

# 2016 Interdisciplinary Conference on Morality and Immorality



## Conference Organizers:

Karl Aquino (Marketing and Behavioral Science, UBC)  
Katherine White (Marketing and Behavioral Science, UBC)  
Michael Griffin (Department of Philosophy, UBC)  
Daniel Skarlicki (Marketing and Behavioral Sciences, UBC)

We thank the Ethics and Sustainability Group at the Sauder School of Business, the Center for Applied Ethics at UBC, and the WELL Lab at Australia National University for providing financial support for this conference.

## **Purpose of the Conference**

This first conference on Morality and Immorality has been organized to bring together a group of scholars from different disciplines interested in thinking about and actively researching the dual nature of human behavior and social organization. The study of morality has become increasingly popular in recent years, but the emphasis of much contemporary research has been on desirable behaviors like altruism, compassion, integrity, forgiveness, or generosity. In this conference, we recognize the complex moral predicament faced by imperfect creatures like ourselves by calling attention to how other forces present within us, like egoism, tribal allegiance, the enjoyment of cruelty, and a desire for dominance can motivate behaviors that threaten social order and weaken the relational bonds that make civilized life possible. By doing so, we present a balanced picture of what human beings are capable of in their most exalted and debased moments.

A second purpose of the conference is to generate conversations that may lead to fruitful cross-disciplinary collaboration. As you will see from the program, the speakers come from a range of disciplinary backgrounds including philosophy, marketing, organizational behavior, and psychology. The diversity in our speakers is mirrored by the attendees of this conference as well as its organizers whose research spans the fields of social psychology, philosophy, organizational behavior, marketing, and human resource management. We have organized the conference so that the presentations are followed by a “Synthesis and Collaboration” period that will allow you to have discussions with colleagues old and new. Our hope is that you will use this time to talk to one another about what you heard, inform one another about your current research, and share nascent ideas you may have that could benefit from a fresh perspective. We have encouraged presenters to share empirical or theoretical work that is either in a formative stage or in the process of being prepared for submission to a journal. The presentations are meant to be relaxed, exploratory, and conversational. We encourage you to give feedback to all the presenters and engage them enthusiastically and critically. They will be grateful for it.

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A third goal of the conference is to facilitate the development of graduate students and junior faculty. Two of the scheduled presentations are by graduate students and others are by faculty early in their academic careers. The conference attendees also include many graduate and undergraduate students. This was by design and our hope is that the senior scholars in attendance will use this opportunity to inspire and guide the next generation of researchers.

Finally, and no less important, a goal of this conference is to build or maintain relationships of lasting professional and personal value. It is for this reason that we chose the spectacular landscape of Whistler as a background for the conference. Our hope is that being surrounded by natural beauty and all its offerings will not only stimulate creativity and spirited discussion, but will also allow you to create the kinds of experiences with friends, colleagues, and families that you will look back on many years from now with fondness and appreciation.

Thank you all for being part of this event,

Karl, Kate, Michael, and Daniel

## Conference Program

### Pre-Conference Cocktail Hour: Monday, August 1

18:00-19:00 **Fairmont Hotel, Macdonald E**

There are no formal dinner plans, but we will provide suggestions for places to eat in Whistler and help coordinate small groups who might wish to have dinner together.

### Day 1: Tuesday, August 2, 2016, Macdonald E

You can choose your own venue for breakfast during the conference. Conference attendees staying at Fairmont may want to have breakfast at the hotel's Wildflower Restaurant. The breakfast will be charged to your room.

9:00–9:15 Welcome & Introductions

9:15–10:00 **Keynote Address** (Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, Duke University)

10:00–10:15 Break

10:15 –11:00 Presentation #1 (Yann Cornil, UBC)

11:00–11:45 Presentation #2 (Simone Tang, Duke University)

11:45–12:00 Break

12:00–13:30 Lunch in Conference Room

13:30–14:15 Presentation #3 (Steve Hart, SFU)

14:15–14:30 Break

14:30–15:15 Presentation #4 (Eric Uhlmann, INSEAD-Singapore)

15:15–15:30 Break

15:30–17:00 Synthesis and Collaboration Period

17:00– 19:00 Free time

19:00–21:00 Group dinner at Sidecut

### Day 2: Wednesday, August 3, 2016, Macdonald E

Breakfast is at the venue of your choice.

