The Swedish Congress of Philosophy 2019

Book of Abstracts

UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Administrative Information

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Lunches and Conference Dinner

The lunches for the 15th and 16th of June include the following items:

- 1 wrap
- 1 bottle of water
- coffee

For those who have registered for it, the conference dinner is held on Saturday the 15th of June. The dinner will take place at Kassjöbacken, a small ski resort overlooking lake Kassjön located a 15-minute drive from the conference site. In connection with the dinner, it's possible (but not required) to walk around the countryside for a bit, so please dress according to your interests (and the weather).

The (subsidised) fee includes transportation by bus. The buses leave the conference site immediately after the end of the programme on Saturday (approximately 18:00). Return times may partly depend on factors such as weather and popular demand, but there will be an option to leave around 21:00 for those who want.

Individual Presentations

Henok Girma Abebe – A Systematic Categorization and Critical Analysis of Arguments Against Vision Zero: Literature Review

KTH Royal Institute of Technology

Abstract:

Despite the complex nature of traffic safety problems and ways of addressing them, a significant number of countries have adopted and are committed to the Vision Zero. Vision Zero seeks to create a road transport system in which no one will be killed or seriously, in the long term. The primary justification provided in defense of the policy is that it is morally unacceptable that people die or get seriously injured due to preventable accidents. However, despite the Vision's moral appeal, and its proliferation to different parts of the world and other policy areas, the approach has been criticized on different grounds. Based on a critical review of literatures three general categories of philosophically relevant criticisms have been identified and are discussed in this paper. First, critics question the rationality of adopting overly ambitious goals, such as the goal to prevent all fatalities and serious injuries in traffic safety. For instance, it has been argued that the goal to achieve zero fatalities and injuries is a utopic nonsense, with no chance of ever getting achieved and, therefore, an irrational cause to pursue. Second, critics target central assumptions behind Vision Zero. Among other things, the acceptability of the ethical assumption behind Vision Zero has been criticized on the ground, for instance, that it is not in itself unethical to let people die in road traffic since people often voluntarily chose to engage in risky activities that endanger their life and health. Third, criticisms target specific Vision Zero strategies and their implications. These includes, the new ascription of responsibility proposed in Vision Zero, the sole focus on fatal and serious injuries, and the use of too paternalistic interventions to promote safety. So far these criticisms have not been systematically analyzed. It is the purpose of this paper to identify, categorize and also provide a critical analysis of these criticisms.

Tobias Alexius Ohlsson – Ontological Parsimony Without Fundamentality

Uppsala University

Abstract:

According to Ross Cameron (2008, 2009), the fundamental entities are (roughly) those entities that make sentences true. In other words, fundamental entities are truthmakers. A key component of Cameron's view is the claim that, when checking for a theory's ontological commitments, one need only count those entities that are needed to make the sentences entailed by that theory true. A consequence of this is that a theory can entail the truth of e.g. 'there are tables' (and, via disquotation, entail that there are tables) without being ontologically committed to tables (so long as 'there are tables' is made true by entities that are not tables). In this way, Cameron's view allows us to grow a jungle of non-fundamental entities on top of a desert ontology, which in turn allows us to cut our ontological costs without having to eliminate entities – and that is the main benefit ('MB') of his approach. In this talk, I argue that MB is achievable without identifying which specific entities are fundamental/the truthmakers. My argument builds on two claims: (a) MB stems from the fact that sentences that quantify over (or otherwise refer to) different (kinds of) entities sometimes share truthmakers. (b) We can come to know which sentences share truthmakers without identifying those truthmakers. As regards (a), I argue that it is because Cameron counts all the entities quantified over/referred to by sentences that share truthmakers as one cost that he increases ontological parsimony without eliminating entities (and that this can be done without identifying the fundamental entities/truthmakers). As regards (b), I argue that we can know which sentences share truthmakers based (roughly) on patterns of shared verification conditions(without having to check which specific entities are truthmakers/fundamental). Combine(a) and (b),and we get the claim that we can achieve MB without bothering to find out which entities are fundamental/the truthmakers. I end by discussing whether a proponent of my approach should be agnostic about which entities are truthmakers/fundamental, or whether she should embrace some different approach (such as positing coarse-grained truthmakers). I also draw some parallels to other fundamentality-based approaches to ontology.

Carola Barbero – Phenomenology of Reading

University of Torino (Italy)

Abstract:

When we read literature we fill out what is ontologically incomplete by conceiving it as if it were complete. Sure enough literary objects – as Roman Ingarden underlines in The literary work of Art (1931/1973) –, differently from real ones, are characterized by spots of indeterminacy, i.e. are not determined under every aspect, hence are nothing but schemas, full of gaps (independently of any additional epistemological incompleteness which may derive from inaccurate readings) that need to be concretized by our acts of reading. This peculiar feature of literature makes clear why in comparison with being engaged with books, being engaged with films is imaginatively impoverished: because there are less elements of indeterminacy, i.e. less gaps in the work to be filled up. The point here is, as Wolfgang Iser in The implied reader (1978) remarks, that the reader is able to visualize the main character for himself and when the character is offered, concretized by a complete and immutable picture, then the work of imagination is out of action. The intrinsic incompleteness of literature also makes clear why projects as the one of Brian Davis (http://thecomposites.tumblr.com), based on the idea of doing with literary characters what the police does with composite portraits of criminals somehow is more effort than it's worth: our imagination is able to fill up the gaps, whereas the software, reproducing nothing but incomplete objects, isn't. No software can make Madame Bovary come alive, our help is needed.

Alexander Max Bauer – Modern Day Ethics Between Empirical Research and Normative Theory

University of Oldenburg

Abstract:

Many people today may see empirical research (say, e.g., empirical social research) and normative theory (say, e.g., ethics) as two distinct fields, that either have little to no relation to each other, or which, if they do, seem to be at tension constantly. The conflict both areas experience today, it is argued, can be traced back to certain historical developments, such as the advent of modern sciences. Against this background, some exemplary historical arguments, debates, and developments are highlighted. After that, two positions regarding this relation from the perspective of ethics are elaborated upon more deeply: A critical perspective which is denoted as Platonic, and an affirmative perspective which is denoted as Aristotelian. After highlighting some important arguments from both, some systemic interdependencies between the two fields are illustrated, and the potential influences between empirical research and normative theory are explored more widely.

Katharina Berndt Rasmussen – (When and Why) Is Age Discrimination Wrong?

The Institute for Future Studies

Abstract:

Age discrimination differs from other forms of discrimination in that the socially salient property which causes the differential treatment in question (e.g., old age, or youth) is attained and shed by one and the same individual during a normal life time (unlike, e.g., gender or race). This feature arguably has repercussions for some accounts of the moral wrongness of discrimination (e.g., harm-accounts, focussing on life-time well-being), but possibly not for others (e.g., demeaningness-accounts, focussing on the social meaning of the differential treatment). The first part of this paper gives an overview of the most influential accounts of the wrongness of discrimination and examines their verdicts on different cases of age discrimination. Age discrimination, on the other hand, shares with other forms of discrimination that its socially salient property, in certain contexts, may serve as a reliable proxy for other relevant attributes, thereby qualifying as a form of statistical discrimination. The second part of this paper examines the moral relevance of the age property's proxy function. Is it on a par with other such socially salient properties? How does this function affect age discrimination's moral status, by the lights of the different accounts of the wrongness of discrimination? The paper concludes with an evaluation of the answers given by these different accounts in parts one and two, thus employing age discrimination as one test case for their overall plausibility.

Stina Björkholm – Quasi-Realism and Normative Certitude

Stockholm University

Abstract:

A familiar feature of normative and non-normative judgments is that they can vary in degrees of certitude. One can, for example, be more or less certain that murder is wrong, or that murderers are punished in the afterlife. Since non-cognitivists take normative judgments to be desire-like states, rather than beliefs, they have struggled to accommodate normative certitude (Smith 2002). There have been several attempts to solve this problem (Lenman 2003; Ridge 2003, 2007; Sepielli 2012; Eriksson & Francén Olinder 2016), all of which have been considered inadequate (Bykvist & Olson 2009, 2012, 2017). Michael Ridge (2018) has now provided yet another proposal. He maintains that the quasi-realist (whose project is to mimic realism while maintaining a fundamentally non-cognitivist framework) can use whichever explanation of normative certitude that realists endorse. Ridge opts for the view that degrees of certitude can be reduced to counterfactual betting behavior. We argue that Ridge's understanding of counterfactual betting behaviour faces several difficulties. What is more, he appeals to the notion of non-representational beliefs. An idea which: (1) does not clearly fit with the counterfactual betting account he wishes to adopt, and (2) must be made intelligible before he can claim to be on equal footing with the cognitivist.

Eric Brandstedt – Why Should Generation X and The Millennials Pay for the Baby Boomers' Pensions?

The Institute for Future Studies

Abstract:

Pension systems are usually unfunded, that is, they are pay-as-you-go. In such systems, the benefits retired individuals receive are paid directly by taxes from those in the workforce. There is thus a kind of zero-sum game between contributions and benefits: if those in the workforce pay less, pensions decrease, and vice versa, to increase pensions, those in the workforce will have to pay more. This creates a problem of justice between generations, with generations understood as birth cohorts: when a generation can no longer provide for itself how much support can its members then reasonably expect from the younger generations now in the workforce, or vice versa, how much should the younger generations reasonably be required to transfer to the old generation? A defining feature of this problem as a problem of justice is that even though pension systems are tax transfers between different social groups, they are not simply a matter of equalising resources between groups or individuals in society, nor are they acts of charity. The generation now in need of support has previously supported their predecessors by paying premiums into the pension system and thus formed certain expectations of fair returns. Individual contributions and benefits are thus partly formed by normative expectations grounded in reciprocity and desert. With a technical term, pension systems are cleronomic. But how should these different moral considerations be combined into a comprehensive assessment of fair pensions? I will outline a model for this based on John Rawls's original position. I will also describe certain theoretical problems that such a model must deal with due to demographic changes, in particular having to do with the fact that cohorts are of different sizes.

Adam Michael Bricker – The Neural Correlates of Knowledge Attribution: Doing Epistemology With EEG

University of Oulu

Abstract:

The purpose of this talk is to introduce a nascent empirical method for conducting epistemological research, which combines established electrophysiological techniques—used in social neuroscience to measure the neural correlates of belief attribution—with novel, epistemology-derived experimental designs that measure the neural correlations of knowledge attribution. This method promises to shed new light on key epistemological debates, such as contextualism/invariantism and whether knowledge is a mental state. In this talk, I discuss in general terms (i) what these electrophysiological techniques are, (ii) how they are used in a socialneuroscientific/theory-of-mind context, and (iii) how they might play a key role in epistemology,together with a brief description of the first set of epistemological experiments, currently ongoing, to use this new approach. Below I introduce each point in turn.

Electroencephalography (EEG) is a technique for directly measuring activity in the brain by recording slight electrical changes across the surface of the scalp. A key selling point of EEG is the millisecond-level temporal resolution, although detailed spatial information can often also be extracted. Crucially, systematic changes in the EEG signal over time correspond with different stages of cognitive processing in response to tasks/stimuli. This allows neuroscientists to test not only whether different experimental conditions elicit systematic changes in cognitive processing, but when and in what stage of processing these differences occurred.

For Theory of Mind studies in social neuroscience, EEG is typically used to measure neural activity during belief attribution tasks. Importantly, this means that the experimental paradigm for epistemological EEG studies more-or-less already exists and wasn't something I needed to build from scratch.

There are a number of promising avenues for applying such techniques to epistemology, and here I will focus on two. First, as there are significant differences between the neural patterns of mental and non-mental state evaluation, by observing the neural correlates of knowledge attribution and comparing them to those for non-mental, mental, and composite states under the same experimental conditions, we might test empirically whether knowledge is in fact a mental state, as suggested by Nagel and Williamson. Although the findings of the present experiment are preliminary, they clearly indicate that, at the neural level, knowledge is attributed like a composite state, not a mental state. Second, I also explore the use of EEG measures to discriminate between reliable and unreliable knowledge attributions, suggesting that electrophysiological methods might be directly useful in the contextualism debate.

Bengt Brülde – Death and Age

University of Gothenburg

Abstract:

The philosophy of ageing is in part concerned with questions that explicitly refer to old age. Many of these questions are ethical or political, e.g., whether there are any virtues of old age, what old people should do with their estate, and what distribution of resources between age groups should be regarded as just. However, the philosophy of ageing (broadly conceived) also include more general questions that are actualized or accentuated by the process of ageing but which apply to younger people as well, e.g., how we should weigh the quality of a life against its quantity, or how much it is reasonable to care about the well-being of one's future selves. In these cases, older people might get help from philosophical theories that were not constructed with old age in mind, but we might also improve these theories if we test them against the case of old age.

