

Einladung zum GASTVORTRAG

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The determination of human death from the perspective of the philosophy of science

Mi., 18. 01. 2023, 18.00 Uhr s.t., Seminarraum VI (Karl-Rahner-Platz 3)

Some scholars claim that human death is a matter of fact, a biological phenomenon whose occurrence can be determined empirically, based on science. We should take this claim seriously, whether we agree with it or not. The question is: How do we know that human death is a scientific matter of fact? Taking the philosophy of science approach means, among other things, examining how the determination of human death became an object of scientific inquiry, exploring the nature of the brain death criterion itself, and analysing the meaning of its core concepts such as “irreversibility” and “functions”. For example, in a forthcoming article, co-authored with Anne Dalle Ave, James L. Bernat, we show that the current definition of death in the USA is conceptually inconsistent as it contains two conflicting interpretations of the phrase “cessation of functions”.



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