



# ARROGANCE & POLARISATION IN DEBATE

CARDIFF UNIVERSITY  
6-7 NOVEMBER 2017

Part of the 'Changing Attitudes  
in Public Discourse' project:  
[sites.cardiff.ac.uk/changingattitudes](http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/changingattitudes)



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Arrogance and Polarisation  
'Changing Attitudes in Public Discourse' Conference  
6-7 November, 2017  
Cardiff University

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For more information, please visit our website: [sites.cardiff.ac.uk/changingattitudes](http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/changingattitudes)

The [Changing Attitudes in Public Discourse](#) project is developing and testing practical interventions to reduce arrogance in debate, funded by the John Templeton Foundation and the Analysis Trust.



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# Programme

All sessions will be held in the Glamorgan Building, room -1.61. Registration and lunch will also be located in this building.

## **Day One (6 November)**

10:00-10:30 Registration and coffee / tea

10:30-11:15 Alessandra Tanesini (Philosophy, Cardiff): "Vicious Attitudes"

11:15-12:00 Jonathan Webber (Philosophy, Cardiff) "Is Function a Fundamental Feature of Attitudes?"

12:00-12:15 Break

12:15-13:00 Leaf Van Boven (Psychology and Neuroscience, Colorado): "Psychological Barriers to Bipartisan Support for Climate Policy in the United States"

13:00-14:00 Bag Lunch (collect from room 0.86)

14:00-14:45 Robin S. Dillon (Philosophy, Lehigh University): "Arrogance, Self-Respect, and Power: A Feminist Analysis."

14:45-15:30 Andrew Aberdein (Philosophy, Florida Institute of Technology): "Arrogance and Deep Disagreement"

15:30-15:45 Break

15:45-16:30 Igor Grossmann (Psychology, Waterloo): "The Socrates Effect: Teacher's Mindset, Wisdom, and Reasoning in a Polarized World"

16:30-17:15 Emma Gordon (Philosophy, Edinburgh) and J. Adam Carter (Philosophy, Glasgow): "Is Searching the Internet Making Us Intellectually Arrogant?"

17:15 End

18:30 Informal dinner at Wahaca (51 - 53 The Hayes, St David's Dewi Sant, Cardiff CF10 1GA)

*Please note that this dinner is not covered under the registration fee. Delegates will need to pay for their own dinner and drinks. You can view Wahaca's menu at: <http://bit.ly/1lfeK6S>*

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## **Day Two (7 November)**

9:00-09:30 Registration and coffee / tea

9:30-10:15 Steven J Spencer (Psychology, Ohio State University): TBA

10:15-11:00 Ulrike Hahn (Psychology, Birkbeck): "Can we get rational argument back into public debate?"

11:00-11:15 Break

11:15-12:00 Catarina Dutilh-Novaes (Philosophy, Groningen): "Metaphors for argumentation"

12:00-12:45 Ian James Kidd (Philosophy, Nottingham): "Appraising Metaphors for Argumentation"

12:45-13:45 Bag Lunch (collect from outside room -1.61)

13:45-14:30 Chris Heffer (Linguistics, Cardiff): "Dogmatism and Bullshit: A Discourse Analytic Perspective"

14:30-15:15 Lani Watson (Philosophy, Edinburgh): "Vices of Questioning in Public Discourse"

15:15-15:30 Break

15:30-16:15 Greg Maio (Psychology, Bath): "Values and openness to change"

16:15-17:00 Constantine Sedikides (Psychology, Southampton): "Does a Communal Life-Oriented Really Quiet the Ego? The Case of East-Asian Culture, Christian Religion, and Mind-Body Practices"

17:15 Conference Ends

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## Abstracts

### **Alessandra Tanesini (Philosophy, Cardiff): "Vicious Attitudes"**

Intellectual arrogance and haughtiness are epistemic vices which undermine the quality of debate. Arrogant individuals are too sure of themselves, and put other people down. In this talk I suggest that the social psychological framework of attitudes sheds light on these vices' underlying natures and explains their characteristic emotional and behavioural manifestations. I also outline how these epistemic vices damage the quality of debates.

