



# DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

## ONLINE JOINT SEMINAR

The University of Hong Kong  
Lingnan University  
National University of Singapore

Stephen Finlay  
Australian Catholic University

### ***Beyond Normativity: Can Metaethics Escape Samsara's Wheel?***

Thursday  
12 November 2020  
4:30-6:15 pm

Zoom link:  <https://lingnan.zoom.us/j/91761022322>

#### Abstract:

In this talk I argue that metaethics has been stuck in a futile circle, recycling the same debates and moves under different rubrics such as "normativity" (the current fad). I distinguish between a possible Bad Future in which the normativity wars are replicated under a new rubric, and a possible Good Future in which metaethics finally achieves enlightenment and escapes the circle. The inevitable "death" of each epicyle is attributed to a four-fold ambiguity in the target terminology, motivated by an opinionated Perspectivist theory of normative judgment, and "rebirth" in a new epicyle is attributed to a combination of three factors: (i) a systematic kind of projective illusion to which human cognition is naturally prone; (ii) attachment, in the form of motivated or wishful thinking on the part of metaethical objectivists, and (iii) charity as a basic operational norm of philosophical engagement.

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Co-organized by:

