



University of  
Hradec Králové  
Philosophical  
Faculty



# *Rule-following:* **Between Nature & Culture**

EXPRO INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

**MICHAEL TOMASELLO / KRISTIN ANDREWS**  
**DORIT BAR-ON / JONATHAN BIRCH / PHILIP PETTIT**



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# About

Human activities are subject to many types of rules that structure human societies. Broadly speaking, rules are “in force” in a society or group when its members tend to promote some ways of doing things as desirable or appropriate and tend to repress other ways as harmful or inappropriate. The ability to establish and follow rules in this general sense allows humans to maintain complex practices and institutions, including linguistic, economic, moral, legal and political institutions. In other words, it underlies unique forms of cooperation, social organization and culture that characterize the human form of life. This is a feature of human life that is studied by philosophers, cognitive scientists, psychologists, and sociologists. But as the philosophers who investigate the nature of rule-following indicate, rules and rule-following are far from transparent.

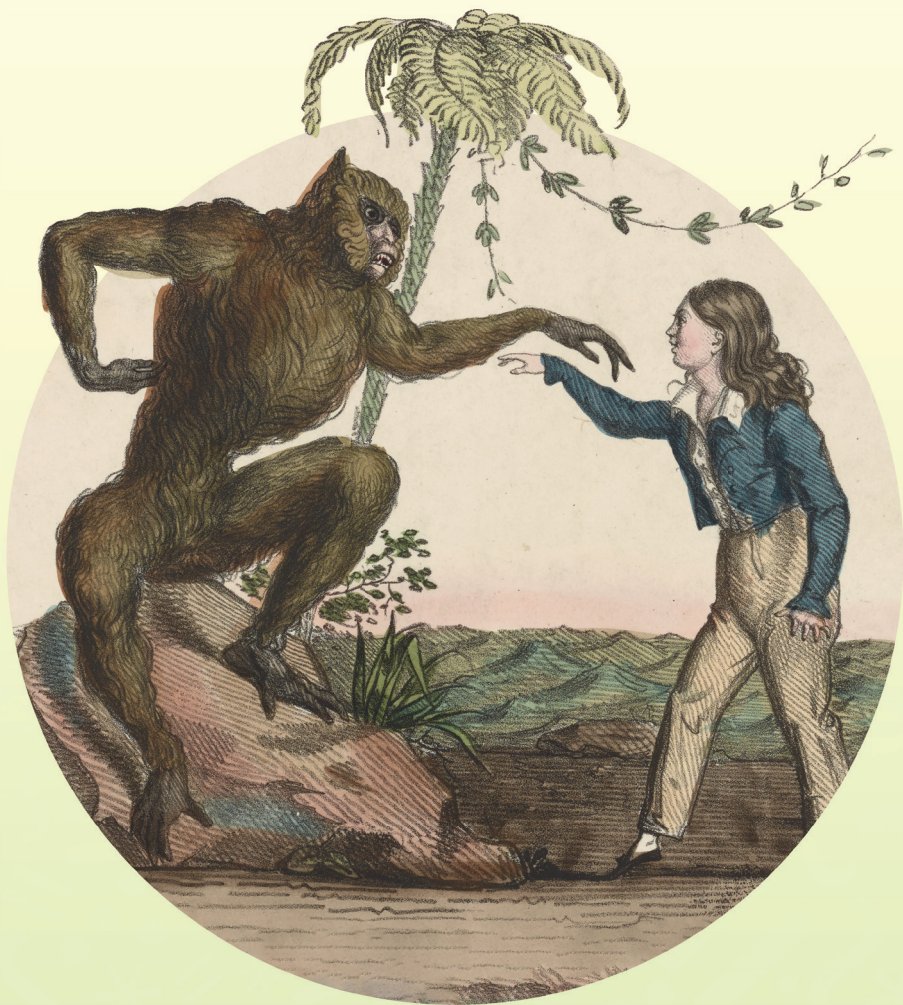
As a result, both philosophers and scientists are interested in the phenomenon of rules and rule-following. Because the phenomenon is complex and difficult to analyze, different focuses and approaches have been taken. Some theories have focused on quite abstract, often conceptual issues concerning the nature and constitution of rules, even raising the issue of how rule-following is so much as possible. Other theorists have systematically studied specific aspects of the phenomenon, including evolutionary, ethological, sociological, cultural and psychological ones.

Despite the thematic interconnection of these inquiries, their impact outside of their original domains of investigation has long been limited. But times change, and there is nowadays a growing recognition that our understanding the phenomenon

of rule-following (its nature, precursors, evolution, cognitive basis, development, etc.) requires not only the division, but also the integration of our theoretical work: one that combines conceptual analysis with theory building, modelling and empirical research. The aim of this conference is to provide the platform for such analysis and synthesis, allowing researchers from different theoretical traditions to share and discuss their ideas in an interdisciplinary spirit.

## **We especially invite and welcome contributions on the following topical issues:**

- How do philosophical theories of rule-following fare in the light of empirical research?
- What are rules and how are they constituted?
- What kind of behavioral and cognitive abilities are involved in, or required for, rule-following?
- How do human beings develop into normative creatures?
- What is the role and influence of rule-governed practices on the human form of life, both at the collective and at the individual level?
- What kind of evolutionary considerations may shed light on the emergence and resilience of rule-governed practices and institutions, and the corresponding abilities or motivations?
- Can non-human animals (particularly primates) establish and follow rules of sorts, so that we may learn from their case something about the origin and nature of our own capacities?