Here, I consider a question of the second kind, namely how we should relate to our own death. There are two sub-questions here, and I argue that the best answer to both of them might be age-relative. The first question is whether it is good or bad for us to be aware of our own death, and it presupposes that we know both what it means to really be aware of one's own death and what the content of this awareness might be. To answer the question, we need to look at the probable consequences of being aware in this way – e.g., more authenticity vs. less meaning – and these effects may well vary with age.

The second question is whether we have reason to fear (or dislike) our own death, or whether acceptance is a more reasonable attitude. To answer this question, we might look at the arguments that purport to show that fear is an inadequate response to one's own death, and assess their plausibility. But we might also consider whether these arguments can actually help us accept our own death (assuming that the relevant fear is both existential and non-pathological), i.e. whether they are not just plausible but also effective (if endorsed) and convincing. I argue that most of the arguments that philosophers have offered do not work very well, but that some of them might work better for older people.

Arvid Båve – Propositions and Their Truth Conditions

Stockholm University

Abstract:

Propositions have truth conditions. For instance, the proposition that Socrates is wise is true iff Socrates is wise. But why is this the case? Is it because of certain properties of this proposition, perhaps some properties of its "constituents"? Or is this fact fundamental, so that there is no answer to why? If so, then facts expressed by these "propositional T-sentences" are not grounded (in some further fact). Which of these answers is true turns out to be important. Peter Pagin has recently argued that any account of propositions as structured face a Benacerraf problem, but his objection, I argue, presupposes that facts about truth conditions are grounded in facts about propositional constituents. Thus, if these facts are instead fundamental, the argument fails. The question is also crucial for assessing a common kind of adequacy constraint on theories of propositions, to the effect that such theories must explain why propositions, as conceived of by the theory, have the truth conditions they have. This constraint has been used many times to disqualify various theories, but it, too, presupposes that facts about truth conditions are grounded. I finally provide some reasons to think these facts are fundamental. I also consider an argument for the opposing view, trading on the intuitive truth of the claim that which truth conditions a proposition has depends on facts about its constituents. For instance, whether a Fregean, simple subject-predicate proposition is true iff Socrates is wise surely depends on whether its individual concept refers to Socrates and whether its predicative concept is true of all and only wise things. I argue that this dependency claim is true, but in a sense of "depend" in which the claim fails to establish the grounding claim. It is a sense, rather, in which dependency amounts to certain conditionals holding.

Argun Abrek Canbolat – Can Emotions Be Extended by the Use of Smilies?

Lund University

Abstract:

As a provocative and popular thesis, the 'extended mind' argues for the possible extension of human mind beyond the skull. Although the overall validity of the thesis is currently a subject of a fierce debate, this work will focus on the 'parity principle' and through this, whether the 'smilies' or emoticons used in online chat applications can be considered extended emotive entities that take on the role of physical gestures and even replace some aspects of emotive cognition. Clark and Chalmers (1998) describe the parity principle as, "[i]f, as we confront some task, a part of the world functions as a process which, were it done in the head, we would have no hesitation in recognizing as part of the cognitive process, then that part of the world is part of the cognitive process." Accordingly, I suggest that smilies are parts of emotive processes, and as the device that sends a smiley (cell phone, computer, etc.) is a part of extended cognition, smilies should therefore be considered extended emotive processes. Thus, I suggest that it seems effectively hard to differentiate between a smiley and an actual smile in this context. The issue, therefore, is not whether the receiver of a specific smiley is satisfied with the emotional action; it is related to the similarity between the cognitive aspect of -let us say- smiling and that of sending a smiling smiley. This work will argue that this similarity is accountable, and that smilies can be considered extended emotive entities.

John Cantwell – A Semantics for Probability

KTH Royal Institute of Technology

Abstract:

A minimalistic truth-conditional semantic analysis of probability claims is developed in which such claims are taken to describe neither epistemic states nor mind-independent chances. It allows that `subjective' judgments of probability have the same kind of content as the `objective' claims of probability entailed by the probabilistic theories, models and hypotheses employed in science. The contention is, thus, that the distinction between `subjective' and `objective' probabilities is spurious. Some of the controversial consequences of this contention will be discussed.

Herman Cappelen – Conceptual Engineering of 'Beauty' and 'Knowledge' (or: How to Use Conceptual Engineering to Improve Beauty and Knowledge)

University of Oslo/St Andrews

Abstract:

Conceptual engineering is the study of how to assess and improve concepts (and other representational devices). Context sensitive terms have a level of meaning that Kaplan called 'characters': functions from context of utterance to contents. I show how conceptual engineers can revise and improve Kaplanian characters, using 'beautiful' and 'knows' as illustrations. When we improve the meaning of these terms, beauty and knowledge (without quotation marks) can be improved.

Staffan Carlshamre – Art as Research – Reflections on Artistic Research

Abstract:

"Artistic research" is, since several decades, an established name for a domain of art-related research, outside of the traditional aesthetic disciplines. In Sweden it is supported by the Swedish Research Council (VR), and it is institutionally entrenched at several Swedish universities. The label is rather generous and covers many different types of research connected to higher level professional education in the arts. What sets (some) artistic research apart from other types of profession-based research is the notion that art is in itself, at least in some cases, a form of research: artistic research is supposed to produce art, and the resulting artwork itself is supposed to embody the knowledge produced. Artistic research, in the pertinent sense, is not primarily research about art or in the service of art – it is itself art and delivers works of art. This idea builds on a perceived analogy between science and art. At least in some cases it seems reasonable to describe artists as investigating sections of reality through their art, and thereby producing and communicating new knowledge. I intend to probe the validity and the limits of this analogy, partly by discussing some of the different conceptions of knowledge that may be relevant in this connection. The primary aim is not to answer the question whether art is research, but to elucidate some of the cognitive functions of art by means of a comparison with science.

Karun Çekem – What Is Critical Posthumanism Critical of?

Ege University

Abstract:

Posthumanism is "an umbrella term to refer to a variety of different movements and schools of thought" (Ferrando 2013: 26) such as critical posthumanism, transhumanism, metahumanism and antihumanism. What all these different movements have in common is their critical outlook on the subject of classical humanism – as a subject or category which is already dead or at least should be dead. According to posthumanist thought, the notion of the cartesian subject which conceives itself as a rational, finite entity isolated from the realm of objects and as prior to its relations with this realm is no longer acceptable. Thus humanism, which is grounded on this very subject should either be rejected completely or be transformed. In this talk, I will specifically focus on a posthumanist submovement called "Critical Posthumanism". Firstly, I will explain how Critical Posthumanism criticises classical humanism, by pointing out its dichotomous structure which leaves out of the "human" category not only non-human agents but also certain genders and races as well. Secondly, I aim to emphasize its critique towards another posthumanist submovement, namely Transhumanism. Although the terms "posthumanism" and "transhumanism" are often used as synonyms and although transhumanists and critical posthumanists have similar views regarding our relationship with technology, critical posthumanists criticise transhumanists for continuing the previous conception of liberal, anthropocentric humanism and taking it to its extreme. Lastly, I aim to show how Critical Posthumanism suggests a non-dichotomous ontological, ethical and political approach regarding our relationship with non-human agents and with technology – which seems to be urgent in the Anthropocene Epoch, where the future of "humanity" is at risk.

Ludovica Conti – Russell's Paradox and Free Zig Zag Solutions

Università di Pavia

Abstract:

In the debate about Russell's Paradox, there are two main explicit explanations: the *Cantorian* explanation and the *Predicativist* one, which respectively blame the inconsistency on the injective extensionality function (obtained by existential generalisation of Basic Law V - BLV: $\forall X \forall Y(\epsilon(X) = \epsilon(Y) \leftrightarrow \forall x(Xx \leftrightarrow Yx))$ and on the impredicative specification of the concepts (obtained by the instances of the Comprehension's Axioms Schema - CA: $\exists X \forall x(Xx \leftrightarrow \phi(x)))$. These explanations suggest related solutions of the paradox by the restriction of respectively BLV and CA: both these two sorts of solutions only partially save Frege's project[1] and, moreover, their presupposed explanations are subject to many objections[2].

The only proposals which achieve a logicist and extensionalist program[3] are solutions of the paradox which, in different ways, revise the fregean correlation between concepts and extensions, obtaining "zig zag" theories[4]. These results are important not only for the mathematical achievement[5] but also because implicitly presupposes a third - which we will call *Extensionalist* - explanation of the paradox.

Our first aim consist in clarifying this third possible explanation implicitly presupposed by *zig zag* theories. Considering the fregean formulation of Russell's Paradox, the *Extensionalist* explanation ascribes the contradiction to the too generous fregean intersection between logicist and extensionalist program, namely to the interaction between classical second order logic (core of fregean logicism) and the non logical abstraction principle BLV (witness of extensionalist aim). This means that the problem does not concerns neither (unlike from *Cantorian* explanation) the mere iniectivity of the correlation described by BLV, neither (unlike from *Predicativist* explanation) the second order domain specified by CA, but the domain of the extensionality function, namely what classical logic says about the non logic correlation between concepts and abstract objects.

Our second aim consists in proposing a different way to obtain this *zig zag*-correlation between concepts and extensions. The main proposals[6] which realise a *zig zag* project are two sorted theories which work by a distinction of two versions of the second order specification (CA) and a correspondent restriction of BLV[7]. However, following the proposed *Extensionalist* explanation, we had recognised that the reason why full second order domain is not able to be the domain of the correlation depends not on the specification of its members but on the requests that classical second order logic imposes on them, namely that each of them is correlated to an extension. So, a solution which literally follows from the *Extensionalist* explanation has to carve the *zig zag* correlation working on the correlation itself: this goal is obtained substituting classical logic with a negative free logic and moving the restrictions, traditionally imposed on second order specification, on the right hand of BLV.

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[1] Predicativist solutions - cfr. [9], [16], [7] - obtain theories equi-interpretable with Robinson arithmetic Q; Cantorian solutions - cfr. [8], for the debate [12], [11] - result to be not able to avoid the contradiction.

[2] Cfr.[3], [5], [11], [15].

[3] Cfr. [1].

[4] The explicit *zig zag* proposals are in [13] and [7]; in our opinion, the same idea is developed, in other ways (and also for other reasons) in [2], [4].

[5] The plural revision of Frege's logicism - in [2] - allows to interpret Peano arithmetic; the explicit zig zag revision - in [7] - allows to interpret Peano and Frege Arithmetic.

[6] [2], [7].

[7] In [2] and [7] this restriction is not visible in the axiomatisation.

Cleber Correa – Carnap and Neo-Quineans on the Hardness of Ontological Questions

University of São Paulo, MCMP

Abstract:

In contemporary Metaontology, Carnap and his heirs are usually described as holding dismissive views about Ontology. According to the received picture, Carnap and Neo-Carnapians regard ontological questions and disputes as easy, trivial, unimportant, or merely verbal. Neo-Quineans, on the other hand, are often described as regarding such questions in the opposite way. My aim is to challenge the received view with respect to the contrast between Carnap and Neo- Quineans. First, I argue that what Carnap takes to be trivial is not what Neo-Quineans take to be hard; and, second, that Neo-Quinean method for solving ontological questions is very much in agreement with Carnap's prescription for settling external practical questions.

David Davies – What Should a Nominalist Say About Multiple Artworks?

McGill University

Abstract:

Multiple artworks are usually understood as artworks that allow of multiple 'instances' through which they can be properly appreciated but that seem to be ontologically distinct from those instances. Examples include works of literature, classical musical works, and works of theatre, cinema, photography, printmaking, and dance. It has been widely assumed that such works must be abstracta of some sort. Accounts of multiples based on this assumption, however, not only face standard nominalist objections but also, more seriously in the present case, seem unable to account for some central ways in which discourse about multiples figures into our artistic practices. The standard nominalist strategy here has been to argue that multiple artworks exist, but do so in some nominalistically acceptable way. Nelson Goodman, for example, identified a musical work with the class of performances compliant with a score, and more recent theorists have taken multiples to be perduring or enduring entities constituted by or otherwise dependent on their material embodiments. Andrew Kania, however, has argued that a nominalist realism about musical works - usually viewed as the paradigm kind of multiple - is not an option, and that nominalists about such works should be fictionalists. In my paper I look at Kania's arguments and then consider some problems for musical fictionalism derivable from Jody Azzouni's criticisms of fictionalist accounts of other nominalistically problematic discourses such as discourse 'about' numbers and discourse 'about' fictional characters.

