

# PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR

14 AUGUST at 12:30pm, ARTS 628

## AN ANTIINOMY OF AGENCY

**Prof Lucy Allais** is jointly appointed as Professor of Philosophy at Wits University and as William H. Miller Professor of Philosophy at Johns Hopkins University. She has published widely on issues to do with moral responsibility, including on moral emotions like forgiveness and blame, as well as on the philosophy of Immanuel Kant.

**Abstract:** My aim in this lecture is to present the first part of a three part account of human free agency that I'm currently working on. The idea of the book project is to sketch a picture of human free agency that brings together its metaphysical, rational/moral, and political aspects. This talk concerns the first part of the picture: the metaphysics of agency. I approach this through considering an antinomy which I take to apply to both human agency and the agency of other animals. I argue that agency cannot be understood as compatible with metaphysical determinism, but could be compatible with deterministic laws. I argue that the causality of agency requires that an agent can do something or not do it, and that whether they do it is not a determined function of previous states of the universe. Through situating human agency in relation to the agency of other animals, I present the denial of metaphysical determinism as part of a (relatively) naturalistic understanding of the world.

