CEACOP Speaker Series

Gaslighting Citizens

Speaker: **Professor Eric Beerbohm**
Date: **07 May 2021 (Friday)**
Time: **11:00 (HKT)**
Venue: **Zoom**

*Abstract*

Gaslighting, as an interpersonal wrong, brings its victims to doubt the sources of their evidence. This paper holds that political gaslighting, by targeting the higher-order evidence of citizens, poses a distinctive threat to democratic politics. Gaslit citizens come to hold beliefs that are disconnected from the available evidence. But holding “audacious beliefs” can serve as a core ingredient for democratic movements. This creates an agential dilemma for citizens, who must choose between two kinds of evidential policies. How can they protect themselves from the gaslighting without rendering themselves insusceptible to the mobilizing efforts central to democratic politics?

*Biography*

**Eric Beerbohm** is Professor of Government and Faculty Affiliate in the Department of Philosophy at Harvard University. He serves as Chair of the Committee on Degrees in Social Studies and Faculty Dean at Quincy House. His philosophical and teaching interests include democratic theory, political ethics, theories of social equality, and the philosophy of social science. His latest book project, *Gaslighting Citizens*, examines how politicians can target our evidence about our evidence, and concludes that this form of manipulation raises distinctively democratic worries.

*Registration & Enquiry:*
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