

## SEMINÁRIO

### **“Functional Measurement in the Field of Empirical Ethics: Medicine, Business, and Politics”**

Etienne Mullet (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris)

6 julho 2017, 9h30

Sala 3.1, Edifício II FPCE (Largo D. Dinis, ao pé do Centro Cultural D. Dinis)

#### RESUMO:

Once conceived as the exclusive domain of philosophers and theologians, ethics has evolved, in no more than 25 years, to be a “multidisciplinary field of study, where moral philosophy, the medical sciences, the humanities, and the social sciences intersect” (Jacoby & Siminoff, 2008, p. 2). From a professional viewpoint, it was always evident that ethics cannot be reduced to general principles or the mere application of general principles to concrete settings. From a daily life perspective, ethics is the determination, in each concrete set of circumstances, of what constitutes the right conduct (or, at least, the less unacceptable conduct). This viewpoint was already the one that was developed by Aristotle, more than 2000 years ago, in his *Nichomachean Ethics*.

Problems of ethics arise most often in situations that can be considered as complex, indeed as emotionally charged, in situations in which certain elements point in one direction and other elements in the opposite direction. In other words, multiple factors are most often in play, and they are likely to contribute in a complex way to the final judgment relating to conformity with ethics. It is, therefore, not surprising that social scientists (economists, sociologists or psychologists) who study human judgment have decided to apply their observational or experimental techniques to the rich field of ethics; that is, to a diverse field that encompasses the domains of business, politics, medicine or psychology to quote a few.

Two applications of a psychological technique – Functional Measurement (Anderson, 2017) -- to the domain of ethics will be presented and discussed. They are about: (a) the acceptability of therapeutic abortion (Munoz Sastre et al., 2015), and (b) the acceptability of layoffs and job alliances in time of economic crisis (Sequeira Neto & Mullet, 2016).

#### BIBLIOGRAFIA

Anderson, N. H. (2017). *Moral science*. New York: Psychology Press.

Jacoby, L. & Siminoff, L. A. (2008) Introduction. In L. Jacoby & L. A. Siminoff (Eds.), *Empirical methods for bioethics: A primer* (pp. 1-10). New York, NY: Elsevier. Munoz Sastre, M. T., Petitfils, C., Sorum, P. C., & Mullet, E. (2015). A mapping of the positions of adults in Toulouse, France, regarding induced abortion. *European Journal of Contraception and Reproductive Health Care*, 20, 158-169.

Sequeira Neto, J., & Mullet, E. (2016). Perceived acceptability of organizational layoffs and job alliances during a recession: A mapping of Portuguese people's views. *Journal of Business Ethics*, on-line first.