

CONFERENCE

Queer AΦ Europe | Queer Analytic Philosophy: Social Concepts and Categories



16 June 2025 | College for Social Sciences and Humanities, Essen

Analytic philosophy is able, at its best, to untangle large and seemingly ineffable questions. Social ontology and conceptual engineering aim to analyse ordinary concepts and categories, such as gender, race, sexual orientation, identity, as well as social emotions. This conference presents work in analytic philosophy that focuses on the nature and properties of the social world.

Analytic philosophy in the English-speaking world has been notoriously reluctant to engage in issues that affect public discourse, and has generally avoided political activism. This is despite the fact that this particular brand of philosophy, with its stress on clarity and on rigour, is able, at its best, to untangle large and seemingly ineffable questions, making them appear comprehensible and analysable through careful rational analysis.

This isolationist and a-political trend in analytic philosophy has now changed. Following the lead of feminist philosophers, analytic philosophy has seen the emergence of politically active work that directly engages the public. One branch of this work is in social ontology and conceptual engineering. This work aims to analyse ordinary concepts and categories, such as gender, race, sexual orientation, identity, as well as social emotions. This conference presents work in analytic philosophy that focuses on the nature and properties of the social world. It is concerned with analysing things in the world that arise from social interaction,

and with explaining what makes them the things they are. The aim of this conference is also to foreground philosophical work in the analytic tradition that is informed by queer experience, community, and theorising, as well as to build community among queer scholars in philosophy.

Organisation & Chair

Prof. Nico Orlandi | University of California Santa Cruz (USA) &
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PROGRAMME

Monday, 16 June

13:00 SESSION 1

A Kind of Love

Matthew Andler, Saint Louis University, Madrid Campus (Spain)

Discussion by:

Jonna Vance, Northern Arizona University (USA)

14:30 Coffee break

15:00 SESSION 2

Techbro Authoritarianism, Pronatalism, and the Technologies We Will Lose

Maren Behrens, University of Twente (The Netherlands)

Discussion by:

Eric Llaveria Caselles, Technische Universität Berlin (Germany)

16:30 Coffee break

17:00 SESSION 3

Sexual Orientation, Sexual Desire, Sex, and Gender

Esa Diaz Leon, University of Barcelona (Spain)

Discussion by:

Resa-Philip Lunau, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (Germany)

18:30 Drinks and dinner

CONTRIBUTIONS AND SPEAKERS

A Kind of Love

Matthew Andler | Saint Louis University, Madrid Campus (Spain)

In this paper, I develop an error theory that targets the (commonly-held, yet false) belief that there are multiple kinds of love such as parental love, friendship love, and romantic love. More specifically, I argue that the idea that there are multiple kinds of love is both harmful and mistaken: an artifact of an unjust social structure that obscures the singular nature of love.

Techbro Authoritarianism, Pronatalism, and the Technologies We Will Lose

Maren Behrens | University of Twente (The Netherlands)

In this contribution, I connect three seemingly different political phenomena: overt, aggressive interventions of tech oligarchs in political processes, increasing attention to pronatalism as an ideology and philosophy of population policy, and the backlash against queer and trans rights in much of Europe and North America. I argue that there is a distinct type of “illiberal tech pronatalism” that advocates for a restriction of autonomy rights in the name of pronatalist concerns. This restriction of rights implies the loss of access to technologies that could and do enhance human autonomy: mobility, the free flow of information, and reproductive autonomy. It also implies an ontic disregard for human personhood: illiberal tech pronatalism treats human beings as a quantifiable resource, thereby depersonalising and dehumanising them.

Sexual Orientation, Sexual Desire, Sex, and Gender

Esa Diaz Leon | University of Barcelona (Spain)

Recently several philosophers have argued that concepts for sexual orientations should be concerned with sexual attraction towards people with a certain sex, rather than gender. This is a claim in conceptual ethics, that is, it has to do with the concepts and meanings that we ought to employ. Contra these views (defended by Stock, Lawford-Smith, Halwani and others), I will argue that the amelioration of concepts of sexual orientation yields a plurality of concepts, including concepts concerned with people’s self-identities.