

# 13<sup>th</sup> Oxford Philosophy Graduate Conference

## ABSTRACTS KEYNOTE LECTURES

November 2, 2009

---

**Prof Charles Larmore**

Brown University

*What is Political Philosophy?*

What is political philosophy's relation to moral philosophy? Does it form simply part of moral philosophy, determining the proper application of certain moral truths to political reality? Or does it instead form a more autonomous discipline, drawing its bearings from the specifically political problem of specifying the nature of legitimate coercion? I seek to provide an answer to these questions, with special attention to recently published writings by Bernard Williams and G.A. Cohen.

---

**Prof Agustín Rayo**

MIT

*Platonism: Traditional and Subtle*

Years ago, when I was young and reckless, I believed that the existence of numbers was a non-trivial affair. When God made the world, and took care to create exactly eight planets, she did not thereby make it the case that the number of the planets was Eight. Bringing numbers into existence would require an additional effort on her part. Believing in Platonism is therefore a risky affair—what if God never got around to creating the numbers? Now I know better. I will be defending a version of Platonism whereby there is no difference between its being the case that the number of the planets is Eight and its being the case that there are eight planets.