

**PHILOSOPHISCHES SEMINAR
DER GEORG-AUGUST-UNIVERSITÄT GÖTTINGEN**

Humboldtallee 19, 37073 Göttingen
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G A S T V O R T R A G

**Mittwoch, den 09.05.2018
18 Uhr c.t.**

**Prof. Dr. Neil Roughley
(Universität Duisburg-Essen)**

Raum ZHG 005

spricht über das Thema:

„The Empathy in Moral Obligation. An Exercise in Creature Construction“

**Hierzu ergeht herzliche Einladung.
Ich bitte, die Studierenden in den Lehrveranstaltungen
auf diesen Vortrag hinzuweisen.**

Prof. Dr. Holmer Steinfath, Direktor des Philosophischen Seminars

Abstract

In this talk I argue that we cannot make sense of moral obligation without drawing on a conception of empathy. The key conception is that central to Adam Smith's moral theory and involves an agent 'going along with' the emotion of another. In an exercise of Gricean creature construction, I claim that the creatures for whom moral obligation can exist must be fitted out with a specific set of dispositions: to the non-normative attitude of resentment*, to Smithian empathy, to vicarious resentment* or indignation*, and finally with the capacity to empathise with an impartial empathiser, where the first two dispositions are presupposed by the latter two. The construction culminates in the claim that the contents of our moral obligations are the (counterfactual) objects of indignation* of an impartial empathiser. Neither a society of psychopaths nor a community of chimpanzees could develop anything approaching human morality, because they lack this suite of dispositions.