

Research Institute CLUE+, the Department of Philosophy,  
and the CEC (Critical Ethics of Care foundation) present:  
VU Philosophy Colloquium #5

# UNEXPECTED AND UNAVOIDABLE: The many faces of neoliberalism

**Date:** Thursday June 15, 2017  
**Speaker:** Thomas Biebricher (Goethe Universität, Frankfurt)  
**Commentaries:** Govert Buijs (VU) and  
Andries Baart (Critical Ethics of Care)  
**Time:** 15.30-17.00 hrs.  
**Venue:** Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam,  
Main building, Room 11A-33

Has the hegemony of neoliberalism finally run its course? Domains such as health care, welfare, education, and even representative democracy itself have been invaded by neoliberal solutions. We were told we needed a smaller state, responsible citizens and effective markets.

The German political theorist Thomas Biebricher argues that the neoliberal project is far from being a thing of the past. He contends that it is continuing in different guises. Neoliberalism is alive and kicking, forging coalitions with newly emerging movements.

Why is this so? Because the problems identified by neoliberal protagonists in the 1930s and 1940s remain to be solved. The democratic state and the economy are officially governed by liberal principles, such as individual freedoms, contract theory, and self-regulating markets. However, these principles appear to be impotent to regulate the economy in times of 'extreme capitalism' and economic crisis. Similarly, democracy is being challenged by discontent and fear, and it seems to be paralyzed. The 'reason' for neoliberalism is far from gone...