Justice for Hedgehogs:  
A Conference on Ronald Dworkin’s Forthcoming Book

Boston University School of Law
September 25-26, 2009
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

9:15 a.m.-9:30 a.m.
Welcome and Introduction
Dean Maureen O’Rourke, Boston University School of Law

9:30 a.m.-10:45 a.m.
I. Truth and Metaethics
Aaron Garrett, Boston University Department of Philosophy
Russ Shafer-Landau, University of Wisconsin Department of Philosophy
Daniel Star, Boston University Department of Philosophy
Michael Smith, Princeton University Department of Philosophy

11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Keynote Address: Justice for Hedgehogs
Ronald Dworkin, New York University School of Law & University College London

12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m.
Lunch

2:00 p.m.-3:15 p.m.
II. Interpretation
Richard Fallon, Harvard Law School
James Fleming, Boston University School of Law
David Lyons, Boston University School of Law
Lawrence Solum, University of Illinois College of Law
Benjamin Zipursky, Fordham University School of Law

3:30 p.m.-4:45 p.m.
III. Ethics and Free Will
Anita Allen, University of Pennsylvania Law School
Christine Jolls, Yale Law School
Robert Kane, University of Texas Department of Philosophy
T.M. Scanlon, Harvard University Department of Philosophy
Amartya Sen, Harvard University Departments of Economics & Philosophy
September 25-26, 2009

5:00 p.m.-6:15 p.m.

IV. Morality: Aid, Harm, and Obligation
Kwame Anthony Appiah, Princeton University Department of Philosophy
John Goldberg, Harvard Law School
Frances Kamm, Harvard University Department of Philosophy & Kennedy School of Government
Kenneth Simons, Boston University School of Law
Susanne Sreedhar & Candice Delmas, Boston University Department of Philosophy

6:30 p.m.
Reception

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

9:30 a.m.-10:45 a.m.

V. Politics and Justice I
Ed Baker, University of Pennsylvania Law School
Hugh Baxter, Boston University School of Law
Linda McClain, Boston University School of Law
Larry Sager, University of Texas School of Law
Robin West, Georgetown University Law Center

11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

VI. Politics and Justice II
Robert Bone, Boston University School of Law
Samuel Freeman, University of Pennsylvania Department of Philosophy
Stephen Macedo, Princeton University Department of Politics
Frank Michelman, Harvard Law School
Robert Sloane, Boston University School of Law
Jeremy Waldron, New York University School of Law

12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m.
Lunch

Response by Ronald Dworkin
“The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing.”

- Archilochus

Boston University School of Law will hold a conference on Ronald Dworkin’s forthcoming book, *Justice for Hedgehogs*, on September 25-26, 2009. Dworkin himself will give the keynote address on September 25 and a response on September 26. The *Boston University Law Review* will publish the papers and proceedings.

In *Justice for Hedgehogs*, Dworkin defends the unity of value – the one big thing he knows – and argues against “several foxy causes”: value skepticism, value pluralism, value conflict, and, in particular, the supposed opposition between the values of self-interest and those of personal and political morality. He argues for the integration of ethics (the principles that tell human beings how to live well) and morality (the principles that tell them how they must treat other people), and for a morality of self-affirmation as against a morality of self-abnegation. In doing so, he develops accounts of the indispensable conditions of living well – dignity, self-respect, and authenticity – and of our moral duties to others regarding aid and harm. He also argues that law is a branch of political morality that is in turn a department of morality more broadly understood. The conference will include the following panels, taking up issues of the sort sketched below.

I. Truth and Metaethics

The opening panel will assess Dworkin’s arguments for truth about value and against various forms of skepticism, including his rejection of Archimedean and meta-ethical attempts to address questions of ethics, morality, and justice from a standpoint outside of our ordinary ways of thinking about them.

II. Interpretation

This panel will respond to Dworkin’s arguments that interpretation in general seeks truth and that moral reasoning and legal interpretation are enterprises involving conceptual interpretation as distinguished from collaborative and explanatory interpretation.

III. Ethics and Free Will

Herein of Dworkin’s arguments concerning the indispensable conditions of living well – dignity, self-respect, and authenticity – along with his response to the “no free will” challenge to ethical and moral responsibility.

IV. Morality: Aid, Harm, and Obligation

The issues to be considered include Dworkin’s arguments of substantive morality concerning duty, harm, and obligation, including associative and political obligation.

V & VI. Politics and Justice

These two panels will take up Dworkin’s arguments about political morality, including his account of political, legal, and human rights; his interpretive conceptions of equality, liberty, and democracy; and his argument about the relationship between law and morals.
All — including not only professors, law students, graduate students, and undergraduates but also members of the public — are welcome to attend. There is no registration fee, but if you plan to attend, please RSVP to Andrea Larsen, alarsen@bu.edu. If you have academic questions about the program, please contact Professor James E. Fleming, jfleming@bu.edu.


We are pleased to include the following members of BU’s Department of Philosophy.

Aaron Garrett is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Associate Chair of the Department of Philosophy. He is author of Meaning in Spinoza’s Method (Cambridge University Press, 2003) and Berkeley’s Three Dialogues (Continuum, 2008) and editor of The Routledge Companion to Eighteenth Century Philosophy (Routledge, forthcoming) and Francis Hutcheson: An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense (Liberty Fund, 2003). He also has published many articles, including “Was Spinoza a Natural Lawyer?,” 25 Cardozo Law Review 627 (2003). He is currently working on a book on history and character in seventeenth and eighteenth century moral philosophy.


Daniel Star is Assistant Professor of Philosophy. He is working on two books, Knowing Better (under contract with Oxford University Press), and History of Ethics: Essential Readings with Commentary (under contract with Blackwell Publishing), and has published several articles in ethics and metaethics, including “Moral Knowledge, Epistemic Externalism, and Intuitionism,” 21 Ratio 3 (2008); “Reasons: Explanations or Evidence?,” 119 Ethics 31 (2008) (with Stephen Kearns); and “Reasons as Evidence,” 4 Oxford Studies in Metaethics (forthcoming 2009) (with Stephen Kearns).