

# Programme

Summer Semester (lecture period): 14 April – 19 July 2025

Human Abilities Centre, Schönhauser Allee 10-11, 10119 Berlin

## Colloquium

Open to all people on the colloquium list, paper (pre-read)

[humanabilities\\_colloquium@lists.hu-berlin.de](mailto:humanabilities_colloquium@lists.hu-berlin.de)

Tuesdays from 02:15 to 03:45 PM in room 4.17, tea/coffee afterwards

29 April	Brian Talbot: “Do reasons for belief vanish?”
20 May	Jonathan Beere
17 June	Jennifer Marušić
08 July	Mikayla Kelley

## Reading Groups

Open to all members of the group

- 1 Eternity and Duration: Spinoza to Kant**  
Organised by Leonardo Moauro and Myriam Stihl  
Every other Tuesday from 10:15 to 11:45h  
Starting from 22 April 2025  
[humanabilities\\_readinggroup1@lists.hu-berlin.de](mailto:humanabilities_readinggroup1@lists.hu-berlin.de)
- 2 A Rational Animal's Perceptual Capacity**  
Organised by Jonathan Beere and Robert Roreitner  
Every other Tuesday from 10:15 to 11:45h  
Starting from 29 April 2025, first session on 28 April 14h  
[humanabilities\\_readinggroup2@lists.hu-berlin.de](mailto:humanabilities_readinggroup2@lists.hu-berlin.de)
- 3 Inabilities and Control at the Interface of Law and Forensic Psychiatry**  
Organised by Sanja Dembić and Luca Malatesti  
Every other Wednesday from 13:00 to 14:30h  
Starting from 23 April 2025  
[humanabilities\\_readinggroup3@lists.hu-berlin.de](mailto:humanabilities_readinggroup3@lists.hu-berlin.de)

#### **4 Ought-Implies-Can in Epistemology**

Organised by Amelia Kahn

Every other Wednesday from 13:00 to 14:30h

Starting from 30 April 2025

[humanabilities\\_readinggroup4@lists.hu-berlin.de](mailto:humanabilities_readinggroup4@lists.hu-berlin.de)

#### **5 Basic Action**

Organised by Nathaniel Baron-Schmitt, Max Goetsch, David Heering, Mikayla Kelley

Every other Thursday from 16:15 to 17:45h

Starting from 24 April 2025

[humanabilities\\_readinggroup4@lists.hu-berlin.de](mailto:humanabilities_readinggroup4@lists.hu-berlin.de)

### **Workshops**

Open to all members of the group

#### **(Mental) Disability and Ability**

Organisers: Sanja Dembić, Stephanie Elsen, Sophie Kikkert & Alex Gregory

9 July 2025 (Wed) from 09:00 am to 06:00 pm (CEST)

Room 4.17, Human Abilities Centre, Schönhauser Allee 10-11, 10119 Berlin

#### **Substance and Consciousness in Chinese Philosophy – Author Meets Critic**

Organiser: Dominik Perler

17 July 2025 (Thu) from 09:00 am to 06:00 pm (CEST)

Room 4.17, Human Abilities Centre, Schönhauser Allee 10-11, 10119 Berlin

#### **The Human Ability for Emotional Coregulation**

Organisers: Ellen Fridland & Sanja Dembić

22-23 July 2025 (Tue/Wed) from 09:00 am to 06:00 pm (CEST)

Room 4.17, Human Abilities Centre, Schönhauser Allee 10-11, 10119 Berlin

#### **Epistemology and the Sentiments**

Organiser: Mike Deigan

29-31 July 2025 (Tue/Wed/Thu) from 09:00 am to 06:00 pm (CEST)

Room 4.17, Human Abilities Centre, Schönhauser Allee 10-11, 10119 Berlin

#### **Human Abilities and Their Limits**

Colloquium at the GAP.12: <https://gap12.de/programme.html>

Organisers: Nathaniel Baron-Schmitt & Barbara Vetter

Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf

Want to get on/off a list (only subscribers can send e-mails via the list)?

Please contact Katharina Langenbach via [human-abilities@hu-berlin.de](mailto:human-abilities@hu-berlin.de)

### **Reading Group 1: Eternity and Duration: Spinoza to Kant**

In this reading group, we will examine discussions of eternity and duration (or temporality) in several important theorists of the 17th and 18th centuries—especially Spinoza and Kant. Our aim will be to understand how these theorists relate eternity and duration (i) to other topics in their metaphysics, such as infinity, necessity, causation, and individuation, (ii) to their accounts of human cognition, and especially the limitations thereof, and (iii) to one another, within a unified account of time. With this, we aim to shed some light on the history of philosophy of time across several philosophical systems, with the additional hope that this will help relate these systems to one another in novel ways. The readings will focus on secondary literature, with primary sources provided as background.

### **Reading Group 2: A Rational Animal's Perceptual Capacity**

The central question we want to explore in this reading group is how the fact that human beings are rational bears on the nature of the human capacity for perception. One can think of this as a central part of the thought that what it is to be a human being is to be a rational animal. For perception is something that we have in common with animals that do not have reason. And yet it would also seem that our perceptual capacity must be somehow specially suited to be a cognitive capacity of a rational creature, and to that extent unlike the perceptual capacities of non-rational animals. How can we make sense of both thoughts? We will juxtapose Aristotle's views on this matter with contemporary work. From Aristotle, we will read and discuss selected parts of *de Anima* and perhaps related texts. Among recent philosophers, we will read, e.g., Matthew Boyle's paper "Additive Theories of Rationality," papers in the collection *Reason in Nature* (edd. Boyle and Mylonaki), and related work.

### **Reading Group 3: Inabilities and Control at the Interface of Criminal Law and Forensic Psychiatry**

Different views exist on whether an inability to control one's actions should factor into exculpatory incapacities in criminal law. Some jurisdictions exclude this type of incapacity, arguing that while cognitive or evaluative incapacity tests are justified, assessing control inabilities presents conceptual and empirical challenges. Conversely, several judicial systems recognize exculpation for lack of control, with some legal scholars supporting this stance.

The aim of the reading group is to examine how philosophical inquiries into control and inability can inform this debate. Alongside an introduction to the legal discourse, we will explore forensic psychiatry tools for assessing control incapacities and discuss proposals to enhance the reliability and validity of these assessments through new measurement paradigms for relevant psychological constructs associated with exculpation abilities. Additionally, we will look at integrating functional and biological data into this research. The exculpation of addicts will serve as a case study.

### **Reading Group 4: Ought-Implies-Can in Epistemology**

An ought-implies-can principle says that if one *ought* to  $\phi$ , then one *can*  $\phi$ . Or, equivalently, if one cannot  $\phi$ , then it's not the case that one ought to. Such principles are commonplace in the practical realm, but are often rejected in epistemology, where norms on belief and credence drastically outstrip even the most exceptional human abilities.

This reading group will focus on the question: Does "ought" imply "can" in the epistemic domain? We'll look at the motivations to adopt an epistemic ought-implies-can principle, as well as motivations to reject it or idealize beyond human limitations in epistemological theorizing. We'll put particular emphasis on the question of what "can" *means* in an epistemic ought-implies-can principle. Put another way, what sense of "can't" would get us off the hook, epistemically speaking? It's obvious that we can't believe or know a proposition in the same way that we can perform an action. But it's not clear which sense of "can" features in epistemic ought-implies-can principles: is it the "can" of psychological possibility? Or does it track the ability to reason to a given proposition? Or the ability to bring about a belief through our actions?