CALL FOR PAPERS

"Forward-Looking Collective Responsibility"

at the Manchester Workshops in Political Theory 2011

Eighth Annual Conference: August 31-September 2nd 2011

Most of the discussion about collective responsibility is focused on backward-looking or retrospective responsibility of collectives for what they have done or brought about. By contrast, relatively little attention is paid to the idea that collectives such as states, nations, corporations, segments of society, or random collections of people might have forward-looking or prospective responsibility to perform actions from now on. This workshop invites papers that discuss this idea of forward-looking collective responsibility, as well as the related ideas of collective obligations (what collectives are obliged to do) and collective oughts (what collectives ought to do).

DEADLINES:

May 31, 2011: Deadline for submission of abstracts:

June 15, 2011: Notification of acceptance

July 15, 2011: Registration deadline

August 15, 2011: Submission of full papers for circulation

August 31 – September 2: Workshop

POSSIBLE PAPER TOPICS:

In terms of scope, this workshop invites papers about any aspect of forward-looking collective responsibility, collective obligations, and collective oughts. Papers about backward-looking or retrospective collective responsibility will also be considered if they concern the relation between such responsibility and forward-looking collective responsibility.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE:

If you are interested in presenting a paper, please submit an abstract of at most 500 words here. If you already have a full draft of the paper, you can also submit the draft prefaced by an abstract. Full drafts of accepted papers are due August 15 for circulation among workshop participants.

CONFERENCE DATE & LOCATION

Friday, September 23, 2011 at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

WEBSITE:

Manchester Workshops in Political Theory 2011
The following is a non-exhaustive list of possible questions to discuss in submitted contributions:

1) Questions about investigating prospective collective responsibility in the first place:
   - What is the conceptual role of prospective collective responsibility in ethics? Where, if at all, do we need this concept?
   - What can we learn about prospective collective responsibility from the discussion about retrospective collective responsibility, and vice versa? Is a separate investigation into prospective collective responsibility necessary at all?
   - How did the strong emphasis on retrospective collective responsibility in the current philosophical discussion originate? Is it justified?

2) General questions about prospective collective responsibility:
   - Which conditions must collectives meet to bear prospective collective responsibility?
   - How should we understand prospective collective responsibility? For example, is it analogous to individuals’ prospective responsibility, or of its own kind?
   - How does a collective’s prospective collective responsibility relate to the prospective responsibility of its members?
   - How does prospective collective responsibility relate to retrospective collective responsibility?

3) Questions about particular instances or candidates of prospective collective responsibility, e.g. concerning:
   - responsibility to assist the poor
   - responsibilities of environmental protection
   - responsibility to protect (R2P) / to engage in humanitarian intervention
   - responsibility of collectives whose members are themselves collectives (e.g. the international community, the UN, the EU)