



INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH SEMINAR



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Can Collectives Be Morally Responsible?

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Abstract

The idea that certain highly integrated social groups can be morally responsible for what they do in a non-redundant way – i.e. in a way that does not reduce to the moral responsibility of their members – has recently gained popularity among philosophers interested in group agency and collective responsibility. In this talk I will attempt to push back against this thesis. After critically reviewing some key arguments in its favor, I will sketch an argument against it that draws on discussions of the “manipulation argument” against source compatibilist accounts of free will. The general idea of the argument I will present is that because mental attitudes of social groups are controlled by those of their members, group attitudes lack a certain kind of autonomy required for moral responsibility.