

***Workplace Democracy – International Workshop***

Oct 16-17, 2008,

Chaire Hoover d'éthique économique et sociale

**Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium**

Room : Salle Oleffe, Halles Universitaires

Funded by the Fondation Emile Bernheim

Convenor : Axel Gosseries

**NB : Attendance to paper presentations 1 to 4  
is compulsory for students**

**Oct. 16 : 14h – 15h30**

**1. Jeffrey Moriarty** (Bowling Green State University)

Title: **Participation in the Workplace: Are Employees Special?**

Discussant : **Nenad Stojanovic** (U. Zurich & UCL-Chaire Hoover)

**Abstract:** Many writers argue that employees should have participation rights in firm decision-making. In this paper, I examine precisely *who* popular arguments for employee participation justify enfranchising. Three arguments have received the bulk of recent attention: the interest protection argument, the autonomy argument, and the democracy argument. The ostensible goal of these arguments is to justify *all and only employee participation*, or AOEP. I argue that, even if they succeed in justifying the enfranchisement of *some* employees, they do not justify AOEP. I conclude by considering whether AOEP is worth justifying.

**Bio:** Jeffrey Moriarty is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Bowling Green State University. He has interests in business ethics and political philosophy. His recent work focuses on compensation and the organization of the labor process. His articles have appeared in journals such as *Nous*, *Utilitas*, *Business Ethics Quarterly*, and *Journal of Business Ethics*.

**Oct. 16 : 16h-17h30**

**2. Daniel Attas** (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Title: **Democratic inequality in the workplace**

Discussant : **Dominic Martin** (U. de Montreal & UCL-Chaire Hoover)

**Abstract:** Many organizations exhibit some inegalitarian relations among their members, particularly between management and worker classes. I discuss some of these practices and explain in what way they are morally wrong. Although they do not appear to raise widespread indignation, I argue for the priority of democratic equality in the workplace over other concerns of justice.

**Bio:** Daniel Attas is director of the PPE Program and Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His research interests are mainly on issues of economic justice, in particular on property and equality. He is author of *Liberty, Property and Markets: A Critique of Libertarianism* as well as a number of articles in journals such as *Social Theory and Practice*, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, *The Philosophical Quarterly*, *Law and*

Philosophy, and Politics, Philosophy and Economics.

**Friday - Morning session**

Chairwoman : **Alexia Autenne (FNRS-UCL – Fac of Law)**

**Oct. 17 : 9h30-11h**

**3. Nien-He Hsieh** (The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania)

**Why Work: Workplace Democracy and the Value of Work**

Discussant : **Marek Hudon (ULB)**

**Abstract:** This paper examines what is significant about work as a human activity in ways that are relevant to liberal egalitarian arguments for workplace democracy. On some views, work seems to matter only because it occupies a significant portion of people's time. On other views, work is significant for reasons more closely tied to the concept of work itself, such as its potential to realize certain human goods. The paper aims to further our understanding about the aspects of work that the liberal egalitarian state should be concerned to regulate.

**Bio :** Nien-hê Hsieh is an Associate Professor in the Legal Studies and Business Ethics Department at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania with a secondary appointment in the Department of Philosophy. He also serves as Director of the Wharton Ethics Program. His research is in ethics and economics, with a focus on distributive justice, justice in economic production, incommensurable values, and how the number of people affected should be taken into consideration by decision-makers.

**Oct. 17 : 11h15-13h**

**4. Waheed Hussain** (The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania)

***Why is the right of exit not enough?***

Discussant : **Axel Gosseries (FNRS & UCL-Chaire Hoover)**

**Abstract :** Many people believe that worker autonomy requires only that workers have the ability to enter and exit firms freely. Once workers can move freely between firms, we can regard the individual worker's activities on the job as an expression of his own choice to remain at the firm. In this paper, I argue that worker autonomy requires more than the freedom to enter and exit firms. Distinguishing between a choice-centered and an attitude-centred conception of autonomy, I argue that worker autonomy is best understood in terms of the worker achieving a certain kind of psychological integration with his activities at work. An implication of this view is that worker autonomy requires more than labor mobility; it requires that firms incorporate mechanisms of deliberation and consultation that allow workers to reflectively endorse their activities at work. The "codetermination" system in Germany provides a good illustration of how we might provide for worker autonomy within the framework of capitalist democracy.

**Bio:** Waheed Hussain is an assistant professor at the University of Pennsylvania in the Wharton School. He holds an A.B. in Philosophy from Princeton University and a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Harvard University. A former fellow at the Safra Center for Ethics at the Kennedy School of Government, he works on issues in moral and political philosophy, particularly as they arise in economic life. He has published articles on the nature of freedom and autonomy, the ethical significance of class, and more democratic alternatives to the

Anglo-American model of capitalism. His current research asks whether Rawls's theory of justice has an adequate response to the "consumer culture" critique of capitalist democracy.

**Oct. 17 : 14h-15h30**

**5. Martin O'Neill** (University of Manchester)

**Bread and Roses? Labour Unions, Social Justice and Non-Ideal Theory**

Discussant : **Gregory Ponthière** (ENS, Ulm)

**Abstract :** The political philosophy of labour unions is a curiously neglected topic, and insufficient attention has been paid to the normative dimensions of union activity. In this paper, I examine the variety of normative justifications for the existence of trade unions, in both ideal and non-ideal theory ; address a number of critiques of the dangers of excessive union power ; and suggest how we should reshape or reform the legal rules under which labour unions operate.

**Bio :** Martin O'Neill is Hallsworth Research Fellow in Political Economy at the Manchester Centre for Political Theory, in Politics at the University of Manchester. He was previously Research Fellow in Philosophy and Politics at St John's College, University of Cambridge. His research is primarily in political philosophy, and he is currently writing a book on *Corporations and Social Justice*. He has published in journals such as *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, *the Monist* and *Revue de Philosophie Economique*, and writes regularly on philosophical issues in current politics and public policy for *The New Statesman* website.

**Oct. 17 : 16h-17h30**

**6. Vincent Aubert** (Chaire Hoover, Université catholique de Louvain)

***Hayek and workplace democracy***

Discussant : TBA

**Abstract :** This paper is devoted to the normative force of economic and workplace democracy within F. A. Hayek's political theory. We'll begin with Hayek's critical views on (workplace) democracy. Delineating Hayek's substantial conception of social justice will be necessary and we'll see its implications concerning CSR. We'll then study the value and the compatibility of workplace democracy with Hayek's theoretical framework. First, we'll examine the value of workplace democracy as a mean to implement Hayek's political ideal. Second, we'll study the possibility of defending workplace democracy conceived as an ideal of local justice within Hayek's political theory.

**Bio :** TBC

**17h45-18h45** : open discussion