmas, respectively, both for first and third person framings. When dilemmas are framed so that the participants need to judge a hypothetical utilitarian intervention of their own (first person framing), impersonal dilemmas are accompanied by higher arousal and need more time for judgement compared to personal moral dilemmas. No significant difference in skin conductance response and response times is found for avoidable and inevitable dilemmas. For third person dilemmas, when participants need to judge the hypothetical intervention of another individual, again, impersonal dilemmas need more time for judgement compared to personal ones, but there is no difference in the accompanying skin conductance response. Results suggest that apart from the well-established personal-impersonal distinction the extent of emotional processing in moral judgement could be influenced by the first-third person perspective which in the current research could be explained by differences in psychological distance posed by the two alternatives.

Hanno Sauer: Vindicating Arguments

Debunking arguments aim to undermine the justification of some or all of our moral beliefs by showing that they are based on epistemically defective processes. They do so by supplying an empirically informed causal genealogy of our moral beliefs to demonstrate their normatively dubious origins. The converse strategy of vindicating moral beliefs by pointing out their trustworthy sources has received much less attention. In this paper, I offer an account of vindicating arguments in moral philosophy. I distinguish four types of debunking – off track debunking, obsoleteness debunking, symmetry debunking, and detection error debunking – that are frequently lumped together. I then use this typology to extract a list of vindicating features a process of judgment formation must possess in order to count as

reliable. I conclude with a discussion of what is special about empirical vindicating arguments as opposed to debunking arguments.

Robin Kopecky: Methodological and philosophical problems of using thought experiments – study on a large sample of Czech general public

The aim of the study is to discuss various issues linked with comparing and matching folk intuitions with well thought and reasoned philosophical standpoint. The methodological question preceding usage of thought experiments is whether human mind uses one consistent module for moral reasoning, i.e. utilitarian or deontological, or folk intuitions in moral dilemmas are more akin to "moral toolbox" with more than one consistent module. The philosophical question of terminology in so-called "utilitarian" judgments in moral dilemmas like "trolley problem" and "ticking bomb dilemma" is the relation between "utilitarian" judgments and genuine utilitarian concern for the greater good which is currently quite unclear. These theoretical issues are discussed on the basis of the ongoing results of our own research. We are investigating factors influencing moral decision. This particular study was conducted in the Czech Republic on general public of a massive sample size (N=8000) by method of online questionnaire.

Nora Heinzelmann: Delay discounting and weakness of will

Delay discounting theory has been invoked by psychologists and philosophers as a model for weakness of will: imagine an agent forms a New Year's resolution to save some money for a summer vacation but then spends said money in spring on a shopping tour. According to discounting theory, she discounts the benefit derived from the vacation so steeply that it is trumped by the smaller but immediate gratification derived from shopping.

My paper examines and challenges this approach. Within an economic framework, delay discounting theory best accounts for weakness of will as a preference reversal. On a common view, hyperbolic but not exponential discounting theory describes preference reversals, yet this view is misleading. However, even if it was true, preference reversals are neither necessary nor sufficient for weakness of the will, and even some weak-willed preference reversals cannot be accounted for by current theories of delay discounting.

Benjamin Fischer, Damar Hoogland and Björn Jorges:: Do Scientific Convictions Serve as Defense against Death Anxiety?

The goal of this study is to shed light on the effect of personal emotional investments on scientific decisions. In this fashion we aim to contribute empirical evidence to the philosophical debate around the objectivity of science. To quantify the notion of personal investment, the study was situated within the framework of Terror Management Theory (TMT). TMT poses that when humans are reminded of their mortality, they seek to alleviate their resulting death anxiety by indulging in world views that are central to their identity, and that provide them with symbolic immortality. Following a standard TMT study design, we will death-prime participants subliminally in an online survey and measure their worldview adherence. We expect death-primed groups to have higher adherence scores than the unprimed control groups. We will target two communities, an academic group, and a group of non-professional members of a science-inspired movement.

Sunday

Lara Pourabdolrahim: When the bad effect is a murder: A unifying account for moral life-death dilemmas

Most people judge actions with bad effects more morally permissible if the agent did not intend this effect. However, intentionality is only one of many factors that might influence judgments of moral permissibility. Discussions of trolley problems (thought experiments where one person's death is accepted to save the lives of five others) suggest a whole range of factors is relevant. (Bruers and Braeckman 2014)

We have hypothesized that all trolley dilemma judgments can be explained by one factor: How strongly the victims' death reminds people of murder. Intentionality plays a role insofar as it has been closely associated with the concept of murder (e.g., in the form of intent). I will present new findings from our survey about prototypical vs. supernormal features of murder that put this hypothesis to test.