## Location



## Transportation

Transport from the Prague Airport to Prague Central Train Station is easiest either with a taxi just outside the doors across from where you pick up your luggage, or with the Airport Express Bus (AE). The bus stop is situated in the public transport area in front of Prague Airport's Terminal 1 check-in area. You can acquire AE Bus tickets directly from the driver, with card payment options available. It is important to note that these tickets are exclusively valid for this particular bus line and are priced at 100 CZK. The AE Bus runs at 30-minute intervals between 5:30 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., with a travel time of approximately 40 minutes to reach the Main

Railway Station. Alternatively, taxis are available for approximately 250 CZK. Additionally, Uber and Bolt are other options, though be aware that Uber is not available in Hradec Králové.

For the journey from Prague Central Station to Hradec Králové, the approximate travel time is 1 hour and 35 minutes. Tickets for this route can be purchased either at the station or via the web application: <https://www.cd.cz/en/eshop/>. Ticket prices typically range from 150 to 220 CZK.

Within Hradec Králové itself, the most convenient transportation options are walking, bike sharing (Nextbike) or utilizing

public transport. Bus tickets can be directly purchased on board using a credit card or cash payment to the driver. To travel from Hradec Králové's Central Station to the Main Square (bus stop Adalbertinum), you can take a bus or a trolleybus no. 2, 6, 11, 15 or 16. Bus tickets are priced at 30 CZK.

Taxis within Hradec Králové generally charge around 100 CZK, and they can be

reached via phone at +420 605 123 456. Alternatively, passengers can opt for a ride-hailing service provided by Bolt. It's worth noting that bus drivers may not always have change for amounts exceeding 100 CZK, so it's advisable to carry smaller denominations for convenience.

## Conference venue

**The conference will take place at the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Hradec Králové.**

Náměstí Svobody 331

500 02, Hradec Králové

Czech Republic



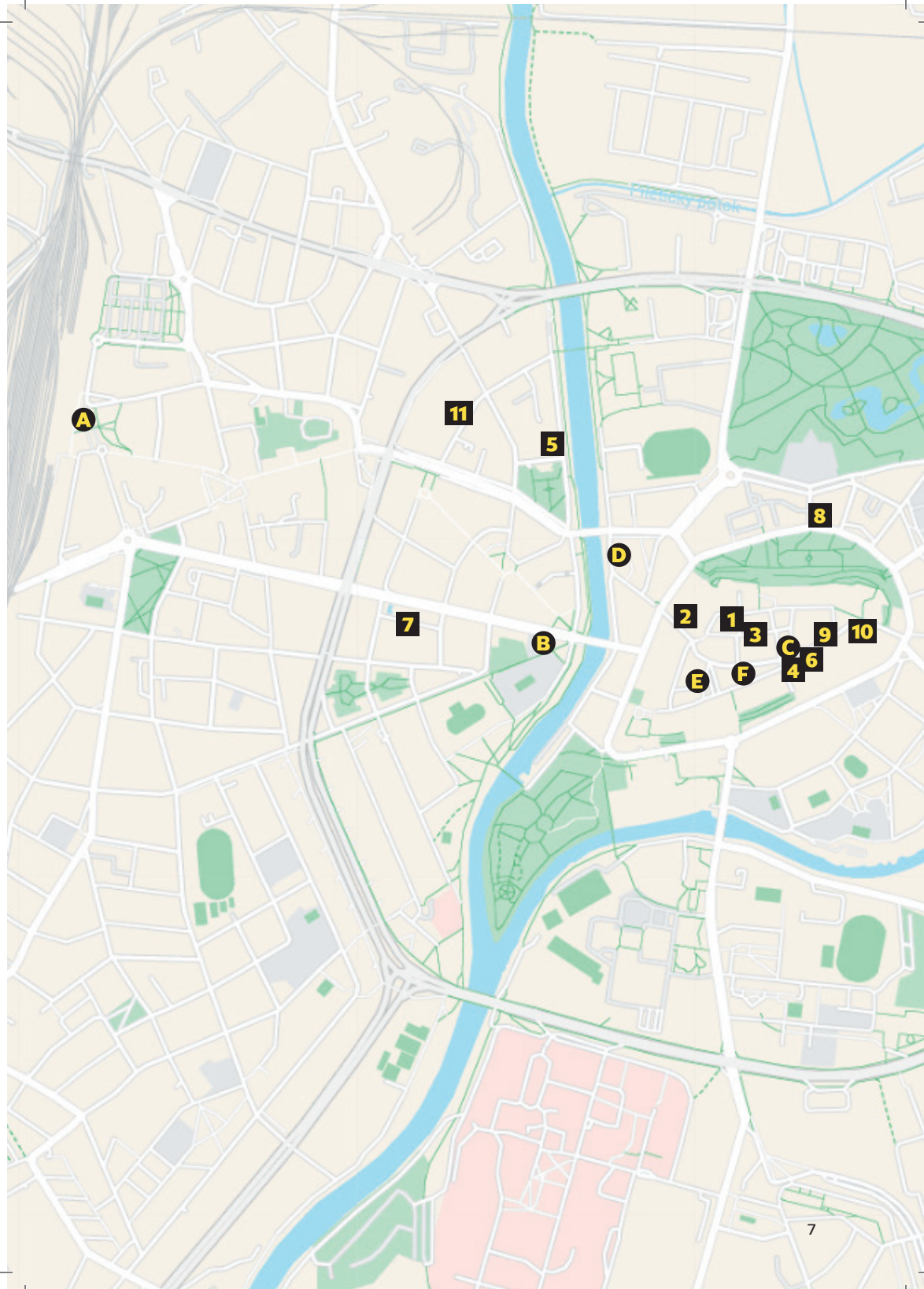
# Points of Interest

- A** CENTRAL STATION
- B** PHILOSOPHICAL FACULTY
- C** GALLERY OF MODERN ART
- D** THE MUSEUM OF EASTERN BOHEMIA IN HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ
- E** WHITE TOWER
- F** MAIN SQUARE

