

The Chair of Business Ethics (Prof. Dr. Christoph Lütge) offers the following thesis topic (Bachelor or Master):

Moral reasoning and offsetting conflicting norms during COVID-19: What role does technology play in this process?

Background.

In 2020, the world experienced an unprecedented health, economic, and social crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, within a short period, we observed changes in behavioral patterns and acquired “new normal” ways of living. Underlying these behavioral changes seems to appear a shift in the prioritization among conflicting fundamental human rights and moral norms. For example, when it comes to the introduction of contact-tracing apps, the right to (data) privacy seems to oppose the right for life and (health) security. Therefore, it is of urgent need to understand the process of moral reasoning when individuals are confronted with conflicting moral norms and new technologies.

Expected goals.

Drawing upon past literature and qualitative data stemming from semi-structured interviews, this thesis will aim to determine the process of offsetting norms / rights and developing moral priorities. In particular, it should be investigated what role technology plays in this process. Possible research questions are:

- *How do individuals offset conflicting (moral) norms / rights?*
- *In what way does technology impair or initiate individual's moral reasoning / maturity?*

Recommended literature.

Alexy, R. 2003. On balancing and subsumption: A structural comparison. *Ratio Juris*, 16: 433-449.

Ellis, E. 1999. *The principle of proportionality in the laws of Europe*. Oxford: Hart Publishing.

Gulenc, K., & Aritürk, M. H. 2015. Is human emancipation through technology possible. *Synthesis philosophica*, 61: 83-103.

Hampshire, S. 1983. *Morality and conflict*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Harms, W., & Skyrms, B. 2008. Evolution of moral norms. In M. Ruse (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Biology*: 434-450. New York: Oxford University Press.

Ohlin, J. D. 2020. *Pandemics, Quarantines, Utility, and Dignity*. Cornell Law School Legal Studies Research Paper Series. DOI: 10.2139/ssrn.3591784.

Details.

Supervisor: Franziska Poszler
Starting date: as soon as possible

Contact.

If you are interested, please contact Franziska Poszler (franziska.poszler@tum.de)

We are looking forward to your application!