Kevin Reuter: No knowledge required: On the norms of assertion

Assertions are the centre of gravity in social epistemology. But what are the norms of assertion? Do we request of a person to believe with justification what she claims, is it crucial that the claim she makes is true, or do we even need to know what we assert? Philosophers have to a large extent relied on their own intuitions to argue for one or the other account. In this paper, we present empirical evidence showing that having a justified belief that p is sufficient for asserting p. Truth and knowledge don't seem to be required. Our results challenge recent studies conducted by Turri (2013, 2016) which are supposed to support a knowledge norm of assertion. We will demonstrate empirically that his conclusion is not warranted but that the justified belief account prevails.

Pascale Willemsen: I must although I can't!? A pragmatically grounded two-level theory of 'ought implies can'

The principle 'Ought implies can' (OIC) states that if you lack the ability to do X, then you are not morally obligated to do X. While philosophers believed it to be both normatively adequate and intuitively compelling, recent empirical findings suggest that laypeople reject OIC. In this talk, we suggest a pragmatically grounded model of the relationship between ought- and can-judgments that can account for such findings. More specifically we argue that 'ought' is pragmatically used in two ways: namely as expressing an obligation or recommending an action. We further argue that also 'can' is understood in two different ways: it can either describe a person's general physical and mental faculties, or refer to a situation-specific ability. In five experiments we show that moral obligations imply general abilities, and that moral imperatives imply situation-specific abilities. Once these two levels are carefully discriminated in empirical research, OIC-incompatible answers vanish.

Alex Wiegmann: Morally irrelevant factors and moral intuitions

In this talk, I will present two morally irrelevant factors that have been shown to influence our moral intuitions, namely the order of presentation of a moral dilemma and the addition of irrelevant options. Some of the studies were conducted with both lay people and professional philosophers. The presented findings are meant to stimulate a discussion about the philosophical implications of these kind of findings.

Adina Roskies: Moral enhancement: Can and should we do it?

Neuroethics has long been concerned about cognitive enhancement, but discussions of moral enhancement have only recently begun. In this talk I identify possible targets for moral enhancement based on moral psychology, and discuss their potential. I then turn to arguments against enhancement, and assess their force. I conclude that there are some arguments against enhancement that have some bite, but they are not the ones generally recognized in the enhancement literature.

Katharina Anna Helming and Maureen Sie: Sharing responsibility. The importance of tokens of appraisal

In this talk we will share some preliminary experiments that resulted from collaboration at prior Einstein meetings. First, Maureen will elaborate on a view on moral agency defended elsewhere as the "Traffic Participation View on Human Agency" and argue that that view enables us to understand the social function and importance of the moral sentiments (such as blame, resentment, gratitude, moral indignation and praise). She will contrast this understanding with discussion of moral responsibility in contemporary moral philosophy. Secondly, she will shortly outline some of the implications of the Traffic Participation View for the interpretation of work in moral and social psychology. Next Katharina will present two experiments related to this work, explain their underlying hypothesis and how they were tested.

Julia Christensen: Moral dilemmas reloaded

A range of disciplines including cognitive neuroscience, experimental psychology and empirical philosophy approach the question of what guides our moral decision-making and judgment by means of 'moral dilemmas'. It has been suggested that human sense of what is right and what is wrong in a given dilemmatic situation is triggered by specific parameters of that situation. Therefore, moral dilemmas are formulated in such way that they probe for particular parameters, teasing them apart, as much as allowing to investigate the interaction between various parameters.

However, given the complexity of dilemmatic situations, dilemma creation is troublesome. Two main issues stand out. First, the formulation of the key parameters within the dilemmatic situation (e.g., Personal Force, Benefit Recipient, Evitability, and Intention) and the formulation of enough and plausible dilemmas of the required type to have a statistically viable design. The second issue regards the actual writing of the dilemmas. There are several stylistic elements and methodological aspects that may hinder the comprehension of the narrative of a dilemma. In the present talk I will address both these issues.

Different moral dilemma libraries are available in literature for empirical research. The most extensively used are the Trolley type dilemmas proposed by Foot, (1967) and Thomson (1976), and extended by researchers such as Greene et al. (2001, 2004) and Moore (2011). We have recently revised and validated a dilemma set based on these previous dilemmas. A total of 46 moral dilemmas was selected and fine-tuned in terms of 4 conceptual factors and methodological aspects of the dilemma formulation (word count, expression style, question formats). Normative ratings were obtained for each dilemma in 2 norming experiments. This allowed to statistically classify the dilemmas according to the dilemmatic parameters Personal Force, Benefit Recipient, and Intentionality. The said dilemma set is available in 6 languages (English, French, German, Spanish, Catalan, and Danish). I will present this dilemma set and outline pros and cons.

Finally, I briefly discuss the use of 'moral dilemmas' in relation to other types of paradigms available in cognitive neuroscience of morality. In particular, outlining evidence comparing short-story versus video versions of moral dilemmas, and, examining the benefits of implicit tasks as opposed to moral dilemma paradigms which probe for people's explicit moral judgment.