# Restaurants & Coffee

- 1 Tandoor - Indian-Nepalian Restaurant**  
Address: Špitálská 183, 500 03  
Phone: +420 608 456 000  
Description: Indian-Nepalian cuisine, vegetarian-friendly
- 2 Pivovarská brána**  
Address: V Kopečku 83/5, 500 03  
Phone: +420 602 500 848  
Description: Traditional Czech cuisine, a wide selection of craft beers
- 3 Dhaba Beas**  
Address: Klicperova 141, 500 03  
Phone: +420 775 063 658  
Description: Vegetarian restaurant, vegan-friendly
- 4 Pasta Cook&Look**  
Address: Velké nám. 28, 500 01  
Phone: +420 773 660 067  
Description: Italian cuisine, vegetarian-friendly
- 5 Náplavka café & music bar**  
Address: nám. 5. května 835, 500 02  
Phone: +420 608 979 556  
Description: Modern international cuisine, vegetarian-friendly
- 6 Pivovarské domy**  
Address: Velké nám. 26, 500 03  
Phone: +420 734 245 400  
Description: Modern local cuisine, craft beers, vegetarian-friendly
- 7 Asian Restaurant Hieu & Thao**  
Address: Ulrichovo nám. 810, 500 02  
Phone: +420 775 777 578  
Description: Vietnamese restaurant, vegetarian-friendly
- 8 Ca Phe District HK**  
Address: Opletalova 328/3, 500 02  
Phone: +420 724 293 197  
Description: Vietnamese cuisine and coffee
- 9 Café Na kole**  
Address: 24, Velké nám. 130, 500 03  
Phone: +420 495 458 460  
Description: Quality coffee, Coffee specialities, vegan friendly
- 10 Chroast Coffee Roasters**  
Address: Malé nám. 8/24, 500 03  
Phone: +420 608 729 490  
Description: Third-wave local coffee roasters
- 11 Los Capolitos**  
Address: Škroupova 441, 500 02  
Phone: + 420 792 307 703  
Description: Mexican cuisine, vegan-friendly





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# Schedule

## Thursday, October 12

- 10:00 - 10:30**     *Breakfast*
- 10:30 - 11:15**     Preston Stovall - Reflective Single-Minded Agency as the Font of the Transformative Power of Rationality
- 11:25 - 12:10**     Vladimír Svoboda Normative attitudes and the origins of normativity
- 12:20 - 13:05**     Martin Palecek and Mark Risjord - Understanding Culture as a Model
- 13:05 - 14:30**     *Lunch*
- 14:30 - 15:45**     **(keynote) Kristin Andrews, Simon Fitzpatrick, Evan Westra - Human and nonhuman norms: A dimensional framework**
- 15:55 - 16:40**     Beth Barker - Propositions in Action: The Problem of Over-Intellectualizing Know-How
- 16:50 - 17:35**     Mirko Prokop - Inferentialism and the Embodied Basis of Normative Attitudes

## Friday, October 13

- 10:00 - 10:30**     *Breakfast*
- 10:30 - 11:15**     Amadeusz Just - Exploring the limits of the rule-governed model of action: Winch, Wittgenstein, and non-linguistic individuals
- 11:25 - 12:10**     Aleksi Honkasalo - Following Rules and Following Desires
- 12:20 - 13:05**     Charles Lenay, Pierre Steiner - Technical mediations and social normativity: an experimental approach
- 13:05 - 14:30**     *Lunch*
- 14:30 - 15:15**     Matěj Drobňák - Rule-following and the Holy Grail of Evolutionary Pragmatics
- 15:25 - 16:10**     Lachlan Devine - Normativity and the concrete dynamics of linguistic practice
- 16:20 - 17:35**     **(keynote) Dorit Bar-On - On the Origins of 'Normative' Meaning**

## Saturday, October 14

- 10:00 - 10:30**      *Breakfast*
- 10:30 - 11:15**      Antonio Scarafone - Normativity in Infancy: Learning from Demonstrations
- 11:25 - 12:10**      Christopher J. Gonzalez An - The "hurly-burly" roots of rule-following: Discursive co-regulation in social play and its exaptive and developmental potential
- 12:20 - 13:05**      Szymon Sapalski - How to Naturalize Inferentialism
- 13:05 - 14:30**      *Lunch*
- 14:30 - 15:45**      **(keynote) Jonathan Birch - Grades of empiricism about normative concepts**
- 15:55 - 16:40**      Jaroslav Peregrin - The natural history of correctness
- 16:50 - 17:35**      **(keynote) Michael Tomasello – Origins of Normativity**
- 18:30**                      Conference dinner

## Sunday, October 15

- 10:00 - 10:30**      *Breakfast*
- 10:30 - 11:45**      **(keynote) Philip Pettit - A Genealogy of Rule-following**
- 11:55 - 12:40**      Ronald Loeffler - Belief, the norm of truth, and assertion's essential effect

# Keynote speakers

## DORIT BAR-ON

University of Connecticut

Dorit Bar-On is a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. Before that, she was the Zachary Smith Distinguished term Professor of Research and Undergraduate Education at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She is the director of the Expression, Communication, and Origins of Meaning (ECOM) Research Group, which she established in 2010. She is the author of *Speaking My Mind: Expression and Self-Knowledge* (Oxford Clarendon, 2004) and the co-author of *Expression and Self-Knowledge* (with Crispin Wright) in the *Great Debates* Series (Wiley, forthcoming in 2024). Her manuscript-

in-progress, *Expression, Communication, and Origins of Meaning* is under contract with Oxford University Press.



Bar-On specializes in philosophy of language and mind, epistemology, and metaethics. She has published extensively on the indeterminacy of translation, conceptual relativism, self-knowledge and first-person authority, expression and expressivism, and animal communication and the evolutions of language.

