DAVID HUME

On Human Nature and Dark Emotions

Hosted by the Notre Dame Centre for the History of Philosophy

Friday 12 December

Masterclass – Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*

10:00 am- 12:00 pm (AEDT)

Associate Professor Peter Kail (Oxford)
Based on Peter's new book, *The Routledge Guidebook to Hume's A Treatise of Human Nature* (Routledge, 2025)

Seminar – Dark Emotions in Hume

1:00 PM – 3:30 PM (AEDT)

Professor Anik Waldow (Sydney) & Associate Professor Peter Kail (Oxford)

Attendance is free. Registration essential.

All welcome, including students, researchers, faculty and members of the public.

Location
The University of Notre Dame Australia (Sydney), Moorgate Boardroom, 10 Grafton St, Chippendale, NSW

Online
Via Microsoft Teams

Associate Professor Peter Kail
Professor Anik Waldow

Register here
tinyurl.com/2jp8kvkm

Enquiries
chop@nd.edu.au

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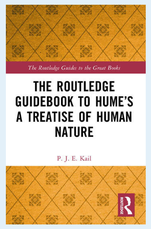

Seminar – Dark Emotions in Hume

1:00 PM – 3:30 PM (AEDT)

Peter Kail: ***Anxiety and Hume's Philosophy.*** This paper explores the role anxiety plays in Hume's philosophy. It begins by discussing anxiety as an emotion and connecting it to its object namely problematic uncertainty. The paper then explores Hume's own view of anxiety, beginning with a discussion of *Treatise* 2.39 'Of the direct passions' where he draws the connection between anxiety, a species of fear, with uncertainty. It then connects this with his remarks on doubt, before turning to Hume's treatment of the false religions of superstition and enthusiasm, and their connection with anxiety as a mood rather than an emotion.

Anik Waldow: ***Hume on Contempt, Race, and the Homo Monstrosus.*** This paper will critically interrogate the status of Hume's concept of human nature. More specifically, it will investigate if this concept is truly inclusive or, instead, possesses clandestine exclusionary tendencies by denying certain members of the human species their status as humans. The paper will approach this question through an analysis of his conception of contempt and classificatory issues surrounding questions of dehumanisation and monstrosity in the context of Hume's infamous footnote of the essay "Of National Characters." It will argue that it is precisely because contempt motivated Hume's deprecating views about non-White people in this footnote that he ignored that it was strikingly inconsistent with his broader philosophical commitments and explanatory strategies concerning the context-dependence of human life. In the final analysis, contempt thus emerges as a passion that confirms itself by rendering the mind blind to the deficiencies of its own thinking.

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Via Microsoft Teams (register to receive links)

Peter Kail is Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy at St Peter's College and Associate Professor in the History of Modern Philosophy at the University of Oxford. His research focuses mainly on the history of philosophy. He has written books on David Hume, George Berkeley and Friedrich Nietzsche, has served as the editor of the journal *Hume Studies*, and is a founding member and member of the executive committee of the International Nietzsche Society.

Anik Waldow is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Sydney. She works on early modern philosophy, focusing on theories of sympathy, personal identity, and the role of experience and embodiment in the formation of the self. Her books include *Experience Embodied: Early Modern Accounts of the Human Place in Nature* (OUP, 2020) and *Hume and the Problem of Other Minds* (Continuum, 2009). She has co-edited volumes on empathy, sensibility, and Herder, and was awarded the Annette Baier Prize in 2023 for the essay "What is Humean Autonomy?". Her current research investigates conceptions of monstrosity and dehumanization in early modern philosophy.

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