



COLLOQUIUM SERIES

"Making Kant's Empirical Realism Possible"

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In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant subscribes to a position called 'empirical realism'. Yet he is also, and more famously, the pioneer of 'transcendental idealism', and one is tempted to understand the former in terms of the latter. But that is a mistake. Rather than beginning with transcendental idealism and using it to understand *what empirical realism is*, we should first get a grip on empirical realism, and then ask *how transcendental idealism makes empirical realism possible*. In this talk, I offer a preliminary sketch of empirical realism and a contrast with conventional idealism, which brings into view some minimal requirements that an interpretation of the *Critique* must meet to count as respecting Kant's empirical realism. And I show that even a paradigmatically 'non-metaphysical' reader, Henry Allison, who aspires to respect Kant's empirical realism, cannot meet those requirements. We thereby begin to understand just how radical an interpretive demand Kant's commitment to empirical realism places on us.

Friday, March 20th, 2015

Room: 3228 River Building

Time: 3:00 pm

All are welcome!