## KRISTIN ANDREWS

York University

Kristin Andrews is Professor of Philosophy and York Research Chair in Animal Minds at York University (Canada). She is the author of many papers and books on animal social cognition, consciousness, morality, and personhood, including *The Animal Mind: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Animal Cognition* (Routledge 2020), *How to Study Animal Minds* (Cambridge 2020), and *How Apes Read Minds: Toward a New Folk Psychology* (MIT 2012), and co-author of *Chimpanzee Rights: The Philosophers' Brief* (Routledge 2018).

Professor Andrews brings empirical and theoretical expertise to questions about the similarities and differences between humans and nonhuman animals in terms of their cognitive, affective, social, and

cultural capacities. She has developed novel frameworks for social and normative cognition that can be used to investigate these capacities in other animals. Professor Andrews is currently engaged in a number of projects related to social norms. She is writing a book on the evolution of social norms, exploring whether social norms form part of animal cultures in a range of species, and developing the implications of these findings for animal conservation and welfare efforts. Professor Andrews also writes on animal consciousness, animal ethics, animal morality, and legal status for animals.



## JONATHAN BIRCH

London School of Economics and Political Science  
Foundations of Animal Sentience project

Professor Jonathan Birch is a Professor of Philosophy at the LSE and Principal Investigator (PI) on the Foundations of Animal Sentience project. In 2021, he led a „Review of the Evidence of Sentience in Cephalopod Molluscs and Decapod Crustaceans“ that led to invertebrate animals including octopuses, crabs and lobsters being included in the UK government’s Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022. In addition to his work on animal sentience, cognition and welfare, he also has a longstanding interest in the evolu-

tion of altruism and social behaviour. His first book, *The Philosophy of Social Evolution*, was published by Oxford University Press in 2017. In his 2021 article „Toolmaking and the evolution of normative cognition“, he defended a „skill hypothesis“ that ties the origins of core features of normative thought to the need to transmit technical norms of skillful action down the generations through social learning.



## PHILIP PETTIT

Rockefeller University  
Australian National University

Philip Pettit A.C. is L.S.Rockefeller University Professor of Human Values at Princeton University and Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the Australian National University. He has worked in a range of areas, including ethical and political theory and the theory of collective and

corporate agency. His books include *The Common Mind* (1996), *Rules, Reasons and Norms* (OUP 2004), *Group Agency* (with C.List, OUP 2011), and *The Birth of Ethics* (OUP 2018).



## MICHAEL TOMASELLO

Duke University  
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology

Michael Tomasello is Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Duke University, and emeritus director at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany. Research interests focus on processes of cooperation, communica-

tion, and cultural learning in human children and great apes.



# Abstracts

## Reflective Single-Minded Agency as the Font of the Transformative Power of Rationality

**Preston Stovall**

University of Hradec Králové

Using the resources of modal logic, I argue for a transformative theory of rationality. According to such theories, the capacity to reason affects our perceptual-motor capacities in ways that mark a qualitative difference in their operations, as compared with the perceptual-motor abilities of non-rational animals. In order to model the distinction between the strong and weak deontic modalities ("ought" versus "may"), I introduce a notion of *single-minded practical cognition*, and I gloss this notion in terms of physiological capacities for higher-order executive functioning. My central claim is that the capacity for self-government, brought off in the exercise of single-minded agency, underlies our grip on reason's commands understood as such, and this grip reworks the way our habitual perceptual-motor behavior operates. For when the self-government made possible by

single-minded agency is exercised within a linguistic community whose members direct that capacity at their own speech – by choosing single-mindedly concerning *linguistic acts* – a properly *discursive* or *reflectively self-governing* cognition is on the scene.

In such a linguistic community, the initially *domain-specific* and *practical* grasp of genus/species relations – manifest in single-minded agency of the sort needed to select among the various permitted ways to accomplish what one judges one ought to do – can then become a mechanism of cognitive classification along which the *reflective* study of genus/species relations hones the *domain-general* classificatory abilities that accompany adult human language use. In this fashion, even our instinctive behaviors may be transformed: we might cease to respond to events simply as (e.g.) *fearful* or *enraging*, and begin to treat them as opportunities for *restraint* or *courage*.

Thursday Oct 12 | 10:30 – 11:15

## Normative attitudes and the origins of normativity

**Vladimír Svoboda**

Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences

In my presentation I will reconsider the concept of *normative attitude* that plays a crucial role in the works of Brandom, Peregrin, and others. I will argue that the available interpretations of the term

"normative attitude" are not quite coherent - neither mutually nor internally. The main tension is between the private and the public aspects of the attitudes. I will suggest that normative attitudes shouldn't be too closely associated with correctness represented paradigmatically by linguistic correctness. Normativity in its rudimentary form in my view originates

in “small scale” interpersonal relations, namely in relations of restraining/discouraging and requiring/compelling – that we can term as *demandatory relations*. This account of normativity complements the top-down conception of normativity implied by the Sellarsian/Peregrinian picture in which normativity depends on

(in)correctness that transcends individual relationships. I will try to show that the “relational” account of normative attitudes (or perhaps better *normative relationships*) allows for a plausible bottom-up explanation of how implicit social rules/norms appear and linger in human communities.