Frédérique de Vignemont – A Phenomenal Contrast for Bodily Ownership

Institut Jean Nicod

Abstract:

Anscombe (1957, 1962) famously claimed that we do not feel our legs as being crossed; we simply know that they are that way. What about the rest of the knowledge that we have of our body, and more specifically of the fact that it belongs to us? The question is: do we actually feel this body that way, or do we merely know it? The debate is structured between those who defend a liberal or rich view of phenomenology and those who defend a sparse and thus conservative view. In the recent literature several authors have questioned the existence of a distinctive experiential signature for the sense of bodily ownership (Alsmith, 2015; Bermúdez, 2011, 2015; Martin, 1992, 1995; Wu, forthcoming). It does not seem that one can settle the debate about ownership feelings by a direct use of introspection in everyday life but one may still be able to apply the method of phenomenal contrast proposed by Siegel (2010). It proceeds in two steps. First, one describes a situation in which there is intuitively a phenomenal contrast between two experiences, one of which only instantiating the high-level property. The second step consists in drawing an inference to the best explanation of this contrast by ruling out alternative explanations. Most interest in the debate on the degree of richness of perceptual content has focused on visual awareness but it may as well be applied to bodily awareness. The only difference here is that it is more difficult to find scenarios in which one is not aware that this is one's own hand than scenarios in which one is not aware that this is a pine tree. But not impossible.

Foad Dizadji-Bahmani – Truth, Approximate Truth, and The Pessimistic Meta Induction

California State University Los Angeles

Abstract:

The scientific realism debate is a longstanding one in the philosophy of science. One of the most important arguments in the anti-realist's armory is the Pessimistic Meta-Induction (PMI). As is well known, PMI purportedly shows that the history of science undermines realism. PMI has two guises: an inductive argument for the conclusion that current scientific theories are not true (PMIi) or a reductio ad absurdum against the idea that one can take the empirical and predictive success of a theory as reason to think that it is true (PMIr). I argue that once attention is paid to the logical difference between truth (which is categorical) and approximate truth (which is a matter of degree) it can be shown that the argument, in each guise, is fallacious.

Reidar Due – Selfhood as a Constitutive Void in Heidegger's Sein und Zeit

Oxford University

Abstract:

In this paper I present a phenomenological reading of selfhood in Heidegger's Sein und Zeit. The paper will show how Sein und Zeit encircles a phenomenological experience of the self as void. This void is dialectically related to everything that makes the life of Dasein practically and socially meaningful. It is a void that would have been filled by a substance, if self-determination had had its origin in a self, which would be objectifiable like a substance. However, for Heidegger this would be a derivative and hence inadequate mode of self-perception. Rather, Dasein comes to 'know itself' through the twin routes of acting in view of itself (Sorge) and in acquiring a perspective upon itself as separate from others – through the awareness of its own mortality. Via both of these routes, selfhood appears in an experience of void: it is the void behind the telos of my concern, and it is the void giving sense to the normative border, dividing authentic from inauthentic being (and behaviour). This void is thus the place of self-determination.

Elena Dzikevich & Sergey Dzikevich – Contemporary Performance Aesthetics: Postdramatical Mimesis

M.S.Schepkin High Theatre School at Maly Theatre

Lomonosov Moscow State University

Abstract:

This presentation is devoted to postmodern processes in theatre aesthet-ics that are concerned with changes in the role of theatre in society. The authors are investigating how events of the XX century, especially two world wars, have transformed expectations of the audience from art as institution. These transformations were revealed in fundamental theatre experiments of Brecht, Meyerhold and other key persons of theatre history of the XX century.

The authors are focusing their attention on the phenomenon of aesthetic distance that is dividing and connecting the performers and the audience in the event of a spectacle. Transformations of aesthetic distance lead to the new conditions of the aesthetic regime in which contemporary theatre continues its dialogue with the whole of postmodern society.

Romy Eskens – Thanks for Nothing: Gratitude and Partiality in the Context of Unsuccessful Rescues

Stockholm University

Abstract:

When faced with two equally imperilled people whom it is equally difficult to save, one should ordinarily give each an equal chance of rescue. However, when one imperilled person has wrongfully or responsibly caused the forced choice, most of us think that this person (rather than some innocent person) should bear the harm. But the converse scenario, in which a forced choice results from the permissible action of one of the imperilled people, has received little attention in debates about the just distribution of unavoidable harm. I argue that the presumption of impartiality is overturned in this type of case when the rescuer is owed gratitude for her actions. Gratitude can be owed by the person the rescuer tried to save, qua beneficiary, and by the person making the forced choice, qua moral agent. The latter kind of gratitude, which I call 'moral gratitude', is of a public nature: just as there are actions so bad that we should all condemn them, so there are actions so good that we should all be grateful for them. Very often, gratitude requires that we weight the interests of the people we owe gratitude to heavier in our decision-making than the interests of people we do not owe gratitude to. I argue that moral gratitude requires the person making the forced choice to weight the rescuer's interest in being saved heavier in her decision-making than the initially imperilled person's interest in being saved. The rescuer should therefore get the greater chance of rescue. I argue that the role of gratitude in establishing the just distribution of risks of harm illuminates the present debate in just war theory about the permissibility of transferring risk from combatants to civilians in humanitarian interventions.

Andreas Fjellstad – Cut-Elimination for the Cut-Free Approach to Transparent Truth

Department of Philosophy, University of Bergen

Abstract:

Despite originally achieving its fair bit of the incredulous stare, the formal theory of truth STT developed by Cobreros, Egre, Ripley and van Rooij certainly has its merits; by rejecting the assumption that logical theories should be transitive, the result is a logical theory for transparent truth containing all inferences and theorems of classical logic. While originally defined on Strong Kleene models with a strict-tolerant definition of entailment, STT is typically presented with a two-sided cut-free sequent calculus with the standard metarules for classical logic and transparent truth, but for which cut is not admissible. The approach is thus sometimes called the "cut-free" approach. Borrowing tricks to ensure admissibility of cut from Tait, Rathjen, Leighand Negri, the aim of this talk is to develop an alternative two-sided sequent calculus for STT for which cut-elimination holds by proof analysis. To that purpose, we formulate STT for an arithmetical theory where every formula is in negation normal form based on a language containing both a truth- and a falsity-predicate, and base the calculus on sequents interpreted as there being no Strong Kleene model for transparent truth such that every formula in antecedent position is assigned 0, and every formula in succedent position is assigned either $1/2$ or 0. With two cut-rules based on "exhaustion" of values for truth- and falsity-predications, familiar-looking rules for the connectives andcarefully crafted compositional rules for the truth-predicate, some of which are infinitary, we obtain a "semi-formal" calculus for which a standard Schütte/Tait-style cut-elimination argument is available. We conclude with some remarks on the philosophical relevance of the cut-elimination proof.

Martin Fricke – Fernández on Knowledge of One's Own Beliefs

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Abstract:

In Transparent Minds (2013), Jordi Fernández argues for "the bypass view", according to which we self-attribute beliefs not on the basis of the first-order beliefs to be attributed but on the basis of the grounds for those first-order beliefs. If I see an apple in front of me I can directly self-ascribe the belief "I believe there is an apple in front of me", thus bypassing the first-order belief "There is an apple in front of me". Mental states such as perceptions can play this double role of grounding first-order and corresponding second-order beliefs because the same grounds regularly cause the same first-order beliefs. This regularity makes the bypass procedure possible and justifies it. In my talk I would like to present two objections against Fernández's theory which arise from the possibility that the subject might change her ways of forming beliefs. The first objection concerns the normative aspect of the bypass procedure. If a subject accidentally forms a first-order belief, which might be true or false, on the basis of some prior state, there is no regular causal relation between the state and the belief. In consequence the bypass procedure lacks justification and cannot give the subject knowledge of her own belief. But is it plausible to deny that we can have ordinary self-knowledge regarding accidentally formed beliefs? The second objection concerns the metaphysics of the bypass procedure. Is the procedure functional at all if the subject's ways of forming beliefs change? Suppose a subject regularly affirms the consequent, forming the belief that p on the basis of her prior beliefs that q and that if p, then q. At some point in time she stops reasoning in this fallacious way, for whatever reason. Now, how is the subject to know, on the basis of her beliefs that q and that if p, then q alone, whether or not she believes that p? It seems that bypass needs to take into account "the pull" these prior beliefs exert on the subject's process of forming beliefs. If we modify Fernández's transparency account in the required way, it becomes rather more similar to that of Alex Byrne (2005, 2011) than was at first apparent.

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Helen Frowe – Honour, Condemnation, and Statues of Wrongdoers

Stockholm Centre for the Ethics of War and Peace (Stockholm University)

Abstract:

This paper argues that if a historical figure perpetrated serious rights violations, then this gives us grounds to remove public statues of that person. My claim is that a person's being a serious rights violator is a sufficient condition for a state's having a defeasible duty to remove a public statue of that person. I think we should be pluralist about the features that can ground this duty. There are, for example, lots of reasons to remove statues of Confederate soldiers: such statues cause distress, give credence to white supremacist views, affirm existing social injustices and so on. The reason for removal that I explore here is that keeping public statues of serious wrongdoers is incompatible with the state's duties to condemn and repudiate serious wrongdoing.

Andrés Garcia – Instrumental Value: Varieties and Importance

Lund University/Humboldt University of Berlin

Abstract:

Some objects have instrumental value in the sense that their being valuable has something to do with their effects. Money has instrumental value for the objects and experiences that it can help people acquire; buses have instrumental value for the quickness with which they let people conveniently travel from one point to another; and medicine has instrumental value for its use in the treatment of symptoms and illnesses. The following talk aims to clarify how it might be that the value of objects has something to do with their effects. Several analyses will be developed, each of which is assumed to capture a unique concept of instrumental value. It is also assumed that there is no single privileged understanding of instrumental value that philosophers should be mainly interested in. Instead, the argument will be made that while some of the concepts will seem less significant from a theoretical and practical standpoint, there are several that can be expected to play a central role in ethical theorizing and moral choice. The talk is not just meant to try to establish what concepts people actually have in mind when they go about their everyday life judging that objects have instrumental value. The purpose of the talk is also partly creative as it aims to clarify some of the many concepts that people could have in mind when they pass such judgments. This is important because it turns out that there is a great deal of ways for the value of objects to have something to do with their effects. There may therefore be an equally great variety of instrumental value that our current system of concepts has not equipped us to think very carefully about. The following talk is meant to remedy this issue and so while it takes its point of departure from some of the substantive intuitions that surround the idea that the value of objects has something to do with their effects, some of those intuitions will also end up being challenged.

Giacomo Giannini – A Crowded World. Dispositionalism and Necessitism

Durham University

Abstract:

Dispositionalism is the thesis that this-worldly powers are the sole truthmakers for truths of metaphysical modality. Some of the main reasons Dispositionalism is thought to be appealing are the following: 1) It purports to be a hardcore actualist theory of modality: there are no non-actual entities, nor abstract ersatz for possibilia. All we need to make the modal claims true is the concrete powers of this world. 2) Therefore, it purports to be both friendly to our commonsense intuitions about what there is, and sport relatively light ontological commitments. Unfortunately, both of these hopes are to be dashed Dispositionalism is far from both being ontologically parsimonious and being safe and sane. I will first argue that Dispositionalism is committed to the existence of every possible entity. Albeit the dispositionalist avoids the commitment to things such as 'possible worlds', she is committed to all of their population nonetheless – so, she is in no better position than the Possibilist or the 'Softcore Actualist'. I will then argue that Dispositionalism, at least in Vetter's version, plausibly supports a modal logic as strong as S5. Coupling these two results we obtain the (perhaps) surprising result that the Dispositionalist is committed to a form of Necessitism.

Aleksandra Gomulczak – Semantic Paraphrase of Husserl′s Theory of Meaning. A Critical Approach to Føllesdal′s And Dummett′s Interpretation of Husserl′s Phenomenology

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan

Abstract:

In his 1972 paper Føllesdal aims to show how the key concepts of phenomenology can be explained in terms of analytic philosophy. His construction is based on analogy between Husserl's theory of meaning and Frege's theory of Sinn and Bedeutung. According to Føllesdal the key similarity lies in Husserl's notion of noema and Frege's notion of Sinn. Føllesdal is using Frege's theory as a framework into which Husserl's concepts are translated. On this basis he wants to show that on some essential level early analytic philosophy and early phenomenology are very close ideationally and one can be used to explain the notions of the other. A first claim was retained by Dummett (1993) who – when explaining the similarities and differences between Husserl's and Frege's philosophy – follows the path sketched by Føllesdal. What Føllesdal and Dummett did can be understood in terms of the semantic paraphrase. According to Beaney (2009, 2013) application of the paraphrase method (although he calls it transformative analysis) is one of the main features defining analytic philosophy (this kind of analysis occurs in works of e.g. Frege, Russell, Carnap, Ryle, Quine). But most of the philosophers didn't see their methods this way and didn't pursue a reflection over the method itself. It was done in 1930's by Ajdukiewicz (a member of Lvov-Warsaw School). He provided not only a basic characteristics of the paraphrase method but also pointed out some important problems and constraints concerning it. Ajdukiewicz's approach was later developed by Wolenski (1993) and Nowak (1998). These philosophers provided further theoretical background which included basic schema of the procedure, more detailed profile of what semantic paraphrase is, how it works and how it can be expanded. With these concepts and tools in mind, I started to work on the theory of the philiosophical paraphrase. I aim to use it to analyse Føllesdal's and Dummett's interpretation of phenomenology in analytic terms.

