

The Oxford Centre for Neuroethics

2015 Wellcome & Loebel Lecture in Neuroethics

'Death and the Self'

Professor Shaun Nichols, University of Arizona

Many revolutionary positions in philosophy – skepticism, materialism, hard determinism – have disturbing implications. By contrast, the revolutionary idea that there is no persisting self is supposed to have generally beneficial consequences. Insofar as the self does not persist, one should be more generous to others, less punitive, and have less fear of death. This talk will report recent experiments indicating that changing beliefs about the persistence of self does affect generosity and punitiveness. For attitudes about the self and death, we examined responses from Hindus, Tibetan Buddhists and Westerners; the results are complex and surprising.

**Tuesday 10 March 2015, 5.30—6.45pm | Seminar Rooms 1 & 2, Oxford Martin School,
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