**Thursday Oct 12 | 11:25 – 12:10**

## Understanding Culture as a Model

**Martin Palecek** (University of Hradec Králové) **and Mark Risjord** (Emory University)

The traditional anthropological concept of culture has long been a subject of scrutiny, often criticized for its inability to represent the complexities of human social behavior tangibly. Cultural Evolutionary Science (CES), however, has reinvigorated the concept by employing it as a theoretical model rather than a mere representation. This paper argues that CES’s utilization of culture sidesteps the pitfalls of representational debates by treating culture as a scientific model, akin to how implicit norms govern patterns of interac-

tion among individuals in a population. We propose that any explicit rule formulation in culture is based on these implicit norms, which need not be linguistically articulated to exert influence. This reframing allows us to challenge two commonly critiqued assumptions: that culture is a shared set of rules among all its members and that cultures are bounded and distinct entities. By conceptualizing culture as a model, we not only dissolve these problematic assumptions but also enhance its explanatory power, thereby revitalizing its theoretical relevance. This approach has significant implications for our understanding of culture, research methodologies, and theories of cultural change.

**Thursday Oct 12 | 12:20 – 13:05**

## Human and nonhuman norms: A dimensional framework

**Kristin Andrews** (York University), **Simon Fitzpatrick** (John Carroll University), **Evan Westra** (Purdue)

Human communities teem with a variety of social norms supported by a variety of psychological and cultural processes. In order to understand particular norms and to diagnose norms targeted for norm

change, identifying these processes is crucial. In this article, we approach this matter from a comparative perspective, drawing on a burgeoning and interdisciplinary body of research on animal social behavior that has produced robust evidence for social norms in many species, ranging from nonhuman primates to eusocial insects. The claim that social norms are present in nonhuman animals may

strike some readers as surprising, as many researchers take it for granted that social norms are uniquely human. In reality, the behaviors we call social norms are produced by a wide range of mechanisms, many of which we share with nonhuman animals. Approaching this variability from a comparative perspective can help norm researchers expand and reframe the range of hypotheses they test when attempting to diagnose the causes of socially normative behaviors in human beings.

To this end, this paper offers a dimensional framework for thinking about social norms. This dimensional approach enables researchers to better diagnose the psychological and social factors implicated in a given norm, and thereby develop more nuanced plans of intervention. This makes the dimensional framework beneficial for supporting norm change, and also, as we will show, for supporting conservation goals in terms of positive human-wildlife interaction.

**Thursday Oct 12 | 14:30 – 15:45**

## Propositions in Action: The Problem of Over-Intellectualizing Know-How

**Beth Barker**

Northwestern University

Recent accounts of know-how aim to capture what is intelligent about knowing-how without over-intellectualizing knowing-how. (e.g., Löwenstein 2017 and 2020, Elzinga 2021, Habgood-Coote 2019). These accounts try to do this by specifying the role propositional attitudes must play in knowing how, or in actions that manifest know-how. However, determining whether an account is over- or under-intellectualized has fallen to our case-based intuitions—there has been no principled explanation of what it

means to 'over-intellectualize' know-how. In this paper, I show that we can do much better than rely on case-based intuitions. I characterize one clear sense in which an account of know-how is over-intellectualized if it appeals to propositional attitudes: appealing to propositional attitudes over-intellectualizes know-how because it *fails to explain what it purports to explain*. I develop a rule-following problem to show this. The rule-following problem is both novel to the recent debate and important to keep in view; failure to keep it in view will result in the same old problems for the debate about know-how.

**Thursday Oct 12 | 15:55 – 16:40**

## Inferentialism and the Embodied Basis of Normative Attitudes

**Mirko Prokop**

University of the Basque Country

It has recently been proposed that the notion of meaning may be naturalised against the background of Robert Bran-



dom's inferentialist approach to conceptual content. The basic strategy is to explain how the normative attitudes which institute content-conferring rules and normative statuses arise from more basic behavioural regularities in how organisms interact with their environment and each other. Thus understood, normative attitudes become tangible targets for naturalistic explanations of rule-following behaviour, a claim that also seems to be supported by empirical research. I will argue that this naturalisation strategy so far lacks a worked-out account of how implicit norms are enacted at the level of behaviour.

I then outline such an account drawing on the conception of sensorimotor normativity developed within the enactive approach to cognition and biological autonomy. The enactive proposal, I suggest, helps to explain how implicit norms are continually enacted as well as embodied in the sensorimotor organisation of behaviour. It thus adds an important perspective for understanding how norms are implicit in behaviour, thereby providing a broadly inferentialist approach towards the naturalisation of meaning with more plausibility.

**Thursday Oct 12 | 16:50 – 17:35**

## **Exploring the limits of the rule-governed model of action: Winch, Wittgenstein, and non-linguistic individuals**

### **Amadeusz Just**

University of Warsaw

*In The Idea of a Social Science* (1958) Peter Winch applied his interpretation of Wittgenstein's rule-following remarks to human action and famously argued that all meaningful and normative human behaviour depends on rules. Insofar as Winch represented very various modes of social action using a single model that fits well only some – the model of following a rule – he fell into a kind of rationalism. The limits of rule-following model of action can be seen in particular in the passages where Winch contrasts human behaviour with that of animals. He believed that an animal merely responds to a stimulus and "has no conception of what it is doing at all" (Winch 1958: 61).

The aim of my talk is to call into question the view initiated by Winch, which is now deeply engrained in Western social thought, that semantic and normative significance of practices and action in general is necessarily rule-dependent. This view not only operates with a distorted notion of rules, but also threatens to hinder our efforts to think in other ways about the meaningfulness and normativity of social life. First, I revisit Wittgenstein's rule-following sections in order to bring out some features of the concept of rule helpful in making its use clear. Then, I discuss some examples of non-linguistic individuals whose actions we would be willing to recognize as characterized by semantic and normative meaning despite the fact that at the same time we would be reluctant to say that they follow any rules.