Valentin Goranko – Towards a Logic for Conditional Strategic Reasoning

Stockholm University

Abstract:

We consider systems of rational agents who act in pursuit of their individual and collective objectives. We study the reasoning of an agent or an external observer about the consequences from the expected choices of action of the other agents based on their objectives, in order to assess the agent's ability to achieve her own objective. For instance, consider a scenario where an agent, Alice, has an objective O(A) to achieve. Suppose, that Alice has several possible choices of an action (or, strategy) that would possibly, or certainly, guarantee the achievement of her objective O(A). Now, Bob, another agent or an external observer, is reasoning about the consequences from Alice's possible actions with respect to the occurrence of Bob's objective or intended outcome O(B). Depending on Bob's knowledge about Alice's objective and of her available strategic choices that would guarantee the achievement of that objective, there can be several possible cases for Bob's reasoning, based on whether or not Bob knows Alice's objective, her possible actions towards achieving that objective, and her intentions on how to act. Thus, Bob has to reason about his own abilities to achieve his objective O(B), conditional on what he knows or expect that Alice may decide to do. That scenario naturally extends to several agents reasoning about their abilities conditional on how they expect the others to act. In this work we introduce logical systems featuring new modal operators for capturing conditional strategic reasoning. We provide formal semantics for these, discuss the expressiveness of the respective logical languages, propose axiomatic systems for them, study their meta-theories and obtain some technical results.

Derek Green – Reinterpreting Rule-Following

University of Central Florida

Abstract:

Cognitively-sophisticated agents follow rules. This is at least one of their distinctive activities. But rule-following is a controversial phenomenon: in concept, conception, and consequence. This paper will attempt to solve two problems—one of the first sort, and one of the second—and hopefully shed light on the third. The first problem is basically of the same form as the problem for any difficult, interesting concept: what are the informative conditions for rule-following? An agent who follows a rule not only accords with it—acts appropriately with respect to it—but in so doing makes it appropriate to describe the agent, not just her action, as according with that rule. The two standard families of views struggle to account for this dual "appropriateness." Classical views are rarely expressed, but often presupposed. They understand following a rule as a matter of representing a rule with propositional attitudes and intending to accord with it (e.g., Boghossian 2008). These views are subject to well-worn regress charges, and probably misunderstand distinctively rule-following in thought (as opposed to public action). Dispositional views attempt to improve upon classical predecessors (e.g., Martin and Heil 1998; Railton 2006; Yamada 2010; Schlosser 2011). Yet, they do not lack for pro tanto problems of their own, e.g., an inability to give a determinate answer about what rule the agent follows. My proposal—the self-interpretative sense view—is a conception of rule-following that explains the dual appropriateness without incurring competitors' difficulties. An agent A follows rule R with her performance of φ iff$_{df}$...

• a) A can, in suitable conditions, entertain a mode of presentation of φ under which i) φ is A's action and ii) φ is interpretable in suitable circumstances as correct w.r.t R &

• b) A φ's; and

• c) at the time of φ-ing, A lacks any intention to violate R.

The elaboration and defense of this account will acknowledge a (seemingly prohibitively) strange consequence: agents can realize after they've completed following a rule what rule they were following, even though they had neither a very precise, explicit representation of the rule before or while doing so, nor any antecedent or contemporaneous disposition to accord with that rule. In fact, the apparent absurdity is a virtue, not a vice; this is a frequent feature of rule-following.

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Petra Green – Objectivity Without Impartiality

Umeå University

Abstract:

The bias paradox, as formulated by Louise Antony, entails that feminists who claim to be able to expose male biases end up in a paradox if they simultaneously claim knowledge to be situated, because the thesis of situated knowledge entails the rejection of the ideal of impartiality, and this ideal is needed when criticizing biases. Without impartiality, the bias paradox suggests, feminist approaches are nothing more than expressions of women's biases. I argue that the ideal of impartiality can be rejected without such devastating results: even though feminist projects are not impartial, they nonetheless entail an advance in objectivity because they reveal how our social positions limit as well as enable our perceptions, and thus elevate us from the state of merely accepting how the world appears from one position or another to a state of enhanced self-awareness.

Kalle Grill – Neutrality and the Plural Value of Future People

Umeå University

Abstract:

In population ethics, neutrality is the position that the addition to the population of a life with non-exceptional but positive wellbeing is morally neutral. Many find this position intuitively plausible. However, it has been widely criticized. In my presentation, I defend the view against some main objections, by invoking value pluralism. Neutrality has become associated with person-affecting views of the good, which say that one outcome can be better than another only if it is better for some person or persons. However, neutrality should only be taken to deny the value of the wellbeing of additional lives, not the possibility that additional lives contribute to any value whatsoever. I consider three objections to neutrality and how different values can be invoked in response: First, it has been argued that neutrality counter-intuitively implies that it would have been no loss if currently existing people never existed. One response to this objection is that existing lives contribute to the complexity and diversity of human culture, and that this has value. Second, it has been argued that neutrality counter-intuitively implies that the end of humanity would not be bad. In response, neutrality is compatible with the view that the existence over time of humanity as a collective, in sufficient numbers, has value. Third, it has been argued that neutrality counter-intuitively implies indifference between a future where all people live good lives, and one in which all live much poorer (but positive) lives. In response, first, better lives might tend to produce greater achievements and better chances of long-term survival, and, second, high minimum and maximum wellbeing may have independent value. In sum, the case against neutrality depends to a large extent on value monism, while neutrality is a natural ally to value pluralism.

Johan Gustafsson – Utilitarianism Without Moral Aggregation

Gothenburg, York, IFFS

Abstract:

Is it better to save many people and let one person die than to save the one and let the many die? According to the standard evaluative form of utilitarianism, it would be better because the sum total of well-being would be greater. This kind of justification involves a controversial form of moral aggregation, because it is based on a comparison between aggregates of different people's well-being. An alternative justification of its being better to save the many, which does not involve moral aggregation, is the Argument for Best Outcomes. I extend this argument to show that any utilitarian evaluation can be justified by four fundamental principles without relying on moral aggregation.

Susan Haack – "Post 'Post-Truth': Are We There Yet?"

University of Miami

Abstract:

I begin (§1) by explaining what prompted me to return to the topic of truth: the skepticism, in this era of "post-truth" about truthfulness, the sense that lies, half-truths, economy with the truth, "spin," and the like are now ubiquitous; and the doubts about the very idea of truth, as if the concept had been revealed to be illegitimate, a kind of smokescreen to disguise those lies, etc. I continue (§2) by suggesting why the claim that concern for truth is on the decline may, sadly, be true. Then (§3), looking at some of the many forms that carelessness with the truth may take, I show that, so far from revealing that the concept of truth is illegitimate or that there is no such thing as truth, the claim that lies, half-truths, etc., are ubiquitous simply makes no sense unless there *is* such a thing as truth, and a legitimate truth-concept. After that, (§4) I'll argue that there is, *of course*, such a thing as objective truth, and a robust truth-concept. And finally, (§5) I'll suggest some ways to fight against the rising tide of unconcern for truth—and give my answer to the question in my title.

Sven Ove Hansson – What Is Equal Opportunity, and Is It Worth Striving For?

KTH Royal Institute of Technology

Abstract:

One might expect the meaning of the phrase "equal opportunity" to be derivable from its two components "equal" and "opportunity". However, this is not how the term is used today. In the late nineteenth century, "equal opportunity" obtained a specialized meaning that cannot be derived from the meanings of its constituent words. The "equality" of equal opportunity refers to equality between groups rather than among individuals, and the "opportunities" mostly concern access to desirable activities and resources that are important for a person's career and chances in life. The ideal of equal opportunity has often been criticized by egalitarians who consider it to be an insufficient form of equality. The concept of equal opportunity is also unusually difficult to pin down. Contrary to many other social goals, the ideal of equal opportunity does not seem to have a well-defined endpoint, that is, it does not seem possible to describe a plausible social state in which equal opportunity is perfectly satisfied. In this presentation it is argued that in spite of this, equal opportunity has sufficient directional precision to be a viable social goal. Furthermore, it is argued that strivings for equal opportunity form an essential component of an egalitarian agenda for current societies. This is largely because equal opportunities are the opposite of discrimination, i.e. worse treatment of people because they belong to certain groups. Discrimination is a particularly destructive form of inequality, since each act of discrimination contributes to perpetuating a pattern that can persist for generations. Viable policies for equal opportunities cannot be based on the "starting-gate" idea according to which opportunities should be offered only on a single occasion, after which the individual is left to her own devices. We all need to be offered new chances and opportunities on successive occasions in our lives.

Tobias Hansson Wahlberg – The Creation of Institutional Reality, Special Theory Of Relativity, and Mere Cambridge Change

Lund University

Abstract:

Saying so can make it so, J. L. Austin taught us long ago. Famously, John Searle has developed this Austinian insight in an account of the construction of institutional reality. Searle maintains that so-called Status Function Declarations create worldly institutional facts corresponding to the propositional content of the declarations. In this talk, I argue that Searle's account of the making of institutional reality is in tension with the special theory of relativity and should be replaced by a more modest theory which interprets the results of Status Function Declarations in terms of mere Cambridge change and institutional truth. I end the talk by indicating the import of this more modest theory for theorizing about the causal standing of institutional phenomena.

Fredrik Haraldsen – The Ordinary Notion of "Belief"

University of Agder

Abstract:

Classical epistemology has traditionally worked with a qualitative notion of belief, or outright belief, which in epistemic logics is often represented as a propositional operator. In confirmation theory, however, doxastic states are rather treated as degrees of belief, represented by probability functions. Providing a manual for translation between outright belief talk and degrees-of-belief talk is a non-trivial matter, especially in light of certain well-known paradoxes. The source of tension is the philosophers' notion of outright belief. I argue that this notion does not reflect the notion of belief used in ordinary discourse, which I, based for instance on the discussion in Hawthorne et al. (2015), argue is closer to: S believes that p iff S' credence in p is higher than her credence in any salient alternative option. Although this notion and the philosophers' notion agree on easy cases (S believes that p if S is more confident that p than not-p, for instance), the possibility of varying the contrast class drives the notions apart in more complex cases. For instance, outright belief requires (and my analysis does not) that S's credence in p must be >.5 to correctly ascribe a belief in p to S, insofar as not-p is often not the salient contrast in cases where logical space is more finely grained. In addition, my definition, as opposed to the classical notion,

i)   sustains straightforward translations between belief and degrees-of-belief talk,
ii)   avoids the familiar lottery and preface paradoxes,
iii)   yields consistent behavior (supports closure) in formal epistemological models.

Importantly, I give is a conceptual analysis of the notion of belief as ascribed to oneself or others in a context, not agents' doxastic states, which I take to be best understood as confidence levels – instead of pragmatic encroachment on doxastic states, we need contrast sensitivity in contexts of ascriptions. Nevertheless, if I am correct, since the classical understanding outright belief does not correspond to our everyday notion it must be viewed, at best, as a technical construct that has to earn its keep by being theoretically useful. I argue, however, that ordinary belief, as defined, above does an at least equally good job in (e.g.) explanations of actions, or in reporting epistemic states corresponding to unqualified assertions, leaving the classical notion theoretically otiose.

Jaakko Hirvelä – Justification and The Knowledge-Connection

University of Helsinki

Abstract:

I will argue that the justificatory status of a belief depends on whether it could amount to knowledge. To be justified is to be in a position in which one could know. A bit more precisely, one is doxastically justified to believe that p just in case the way in which one believes that p yields knowledge of p in some close possible world. Since all known beliefs could be known, knowledge entails justification. Since some false beliefs might have qualified as knowledge if they had been true, justification does not entail truth. I call this the modal account of justification. The account I propose secures a tight connection between knowledge and justification. It just reverses the traditional order of explanation in a knowledge first spirit. Justification is explained in terms of knowledge, not the other way around. My central aim is to reveal certain structural features of justification and how justification relates to knowledge. To accomplish this I will equate knowledge with safe belief. A belief is safe just in case it could not easily have been false. I will demonstrate that justification doesn't iterate trivially, and that the JJ-principle is hence false. I will also show that justification is not a luminous condition. Moreover, I will argue that justification is closed under multi-premise closure in the same way as knowledge is. An interesting consequence of this feature is that one can be justified to believe in preface-style conjunctions, provided that one can know all of the individual conjuncts. Since safety does not demand that the evidential probability of what is known is 1, this entails that one can be justified to believe in propositions that are extremely improbable on one's evidence. I will also prove that Moore-paradoxical beliefs are never justified on the modal account of justification. Finally, I will contrast my proposal with recent knowledge first accounts.