9:00–10:45 Presentation #6 (Alexis Smith, Oklahoma State University)

10:45–11:00 Break

11:00–11:45 Presentation #7 (Johannes Boegershausen, UBC)

11:45–13:00 Lunch (Choose your venue)

13:00 – 13:45 Presentation #8 (Kate White, UBC)

13:45 –14:00 Break

14:00 – 15:00 Synthesis and Collaboration Period

15:00–15:30 Closing Remarks

15:30– 19:00 Informal Meetings

19:00–21:00 Dinner (Choose your venue)

## Scheduled Presenters

### Implicit Moral Attitudes

Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, Duke University (Keynote Speaker)

**Abstract:** Most moral philosophers and psychologists focus on explicit moral beliefs that people give as answers to questions. However, much research in social psychology shows that implicit moral attitudes (unconscious beliefs or associations) also affect our thinking and behavior. This talk will report our new psychological and neuroscientific research on implicit moral attitudes (using multinomial modeling of a novel sequential priming task) and then explore potential implications for scientific moral psychology as well as for philosophical theories of moral epistemology, responsibility, and virtue. If there is time, I will discuss practical uses of these findings in criminal law, especially regarding the treatment of psychopaths and prediction of their recidivism.

**Biography:** Walter Sinnott-Armstrong is Chauncey Stillman Professor of Practical Ethics in the Department of Philosophy, the Kenan Institute for Ethics, the Center for Cognitive Neuroscience, and the Law School at Duke University. He has published widely on ethics, empirical moral psychology and neuroscience, philosophy of law, epistemology, philosophy of religion, and informal logic. Most recently, he is the author of *Morality Without God?* and *Moral Skepticisms* as well as editor of *Moral Psychology*, volumes I-V. His articles have appeared in a variety of philosophical, scientific, and popular journals and collections. His current work focuses on moral psychology and brain science as well as uses of neuroscience in legal systems. He is also working on one book on Scrupulosity (obsession with morality), another on political polarization and its cure by arguments, and a third that develops a contrastivist view of freedom and responsibility.



### Effects of Brand Hatred on Preferences for Competing Brands

Johannes Boegershausen, UBC

**Abstract:** Consumers frequently experience negative feelings toward brands. In this work we focus on one of the most extreme of these feelings, hatred. Many managers seem to believe that consumers' hatred for a close competitor would be beneficial for their brand. This research tests whether such beliefs reflect reality. We show in six studies using experimental and correlational data that in contrast to managers' beliefs hatred for a brand leads consumers to eschew close competitors from the same subcategory. This effect is driven by heightened concerns about self-protection that are triggered by hatred. We also demonstrate that these preference shifts are unique to hatred and do not emerge for other common negative feelings toward brands such as dissatisfaction.

**Biography:** Johannes Boegershausen is a third-year Ph.D. student at the University of British Columbia. His research examines dark side behaviors of customers and employees including brand hatred, incivility, and dehumanization. In addition, Johannes employs a social cognition lens to understand how consumers form impressions about service providers' warmth, competence, and morality.



## **Unequal Inequality: How Inequality Between Individuals is Perceived as More Unfair than Inequality Between Organizations**

Simone Tang, Duke University

**Abstract:** Inequality is a problem in our society. It can lead to economic instability, increase distrust and undermine health. Much work has been done on the perception of inequality between individuals. In contrast, there has been little work done on the perception of inequality between organizations. But inequality between organizations (e.g. between educational institutions and small businesses) affect individuals and can lead to similar outcomes. For example, larger institutions can take control of the political system, purchasing the power needed to maintain the status quo. Do people care similarly about these two inequalities? In Study 1, people felt that inequality between individuals (vs. organizations) was more unjust. In Study 2, when people anthropomorphize organizations, the effect diminishes. In Study 3, asking people to imagine individuals as companies reduces the unfairness that they perceive between individuals. We show that increased perception of unfairness happens because people are more empathetic towards individuals.

