**Symposium on basic income, 30th of March 2017  
ABSTRACTS**

***Michael W. Howard, Department of Philosophy, University of Maine:***

**Reflections on the exploitation objection to basic income: Reply to van Donselaar**

In their new book, Philippe Van Parijs and Yannick Vanderborght, respond to the exploitation objection. First, they temporarily assume for the sake of argument that an unconditional UBI violates a norm of reciprocity. But they then point out A.  3 reasons for tempering one’s indignation at this violation, and B. 3 reasons why UBI might on balance reduce injustice despite the violation. Then they give a principled defense of UBI as non-exploitative. I discuss Gijs van Donselaar’s most recent criticism of the principled defense, as well as of other arguments for UBI as compensation for loss, reward for contribution, and as a least-bad proxy for justice. While I favor a pragmatic argument for UBI that does not depend on the principled defense, I explore some ways that we might exit from an apparent standoff between those who support and those who reject equality of resources.

***Stuart White, Jesus College, University of Oxford:***

**Basic income: exploitation, paternalism, and global justice**

The proposal to introduce a universal and unconditional basic income has prompted debate both about its feasibility and its ethical desirability. The ethical debate has a number of dimensions. Amongst the ethical objections to basic income are the following: (a) that it is inherently unjust (because exploitative); (b) that it is paternalist; and, in the context of the ‘advanced capitalist countries’ (c) that it will obstruct movement towards global justice. I argue that basic income advocates have developed persuasive answers to the first two objections but that the third remains a challenge.

***Ingrid Robeyns, Ethics Institute, Utrecht University:***

**Three suggestions for basic income advocates**

In their book Basic Income: A Radical Proposal for a Free Society and a Sane Economy, Philippe van Parijs and Yannick Vanderborght (2017) do an excellent job outlining the various reasons to take the basic income proposal seriously. In this paper, I want to offer basic income advocates three suggestions for how taking the debate forward – both the debate among scholars but also in the political realm, among citizens, activists, politicians and others whom the advocates wish to convince. The first suggestion is to stop talking about basic income in general without an amount specified, but instead to specify the amount of the basic income, as well as the set of other redistributive measures that will be kept or dropped if said basic income would be implemented. I will make suggestions for how this could be done, and outline why this additional clarity is needed. The second suggestion is to be much clearer about the financial viability of a (specific) basic income. The third suggestion is to start the ethical justification with a set of normative ends that societies are currently facing (rather than focusing on the expansion of real freedom – a goal many may not share). Once that set of normative ends is clearer, it will be easier to see what role – if any – basic income can play, and also which accompanying measures are not mere luxuries, but true requirements.

***Nanna Kildal, Rokkansenteret, Uni Research, Bergen:***

**Nordic welfare states and the idea of a basic income**

The Nordic countries stand out as strong welfare states as well as strong work societies. Yet, in spite of their cultural and institutional similarity, the response to the idea of a Basic Income has been remarkably different. Currently this situation is changing. Parallel with a new connection between the welfare state and the labour market, the relationship between social rights and duties has changed and made the welfare state weaker and the work society stronger. Thus today’s growing interest in the idea of a universal basic income in all the Nordic countries may be interpreted as a reaction to the welfare states’ answers to the current labour market challenges. The presentation will conclude by introducing a modest amendment of a basic income, a Universal Basic Share, proposed by the Norwegian Economist Kalle Moene.

***Philippe Van Parijs, Hoover Chair of Hoover Chair of Economic and Social Ethics, Université Catholique de Louvain***

**Reflections and concluding remarks**