



## PHILOSOPHY COLLOQUIUM SERIES

FALL 2025

**1. Wednesday, September 10, 2025, 3:00pm in BEH 103 [Note the day and place]**

**“Hot Hands and Other Statistically-Hidden Causal Factors.”**

**Avram Hiller, Dept. of Philosophy, Portland State University**

Random processes inevitably produce streaks. Many social scientists have argued that ordinary people have a fallacious tendency to impart meaning onto random streaks even when there are no meaningful factors causing them. For instance, sportscasters often say that a player who has made several shots in a row has a hot hand. But in a seminal 1985 paper, Gilovich, Vallone, and Tversky argue that the distribution of makes and misses is not statistically significantly different from what one would expect from chance alone, and thus hot hands don't exist. In the decades since, hot hand skepticism has extended to multiple domains, where random patterns are held to be causally meaningless.

In this presentation, I will argue that the sportscasters are right, and the social scientists are wrong.

Randomness is compatible with meaningfulness in cases when there is a meaningful factor causing a streak that is itself distributed randomly. If no statistically significant pattern is found in basketball shooting, then it is more likely that players' skill level varies randomly than that hot hands are illusory. More generally, I show how this type of oversight has led to misunderstandings regarding regression to the mean, cancer clusters, financial streaks, and the Dunning-Kruger effect.

**2. Friday, September 26, 2025, 3:00pm in BEH 107**

**“Using AI as a Force for Good (or at Least Limiting its Damage).”**

**Todd Jones, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Nevada Las Vegas**

The Academic world is in a quandary about what to do about the widespread availability of AI. There are many who believe that it can be used to greatly enhance student learning. Many more believe that it is little more than a tool enabling students to cheat more easily. Either way, what we can't do is ignore it. In this talk I'll explore some of the ways we might be able to keep some of the worst problems of AI at bay, and at how there could be some types of assignments that might actually help students in ways that would be difficult to do without AI.

**3. Friday, October 17, 2025, 3:00pm in BEH 107**

**“It’s about the Sex: Queerness as a Radical Political Notion.”**

**Nico Orlandi, Dept. of Philosophy, University of California, Santa Cruz**

This talk is a collaboration with Carol Hay from UMass, Lowell. The term “queer” is often used in the global north to refer to any type of counterculture. This understanding of the term “queer” reflects the liberatory function that the term has, but it also raises questions about the radical potential of the queer movement. We propose to keep separate the question of what queer refers to, and so the question of queer identity, from the question of what should be centered in queer activism. We’ll argue that what should be centered is the subversion of (white) patriarchal gender norms that pertain specifically to sexual desire and behavior. The focus on sexuality is of special importance. Patriarchal norms dictate the presence of a (racialized) hierarchy based on biological sex where cis (white) men’s interests, and the preservation of their power, are of paramount importance. Being queer is centrally about subverting this status quo.

**4. Friday, October 24, 2025, 3:00pm, BEH 107**

**“Inconsistency, Intuitionism, and Excluded Middles.”**

**Roy Cook, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities**

One of the most prominent challenges to the correctness of classical logic has been proposed by intuitionists, who object to the validity of excluded middle: P or not-P.

Intuitionists argue that not all instances of excluded middle are logically true, since (on their view) we have no logical guarantee that every sentence is either determinately true or determinately false. In this talk I will not argue against the intuitionist's claims, but instead argue that their focus on (the simple propositional version of) excluded middle is misguided. One of the primary advantages to adopting a non-classical logic strictly weaker than classical logic, such as intuitionistic logic, is that more theories are consistent in weaker logics, and hence adopting weaker logics gives us more choices for our theories. But it turns out that, in a very simple technical sense, (the propositional version of) excluded middle is irrelevant to such concerns.

**~~5. Friday, November 7, 2025, 3:00pm in CHB C213~~ **POSTPONED UNTIL SPRING 2026****

**~~“Natural Kinds for Psychology: A Multi-Level Mechanistic Proposal.”~~**

**~~Jasmin Özel, Minnesota Center for Philosophy of Science, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities~~**

~~The homeostatic property cluster framework for natural kinds has proven useful across various scientific contexts, particularly those requiring multiple levels of explanation. In this framework, natural kinds are considered clusters of co-occurring properties sustained by underlying homeostatic mechanisms, such as biological species exhibiting shared traits (property clusters) maintained by genetic and evolutionary processes (homeostatic mechanisms). This talk discusses and develops the recent application of this framework to psychological constructs, emphasizing its capacity to integrate cognitive science, neuroscience, and neuropsychiatry explanations that inform our understanding of mental phenomena.~~

**6. Friday, November 14, 2025, 7:00pm, The Writers’ Block Bookstore [\[Note the time and place\]](#)**

**“A Reading with the Author of *Intimate Borders: Feminist Migration Ethics*, in Conversation with Marisa Duarte & Susana Sepulveda.”**

**Amy Reed-Sandoval, Dept. of Philosophy, UNLV, with Marisa Duarte, Dept. of Philosophy, ASU, and Susana Sepulveda, Dept. of Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Ethnic Studies, UNLV**

In *Intimate Borders*, Amy Reed-Sandoval offers a decolonial, feminist theory of borders that enables us to perceive hidden gender injustices at borders and then take concrete steps to stop them. Grounded in feminist privacy ethics, Chicana feminism, Indigenous philosophies of borders and space, and original ethnographic research conducted by Reed-Sandoval at two abortion clinics in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, this book challenges political philosophy’s public/private divide by urging us to understand borders as intimate. Specifically, it argues that borders are sites of embodied and identity-based harms that often tamper with the boundaries of our “selves” in ways that impact our personal autonomy.

**7. Friday, November 21, 2025, 3:00pm in BEH 107**

**“In Defense of the Actuality of Legal Gluts.”**

**Bradley Armour-Garb, Dept. of Philosophy, University at Albany--SUNY**

While the philosopher and logician Graham Priest is best known for taking *dialetheia*—true contradictions (that is, true statements whose negations are also true)—to emerge from the semantic paradoxes, he (1987/2006) has long maintained that the strongest case for dialetheism emerges from the possibility of *legal gluts*—dialetheia that incorporate some aspect of law. This contrasts with a point made by JC Beall, which is that the only dialetheia arise from the semantic paradoxes, such as the “Liar Paradox”.

Priest argues for the *possibility* of legal gluts, rather than arguing for their actuality, because he relies on hypothetical cases and argues for their plausibility. Beall disputes Priest’s argument for their possibility and argues that they are in fact impossible. In my talk, after setting out assumptions that serve as “common ground” for the current debate, and briefly summarizing arguments for and against their possibility, I show that Beall’s argument against Priest does not work. I then develop a novel argument for their possibility by reviewing and relying on arguments by David Hume that was more recently developed and defended by Stephen Yablo and David Chalmers, viz., that *conceivability* implies *possibility*. I then go further than Priest and make a case for the actuality of legal gluts.

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**For more information contact the  
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