**Biography:** Simone Tang is pursuing her PhD at Duke University. She is interested in how ideological (e.g. desire for order and control) and relational (e.g. desire to be loyal and fair) motivations impact decision--making. The decisions she investigates include, for example, social, moral, and economic decisions. She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a BA in Psychology and an MA in Criminology.



## **Pleasure as an Ally of Healthy Eating? Contrasting Visceral and Epicurean Pleasure and their Association with Portion Size Preferences and Wellbeing**

Yann Cornil, UBC

**Abstract:** Research on overeating and self-regulation has associated eating pleasure with short-term visceral impulses triggered by hunger, external cues, or internal emotional urges. Drawing on research on the moral, social and cultural dimensions of eating, we contrast this approach with what we call “Epicurean” eating pleasure, which is the enduring pleasure derived from the aesthetic appreciation of the sensory and symbolic value of the food. To contrast both approaches, we develop and test a scale measuring Epicurean eating pleasure tendencies and show that they are distinct from the tendency to experience visceral pleasure (measured using the external eating and emotional eating scales). We find that Epicurean eating pleasure is more prevalent among women than men but is independent of age, income and education. Unlike visceral eating pleasure tendencies, Epicurean eating tendencies are associated with a preference for smaller food portions and higher wellbeing, and not associated with higher BMI. Overall, we argue that the moralizing approach equating the pleasure of eating with ‘low-level’ visceral urges should give way to a more holistic approach which recognizes the positive role of “Epicurean” pleasures on health and well-being.



**Biography:** Yann Cornil is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at UBC-Sauder School of Business. He received his Ph.D. in Marketing from INSEAD (France and Singapore) in 2015 and his M.Sc. in Management from HEC Paris. His research on the pleasure of eating was published in the Journal of Marketing Research, the Journal of Consumer Psychology, Psychological Science, and Appetite. He is particularly interested in studying how the food industry can grow without contributing to the obesity epidemic.

## **Psychopathy and Im-/Morality in Everyday Life**

Steve Hart, SFU

**Abstract:** Psychopathy is a form of personality disorder that is prevalent in forensic settings and associated with chronic social dysfunction and disability, including increased risk for serious antisocial behaviour. But normal range or subclinical traits of psychopathy may also be found in the general population. This presentation will review research on the assessment of psychopathic traits in the general population, their prevalence, and their behavioural correlates. Overall, research indicates that even normal range psychopathic traits are associated with diverse adjustment problems. Some of these problems—in particular, deficits in moral reasoning, moral emotions, and moral behaviour—pose serious challenges for those who interact with people with psychopathic traits at home and at work.

**Biography:** Dr. Hart currently holds positions as Professor in the Department of Psychology at Simon Fraser University and Visiting Professor in the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Bergen. His expertise is in the field of clinical-forensic psychology, with a special focus on the assessment of violence risk and psychopathic personality disorder. He has received grants totaling more than CAD \$2 million; co-authored more than 215 books, chapters, and articles; and co-authored more than 500 conference presentations. His manuals and guidelines on the assessment of violence risk and psychopathic personality disorder have been translated into more than two dozen languages and are used around the world. He was Co-Editor and later Editor of the International Journal of Forensic Mental Health from 2001 to 2011, and in 2012 was appointed Editor of the new Journal of Threat Assessment and Management. He is a member of the editorial board of six other journals, and served as ad hoc reviewer for more than 30 other journals, as well as numerous granting agencies. He served as an executive committee member – including President – of the American Psychology-Law Society (Division 41 of the American Psychological Association), President of the International Association of Forensic Mental Health Services, and Director of the Canadian Association of Threat Assessment Professionals. He has led more than 425 training workshops for mental health, law enforcement, corrections, and legal professionals in North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australasia.