### **Jonathan Webber (Philosophy, Cardiff) "Is Function a Fundamental Feature of Attitudes?"**

Attitude psychology has established that there are at least two distinct dimensions to the cognitive structure of an evaluative attitude, its content and its strength. Some attitude psychologists argue for a third dimension, attitude function. In this talk, I tentatively propose that function might not be a fundamental dimension of the cognitive structure of attitudes, but might instead be reducible to patterns of content and strength. I distinguish this kind of reductionism from eliminativism, showing that my proposal does not deny that function is indeed a real feature of the cognitive structure of attitudes. My proposal therefore does not deny that an attitude's function can predict the conditions required for changing that attitude. But we need to know whether the proposal is correct in order to develop the integration of attitude psychology with other work on the structures of cognition, an integration that is likely to produce useful insights into attitude change.

### **Leaf Van Boven (Psychology and Neuroscience, Colorado): "Psychological Barriers to Bipartisan Support for Climate Policy in the United States"**

Psychological scientists have the expertise—and arguably an obligation—to help understand the political polarization that impedes enactment of climate policy. Explanations often emphasize Republican skepticism about climate change. Yet that Democrats and Republicans disagree about climate change, but that Democrats and Republicans disagree with each other. The results of a national panel experiment and of in-depth interviews with four former members of Congress suggest that Democrats and Republicans—both ordinary citizens and policymakers—support policies from their own party and reactively devalue policies from the opposing party. These partisan evaluations occur both for policies historically associated with liberal principles and politicians (cap-and-trade) and for policies associated with conservative principles and politicians (revenue-neutral carbon tax). People also exaggerate how much other Democrats and Republicans are swayed by partisanship. This foments false norms of partisan opposition that, in turn, influence people's personal policy support. Correcting misperceived norms of opposition and decoupling policy evaluation from identity concerns would help overcome these seemingly insurmountable barriers to bipartisan support for climate policy.

### **Robin S. Dillon (Philosophy, Lehigh University): "Arrogance, Self-Respect, and Power: A Feminist Analysis."**

In many cultures arrogance is regarded as a serious vice and a cause of numerous social ills. Although its badness is typically thought to lie in its harmful consequences for other persons and things, I draw on Kant to argue that what makes it a vice is first and foremost the failure to respect oneself. But arrogance is not only a problem inside individuals. Drawing on feminist insights I argue that it is a systemic problem

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constructed in and reinforcing unjust distributions of social power. I identify ways in which arrogance is connected with social arrangements of domination and subordination, then discuss implications of a power-focused analysis. Among the implications: (1) contrary to the widely-held view, humility is not the personal virtue opposing arrogance, self-respect is; (2) arrogance is not always a vice, for in circumstances of oppression a certain kind of arrogance is a virtue of self-respecting resistance to domination.

**Andrew Aberdein (Philosophy, Florida Institute of Technology): "Arrogance and Deep Disagreement"**

**Igor Grossmann (Psychology, Waterloo): "The Socrates Effect: Teacher's Mindset, Wisdom, and Reasoning in a Polarized World"**

In the time of increasing political polarization, what social cognitive strategies can promote a wiser, inclusive discourse? Building on emerging psychological scholarship on wisdom, I propose a set of such strategies. First, I will introduce the concept of wise reasoning – i.e., epistemic humility, recognition of uncertainty and change, and consideration and balancing of different perspectives, which can promote open-mindedness in the political discourse. Next, I present a set of experimental studies, conducted in 2008, 2012, and 2016 US Presidential Election cycles, showing that self-distancing as well as social roles promoting a teacher's mindset promote greater expression of wise reasoning and less discounting of unfavorable viewpoints in discussion of polarizing political issues. These findings highlight novel possibilities for channeling one's potential for greater wisdom in the public discourse.

