

Below are the two abstracts for this weekend's graduate colloquium:

Veronica Majewski

"In Defence of John Stuart Mill: A Response to David Christensen's Independence-Based Conciliationism"

This essay argues against Christensen's Independence-Based Conciliationism approach to disagreement, and makes an epistemic defence of J.S. Mill's political philosophy. Despite the fact that Mill is certainly not an epistemologist, I argue a superior account of epistemic responsibility and disagreement can be gleaned from *On Liberty* than the one presented in Christensen's paper. Christensen argues that while simple examples of disagreements between two people often inspire intuitions about remaining steadfast in our beliefs, arguments involving multiple people (particularly those that are political or philosophical) demonstrate that a conciliatory position is correct, and that we are obligated to suspend judgement in the face of disagreement. However, I argue that his account attempts to have its cake and eat it too by allowing Christensen to disagree when he wants to and demand conciliation when he feels it's appropriate. Meanwhile, Mill's "steadfast" position to be superior to Christensen's, in that it better engages with opposing views, and represents a more accurate account of how our beliefs function in the face of disagreement.

Hanna Jones-Eriksson

"Social and Epistemic Value of Disagreement"

In this paper I attempt to complicate Richard Feldman's equal weight view, which states that in the event of a disagreement with an epistemic peer one should suspend judgment about a belief. I argue that in some instances it is socially and epistemically valuable for one to hold their ground not suspend judgment. I illustrate this through an example of disagreement with an epistemic superior. Although we generally believe one should revise their beliefs to meet those of an epistemic superior, I contend that in some instances it is beneficial for individuals to disagree with their epistemic superiors. I introduce one such case where there are social and epistemic consequences for the epistemic agent and their community if they revise their belief, or revise prematurely. From this example I conclude that, if it is reasonable for one to stand their ground with an epistemic superior, then one should certainly stand their ground with an epistemic peer.