

Wednesday, March 9th, 4:30 PM:

Eric Schwitzgebel, Philosophy, UC Riverside

"Crazyism about Consciousness and Morality"

Location: Barwise Room, Cordura Hall, Stanford University

Abstract:

Our commonsense views about consciousness and morality break down when confronted with hypothetical alien and artificial intelligence cases. I will examine three types of case: the mad pain / Martian pain dilemma presented by David Lewis, the case of group consciousness, and the case of our moral obligations to hypothetical "monsters" who have psychological capacities very different from our own. In all three types of case, commonsense intuition fails us. But neither does empirical science or pure abstract reasoning give us clear answers. Something that seems "crazy" must be true about consciousness and morality, but we are not in a good position to know which crazy view is the correct one.