**Emma Gordon (Philosophy, Edinburgh) and J. Adam Carter (Philosophy, Glasgow): "Is Searching the Internet Making Us Intellectually Arrogant?"**

In a recent and provocative paper, Matthew Fisher, Mariel Goddu, and Frank Keil (2015) have argued, on the basis of experimental evidence, that 'searching the Internet leads people to conflate information that can be found online with knowledge "in the head"' (2015, 675), specifically, by inclining us to conflate mere access to information for personal knowledge (2015, 674). This paper has three central aims. First, we briefly detail Fisher et al.'s results and show how, on the basis of recent work in virtue epistemology (e.g., Tiberius and Walker 1998; Roberts and Wood 2007; Tanesini 2016), their interpretation of the data supports the thesis that searching the Internet is conducive to the vice of intellectual arrogance. Second, we argue that this arrogance interpretation of the data rests on an implicit commitment to cognitive internalism. Thirdly, we show how the data can be given a very different explanation in light of the hypothesis of extended cognition (e.g., Clark and Chalmers 1998; Clark 2008)—one which challenges the extent to which Fisher et al. are entitled to insist that subjects are actually conflating access to knowledge for personal knowledge in the first place. We conclude by suggesting how, against the background of extended cognition rather than cognitive internalism, we have some reason to think that searching the Internet might actually foster (in certain circumstances) virtuous intellectual humility.

**Steven J Spencer (Psychology, Ohio State University): Title TBA**

**Ulrike Hahn (Psychology, Birkbeck): "Can we get rational argument back into public debate?"**

Recent years have seen what commentators have viewed as a shift in the nature of public discourse and public debate, with a steady increase in means of influence other than the actual strength of arguments.

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Is it desirable and, if yes, possible to shift this tide? Doing so will require meaningful measures of argument quality that are independent of mere persuasive success. The talk outlines possibilities and problems of such measures of argument strength in real world settings.

**Catarina Dutilh-Novaes (Philosophy, Groningen): "Metaphors for argumentation"**

**Ian James Kidd (Philosophy, Nottingham): "Appraising Metaphors for Argumentation"**

**Chris Heffer (Linguistics, Cardiff): "Dogmatism and Bullshit: A Discourse Analytic Perspective"**

The notion of 'bullshit' (Frankfurt 2005) has become very popular particularly since the rise of the Trump tweet. However, Frankfurt's notion of bullshit involves the speaker intentionally saying something for rhetorical effect while being unconcerned as to whether or not they believe it. This is problematic from a discourse analytical perspective as the attribution of Frankfurtian bullshit meets the same problem as attributions of lying: just as it is exceptionally difficult to establish in situated discourse that someone *does not believe* what they are saying, it is similarly difficult to establish that a speaker *could not care less whether what they say is true*. It is quite plausible, for example, that Trump lives in an alt-right media echo chamber in which he is constantly subjected to fabricated and unsubstantiated information that is then normalized in his mind. He may well, then, genuinely believe his 'ridiculous' tweets. Here I argue instead for a non-intentional definition of bullshit as a *reckless disregard of available evidence* and I link this with a dogmatic attitude. By having a closed mind and blithely ignoring alternative accounts (my definition of dogma), it is perfectly possible to talk bullshit while believing it. So rather than being an intentional discourse strategy, bullshit can be seen as a 'discourse pathology', something that goes discursively wrong when the speaker, under the influence of a dogmatic attitude, is not being epistemically conscientious.

**Lani Watson (Philosophy, Edinburgh): "Vices of Questioning in Public Discourse"**

We ask questions all the time, often without reflecting consciously on the practice. Questioning is diverse, ubiquitous, and habitual in our daily lives. Sometimes it goes well, sometimes it doesn't, yet we rarely notice the difference overtly. Where questioning arises in public discourse, however, the difference between good and bad questioning can have important and sometimes damaging effects. In this paper, I examine a number of vicious questioning practices that occur in the public sphere, focusing on questioning in political and journalistic contexts. Drawing on examples from contemporary Western politics, I discuss the nature and impact of vicious questioning practices in public discourse and consider some options for addressing the issues that arise.

**Greg Maio (Psychology, Bath): "Values and openness to change"**

**Constantine Sedikides (Psychology, Southampton): "Does a Communal Life-Orientation Really Quiet the Ego? The Case of East-Asian Culture, Christian Religion, and Mind-Body Practices"**

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# Travel and Accommodation

## *Getting to Cardiff University*

### **By air**

Cardiff International airport is 11 miles from the city centre. There is a half-hourly bus service from the airport to the city centre: a single journey costs around £5. Taxis normally cost £30. It is possible to pre-book a taxi for your arrival at [Cardiff Airport online](#).

