Trinity Term 2016: this seminar was convened for the first time (‘dry run’) in May-June 2016.

Trinity Term 2017 will be a revised seminar taking into account what was learnt from Trinity ‘16.

Syllabus Enhancing Life, I: Vulnerability and a Liveable Life

This Enhancing Life seminar focuses its weekly readings and discussions on ‘vulnerability’ as a mode of relationality. In dialogue with a selection of philosophical and theological texts by women authors, eight-weekly seminars discuss topics relevant to my current Enhancing Life research concerning ‘Vulnerability and a Liveable Life’. As convenor of the seminar, I am currently doing research on new concepts for a distinctive position on ‘Enhancing Life’; this does not (for me) mean in either biological or medical enhancement. Instead my particular project intends to transform what, I suggest, has been a pervasive assumption of, on the one hand, a closed moral life and, on the other hand, a static religious life. My contention is that increasingly for many people today this dual approach to life is no longer ‘liveable’, precisely because it associates vulnerability – not with relationality and love, but with violence and fear. It is hoped that our readings may be able to redirect us to an ‘openness’ (in wounding) and an ‘dynamism’ (in becoming); this openness and this dynamism are compatible with (our) socially constituted relationality; and we will debate the idea of ‘a social ontology of relations’. The task is to conceive a liveable life which is ethically open and spiritually dynamic; and this means, for me at least, creatively enhancing our lives together.

Methodology: ‘dialogue’ with texts and participants in seminars. Required texts are scanned at: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B2NDL3Lmbe41WExtOHpZLZXZXWUU

This drive gives access to the term’s syllabus plus pdfs of each week’s readings with files named by week number and author name.

Trinity Term 2016 Fridays 3 to 4:30pm at Regent’s Park College, Oxford

Week 1
Vulnerability and Violence

Week 2
Corporeal Vulnerability and Politics

Week 3
Vulnerability and Ambiguity

Week 4
Vulnerability and the Invulnerable Self

Week 5
Vulnerability and Disability

Week 6
Vulnerability and Religion

Week 7
Vulnerability and Relationality

Week 8
Vulnerability and Maternal Love
Required Readings (by week)


Background Text


Additional texts for discussions of ‘vulnerability’ and ‘a liveable life’