**Friday Oct 13 | 10:30 – 11:15**

## Following Rules and Following Desires

### Aleksi Honkasalo

Tampere University

In meta-normative discussions, it is common to distinguish the philosophically interesting 'robust' normativity, (e.g., the normativity of morals and rationality) from 'mere formal' normativity (e.g., the normativity of etiquette and games). It has been argued that only the philosophically interesting normativity presents a problem for naturalistically minded philosophers. Although, how the distinction should be drawn is controversial, what is striking about rules discussed in the rule-following literature is that they clearly belong to the basket of 'formal' normativity. For example, whether or not one ought to utter '1002' after '1000', is contingent on the desire to follow the 'plus two' rule. If desire changes then there is

no reason to think that breaking a rule is a violation. If it just seems to me that I do not wish to follow a rule, then my actions do not violate the rule. This, to paraphrase Wittgenstein, just means we cannot talk about violations at all.

Should Kripke and Wittgenstein have discussed robustly normative rules? I propose that to avoid the above issue, we should distinguish desire-contingent rule-following from following desire-contingent rules. While participating in the 'plus two' rule is voluntary the rule itself is not desire contingent. '1002' after '1000' accords with the rule regardless of agents' desires. Even if uttering '1004' seems to me desirable, it still does not accord with the 'plus two' rule. Thus, we can talk about accordance.

Friday Oct 13 | 11:25 – 12:10

## Technical mediations and social normativity: an experimental approach

### Charles Lenay, Pierre Steiner

Université de Technologie de Compiègne

How can we account for the relative independence of social norms in relation to individual and inter-individual performances, and at the same time account for the deontic force of rule-following without confusing it with mechanical determination? How can interindividual interactions carry a force of obligation while still preserving the possibility of disobedience?

Through an enactive approach, we aim to demonstrate that these two difficulties may be overcome by fully considering the

technical environment in and by which interindividual interactions take place.

We will present a laboratory experiment highlighting the processes of perceptual regulation through technical mediations. In order for actions to obey a norm, regulation must occur at a pre-predicative level, anterior to the constitution of perceived, common contents. To demonstrate this, we mobilize a minimalist experimental framework that allows us to meticulously analyze perceptual activities, primarily focusing on perceptual crossing and the imitation of facial expressions. In this experimental situation, one can clearly

observe that there exists an inherent asymmetry and ignorance: the tool that I have grasped, transparent to me, is opaque to others, and conversely. It can then be experimentally shown that this asymmetry structures our perceptual engagements during interactions. What each

individual undertakes is contingent not only upon their direct perceptions but also upon the manner in which he/she is perceived by others. It seems to us that this indirect causality is one way of accounting for the forces of obligation that can guide our perceptions and behavior.

**Friday Oct 13 | 12:20 – 13:05**

## **Rule-following and the Holy Grail of Evolutionary Pragmatics**

**Matěj Drobnák**

Radboud University Nijmegen

Finding an explanation of the evolution of human mindreading capacities has become the holy grail of evolutionary pragmatics. Many researchers accept that once human beings reached the point in which they were capable of representing mental states and attributing them to others, the capacities allowed for the specifically human, Gricean, form of communication. As a consequence, Gricean communication opened a space for unpre-

cedented forms and scope of coordination of actions. In my paper, I argue that our capacities for rule-following can account for rather sophisticated forms of coordination of actions without presupposing capacities for mindreading. As a consequence, rule-following can account for many pragmatic phenomena that are standardly explained in Gricean/mentalistic terms. While mindreading is the holy grail of evolutionary pragmatics, rule-following could become its coffee mug – the simple, mundane capacity that humans rely on in many ordinary everyday conversational situations.

**Friday Oct 13 | 14:30 – 15:15**

## **Normativity and the concrete dynamics of linguistic practice**

**Lachlan Devine**

University of Edinburgh

I will suggest that a marriage of insights from both post-cognitivism and inferentialism provides a promising approach for naturalising normativity.

According to post-cognitivism, cognition emerges out of dynamic (inter)activity. Post-cognitivism characterises and explains dynamic patterns of activity, including how behaviour constrains and coordinates further behaviour, rather than transformations of internal representations. According to inferentialism, linguistic

practice has the structure of a normative 'game of giving and asking for reasons'.

Putting post-cognitivism and inferentialism together yields an account of higher cognition as concrete, dynamic activity constituting participation in linguistically mediated social practices. Capacities to exhibit linguistic and nonlinguistic behaviour, assess behaviour as (in)correct, express assessments, and respond to the assessments of others (with either justification or behaviour modification), are crucial to how activity is shaped and stabilised.

I'll distinguish between the game of giving and asking for reasons and the space of reasons. The former is a way of describing concrete, dynamic activity of a certain sort;

the latter is an abstract space of propositional contents. The former is central, but I reject the latter: for example, there are assertions of phonological forms embedded in normative practice, not assertions that *p*.

In this combined post-cognitivist, inferentialist framework, human cognition and linguistic practice are normative and social in a naturalistically explicable sense. Normativity involves behavioural patterns constituting the concrete, dynamic game of trading utterances (functionally identified as assertions, challenges, reasons, etc.) to coordinate further behaviour. I'll also suggest that conceptualising this in terms of rules is misleading, and discuss which kind of normative facts are grounded by the account.

**Friday Oct 13 | 15:25 – 16:10**

## On the Origins of 'Normative' Meaning

**Dorit Bar-On**

University of Connecticut

In this paper, I revisit a Sellarsian theme that runs through the work of so-called "linguistic rationalists". This is the idea that human linguistic and mental representation is unique and essentially different from all other forms of animal communication and mentation. Full-fledged human language and thought, so the theme goes, is compositionally structured, intentional, rational, and subject to social norms. It is not merely patterned behavior that is goal- or need-driven, world-directed, and subject to modification via behavioral control or manipulation by co-communicators. Human linguistic communication is different from any known form of non-human communication in being the province

of rational agents who act and think within the space of reasons. Consequently – linguistic rationalists maintain – all application of our concepts of meaning, semantic content, propositional attitudes, etc. to non-human creatures is at best a matter of analogy or metaphorical extension. This Sellarsian theme underwrites what I have dubbed "Continuity Skepticism": the view that there can be no philosophically cogent account of the emergence of distinctive linguistic-mental human capacities in nature. On this view, the essential normativity of human linguistic and mental capacities stands in the way of a thoroughgoing naturalism concerning meaning and mind.