If you are arriving at Heathrow or Gatwick, you can either take a train, or (for Heathrow) the [RailAir](#) service (combines coach up to Reading and then train up to Cardiff). Gatwick's train station is located in the South Terminal (accessible from the North Terminal by a free shuttle). You can plan this journey in advance using the National Rail website or app: <http://nationalrail.co.uk>. The journey time from Heathrow/Gatwick to Cardiff will be around 3 hours.

The Cardiff rail station and the bus stations are next to each other.

### **By rail**

High-speed Intercity trains provide frequent services between all major British cities. The 2-hour Cardiff to London service (from London Paddington) is operated by First Great Western and run 17 times a day. Frequent regional network trains connect Cardiff with Bristol (50mins), Birmingham (2h10), Southampton (2h30), Manchester and Liverpool (3h). You can book your tickets via the [Trainline website](#) or [National Rail Enquiries](#). Please note that, when buying tickets on the day, singles cost approximately as much as returns. Therefore, we advise everyone to buy return tickets wherever possible. An off-peak return will usually allow you to travel back any time within the next 30 days. If you are able to pre-book rail tickets, singles can cost less than returns, although you are restricted to a particular train and time.

### **By coach**

[National Express](#) operates daily services to Cardiff from all major British cities. [Megabus](#) also operates daily services to Cardiff from London.

## *Taxi Services in Cardiff*

We recommend the Dragon Taxi service (<http://dragontaxis.com/cardiff>). They can be reached at +44 (0)2920 333 333, and you can also book via their website or taxi app (<http://dragontaxis.com/cardiff/get-the-app>).

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## ***From Cardiff Centre to the Conference Venue***

The 'Arrogance and Polarisation' conference will be held in room -1.61 of the recently-renovated Glamorgan Building, one of Cardiff University's grandest venues. The Glamorgan Building, which is located on King Edward VII Avenue (location 49 on the map below, D3) is approximately 25 minutes' walk from Cardiff Central Station.

A regular train service runs from Central Station (generally Platform 6) to Cathays Station (next to building no. 31 on the map below), six times per hour. Ticket prices are about £2.20 for a Single.

There are also regular bus services between the city centre and the conference venue: you can find out more by visiting the [Cardiff Bus site](#). The No. 30 or the No. 27 will take you from Customhouse Street (a few minutes' walk from Central Station) to Corbett Road (just around the corner from the venue): a Single costs £1.80; an Day-to-Go travel pass is £3.60.

Alternatively, taxis will cost around £6–7 and are available outside the station. Ask them to take you to the Glamorgan Building on King Edward VII Avenue.

### **By car**

**From the West:** Exit M4 at junction 32 and follow the A470 signs towards the city centre. As you near the city centre you will reach the Gabalfa Interchange/flyover. Continue over this onto North Road (still A470). After about a mile take a left onto Corbett Road, and then turn right onto King Edward VII Avenue. The conference venue will be on your right.

**From the East:** Exit M4 at junction 29 posted Port Talbot, Merthyr Tydfil and Cardiff. Follow the A48(M)/A48, signposted Cardiff East and South, to the A470. Follow the A470, and take the 2nd exit off the roundabout marked city centre. This is North Road. After about a mile take a left onto Corbett Road, and then turn right onto King Edward VII Avenue. The conference venue will be on your right.

Road maps and route planners are available at the [AA website](#). Maps of Cardiff and directions are available on the [University Locations website](#), where you can download maps of the university and city centre in PDF format (also available at the end of this document). For those using SatNav devices, the postcode you require is CF10 3WT.

## Accommodation in Cardiff

Situated so close to the city centre, Cardiff University is provisioned with a wide range of accommodation to suit any budget, ranging from affordable B&Bs to luxury hotels. For your convenience we have provided an overview of some accommodation in the centre of Cardiff. Distances in the table below are given for a typical walking pace.

