



האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים  
الجامعة العبرية في القدس  
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

FACULTY OF THE HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

*The Departmental Colloquium*

**Naveh Frumer**  
(HUJI)

# **Vulnerabilization: Towards a Concept of Structural Inequality**



In "What is the Point of Equality" Elizabeth Anderson argues that most theories of equality miss the point. They regard the question of equality as being about the distribution of goods among people—be those resources, rights, capacities, or others—as opposed to a question about the nature of the interrelations between those people. The challenge is how to understand equality—or rather inequality—as a normative property of socio-political relations. One promising answer comes from Judith Butler: relations are unequal when they exhibit dependency that

in turn translates into vulnerability. This promising starting point, however, once again gives rise to Anderson's challenge in new dress: what is the difference between the unequal social distribution of vulnerability (some are more vulnerable than others), versus the more demanding case, where vulnerability directly results from social dependency. We shall refer to the first as persistent inequality and the latter as structural inequality: a society that exhibits inequality versus one predicated upon it. This demarcation will be made by drawing on Karl Marx's analysis of exploitation in capitalist societies. Structural inequality will be defined as a situation in which a given pattern of social dependency turns one group vulnerable vis-à-vis another in a way that feeds-back into the social reproduction of that dependency. This will be referred to through the neologism "vulnerabilization."

**Tuesday, 21 April 2020 | 12:15-13:45**

<https://zoom.us/j/281465463?pwd=cXpreEsvb05hYmptNUg3aVF1R2VDZz09>