Department of Philosophy Colloquium
Sam Cumming (UCLA)

📅 02/20/2026 🕐 3 pm - 5 pm 📍 HIB 55

"True Demonstratives"

David Kaplan distinguished between pure indexicals (such as 'I', 'here', 'now') and true demonstratives (such as 'this' and 'that'). I will try to improve on the analysis he gives of the latter (the one in "Demonstratives") by making a further distinction between two aspects of their semantics: the content of the demonstrative and the target to which this content is attributed. I will then show that this approach applies just as well to Kaplan's examples of pure indexicals. Understanding pure indexicals in the manner of my analysis of true demonstratives has the benefit of explaining a compelling puzzle case due to Allyson Mount ("Character, Impropriety and Success").

BIO

Sam Cumming is Professor of Philosophy at UCLA. His research focuses on philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, literature, and film. His work has recently appeared in Nous, British Journal of Aesthetics, Philosophers' Imprint, and Ergo.

If you have any questions, please contact philos@uci.edu