



The Philosophy Research Seminar

3rd November 2009 Assoc. Prof. Neil Levy
(Melbourne and Oxford)

Special Venue and Time

67.202 (Moot court) 14.30 - 17.30

CAPSTRANS/ICR WORKSHOP

"Neuroethics, Politics and the Extended Mind"

In earlier work, I argued that the extended mind has significant ethical implications, leading us to see various kinds of environmental manipulations as ethically on a par with interventions into the brain. In response, Zoe Drayson and Andy Clark (forthcoming) have argued that I overlook the important difference between the extended and the embedded mind. In this paper, I turn to the political implications of the extended mind thesis. I argue that the view supports what I call weak communitarianism, according to which cognitive resources are goods which demand special protection. I argue that attention to the ways in which external cognitive resources are veristically valuable actually shows not only that weak communitarianism is the strongest that that we can support by reference to the extended mind; it also provides us with resources to criticize stronger forms of communitarianism. I argue that the difference between the extended and the embedded mind is not important, so far as these political considerations are so concerned.

Responses by:

Dr. Richard Menary (UOW)

Dr. David Neil (UOW)

For further information please contact Dr Richard Menary (rmenary@uow.edu.au)