



CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF
PHILOSOPHY

COLLOQUIUM SERIES



* All talks will be held on Fridays in Room 218 Paterson Hall at 1:00 pm unless otherwise noted *

* Please visit our website at <http://www.carleton.ca/philosophy/> for detailed abstracts *

**“How to Defend a Moderate Supernaturalism
about the Meaning of Life”**

Thaddeus Metz

University of Johannesburg

Until recently, much of the debate about what makes life meaningful in the West had been about whether a supernatural realm is necessary for meaning, but in the 21st century it has shifted, so that it is now largely about whether God or a soul would greatly enhance meaning in life without being necessary for it. The suspicion I will critically explore in this talk is that this more moderate view is unstable—the sort of meaning that God or a soul would confer would invariably be so large (e.g., infinite) as to dwarf an earthly meaning, making it impossible to capture the claim that a life could be meaningful without them, where the latter intuition is one that even a large majority of supernaturalists accept these days. In addition to showing that salient supernaturalist conceptions of meaning suffer from this problem, with reference to recent suggestions from John Cottingham, Richard Swinburne and Timothy Mawson, I will articulate and evaluate one or two *prima facie* promising strategies by which supernaturalism might be able to avoid it.

Friday, September 28, 2018

Room: 218 Paterson Hall

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Hosted by Ethics & Public Affairs Fall Speaker Series