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BLACKHEATH PHILOSOPHY FORUM 2014 PROGRAM

Our 2014 program starts on
Saturday 19 April and continues
fortnightly thereafter.

The program of nine talks has three sub-themes
each of two sessions, with every third talk being
on a stand-alone topic. Open out this brochure for
the full program. For more details and to join our
newsletter mailing list visit our website at:
www.blackheathphilosophy.com.au



VENUE

Blackheath Community Centre Hall
Cnr Gardiner Crescent and
Great Western Highway, Blackheath
Talks are held Saturdays fortnightly at 4pm
Entry \$10 (includes tea/coffee and snacks)
Wheelchair access. Hall is heated.

THEME 1 - POLITICS

Some people's political allegiances stay the same over a lifetime while others - the Turncoats - switch ideological horses. Is constancy of political allegiance a virtue or a vice?

TURNCOATS 1 - KEITH WINDSCHUTTLE 4pm - Saturday 19 April

In the 1960s and 1970s Windschuttle was a prominent figure in the New Left. He is now one of the main Australian public intellectuals of the Right. Keith will outline the factors, influences and reasons that changed his mind.

Keith Windschuttle is editor of Quadrant magazine.

TURNCOATS 2 - DAVID HOROWITZ 4pm - Saturday 3 May

David Horowitz, former editor of *Ramparts* magazine, is one of the most prominent American political figures to change ideological horses. He has spent roughly half of his 75 years on the radical Left, half on the Right. He has written extensively about the factors that caused his change of heart. How persuasive is his case?

Peter Baldwin is Chair of the Blackheath Philosophy Forum. He was a Minister in the Hawke and Keating Governments.

SOCIAL HUMANISM - A NEW FOUNDATION? 4pm - Saturday 17 May

Our speaker will argue for a new way of thinking about social and political arrangements that draws on a synthesis of moral and political philosophy. His proposal, which he terms Social Humanism, provides a theoretical underpinning for the welfare state that, in his view, avoids the pitfalls of Left and Right.

Brian Ellis is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, LaTrobe University.

THEME 2 - THE PASSIONS

Plato described emotion and reason as two horses pulling us in opposite directions. Hume claimed reason is – and ought to be – the slave of the passions. What is the relationship between reason and emotion?

EMOTION AND REASON 4pm - Saturday 31 May

Do we control our expression of emotions to conform to what we deem appropriate to our social roles and relationships? Can this kind of emotional control lead to self-deception? Dr Morag will explain a notion of 'emotional appropriateness'.

Talia Morag took her PhD at Sydney University and now teaches philosophy and psychoanalysis.

REASON, MORAL FEELING AND PSYCHOPATHY 4pm - Saturday 14 June

Immanuel Kant has been depicted as the cold rationalist who famously said that an action motivated by sympathy has no moral worth. Jeanette Kennett will challenge this stereotype and outline a Kantian account of moral feeling and its relation to rationality.

Jeanette Kennett is Professor of Moral Psychology at Macquarie University.

OUR FINAL INVENTION Young Philosophers Panel 4pm Saturday 28 June

Artificial Intelligence researchers think the emergence of machines with human-like intelligence is more likely than not this century. Some think it will not stop there – that such intelligences will go on to improve themselves at computational speed. Is this our final invention?

Toby Solomon, Jeevan Hariharan and Heydon Wardell-Burns are philosophy honours students or graduates at Sydney University.

THEME 3 - LANGUAGE

Language is so embedded in our everyday experience that it is hard to imagine what life would be like without it. What role does language play in thinking?

THE FAILURE OF LINGUISTIC SEMANTICS 4pm Saturday 12 July

Semantics is the study of meaning in language. 'Meaning' however is a vague term that can refer to different things - and there is failure to reach consensus on even the most basic semantic facts. Our speaker will explore some of the implications.

Nicholas Riemer is a Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Sydney.

CHOMSKY vs THE PHILOSOPHERS 4pm Saturday 26 July

In the 1960s Noam Chomsky created a revolution in linguistics that has been compared with those of Galileo and Darwin. Chomsky's theory has been challenged by philosophers. Hear a philosopher argue Chomsky was right and the philosophers wrong.

Peter Slezak is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of New South Wales.

AUGUST 1914 – THEN AND NOW with Blackheath History Forum 4pm Saturday 9 August

World War I was the pivotal event that shaped the 20th century. Historians and political theorists have debated the circumstances that led to the war ever since. Some point to disturbing parallels with our own time.

Bob Howard and **Diarmuid Maguire**, both in International Relations at Sydney University will present, with distinguished military historian **Bob O'Neill** as discussant.