

VHI 2015-16 MERCY

Friday
26th February
4-6pm

Garden Room
St Edmund's College
Cambridge

ALL WELCOME
REFRESHMENTS



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Mind, Brain, and Mercy Iain McGilchrist and John Cottingham

Iain McGilchrist's epic work *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World* (Yale UP, 2009) builds on vast neuroscientific research to highlight different ways of being in and relating to the world based on variable prioritisation of lateral brain function at the phenomenological level. This next stage of our investigation of mercy from many disciplinary angles asks what connections there might be between the phenomenology of either hemisphere and compassionate, altruistic, and merciful behaviours. The eminent philosopher John Cottingham will respond to Iain McGilchrist by exploring how the quality of mercy, as it appears in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, diverges from the abstract beneficence or duty advocated by modern consequentialist or Kantian ethics, involving instead an embodied response of the whole person.

Iain McGilchrist is a psychiatrist and writer, formerly Research Fellow at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, USA and three times elected Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

John Cottingham is Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, University of Reading, Professorial Research Fellow, Heythrop College, London, and Honorary Fellow of St John's College, Oxford. His work has focussed on early-modern philosophy, the philosophy of religion, and moral philosophy.