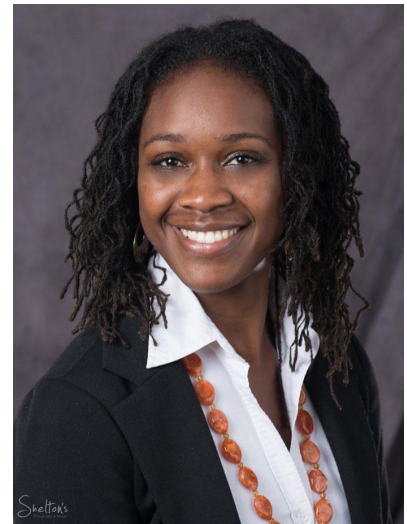


## **Strategic Flirtation in the Sanitized Workplace: Implications for Perceptions of Morality and Workplace Mistreatment**

Alexis Smith, Oklahoma State University

**Abstract:** Prior organizational research on workplace sexuality has long overlooked a reality that practitioners and the popular press have noted for some time: forms of sexuality that are neither harassing nor confined to a romantic relationship are quite prevalent in organizations. Further, some scholars note the existence of a sexual economy wherein some men and women engage in casual strategic flirtation in an attempt to gain favor, advancement or other valued work outcomes. However, strategic flirtation may also appear manipulative and immoral to observers and targets. Further, due to the prevailing societal double standard, these outcomes are likely to be more negative for women who are stereotyped as sexual vixens or objects. The current presentation will discuss a multi-method series of research studies on the use and consequences of strategic flirtation, including a new measure of the construct.

**Biography:** Alexis Nicole Smith is an Assistant Professor in the Management Department at Oklahoma State University. She earned her PhD in management at Tulane University and her BA from Rice University. Her research interests include gender, status and influence, as well as diversity and bias at work. Dr. Smith is a member of the Academy of Management, the Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychologists, and the Southern Management Association.



## **Person-Centered Morality**

Eric Uhlmann, INSEAD-Singapore

**Abstract:** Both normative theories of ethics in philosophy and contemporary models of moral judgment in psychology have focused almost exclusively on the permissibility of acts, in particular whether acts should be judged based on their material outcomes (consequentialist ethics) or based on rules, duties, and obligations (deontological ethics). However, a longstanding third perspective on morality, virtue ethics, may offer a richer descriptive account of a wide range of lay moral judgments. Building on the philosophical tradition of virtue ethics, the person-centered account of moral judgment emphasizes that individuals are typically the focus of moral explanations. Because social perceivers are fundamentally motivated to understand the moral character of others, features of an act that seem easy to explain in terms of virtues and vices can carry more weight in moral judgment than either the consequences of the act, or whether a moral rule has been broken.

**Biography:** Eric Luis Uhlmann is an Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior at INSEAD. His research interests include gender discrimination in the workplace, moral judgments, teams, and crowdsourcing science.



## I Shared What You Did Last Summer: Vicarious Moral Licensing Via the Good Deeds of Others

Katherine White, UBC

**Abstract:** We investigate the consequences of communicating about another person's prosocial behaviours to others. We propose that when the actor publicly communicate the moral or prosocial behavior of another individual that they are connected to the actor is, in turn, less likely to subsequently perform similar positive behaviors themselves. The present research integrates theoretical perspectives from both the moral licensing and vicarious self-perception literatures to outline a conceptual framework that qualifies previously documented research examining the impact that another's behavior has on the focal individual's actions. While past research has shown that visualizing a close other's behavior leads to subsequent consistent behavior (e.g., Goldstein and Cialdini 2007), we identify conditions under which the opposite can occur, leading consumers to show a decrease in the tendency to perform the prosocial behavior. In particular, we show that this operates via a moral licensing mechanism and that when the positive behavior of the other consumer is more publicly (vs. privately) communicated and is about a close (vs. distant) other, the effects are more pronounced.

**Biography:** Kate White is Professor and Division Chair of Marketing and Behavioural Science at the Sauder School of Business, University of British Columbia. Kate holds a professorship in Consumer Insights, Prosocial Consumption, and Sustainability and she teaches courses in consumer behavior and marketing strategy at the BComm, MBA, and PhD levels. Kate's research is focused on how social influence impacts consumer decisions and choices. In addition, she is interested in sustainability marketing and encouraging ethical consumer behaviors. Kate has received the Dean's Award for Research Excellence and has been identified as Young Scholar by the Marketing Science Institute. She currently serves as Associate Editor for the Journal of Marketing Research and is on the editorial review board of the Journal of Consumer Research and the Journal of Consumer Psychology. Her research has been presented at numerous national and international conferences. Kate's published work has appeared in top tier journals including Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing, Journal of Consumer Psychology, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, and Journal of Experimental Psychology: General.