Sabine Hohl – In It Together? An Exploration of the Moral Duties of Co-Parents

University of Bern

Abstract:

Traditionally, the co-parenting relationship has been seen as closely linked to marriage or at least a long-lasting romantic partnership, with the moral duties of co-parents to each other largely subsumed under those of spouses. Due to the diversification of family forms in the last few decades, and the expanding possibilities of reproductive technology, co-parenting is now becoming increasingly de-coupled from romance, but we still largely lack a normative framework for the co-parenting relationship as such. Such a framework would be helpful both for the frequent case of separated couples struggling to redefine their relationship, as well as for people who experiment with new family forms, such as platonic friends raising children together or same-sex couples who include a third (biological) parent in their parenting group. In my paper, I explore the moral duties of co-parents, starting from the assumption that a key aim of this relationship is to provide a stable environment for raising children. I argue that stability and continuity of care for children may best be reached by allowing for some level of flexibility and transformation in the relationship between co-parents (such as a shift from romance to friendship), while setting some core rules for the co-parenting aspect of the relationship. I further argue that the law should provide a framework for the co-parenting relationship that allows for some of the duties co-parents incur to each other to be made legally binding, independently from the parents' romantic relationship status.

Heine Holmen – Death and the Consolation of Philosophy

University of Tromsø

Abstract:

Is it a task for philosophy to reconcile us with death? Many philosophers have thought so. Indeed, many have considered death and coming to terms with it as a constitutive aim of philosophy. Socrates simply defined philosophy as having "the one aim […] to practice for dying and death". He is followed by Montaigne who champions the idea that "to study philosophize is nothing but to prepare one's self to die". For them philosophy has a consolatory or therapeutic function: by discussing and gaining insight into the nature of death, philosophy may make our lives better and reduce fear of death. One of the more famous arguments with that intent are attributed to Epicurus who argues that "the most horrifying of evils, means nothing to us, then, because so long as we are existent death is not present and whenever it is present we are non-existent". Whatever the force is to this and related arguments, many philosophers today are sceptical about such therapeutic aims. According to them, all a philosopher can come up with qua philosopher are arguments, theories and rational considerations and these are not the right tools for exorcising fears. As Setiya puts it: "[Y]ou cannot argue someone out of being afraid to die". His point is that when fear already has a grip on you, "philosophy comes too late": "the fear is in one's bones" and thus unassailable by reason and argument. In my view, this is too pessimistic. For one thing, it is at odds with the ancient ideal of a practical and compassionate philosophy whose ambition is to address our lives and aid us by reflection. Moreover, I think this scepticism hinges on dubious assumptions. First, it assumes that philosophy is narrowly restricted to rational arguments. Secondly, it makes the false assumption that emotions like fear are insensitive to reason and argument. I argue that there is more to the repertoire of philosophy than rational arguments and that emotions like fear have rational or cognitivist aspect to them.

Leia Hopf – Inclusion and Fairness in Education

University of Bristol

Abstract:

'Inclusion is indisputably one of the most important values and objectives in the field of education' (Felder, 2018). Many want mainstream education to be accessible to everyone, especially for marginalised groups which continuously face barriers to education (e.g. children with special educational needs and disabilities). Yet inclusion is nonetheless contested. Some worry that it cannot provide appropriate support to everyone. Barrow (2001) and Wilson (1999), for example, see increasing diversity in schools as a major challenge to providing everyone with an adequate education. However, there are different understandings of inclusion, which its skeptics often fail to take into account or dismiss as irrational or ideological. In this talk I look at an argument made against inclusion, and use it to showcase why clarification and conceptual disambiguation is necessary. Although inclusion is central to many debates in education, the concept itself can be hard to grasp. In its most basic sense, inclusion can be seen as a process where an individual or a smaller group becomes part of a bigger group. However, why they should be included and how inclusion should take place is widely debated. Many disagree about what the aims of inclusion are and how these aims can be achieved. Barrow, for example, fears that including everyone in the same educational environment will make classrooms more diverse, making it difficult to provide everyone with an adequate and effective education. He claims that there is no reason to believe that inclusion is educationally beneficial and that the arguments made in favour of inclusion fail to justify its widespread implementation. However, this worry relies on his understanding of inclusion as a form of placement only and his quite traditional view of what is 'educationally beneficial'. Consequentially he mischaracterises some of the arguments made in favour of inclusion and hence fails to rule them out as justification for implementation.

Sören Häggqvist – Natural Kinds and Scientific Realism

Stockholm University

Abstract:

On an influential line of thought, natural kinds are kinds whose instances share known and unknown properties due to some underlying structure, mechanism, or history. In general form, this thesis is common ground for essentialist and homeostatic property cluster (HPC) theories alike. And it is often held that inductions based on a kind are warranted only insofar as its instances resemble each other due to such underlying factors. Moreover, this view is sometimes said to be required by scientific realism. I argue that the view is false and that scientific realism does not entail it. The common thread joining essentialist and HPC theories is the demand for a uniting, metaphysical ground for kindhood. While looser in the case of HPC than in essentialism, this grounding demand has incurred two liabilities only partially met so far: (1) of stating clearly just what the ground is, and (2) squaring the account's results with empirical findings about various scientific categories which we have some prior stake in accommodating. I outline how both problems have led to the abandonment of essentialism and a recent fragmentation of HPC approaches. An adequate account has to avoid two pitfalls: that of vacuously defining as natural those kinds which lend themselves to induction; and that of excluding epistemically fertile kinds by imposing metaphysical preconceptions. Of course, a strong conventionalism is to be avoided as well. I end on a cautiously optimistic note concerning our prospects for vindicating the objectivity of kinds even if the grounding demand is weakened.

Rögnvaldur Ingthorsson – A Partial Defence of Causal Necessity

Lund University

Abstract:

The Aristotelian view that effects are produced through the exertion of influence between powerful particulars is again becoming popular among causal realists. So also has the question of whether causal connections are necessary. Today, causal realists tend to deny the necessity of causal connections. They not only meekly accept this point, but go to great length to argue in favour of it. I will restate the problem of causal necessity in a form relevant for causal realism, and challenge popular arguments against it. Many arguments against causal necessity are formulated on the assumption that we are dealing with some form of conceptual necessity for which the actual nature of existent reality is irrelevant. Such arguments, while pertinent to those who take an armchair approach to metaphysics, are irrelevant to those who take a naturalist approach. I will grant that there is no mere conceptual necessity to be found in causation. For a naturalist however, causation is not a feature of the way we think, but a feature of mind independent reality. Consequently, questions of what can, cannot, and must be the case (i.e. modality), must be conditioned by the fundamental structure of reality. Having sidelined a priori approaches, I will consider two arguments against causal necessity: Russell's action at a temporal distance argument, and Mumford and Anjum's version of the interference and prevention arguments. I will argue that Russell invents a causal realist view of causation that no one has ever appealed to in defence of causal necessity; it is a straw man argument. Sadly, the view he invented came to be considered the standard causal realist view throughout the 20th Century, one I will dub relational realism. I consider some objections to it, e.g. that it cannot be reconciled with natural science. Mumford and Anjum take themselves to revive a different kind of realism; powers-based causation. However, they think it isn't able to cope with the problem of interference and prevention. I will argue that this is because they operate with a conception of cause as mere sets of powers. I will argue that if we take into consideration the role of the particulars that bear the powers, there is no possibility of interference and prevention.

Karsten Klint Jensen – Collective Harm and Individual Obligation

University of Copenhagen

Abstract:

Consider collective harm problems where very many people contribute to some harm, the aggregated result of which is serious harm, but everyone's contribution to the harm is minuscule. Typically, very many people are in a situation, where they can reduce some of this harm. I shall argue that, in this type of situation, consequentialism implies that each person has an obligation to reduce the harm. In situations, where there is a range of possible acts, from doing nothing over doing very little up to doing very much, this obligation may be very demanding, when others are unlikely to do anything. But contrary to what Peter Singer claims in his seminal "Famine, Affluence, and Morality", consequentialism does have this implication. Singer is of course attracted to the vision that, if many persons contribute, each has only to do a little. But, I shall argue, it is not a solution to make the obligation to reduce harm dependent on (an expectation that) others contribute. However, when each person tries to fulfill her obligation, there are serious co-ordination problems, because each level of aggregate harm reduction can be obtained through very many patterns of behavior. I shall suggest that consequentialism needs a decision procedure that allows co-ordination problems to be solved and try to sketch how it could look like.

Jesper Jerkert – Blinding and Bias

KTH Royal Institute of Technology

Abstract:

"Blind" (or "blinded") is a frequently used characterisation of humans involved in experimental studies. The basic meaning involves a relevant ignorance (lack of knowledge). This ignorance is often assumed to be achieved through more or less concrete safeguards applied by the experimenter, cutting off any improper information transfer in the course of the experiment. In some literature, such an experimenter-imposed state of ignorance is narrowly taken as a defining feature of experimental blinding. This is reasonable in some experimental fields, but comparisons between experimental fields demonstrate variable interrelations between different methodological precautions claimed to create or reinforce blinding and actual states of relevant ignorance. A simple example is that a person P in a certain experimental situation may be in a desirable state of ignorance without the experimenter's involvement. Using the concept of blinding in such a case, we may then say that P is blind without having been blinded. And conversely, even though the experimenter has eliminated improper information transfer in the course of the experiment, so that successful blinding is achieved in the narrow sense, a bias resulting from common patterns of thought in different humans may still be present. We may then say that the persons have been actively blinded but are still not fully blind. Whereas it is important to make distinctions between different methodological states and precautions, it is equally important to understand under what circumstances, and why, they may be related. Blinding is a concept with many facets.

Jens Johansson – Abortion and Deprivation

Uppsala University

Abstract:

A central claim in abortion ethics is the *Harm Claim*: the claim that abortion harms the fetus. One popular argument for the Harm Claim is based on the counterfactual account of harm, according to which an event harms an individual just in case he or she would have had a higher lifetime well-being level if the event had not occurred. Most critics of the Harm Claim either argue against the counterfactual account of harm or argue that since we have never been fetuses, the aborted fetus would not have had a positive lifetime well-being level even if it had continued to live. I suggest that even if the counterfactual account is true and we have been fetuses, the Harm Claim can be denied on the grounds that the aborted fetus does not have a lifetime well-being level.

Ragnhild Iveranna Jordahl – Non-Fundamental Powers?

University of Bergen

Abstract:

In this article I look at developments in the metaphysics of modality concerning powers. We agree that powers are dispositional properties, but there is disagreement regarding what these properties can do. I argue that powers are useful in the following ways. They explain property identity at the fundamental level, and they ground laws of nature. There are, however, several theories arguing that a powers-based ontology can explain more, e.g. causality. Hence, it is important to specify what a power is. I follow Bird in claiming that powers are sparse properties which are essentially dispositional. They are present at least at the fundamental level where there is no further structure. As they cannot be reduced to or explained by their structure, their essence is tied to what they do and can do. The main question in my article is the following. Can powers also exist at non-fundamental levels? If non-fundamental powers existed, they could be a contribution to our understanding of emergent properties. Our definition of powers as properties that are essentially dispositional as well as sparse does not preclude non-fundamental properties being powers. However, if we are to argue that there are non-fundamental powers, we need to find examples of properties which are non-fundamental, sparse, and essentially dispositional. Even if these properties are structurally complex, their essences are still what they do. [Bird, 2018] argues that such properties exist, and that evolved functional properties is an example. In this article I argue against Bird. His argument leads to the following problems.

1) it over-generates powers and generalises beyond what is intended.

2) the relationship between sparsity and laws is not consistent and leads to contradiction.

I argue that Bird's solution is not satisfying. The arguments for accepting non-fundamental powers are not strong enough. It is still unclear whether powers can be used to explain more than property identity and laws of nature.

Susan Kennedy – A Matter of Convention? From Procreation to Parenthood

Boston University

Abstract:

It seems like simply a matter of convention that current social and legal institutions are arranged in such a way that, by default, biological parents acquire rights and responsibilities to raise their child. After discussing how the current convention is morally problematic, I will consider an alternative social arrangement for child-rearing that aims to better-serve the interests of parents and children. Namely, the Redistribution Challenge proposes that children should be routinely re-distributed away from their biological parents and placed in the care of those individuals that are deemed adequate parents. In order to reject this proposal, the right to parent one's biological child must be defended. Rather than attempting to defend such a right on that basis of some causal feature of procreation, I will advance the voluntarist account, which maintains that a necessary condition for acquiring parental rights is that an individual makes a voluntary decision to undertake them. In order to address how the brute facts of procreation may serve to constrain one's ability to make a voluntary choice, I will argue that artificial womb technology (ectogenesis) offers an opportunity to install an important juncture on the track from procreation to parenthood; a track that is all too often coervice owing to the pressures it places on procreators to assume child-rearing responsibilities. I will consider how ectogenesis will affect the permissibility of abortion in light of the father's request to become a parent to the child, as well as the status of negative procreative rights that allow biological parents to prevent their genetically-related child from coming into existence. In conclusion, I will explain why the social arrangement I have proposed, wherein biological parents voluntarily acquire rights and responsibilities to their child, ought to be preferred.

