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Citizenship Lecture Series

Seana Shiffrin

"Promising, Intimate Relationships, and Conventionalism"

Friday, October 26, 2007
3:30 p.m.
Philosophy Department, 347 University Hall
230 North Oval Mall, Columbus OH 43210

Seana Shiffrin holds a joint appointment with the Department of Philosophy and the School of Law at the University of California-Los Angeles. She has taught in the UCLA Department of Philosophy since 1992, where she teaches courses on moral, political and legal philosophy. At the Law School, she has taught courses on Contracts, Free Speech Theory, Constitutional Rights and Individual Autonomy, and seminars on legal theory, contracts, distributive justice, remedies, and feminism. She is an associate editor of *Philosophy and Public Affairs* and on the advisory board of Legal Theory.

Her research addresses issues in contracts, freedom of speech, constitutional law, intellectual property, criminal law, torts and family law.

Shiffrin's talk is drawn from her paper of the same name. In it she argues that conventional accounts of the moral foundation for promise and obligation miss the mark. She gives an alternate account of promising behavior and argues that binding promises between agents are integral to individual autonomy and relations of intimacy and complexity. Without what she calls "the power to promise," we cannot live freely on an equal basis with others.

Shiffrin has a bachelor's degree from University of California at Berkeley, B.Phil. and D.Phil. degrees from Oxford University, and a J. D. from Harvard.

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