My aim in this paper is argue that we can resist Continuity Skepticism by developing certain insights due to Ruth Millikan to

establish normative continuities between nonhuman and human forms of communication. On my Millikanian proposal, non-linguistic communicative norms can be established in social groups of individuals who have acquired – through natural selection or recurring intersubjective interactions – a capacity for ‘mind-minding’. This is a capacity to recognize (though without yet conceptualizing) each other’s

states of mind and attend to them through uptake of their expressive behaviors. Insofar as Millikan’s insights are, in turn, inspired by ideas that can be found in Sellars, my Millikanian proposal can be regarded as supporting a Sellars-approved brand of naturalism about meaning, though it will not be my remit to offer careful Sellars exegesis.

**Friday Oct 13 | 16:20 – 17:35**

## **Normativity in Infancy: Learning from Demonstrations**

**Antonio Scarafone**

LMU München

I will suggest that a marriage of insights from both post-cognitivism and inferentialism provides a promising approach for naturalising normativity.

According to post-cognitivism, cognition emerges out of dynamic (inter)activity. Post-cognitivism characterises and explains dynamic patterns of activity, including how behaviour constrains and coordinates further behaviour, rather than transformations of internal representations. According to inferentialism, linguistic practice has the structure of a normative ‘game of giving and asking for reasons’.

Putting post-cognitivism and inferentialism together yields an account of higher cognition as concrete, dynamic activity constituting participation in linguistically mediated social practices. Capacities to exhibit linguistic and nonlinguistic behaviour, assess behaviour as (in)correct, express assessments, and respond to the assessments of others (with either justification or behaviour modification), are crucial to how activity is shaped and stabi-

lised.

I’ll distinguish between the game of giving and asking for reasons and the space of reasons. The former is a way of describing concrete, dynamic activity of a certain sort; the latter is an abstract space of propositional contents. The former is central, but I reject the latter: for example, there are assertions of phonological forms embedded in normative practice, not assertions that p.

In this combined post-cognitivist, inferentialist framework, human cognition and linguistic practice are normative and social in a naturalistically explicable sense. Normativity involves behavioural patterns constituting the concrete, dynamic game of trading utterances (functionally identified as assertions, challenges, reasons, etc.) to coordinate further behaviour. I’ll also suggest that conceptualising this in terms of rules is misleading, and discuss which kind of normative facts are grounded by the account.

**Saturday Oct 14 | 10:30 – 11:15**

## The “hurly-burly” roots of rule-following: Discursive co-regulation in social play and its exaptive and developmental potential

**Christopher Joseph Gonzalez An**  
University of Edinburgh

The consensus view on the evolution of norm-governed action is that it emerged as a solution to problems of cooperation in early humans. However, cooperation-based accounts that emphasise collective or joint action towards a shared goal are limited by an instrumental or teleological explanatory outlook – normative guidance can't just emerge as an instrumental solution to adaptive cooperation problems. I propose instead that we look at co-regulation, not cooperation, where we attend to features of shared activities with constitutive discursive-communicative elements over goal-based outcomes.

I suggest that this is captured in social play behaviour in human and non-human mammals. What makes play fitting are its behavioural markers (that it is uniquely self-motivating with no direct adaptive significance) and also the enabling surplus resources that facilitate its expression

(usually in juveniles buffered from the demands of survival). The function of play is thus best explained by proximate over ultimate, adaptive explanations.

Ethological studies show that social play is guided by “rules of engagement” (through markers like self-handicapping, turn-taking, and role-reversals) which expressly convey not only relevant agent intentions but also inform “proper conduct” between co-players. Furthermore, social play can meet requirements for non-linguistic discursive communication through play-signals, which can arguably convey expressions of declarative commitment: “This is play.” This should suggest that the incipient forms of discursive co-regulation ostensibly found in social play could have a critical formative role in cultivating an agent that is not primarily driven by instrumental, teleologically-structured constraints and is instead guided by norms and other deontic considerations.

**Saturday Oct 14 | 11:25 – 12:10**

## How to Naturalize Inferentialism

**Szymon Sapalski**  
Jagiellonian University

In my talk, I have two objectives. First, my aim is to explore and critique the most recent approaches proposed for naturalizing inferentialism. Second, I want to develop the most promising of these options.

I will distinguish four strategies for naturalizing inferentialism. The first strategy explains the emergence of linguistic norms in the natural world (Peregrin 2022, Weiss 2022). The second approach aims to show that the norms required by inferentialism already exist in the natural world and can be found in biology (Hlobil 2022). The third strategy weakens the understanding of what norms are and shows that in this

weaker form they can be easily naturalized (Glock 2022, arguably Pośtajko and Grabarczyk 2018). Finally, the fourth strategy is a straightforward approach that imposes fewer restrictions on what naturalism is (Macarthur 2019, Hutto and Satne 2015). I will argue that none of the implementations of these strategies presented in the literature are fully satisfactory.

I will also attempt to develop an original approach to the third strategy, which involves weakening the notion of norms.

Building upon Blackburn's work on quasi-realism in metaethics, I will present an account that is both naturalistically acceptable and preserves the intuition of the normativity of meaning. This will be achieved by distinguishing between two perspectives: one external to the discourse, where meaning normativity will be analyzed using the notion of constitutive rules, and the other internal which will address the intuition of meaning being normative.

