



CENTRE FOR LAW AND COSMOPOLITAN VALUES UNIVERSITEIT ANTWERPEN

3rd Law and Cosmopolitan Values Lecture 2014

The Centre for Law and Cosmopolitan Values, Faculty of Law, University of Antwerp, is delighted to announce its 3rd 'Law and Cosmopolitan Values Lecture' in October 2014.

Dr. Andrea Sangiovanni, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at King's College, London, will deliver three lectures on 'The Idea of Moral Equality, International Law, and Human Rights'.

The event is made possible through the kind support of the Vlaamse Overheid.

Met steun van de Vlaamse overheid

“Richting morgen”, “Vlaanderen in Actie”, “Pact 2020”.

www.ewi-vlaanderen.be

Dates and Venues

Monday, October 20th - 16:00-18:00

M Building (De Meerminne), Room M.005,
Sint-Jacobstraat 2, 2000 Antwerp

Tuesday, October 21st - 16:00-18:00

M Building, Room M.004

Wednesday, October 22rd - 16:00-18:00

M Building, Room M.003



Registration

Participation is free of charge, registration is kindly requested:
sebastian.baldinger@uantwerpen.be

Lectures

1. ‘Moral Equality, Respect, and Cruelty’
2. ‘From Moral Equality to Equal Moral Status’
3. ‘From Equal Moral Status to Human Rights in International Law’

Abstract

Many philosophers – the most prominent and influential have been either Kantians or Christians — have argued that our commitment to moral equality is grounded in our capacity to make choices for reasons, or in our more general capacity to think or reflect or abstract. These capacities, it is claimed, give us an absolute, unconditional, and incomparable worth or dignity. But a deep problem confronts all such accounts: if the capacities come in degrees—as they certainly do — the worth must too. But why start with the idea of a value-conferring natural property? Why start with the idea of something that has unconditional, or absolute, or any other kind of worth or, indeed, dignity at all? In the first lecture, I argue that this is a mistake. Our commitment to moral equality is grounded not in dignity but in a foundational rejection of cruelty. Armed with this conception of moral equality, in the next lecture I defend a theory of the moral rights that are constitutive of our status as moral equals. The final lecture then turns to human rights in international law. In this lecture, I do not aim to set forth a general theory of human rights, but to show how the core human rights and humanitarian principles that are commonly recognized in international law — and that are increasingly gaining ground as *jus cogens* — share an interpretive basis which explains their priority in our moral reflection: they are rights and principles that protect our status as moral equals, understood as requiring, above all, protection from public, systematic, and pervasive forms of cruelty.