

Philosophy Colloquium

Fall 2025

October 3rd
4:00 PM

214 Harriman Hall

*"Frantz Fanon and the Aptness
of Anticolonial Violence"*
Daniele Lorenzini



Abstract: Can violence, and in particular violence against one's oppressor, be justified? The consensus in the literature is that, if it can, the justification must rely on prudential and/or moral reasons. Yet counterproductivity and moral critiques of violence, including of violence against one's oppressor, seem to be unsurmountable. In this paper, I argue that Frantz Fanon, by construing violence as an affective response to colonial oppression, offers us unexpected normative resources to elaborate the justification of certain forms of anticolonial violence in terms of aptness or fittingness. This turns the table on the counterproductivity and moral critics of violence, who no longer appear to have compelling arguments to explain why prudential and/or moral reasons against the use of violence should trump reasons of aptness in this context.

Bio: Daniele Lorenzini is associate professor of philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania. His research focuses on post-Kantian European philosophy as well as social and political philosophy. He is the author, most recently, of *The Force of Truth: Critique, Genealogy, and Truth-Telling in Michel Foucault* (Chicago, 2023).

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