Jonathan Knowles – Does Anti-Represenationalism Entail Anti-Realism?

NTNU

Abstract:

According to metaphysical realism (MR) the world is a fixed totality of objects and properties that exist (for the most part) independently of language and thought, but that we can talk about in virtue of referring to those objects and properties in language and thought ('representationalism'). According to Hilary Putnam and Huw Price this picture of our relation to the world is fundamentally flawed. Both have argued in different but related ways that it offers no way of making sense of determinate reference relations, at least one that is compatible with a reasonable kind of naturalistic requirement on what can constitute such relations. Does the rejection of representationalism imply a kind of anti-realism? Some, like Michael Devitt, have thought not, taking MR to be wholly unconnected to semantic issues. Putnam himself at one time seemed to take the opposing view, developing a view he called 'internal realism'. However, he gradually recanted on this, seeing his repudiation of MR as in no way in conflict with a full-blown kind of realism whereby the world exists independently of the mind. On the other hand, and somewhat confusingly, he maintained a belief in conceptual relativity, which can seem to imply a kind of Kantian picture on which ultimate reality lacks intrinsic structure but nevertheless can make true structured factual statements. Price has never suggested his anti-representationalism involves divergence from a kind of common sense realist view. I think that representationalism is, pace Devitt, a necessary presupposition of MR; however, since the latter, along with the former, is incoherent according to anti-representationalists, this involves no real concession to anti-realism. Beyond this the idea that anti-representationalism commits one to any substantive kind of anti-realism, including the kind of Kantianism just sketched, strikes me as unwarranted. It is true that AR implies a view of meaning as use that means that what gives 'shape' to our truth-aimed utterances and what facts, therefore, they express does not involve a relation to something beyond these utterances. But it would be a use-mention fallacy to think this implies existence claims are relative to language (a point made by Price as well as Hirsch and Thomasson). Moreover, though AR does imply that truths are dependent on language there is no straightforward way of deriving from this the idea that objects themselves are so dependent. Conceptual relativity is a notoriously difficult doctrine to untangle, but neither does not it have any strong motivation from the two main kinds of examples Putnam has used, concerning mereology and empirically equivalent theories in science (as I shall argue). In sum, anti-representationalism plausibly involves a kind of *vertical* pluralism (a term of Price's), whereby we employ discourses of many different kinds with different roles in our lives, none of which latch on to 'the real', but not a *horizontal* pluralism whereby the same facts can be conceptualised in different ways.

Naomi Korem – Do Category Mistakes Warrant a Revision of Logic?

Tel Aviv University

Abstract:

Category mistakes are sentences such as "This stone is thinking about Vienna" (Carnap), "Saturday is in bed" (Ryle), and "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously" (Chomsky). Roughly speaking, they generally involve the application of a predicate to an object for which the predicate seems inapplicable. One way to map the views about category mistakes is by their attitude to the semantic status of category mistakes (as suggested by Magidor 2013). Some believe category mistakes are meaningless, some believe they are meaningful but lack standard truth-value, while others believe they are meaningful and standardly truth-valued. With these views in mind, one can ask the following questions about the `logical status' of category mistakes. Is standard-logic fit to handle them? And if not, should it be revised? According to one answer, standard-logic is perfectly fit to handle category mistakes. This approach coincides nicely with the view that category mistakes are meaningful and standardly truth-valued. In contrast, on the view that category mistakes are neither true nor false (whether or not they are meaningless as well), standard-logic is obviously unequipped to handle them. The question then becomes whether category mistakes warrant a revision of standard-logic. An affirmative answer to this question is more plausible on the view that category mistakes, though neither true nor false, are at least meaningful. Denying the warrant for a revision is more appealing on the view that category mistakes do not only lack standard truth-value, but are also meaningless. It is this view, that category mistakes are `non-items' of logic (a term borrowed from S. Haack 1974), I wish to reject. I will first argue that the no-item view is weakly supported. Then, I'll assume that the view is correct, and propose that it leads to unacceptable results. It would be concluded, by a reductio, that the no-item view is not only weakly supported but also incorrect.

Rasmus Rosenberg Larsen – Mapping the Patient's Experience: An Applied Ontological Framework For Patient Phenomenology In Mental Health Research And Practice

University of Toronto Mississauga

Abstract:

Mental health research faces a suite of unresolved challenges that have contributed to a stagnation of research efforts over recent years, with a negative impact on treatment innovation. One such challenge is how to reliably and validly account for the subjective side of patient symptomatology, that is, the patient's inner experiences or patient phenomenology. While some aspects of patient experiences are included in diagnostic criteria, the focus is usually on diagnostic categories as a whole (e.g. 'depression') and on tracking outwardly observed signs (e.g. behaviors). This situation is arguably due to a lack of standardisation efforts of patient phenomenology, with a shortage of existing tools and resources for clinical and research purposes. Providing a structured, standardised semantics for patient phenomenology would enable future research in novel directions. In this contribution, we survey existing standardisation efforts in this domain, including both the clinical descriptive literature of patient phenomenology and the more foundational philosophical tradition of phenomenology. In an attempt to correct and resolve the gap in the field, we offer a tentative formalisation of patient phenomenology within the framework of an applied ontology, more specifically, within the broader context of the existing open-source Open Biomedical Ontologies resources such as the Mental Functioning Ontology and the Mental Disease Ontology. We discuss a number of prevailing challenges and observations imperative to this task: (1) how to reliably and validly assess and annotate patient phenomenology for research and treatment purposes; (2) the importance of annotating the relationship and differences between the patient's and clinician's perspective on the same phenomena; (3) the relationship to symptoms and signs in already implemented clinical categorisations such as the DSM and the RDoC framework; (4) the importance of future steps towards implementing this tool into treatment facilities in close connection with research-based data repositories.

Palle Leth – Are Implicatures Deniable?

Stockholm University

Abstract:

Implicatures are widely thought to be deniable in the sense that the speaker can deny having meant whatever she did not explicitly state. Even though theorists admit that many implicatures are only implausibly denied (Pinker et al. 2008, Sternau et al. 2016), the conviction persists that the speaker is committed to the semantic meaning of her utterance only (Dummett 1986) and that it is in the nature of implicatures to be deniable (Camp 2018). This is because semantic meaning, in being determined by public linguistic and contextual parameters, is factual and objective, whereas implicatures depend on the hearer's assumptions about the speaker's intention which the speaker may always rebut (Fricker 2012, Stokke 2013 & 2018). By having recourse to implicitly conveyed meaning the speaker avoids commitment and shifts responsibility onto the hearer (Soames 2008, Camp 2008). Against this view, I observe that in case the hearer holds the speaker responsible for her utterance, the hearer's claim is simply that she had the best reasons to understand the speaker's utterance the way she did. The fact that utterance accountability depends on nothing but the most reasonable interpretation of the utterance shows two things. First, the speaker's denial of having meant what the hearer took her to convey is irrelevant, since the speaker's actual intention is not at issue, but the epistemic evaluation of the warrantability of the hearer's interpretation. Second, there is no a priori reason why the most reasonable interpretation could not include pragmatic aspects of meaning, since the hearer can have good reasons to understand something beyond the semantic meaning of the utterance. Because the question is what meaning the hearer was warranted in taking the speaker to convey judging from the various cues available to her, neither the speaker's actual intention nor the semantic meaning of her utterance is decisive. An additional argument comes from the fact that the speaker's commitment to the semantic meaning of her utterance in any case also involves a hearer assumption, namely that the speaker is speaking seriously. I conclude that though many implicatures certainly are deniable, it is not in their nature to be so; whether they are depends on the circumstances at hand. This conception of implicature deniability is in accordance with legal practice: speakers may be convicted of perjury or defamation on account of mere innuendos (Burger 1973, Robertson & Nicol 2002, Quinn 2015).

Lars Lindblom – Knowledge, Justice, and Unions

Linköping University

Abstract:

This presentation will make the case for a normative theory of justice for unions. It takes as its starting point a Rawlsian account of economic justice and proceeds to argue for this view based on considerations of information that play a pivotal role in the economic theory of labor markets. First, it makes the claim that since incomplete employment contracts are explained by radical uncertainty about the future, consent cannot justify employer authority. Instead, contestability implemented through unions are needed to justify such authority. Second, it will be argued, in the context of John Stuart Mill's normative theory of unions, that the reasons for having unions in standard firms are also present under workplace democracy. Third, further considerations of from the theory of the firms will be adduced to rebut the claim that Lindbeck's insider-outsider theory shows that successful unions bring about unfair outcomes for non-members. Fourth, by combining the work of Friedman, Hayek and Coase, it will be shown that unions are indispensable sources of information for the regulation of markets.

Sten Lindström – Paradoxes in the Foundations of Intensional Logic

Umeå University / Uppsala University

Abstract:

I will discuss a number of paradoxes that threaten various general frameworks for intensional logic, in particular, Frege's theory of sense and reference, Russellian intensional logic (as reconstructed by Alonzo Church), and Montague's Intensional logic. These frameworks incorporate different methods of semantic analysis with different basic concepts and different ontologies, but they are all threatened by paradox.

Paradoxes to be discussed are:

Epimenides' Paradox. Let E be the proposition expressed by "Epimenides' favorite proposition is not true". It seems possible that E is the one and only favorite proposition of Epimenides. But then E must be true if and only if it is not true. So the situation that we envisaged as being possible is not possible after all. *Kaplan's paradox.* For any proposition p, it should be at least logically possible that p is Epimenides favorite proposition. Let f be a function, which to every proposition assigns a world f(p) where p is Epimenides favorite proposition. Now we can proceed in two ways. Letting p be E, we immediately get a contradiction by the reasoning above. We can also observe that the mapping f is a one-to-one mapping from the set of propositions into the set of possible worlds. Hence, there must be at least as many possible worlds as there are propositions. On the other hand, if we identify propositions with sets of possible worlds, there are by Cantor's theorem more propositions than there are worlds. Contradiction.

Russell-Myhill's paradox. For every set of propositions X, there seems to be a proposition $\wedge X$, the conjunction of the propositions in X, which is true if and only if all the propositions in X are true. If X and Y are different sets of propositions, it seems that $\wedge X$ and $\wedge Y$ must be different propositions. That is, the function $\wedge$ from sets of propositions to propositions is one-to-one. But this is contrary to Cantor's theorem according to which there are more sets of propositions than propositions. The Russell-Myhill paradox implies that Russellian simple type theory and Fregean semantics are threatened by paradox as soon as propositions are assumed to satisfy a *principle of maximum distinction*: two propositions are identical only if they are built up in the same way from the same constituents.

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Gaetano Masciullo – Aristotle's Ontological Account of Time

Università della Svizzera Italiana

Abstract:

What is time for Aristotle? A lot of different readings have been endorsed by different thinkers. Here I defend my own view, which tries to consider the whole opus of the ancient Macedonian philosopher. The paper is structured as follows: (1) since, according to Aristotle, to define something means to point out the genus and specific difference, namely to set it into the ontological catalogue of the world, I analyze firstly the genus which time belongs to, by a close attention to Categories; (2) then, having defined the genus, I find its specific difference, by a close attention to Physics and, (2.1; 2.2) since the definition of time involves many other concepts, as now, 'when', movement, mutation, number and magnitude, I point out them in relation with the concept of time; (3) furthermore, according to Aristotle, to know something means always to know its four causes: then, I attempt to explain the matter or substrate of time through the contemporary notion of 'grounding relation' and I try to draw an exhaustive 'grounding tree' of time, showing what grounds what in relation to time; (4) then, I expose the particular Aristotelian view of future, which I call 'conceptual branching tree future', and which outlines Aristotle as a particular case of presentist and which explains why saying that past and future do not exist is different from saying that Death Star does not exist; (5) finally, I expose what the agent of time is, necessary to preserve its accidental nature, and (6) what the goal of time is.

Jennifer Nagel – The Epistemic Backchannel

University of Toronto

Abstract:

In the regular flow of human conversation, we send many signals to each other about what we do and do not know. This talk examines what sociologists call "the epistemic backchannel", with an eye to understanding its purpose and its impact on communication. Empirical work on representations of the epistemic gradient between speakers can help philosophers understand the social division of epistemic labor. At the same time, empirical theories of what is happening in the backchannel can be improved by philosophical attention to the distinction between knowing and merely seeming to know.