Name	Type	Distance	Contact Information
<a href="#">Hilton Cardiff</a>	Hotel	13 mins	Kingsway, Cardiff, CF10 3HH Telephone: +44 (0)29 2064 6300 Email: <a href="mailto:reservations.cardiff@hilton.com">reservations.cardiff@hilton.com</a>
<a href="#">Park Plaza Cardiff</a>	Hotel	13 mins	Greyfriars Road, Cardiff CF10 3AL Telephone: +44 (0) 2920 111 111 Email: <a href="mailto:ppcres@parkplazahotels.co.uk">ppcres@parkplazahotels.co.uk</a>
<a href="#">Jury's Inn</a>	Hotel	13 mins	1 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3UD Telephone: +44 (0) 161 744 3179 E-mail: <a href="mailto:jurysinnccardiff@jurysinns.com">jurysinnccardiff@jurysinns.com</a>
<a href="#">Holiday Inn City Centre</a>	Hotel	18 mins	Castle Street, Cardiff, CF10 1XD Telephone: +44 (0)29 2034 7206 Fax: +44 (0)29 2038 9255
<a href="#">Ibis Hotel Cardiff City Centre</a>	Hotel	18 mins	Churchill Way, Cardiff, CF10 2HA Telephone: +44 (0)292064 9250 Fax: +44 (0)29 2064 9260 Email: <a href="mailto:H2936@ACCOR.COM">H2936@ACCOR.COM</a>
<a href="#">Park Inn Hotel</a>	Hotel	19 mins	Mary Ann Street, Cardiff, CF10 2JH Telephone: +44 (0)29 2034 1441 Fax: +44 (0)29 2072 7025 Email: <a href="mailto:info.cardiffcity@rezidorparkinn.com">info.cardiffcity@rezidorparkinn.com</a>
<a href="#">Mercure Holland House Hotel</a>	Hotel	21 mins	24-26 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0DD Telephone: +44(0)29 2043 5000 Fax: +44(0)29 20488894

<a href="#">The Travelodge</a>	Hotel	23 mins	St Mary Street, Cardiff Telephone: +44(0)29 2039 8697
<a href="#">Sandringham Hotel</a>	Hotel	23 mins	St Mary Street, Cardiff Telephone: +44(0)29 20232161
<a href="#">The Bunkhouse</a>	Hostel	23 mins	St Mary Street, Cardiff Telephone: +44(0)29 20228587
<a href="#">YHA Youth Hostel</a>	Hostel	23 mins	2 Wedal Road, Cardiff, CF23 5PG Telephone: +44 (0)29 2046 2303 Email: <a href="mailto:cardiff@yha.org.uk">cardiff@yha.org.uk</a>
<a href="#">NosDa Studio Hotel &amp; Hostel</a>	Hostel	24 mins	98 Neville St, Cardiff, CF11 6LS Telephone: +44 (0)29 2034 5577 Email: <a href="mailto:info@cardiffbackpacker.com">info@cardiffbackpacker.com</a>
<a href="#">The Town House</a>	Guest House	25 mins	70 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9LL Telephone: +44(0)29 2023 9399
<a href="#">The River House</a>	Hostel	27 mins	59 Fitzhamon Embankment, Cardiff, CF11 6AN Telephone: +44 (0)29 2039 9810 Email: <a href="mailto:info@riverhousebackpackers.com">info@riverhousebackpackers.com</a>
<a href="#">Lincoln House Hotel</a>	Hotel	29 mins	118/120 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9LQ Telephone: +44 (0)29 2039 5558 Email: <a href="mailto:reservations@lincolnhotel.co.uk">reservations@lincolnhotel.co.uk</a>

## Eating and Drinking

For a casual cup of coffee or a snack, we recommend the nearby Bute café (in Bute library, next door to the venue), or the Welsh National Museum (around the corner). You can also click on the link to find Yelp's suggestions for dining out in Cardiff's city centre: <http://bit.ly/2yvVdk5>. And, for the gourmands among you, here is Visit Wales's list of Best Places to Eat in Cardiff: <http://bit.ly/2h7YCu1>.

