The Normativity of Ethical Life

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 ★ 4 PM
Harriman Hall, Room 214

Axel Honneth

Axel Honneth is the Jack C. Weinstein Professor for the Humanities in the Department of Philosophy at Columbia University and the Director of the Institute for Social Research and C4-Professor of Social Philosophy at Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main. He is the author of numerous books, including The I in the We (Polity Press, 2013), The Pathologies of Individual Freedom: Hegel’s Social Theory (Princeton University Press, 2010), and Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory (Polity Press, 2007). In his lecture, Honneth will show that Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel’s concept of “ethical life” entails some immanent criteria that allow him to distinguish, within the horizon of a given form of life, between valid norms and merely accepted ones. Honneth will identify those general criteria that Hegel sets out as immanent givens of any justifiable form of ethical life, and then examine whether these provide clues for discerning a certain directionality of moral development within history.