Dr CL Nash – The Door and the Cage; A Global Ontology of Women's Incarceration

Independent Scholar

Abstract:

While many are aware of the U.S. as a leader in mass incarceration, many are unaware of the disproportionate impact of detention for women of color. The impact of gendered detention is one of today's most urgent social issues. Within the U.S., Black boys are suspended and later incarcerated at three times the rate of their White male counterparts. However, Black girls and women are six times as likely as their White female counterparts to become suspended from schools and later incarcerated. A leader in mass incarceration, the U.S. incarcerates its female citizens of color at an alarming rate. As one of today's most urgent social issues, a political philosophy which engages philosophies of incarceration, broadly construed, is helpful. By exploring the matrix of gender, class and race, this paper engages the carceral state from an intersectional framework. Rather than rely upon rigid philosophical categories, this project deliberately works to challenge philosophical categories as an attempt to work against the isolation which silences the conscience of the western world. In "Sentencing and Prison Practices in Germany and the Netherlands: Implications for the United States," authors Subramanian and Shames make clear comparisons between incarceration practices in the U.S. and abroad (Subramanian, 2013). One of the most stark contrasts, is that prisoners in Germany, reside in private rooms with doors. The inmates maintain their own keys. This is in contrast to American prisons which frequently house several inmates together behind caged doors to allow for constant surveillance. (Haley, 2016) Currently, the rate of women's incarceration is outpacing the rate of incarceration for men. I begin the essay by examining gender and incarceration at the local level. I conclude by examining alternative approaches provided in two NATO partner countries with information that will possibly lead to solutions in reducing/abolishing mass incarceration practices within the U.S.

Laura Nicoara – Pornography, Speech Acts and Fiction

University of Southern California

Abstract:

The speech act family of arguments against pornography (as found in, e.g., Langton 1993, Langton and West 1999, McGowan 2009) relies on the view that in depicting misogynistic content, pornography also performs the illocutionary act of subordinating women. This paper has two aims: to articulate two challenges to the classic speech act approach, and to develop a novel anti-pornography speech-act based argument. The first challenge, inspired by a classic objection made by Saul (2006), relies on a separation between works (understood as all kinds of media), acts of work-production, and acts of work-consumption. Since these three elements are logically independent of each other, the traditional speech act-based approach entails that any piece of violently misogynistic pornography produced and consumed with neutral or benevolent intentions is morally unproblematic - a result which many anti-pornography feminists reject. The second challenge is a more sophisticated formulation of a popular pro-pornography defense - pornography is 'just fiction', and so cannot be said to perform genuine speech acts. I argue that pornography is indeed to be understood as fiction, where 'fiction' is a term of art designating a kind of speech act whereby a speaker gives directions to potential audiences, prescribing them to imagine, without believing, a number of propositions, and to respond to them in certain ways. I show that direction-giving speech acts have a special property: they result in works which ensure that the illocutionary force intended by the speaker is preserved in the act of work-consumption. Next, I argue that while pornography does not aim at truth, the responses it prescribes are directed at real natural and social kinds, and that responding positively to images of a kind is a way to wrong those who belong to it.

Maria Nordström – Transport Justice Reconceived

KTH Royal Institute of Technology

Abstract:

The notion of transportation justice has gained a growing interest in recent years, mostly within the transportation field. Here, the need to travel is commonly seen as derived, i.e.travel is needed to participate in desired activities. Therefore, increased accessibility is seen as the key benefit of many transportation projects from the perspective of transport economics and public policy.

Starting with the work that has been done in transportation policy and economics, this paper distinguishes between two, often conflated, notions of transportation justice that have not been explicitly discussed thus far. I have, based on the current literature, identified and defined two views of justice: the accessibility view and the mobility view. The former, most common in the literature, considers justice related to accessibility conceptualized as a measure of potential opportunities, seeing travel as necessary for activity participation and access to public services and goods. The later view considers transportation justice from the perspective of mobility, defined as potential transport, being of intrinsic value. In this sense, mobility or the potential to overcome physical distances is essentially freedom of movement.

Based on my definitions, I criticize the accessibility view on the grounds of being problematic with regards to distinguishing transportation from other means of getting access to activities, goods and services. If the accessibility view is adopted, the government needs to view transport investments as a part of a whole of investments to bring necessary ends to its citizens. Rather than viewing transport infrastructure as a separate entity, it should be judged based on how efficiently it satisfies the ends it strives to satisfy compared to other non-infrastructure interventions. Also, a discussion regarding transportation justice on the basis of this account is not particularly informative since the right to transportation is viewed only as a prerequisite to other 'rights'. If travel is viewed as extrinsically motivated, any account of transportation justice is with regards to the ends the travel is intended to meet. I argue that if one aims to meaning fully discuss transportation justice, the focus should be on the mobility view. I justify this claim on the basis of the sense of agency it provides and the capabilities approach. Lastly, I discuss implications of dismissing the accessibility view and adopting the mobility view for transportation policy and draw some general conclusions.

Ethan Nowak – On Recognition: Language Use as Skillful Activity

Umeå University

Abstract:

Recognition is an idea that shows up in various guises in a variety of important places in philosophy. According to the Gricean tradition in the philosophy of language, what it is for a sentence to mean P is (roughly) for it to be uttered with the intention that listeners come to believe that P in virtue of recognizing that intention. Kantian ethics is built on the recognition of other people as agents, and in political philosophy, recognition is used to underpin claims about what are sometimes called `the politics of difference', i.e., special rights for certain groups. In this paper, I describe a notion of recognition that blends elements from these senses of the term. I will try to describe a notion of recognition that brings out some of the social and political significance of the state's recognition of minority rights, but which does not involve group identification. The notion I am after involves some of the linguistic significance of Grice, but without the determinate meanings and particular intentions. Finally, I will try and capture something of the Kantian picture of agency, but without any particular moral upshot. The kind of recognition I describe is like the kind that is at work when we see someone do something we recognize to be skillful---I take this sense of recognition to reveal something important about our linguistic practice, and I try to say what that something is.

Karl Nygren – A Problem for Rabinowicz's Fitting Attitude Analysis of Value Relations

Stockholm University

Abstract:

According to fitting attitude analyses of value, value can be analyzed in terms of fitting attitudes. Goodness can be understood in terms of fitting pro-attitudes whereas badness can be understood in terms of fitting con-attitudes. In a series of recent writings, Wlodek Rabinowicz (2008; 2009; 2011; 2012) has explored the possibility of giving a fitting attitude analysis of comparative values as well. On Rabinowicz's analysis, value relations can be understood in terms of required and permitted preferences. According to Rabinowicz, such a fitting attitude analysis can account for standard value relations such as betterness, worseness and equal goodness, as well as non-standard ones such as relations of value incomparability and parity. In this talk, we present a problem for Rabinowicz's analysis. Earlier objections (Gustafsson 2013; Rossi 2017) have targeted the attitudinal component of the analysis. Our objection, in contrast, is aimed at the normative component. The problem is that Rabinowicz wants to remain neutral with respect to whether the requirements and permissions at work in the analysis are of a moral kind, a rational kind, or some still other kind. We argue that when the requirements and permissions are qualified in the most plausible ways, the analysis yields counterintuitive results. In particular, we show that the analysis turns paradigmatic cases of equal goodness into cases of parity.

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Takashi Oki – Aristotle on Deliberation and Necessitarianism

Nagoya University

Abstract:

The problem of compatibility/incompatibility between the possibility of meaningful deliberation and necessitarianism (the view that everything happens of necessity) has long been a topic of discussion, and it is well known that Aristotle is concerned with the problem in De Interpretatione 9. He thinks that if everything happens of necessity (18b30-31), then 'there would be no need to deliberate or to take trouble, thinking that if we do this, this will happen, but if we do not, it will not' (18b31-33). In this paper, I argue that Aristotle is a deliberation incompatibilist, and consider why he thinks that it is reasonable to endorse this position. First, while interpreting his presentation of the necessitarian argument (18a34-18b16) as a reductio (pace Bobzien 2011; Nielsen 2011), I show that Aristotle thinks that deliberation is inefficacious if the future is necessary (in the sense of being fixed/irrevocable) in the way the past and present are. Second, I argue that the necessitarian conclusion that 'everything is and happens of necessity' (18b30-31), which is considered to be incompatible with deliberation, should be distinguished from the view that everything that happens happens of necessity, independently of antecedent conditions (pace Nielsen 2011). Further, I also show that Aristotle's argument on the inefficaciousness of deliberation is not a sort of 'Lazy Argument' (pace Sorabji 1980). Third, I argue that, in Aristotle's view, the principle that 'if we do this, this will happen, but if we do not, it will not' (18b32-33) would hold even if everything happens of necessity. By pointing out that Aristotle accepts that one could still 'causally affect some future events' even if everything happens of necessity, I show that Fine's (1984) contention that 'since one can causally affect some future events, one can deliberate about them' misses the point.

Jonas Olson – Brentano's Theory of Value: Good and Fitting?

Stockholm University

Abstract:

Franz Brentano (1838-1917) is mostly known for his work in the philosophy of mind. In recent times, however, his theory of value has been rediscovered by metaethicists and value theorists, as the so-called 'fitting attitude' account of value has become hotly debated, and as Brentano is considered one of the founding fathers—perhaps *the* founding father—of the account. In this talk, I shall consider certain aspects of his theory of value and of his metaethics more broadly. My focus will be on Brentano's own texts and on a recent book-length study of Brentano's philosophy, Uriah Kriegel's *Brentano's Philosophical System: Mind, Being, and Value* (OUP 2018).

Nicolas Olsson Yaouzis – Dissemination of Ideology and the Filter Hypothesis: Data From Swedish Philosophy Departments

Stockholm University

Abstract:

Several radical philosophers claim that mainstream political philosophy is ideological (e.g., Mills 2005, Finlayson 2015, Geuss 2008). Most philosophers interested in ideology and false consciousness merely provide "possibility theorems" showing that it is possible to explain how ideology is disseminated without having to invoke extravagant ontological assumptions. (See, e.g, Stanley 2015) This paper uses data from Statistic Sweden and LADOK to empirically test an implication of the claim that mainstream political philosophy is ideological. It is shown that the data supports the claim.

Søren Overgaard – 'The Value of Reality': Reconsidering Merleau-Ponty's Account of Hallucination

University of Copenhagen

Abstract:

In his short, but philosophically rich discussion of hallucination in the *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty emphasizes that any satisfactory account of the phenomenon must be able to explain two things: first, the fact that patients mostly distinguish between their hallucinations and their perceptions, and secondly, the fact that hallucinations nevertheless can deceive patients. He attempts to meet both desiderata by sketching an account according to which hallucinatory experiences do not have the full-fledged 'horizonal' structure of genuinely perceptual ones, but where the two have a certain basic 'function' in common, such that hallucinations may come to have the 'value of reality'.

However, as I suggest in my talk, it is unclear whether Merleau-Ponty's account succeeds in meeting these desiderata. On Komarine Romdenh-Romluc's reading of Merleau-Ponty – which to my knowledge offers the clearest, most thorough reconstruction of his account of hallucination to date – his account is incoherent, I shall argue. Given this, the principle of charity demands that we raise the question of whether Romdenh-Romluc's reading is mandatory. I suggest it is not, and proceed to sketch an alternative reading, which meets the desiderata.

Elisa Paganini – Fictional and Mythical Entities Without Imagined Ones

Università degli Studi di Milano

Abstract:

Creationist philosophers about fictional entities agree that it is a particular attitude by which a specific name or description is introduced in fiction that allows for the existence of fictional objects as abstract entities. And according to some philosophers, it is a different attitude that allows for the existence of mythical objects: the attitude of mistakenly believing that there are such entities. Now, a creationist philosopher for fictional and mythical objects is challenged by the following question (raised by Caplan 2004): why don't we accept imagined objects? i.e. Why don't we accept objects whose existence depends on the imagining of a person? What is so specific about the make-believe or the mistakenly believing attitude that distinguishes them from the imagination attitude? The starting point of the present work is that there is no reasonable answer to this question, but there are good reasons to allow for the existence of fictional and mythical objects as abstract entities, while there is no reason to allow for the existence of imagined objects. Once this is acknowledged, a different characterization of fictional and mythical objects is proposed which distinguishes them from alleged imagined objects. The idea proposed is that what allows for the existence of fictional and mythical objects is not the attitude of a single person introducing certain names; what is instead crucial is the actual involvement of the receivers of the fiction or the myth. It is because the receivers of the fiction accept to become engaged in make-believe towards a shared content that there are fictional objects and it is because the receivers of the myth mistakenly believe a shared content that there are mythical entities. Instead, when a person describes her imagination to receivers, they may share a content and they may entertain it, but they do not endorse the content (as instead make-believers and false believers do).

Robert Pál – What Is This Thing Called Anger?

