

UCT Conference

Social Equality

South Africa is among the world's most unequal countries economically. What can philosophy tell us about inequality and disadvantage? Can it map out the path to an equal society?

Keynote addresses:

'Epistemic Inequalities' – Professor Miranda Fricker (University of Sheffield)

Miranda Fricker is author of *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* and co-editor of *The Cambridge Companion to Feminism in Philosophy* with Jennifer Hornsby.

'Racial Equality' – Professor Charles W. Mills (Northwestern University)

Charles Mills is author of *The Racial Contract* and *Blackness Visible*, both classics of the philosophy of race. His latest book is *Radical Theory, Caribbean Reality: Race, Class and Social Domination*.

'Social Equality and Relative Poverty' – Professor Jonathan Wolff (UCL)

Jonathan Wolff is author of *The Human Right to Health, Why Read Marx Today?* and *Disadvantage* (co-authored with Avner de-Shalit). He has advised the UK government on drugs, gambling, railway safety and homicide.

The conference includes a special session on inequality in South Africa, featuring:

'The Bigger the Cake? Jobs, Growth and Equality' – Jeremy Cronin (SACP)

Jeremy Cronin is Deputy Minister of Public Works and Deputy General-Secretary of the South African Communist Party.

Many contemporary societies are strikingly unequal and quickly becoming more so. In a country like South Africa, much social inequality is a visible part of daily life. But there are forms of inequality and disadvantage which, though no less problematic, are not immediately obvious to the casual observer.

It would be naive to think philosophy on its own could do anything to alleviate inequality. But it does have a role to play. Philosophy can articulate the various different forms of social inequality. By arguing for a particular conception of justice or the good life, it can show what is wrong with some or all of these forms of inequality. In addition, political philosophy can demarcate the steps a government may legitimately take to address inequality and disadvantage.

The philosophical debate about equality has become increasingly nuanced, concrete and empirically informed in recent years. The UCT Social Equality Conference enables its continuation in a place where the need for an understanding of, and a strategy to address, inequality is particularly urgent.

The conference is also a chance for philosophical approaches to inequality to come into dialogue with those of other disciplines. Alongside established philosophers such as Lucy Allais (Sussex), Tom Angier (UCT), Edwin Etieyibo (Wits), Helen Lauer (Ghana), Thaddeus Metz (UJ), Pierre-Yves Néron (Lille) and Vasti Roodt (Stellenbosch), legal scholars including Cathi Albertyn (Wits), David Bilchitz (UJ) and Joel Modiri (UP), and political scientists including Teppo Eskelinen (Eastern Finland), Daryl Glaser (Wits) and Amanda Gouws (Stellenbosch) will address topics ranging from affirmative action, through corporate democracy, to equality in African philosophy.

Finally, Ann E. Cudd (Vice-Provost, University of Kansas) will facilitate a little self-reflection with her talk, 'What is the Point of (Equality in) Higher Education?'

When? 15-17 August 2014
Where? Humanities Building, Upper Campus
How much? R300/day (concessions R150),
UCT students free

For more information, please visit:

http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/philosophy/events_conferences.htm
To register, e-mail SocialEqualityUCT@gmail.com