**Saturday Oct 14 | 12:20 – 13:05**

## Grades of empiricism about normative concepts

### Jonathan Birch

London School of Economics  
and Political Science

Foundations of Animal Sentience project

In 2006, Sripada and Stich posited a substantial genetically inherited architecture underlying normative cognition. This has led to an empiricist reaction, with authors such as Heyes arguing that domain-general reinforcement learning mechanisms, augmented with language, may be capable of generating normative

thought without any further supplementation. I favour an in-between position, on which normative concepts are grounded in two versatile adaptations of model-based action control: evaluative modelling of the consequences of actions and the tacit encoding of group-wide norms of skilled action. This evolved platform has then been given a rich cultural overlay. I will give an overview of the picture and (if time permits) reflect on how the duality of the „two adaptations“ view might relate to the consequentialist/deontological divide in ethical discourse.

**Saturday Oct 14 | 14:30 – 15:45**

## The natural history of correctness

### Jaroslav Peregrin

University of Hradec Králové

We know that lots of things are correct (and lots are incorrect). To help people who need it is correct. To move the bishop diagonally when playing chess is

correct. To add 7 to 5 with the result 12 is correct. But how come? Where does the correctness come from? There are lots of answers philosophers (and recently also some scientists) have supplied us since the beginnings of their discipline. Here I want to probe one of such answers: Correctness

is something we humans created in the process of forming our societies.

I argue that correctness is instituted by our „normative attitudes“; in the simplest case something is correct if it is endorsed (viz. if it elicits positive normative attitudes) across the relevant community. I think this is the most primitive form of correctness from which, I am going to argue, all other forms of correctness derive. But of course this cannot be the general case of our current rich and multifaceted concept of correctness - we know all too well that many facts are correct without being endorsed (or vice versa).

I argue that this can be explain by what I call a *critical ascent*; what is correct in force of general endorsement are criteria, not what they are criteria for. The criterial ascent is a move from discussing whether something is P to discussing what

does it take to be P. We discuss whether something is a fish or whether it is correct to greet somebody in some way, and move to discussing what does it take to be a fish (to have gills?) or what does it take to greet somebody correctly (to respect some „unwritten rules“ of the community in question?). We know that this may be useful within the kind of discussions we take part in now; but what I claim is that it might have been a move constitutive of this kind of discussions.

In this way we can, I am convinced, reconcile the fact that correctness is wholly our creation with the fact that it is independent of us in the sense that things may be correct even if we do not know that they are (or we think that they are not). The reason is that we often set up correctness in terms of a criterion, and we are not always able to see whether the criterion applies.

**Saturday Oct 14 | 15:55 – 16:40**

## Origins of Normativity

### Michael Tomasello

Duke University

Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary

Anthropology

Human individuals often make judgments about what they or others ought to believe or do in a situation. These normative judgments carry with them a supra-individual force, as they purport to take precedence over the individual's own personal perspectives and preferences. They also carry with them a supra-individual generality, even universality, as they purport to apply not

just to the self or other specific individuals but to persons in general (within some parameters). In my paper I will pursue the hypothesis that the supra-individual force and generality of normative thinking and attitudes - both sociomoral and epistemic - is a natural consequence of their source in humans' species-unique skills and motivations of shared intentionality aimed at coordinating one's actions, thoughts, and attitudes with others both joint agencies with cooperative partners and collective agencies with social groups.

**Saturday Oct 14 | 16:50 – 17:35**



## A Genealogy of Rule-following

**Philip Pettit**

Rockefeller University

Australian National University

How do we intentionally track certain basic properties when we use words to predicate them, yet have no means of defining those terms? This is the rule-following problem posed by Wittgenstein and Kripke. I look at how creatures like us in circumstances like ours would be likely to evolve practices of basic rule-following, thereby constructing

a counterfactual genealogy. Being like us, so the argument goes, such humanoids would display three capacities that distinguish our species: they would be naturally sensitized to certain patterns, they would act together jointly for shared ends, and they would naturally communicate with their young in teaching and learning. The exercise of such well documented capacities would inevitably lead the humanoids, according to the genealogy, into the practice of rule-following.

**Sunday Oct 15 | 10:30 – 11:45**

## Belief, the norm of truth, and assertion's essential effect

**Ronald Loeffler**

Grand Valley State University

A central feature of assertion and belief is what Huw Price calls the norm of truth. If two speakers are aware of making mutually contradictory assertions, or holding mutually contradictory beliefs, they are prima facie obliged to resolve the contradiction by reaching interpersonal doxastic or assertoric agreement. Furthermore, a central feature of assertions is what Robert Stalnaker calls their essential effect: if a speaker's assertion that *p* is understood and accepted by all interlocutors, *p* thereby becomes common ground (commonly and mutually believed or accepted). Conceptually, the two features are separate. Two subjects' adhering to the norm of truth does not imply that their doxastic or assertoric agreement amounts to common ground (rather than simply shared belief or assertoric commitment). Conversely, assertions' essential effect does not imply that belief or assertion is

governed by the norm of truth. Focusing on sincere exchanges of well-understood assertions, I shall introduce a conception of belief that explains why beliefs and sincere, well-understood assertions (*qua* expressions of belief) have both features. My key idea is that belief, by its nature, intrinsically involves an implicit first-person plural normative attitude that echoes the Kantian sense of objective truth as validity for all rational beings. Believing that *p* intrinsically involves, I propose, taking an implicit, indiscriminate normative attitude towards unrestrictedly all rational beings – “us jointly” – to endorse *p*. I shall elaborate and defend this unfamiliar proposal and show that it implies both that beliefs and sincere, well-understood assertions (*qua* expressions of beliefs) are governed by the norm of truth and that sincere, well-understood assertions have the Stalnakerian essential effect.

**Sunday Oct 15 | 11:55 – 12:40**











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