

University of Twente

Philosophy Lectures 2023-2024

18 April 2024, 15:45-17:30, Cubicus C238

Pizza Party to follow in Ideefiks room Cubicus B115

Janna van Grunsven
Assistant Professor in Philosophy,
Delft University of Technology

Reimagining Bodies: Promoting Accessible Technological Futures with Enactive Embodied Cognition and Critical Disability Studies

The aim of my talk is to make a case for a fundamental reimagining of human embodiment in our Western sociotechnical imagination. By *sociotechnical imagination* I mean the ways in which we (as individuals and as a society) imagine that developments in science and technology contribute to human flourishing (Jasanoff & Kim 2015). What I will argue, is that a very particular problematic quasi-Cartesian picture of the human body and, correspondingly, of the human mind, animates our Western sociotechnical imagination. This picture, I show, shapes the sociotechnical niches we inhabit in an ableist manner, such that it perniciously legislates who has access to the built technological environment; whose bodies and minds belong; and thus who gets to flourish within those niches. Because the ableist quasi-Cartesian picture of the human mind and body animating our Western sociotechnical imagination is both problematic and pervasive, the main point I wish to make here is that exposing, dismantling, and reimagining this picture should be a prime focal point in the field of ethics of technology. I present insights from 4E cognitive science and critical disability studies as capable of providing fruitful resources for such much-needed reimagining.

