

“Strangers to Ourselves”:  
Themes from German Philosophy and Cognitive Science  
Saturday, May 20, 2017  
Center for Law, Philosophy & Human Values  
University of Chicago

We feel like we act freely and responsibly, but do we? We often think our conscious choices and reasoning determine our actions, but do they? (Are our conscious thoughts even causally efficacious at all?) Who are we, after all? Who or what is our “self”? Do we really know? And what is the relationship between our sense of “self” and our alleged agency and the social and economic circumstances in which we find ourselves? Do people even know what is “in their interest” as thinkers from Mill to Hayek thought (but thinkers from Socrates to Marx deny)? Are we really “strangers to ourselves”?

These questions remain of lively interest in Anglophone philosophy and psychology, but are also dealt with in German philosophy of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century, especially in the work of Schopenhauer, Marx, and Nietzsche, with resonances, of course, in the writings of Freud in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century. Schopenhauer and Nietzsche were rather explicitly advancing claims in speculative psychology, and Marx’s work, like Freud’s, has more recently been subjected to investigation from the cognitive sciences. The aim of the workshop is to consider themes from German philosophy of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century in light of more recent work in philosophy and the cognitive sciences, in order to try to answer some of these questions.

**First Session: 10 am until Noon**

Speaker: Joshua Knobe, Yale University

Topic: “Teleology and the Self”

Commentator: Claire Kirwin, University of Chicago

**Noon until 1:15:** Lunch provided for all registered participants

**Second Session: 1:30 pm until 3:30 pm**

Speaker: Jaime Edwards, University of Chicago

Topic: “‘Everything is as it seems and all is for the best!’: The Origin of Ideological Belief in Cognitive and Motivated Biases”

Commentator: Claudia Hogg-Blake, University of Chicago

**3:30-4 pm:** coffee break

**Third Session: 4 pm until 6 pm**

Speaker: Mattia Riccardi, University of Bonn

Topic: “Nietzsche, HOT theories and epiphenomenalism about consciousness”

Comment: Tes Hash, University of Chicago