Lund University

Abstract:

Recently, Martha Nussbaum (2016) has argued that anger conceptually involves a wish for payback, which she believes to be normatively problematic. Anger is therefore problematic along with it. Given that this is a correct analysis of the nature of anger, it must follow that there is a necessary connection between all instances of anger episodes and a wish for payback. In this paper, I will show that this is a problematic characterization of the nature of anger. In contrast, I will propose that we should be open to think of anger as a diverse and heterogeneous affect class and that the instances of affect episodes which we denote with the umbrella term 'anger' may vary with respect to neurophysiological and somatovisceral changes, bodily expressions, action tendencies and phenomenological quality. In other words, what I will advocate for is a pluralistic account, which I shall call 'Hedonic Functionalism'. According to this view, 'anger' refers to a plurality of affective phenomena which share a 'family resemblance' to one another. This resemblance is cashed out in terms of two generic properties (1) functional bodily changes and (2) a hedonic quality (a hedonic tone or a set of hedonic tones).

Niall Paterson – Safety, Necessity, and Hyperintensionality

University of Helsinki

Abstract:

Can epistemic luck be captured by modal conditions such as safety from error? This paper answers 'no'. There are two central tasks. The first is to cast an old problem in a new light. It will be argued that the trivial satisfaction associated with necessary truths and accidentally robust propositions is a symptom of a more general disease: epistemic luck but not safety from error is hyperintensional. The second is to argue that as a consequence the standard solution to deal with this worry, namely the invocation of content variation, fails. Finally, it is tentatively suggested that epistemic luck's hyperintensionality derives from its being an explanatory notion, and an analogy is drawn with failures of probabilstic conceptions of explanation in the philosophy of science.

Gregory Peterson – Populism as Cognitive Bias Against Knowledge Elites

South Dakota State University

Abstract:

Populism remains difficult to define. Properly speaking, populist movements just are movements expressing the desire that governance reflects the "will of the people," and so one way to understand populism is in terms of majoritarianism. But populist movements typically define themselves in terms of opposition, either to political and economic elites or to perceived community outsiders. Despite this commonality, populisms are surprisingly diverse, and they do not otherwise share ideological commitments that more typically characterize other types of political movements. This paper proposes that a little-recognized feature of populist movements is their opposition not simply to political and economic elites, but opposition to "knowledge elites" and the "elite knowledge" that they have access to. Populist movements share a variety of anti-science commitments, including opposition to the findings of climate science as well as the results of evolutionary theory. The rise of populism coincides as well with the rise of anti-vaccine movements and opposition to GM crops, and populist movements ignore economic theory when it comes to issues of tariffs and monetary policy. Part I of the paper presents the argument for understanding contemporary populisms in terms of knowledge-elite opposition. Part II of the paper considers explanation of this phenomenon in terms of two, linked intellectual vices: an irrational preference for personalistic explanation, and a group-based form of closed-mindedness defined in opposition to documented forms of open-minded thinking. These vices are mutually reinforcing, and they are linked to political preferences for personalistic forms of governance appealing to nationalism or a "great leader" over impersonal institutions. Further, these vices are not merely the result of situational factors but are chronic traits at least partially amenable to learning and education.

Stellan Petersson – The Present Perfect, Context Dependence and Event Semantics

University of Gothenburg

Abstract:

Consider the following sentence: (1) IFK Norrköping has won Allsvenskan. An utterance of (1) can have at least two readings. First, the intuitive truth conditions can be that IFK Norrköping won Allsvenskan at some point in the past. On this reading, the utterance is true if uttered in 2018, since the team won Allsvenskan in 2015. Secondly, (1) can have the reading that IFK Norrköping is the winner of the year when the utterance is made. If it is supposed that the utterance is made after the last match in 2018, (1) is false, on this second reading. In this talk, I present a novel approach to the present perfect in English, focusing on (1). The account combines Reichenbach's treatment of tense with the approach to the present perfect in terms of result states, associated with e.g. Jespersen. The proposal is formulated within the model-theoretic framework of event semantics, which is intended to account for various phenomena of semantic context dependence. I begin by outlining the framework of event semantics and the implementation of Reichenbach's and Jespersen's approach to tense and the present perfect within that set-up. A crucial idea put forward in the talk is that present perfect sentences contain indexical expressions referring to speech events and contextually salient events. The notion of indexical expressions, well known from the work of Kaplan, and the related notion of saturation, discussed by e.g. Recanati, are thereby shown to be relevant to this particular linguistic phenomenon. The talk is ended by a comparison to alternative accounts of sentences like (1), in terms of conventional implicature and presupposition. I conclude that my suggestion is a viable and empiricially supported alternative to such approaches.

Panu Raatikainen – Natural Kinds Terms Again

Tampere University

Abstract:

In the last few decades, the new externalist picture of natural kind terms due to Kripke, Putnam and others has become quite popular in philosophy. In a recent paper in BJPS, Häggqvist and Wikforss criticize heavily this view. They contend that it depends essentially on a view of natural kinds that is widely rejected among philosophers of science, and that a scientifically reasonable metaphysics entails resurrection of some version of descriptivism.

I shall argue that although Häggqvist and Wikforss make many apt observations, the situation is not quite as dark for the externalist view as they suggest. There are several distinct questions here which should not be conflated and should dealt with one by one.

My primary goal is not, however, to attack Häggqvist and Wikforss. Rather, I shall use their critical discussion as a baseline, and my principal aim is to clarify the whole area and to put forward certain positive views about natural kinds and natural kind terms.

Wlodek Rabinowicz – Can Parfit's Appeal to Incommensurabilities Help to Block the Continuum Argument for the Repugnant Conclusion?

Lund University

Abstract:

Blocking the Continuum Argument for the Repugnant Conclusion by an appeal to incommensurabilities in value, as has been suggested by Parfit (2016), is an attractive option. But the relevant incommensurabilities ('imprecise equalities' in Parfit's own terminology) need to be very thoroughgoing to achieve this result: they need to be 'persistent' in the sense to be explained. While such persistency is highly atypical and might well seem to be problematic, I suggest how it can be explained if incommensurability is interpreted on the lines of the fitting-attitudes analysis of value, as permissibility of divergent preferential attitudes towards the items that are being compared. However, even if Parfit's main suggestion can thus be defended, some of his substantive value assumptions must be given up, to avoid implausible implications. In particular, his Simple View regarding the marginal value of added lives cannot be retained.

Manya Raman-Sundstrom – The Notion of Mathematical Fit

Umeå University

Abstract:

That there is beauty in mathematics is rarely disputed. How to characterize that beauty, however, has been elusively difficult. Perhaps because of this difficulty the main texts in this field are popular accounts. In recent years there has been an attempt to make the field of mathematical aesthetics more rigorous. For example Montano, building on McAllister and others, suggests a unified account of aesthetic experiences, values, and judgments in mathematics. Inglis and Aberdein gathered large databases of mathematicians' use of aesthetic terms and used statistical methods to analyze them. Still, for the most part, results of recent years have led to lists of criteria for identifying beauty. However helpful, these lists tend to lack an explanatory frame to justify why these features—and exactly these features—determine beauty. Our work has taken a slightly different approach. Rather than focus on beauty, we try to analyze the related notion of mathematical fit. Mathematical fit, roughly described, gives a way of measuring how well a proof proves. Given two proofs which establish the truth of a claim, one could be said to be a better fit if gives the sense of being right, or better, or arising in the feeling of "Yes, that is how to do it!" Not all proofs that fit are necessarily beautiful. Nor do all beautiful proofs fit. But understanding why some proofs fit better than others provides some small steps forward to understanding why some proofs appeal more than others. Our paper uses as examples three theorems with contrasting proofs that fit more or less well. We look at three different relations in which fit might be found: between proof and the theorem, proof and a reader, proof and mathematics as a whole. While fit is not beauty, it does have the benefit of being more tractable. This allows us to describe, in very simple terms, why one proof is "better" than another, and to specify, in some detail, what "better" might mean.

Olle Risberg – Meta-Skepticism

Uppsala University

Abstract:

Traditional 'first-order' skeptical challenges to our beliefs about the external world seek to establish that those beliefs are unjustified, or fail to constitute knowledge, even if they happen to be true. My aim in this talk is to articulate a different type of skepticism—'meta-skepticism'—which focuses not on the possibility, but on the significance, of knowledge, justification, and the like. One way to motivate the meta-skeptical challenge appeals to the idea that our concepts of knowledge and justification seem to be only some of the many possible epistemic concepts that we could have had. Hence, even if these concepts happen to be 'skepticism-unfriendly', so to speak, there are at least some possible relevantly similar concepts that are 'skepticism-friendly', in the sense that our beliefs about the external world fail to satisfy them. For example, even if anti-skeptics are right that knowledge does not require that we can 'rule out' scenarios in which we are radically deceived on the basis of perception, there is at least one possible knowledge-like concept which does require this for its satisfaction. Maybe this is not the concept of knowledge. But to say that some concept is the concept of knowledge is just to say that it is the concept that we express with the word 'knowledge' in English. And this raises the question: what is so great about the concepts that we use? Surely the mere fact that we happen to use them carries no weight. Whether we are genuinely better or worse off with regard to skeptical threats cannot plausibly depend on whether we happen to speak in a certain way. And what the meta-skeptic doubts is that there is any other plausible answer to this question. Hence, unlike first-order skeptical challenges, this challenge has the potential to remain unanswered even if we temporarily grant that we know that we have hands, that the external world exists, and so on.

Thor Rydin – Philosophy as Therapy: Huizinga and the Conditions of History

Department of History of Science and Ideas (UU)

Abstract:

The therapeutic capacity of Wittgenstein's philosophy of language has been recognized and discussed ever since Wittgenstein (1889 – 1951) himself. In fact, more than any other twentieth-century philosopher, it is arguably Wittgenstein who is most commonly associated with 'therapeutic approaches' to philosophical problems. This paper aims to show that (1) during and after Wittgenstein's life, other explicitly therapeutic philosophies took shape, too, and (2) why these lesser known philosophies ought to be included in discussions regarding the therapeutic capacity of twentieth-century philosophy and its history. For the first purpose, the present paper shall discuss the philosophies of Ernst Cassirer (1874 – 1945) and, especially, Johan Huizinga (1872 – 1945). Both authors described their philosophies of history as a "mirror" whereby one could achieve "clarity and calmness" (Cassirer), "withdrawal" from the world, "open-mindedness and happiness" (Huizinga). Huizinga in particular, stressed how his philosophy of history could serve as a "therapy" [therapie] for its practitioners. Drawing explicitly from the Kantian tradition, both Cassirer and Huizinga argued that explorations into the critical conditions of history, rather than in historical particularities themselves, allowed the philosopher of history to treat nostalgia as well as irrational hopes and longings. The virtues of their respective therapies, I show, were stoic in nature and inspiration, and were presented explicitly as answers to the political turmoil of post-WWI Europe. For its second purpose, this paper aims to show that the inclusion of Huizinga and Cassirer in the debates on philosophy's therapeutic potential is interesting for at least two reasons. First of all, in the wake of Foucault it has been common to take Kantian thought as a prime example of modern philosophy's supposed inability to 'take care of the self.' By exploring the central role of the stoic heritage in Huizinga and Cassirer's Kantian philosophy of history, this paper sets to discredit this stereotype: during the interwar period there was such a thing as Kantian 'care of the self.' Secondly, by including Cassirer and Huizinga in discussions on philosophical therapy, these discussions could be drawn into untapped contemporary fields, such as political philosophy. Huizinga's 'In Tomorrow's Shadows' (1938) and Cassirer's 'Myth of the State' (1946) discussed the need for historical reflection's consoling effect as a response to a world overcome by violent political "myths."

Alex Sandgren – Interpretation and Truth: A Better Solution to Putnam's Paradox

Umeå University

Abstract:

In 'Putnam's Paradox', David Lewis considers an argument for the conclusion that all claims (and beliefs) are true. This conclusion is taken by almost everyone (with the notable exception of Catherine Elgin) to be disastrous. The most common response to the argument, favoured by Lewis himself and others, is to avoid the conclusion by appealing to eligibility constraints on interpretation that are not tied to the psychology or conventions of representors either individually or collectively; some things (and contents) are just objectively more eligible to be represented in thought and talk. In this paper I defend a different response to the argument that is rather less metaphysically extravagant, and fits better with how linguistic and mental representations are used in science and everyday life.

Signe Savén – Evaluating the Longtermism Paradigm

Lund University

Abstract

The longtermism paradigm can be understood as "the idea that because of the potential vastness of the future portion of the history of sentient life, it may well be that the primary determinant of which actions are best is the effects of those actions on the very long-run future, rather than on more immediate considerations". The paradigm consists of two key components: (i) insofar as consequences matter for the value of actions, all consequences of an action matter, (not just "direct" ones), and (ii) all consequences of a given type matter equally (regardless of where or when they occur). If consequences matter for the value of actions and (i) and (ii) are true, then it may indeed be the case that (iii) the primary determinant of which actions are best is the effect these actions have on the very long-run future. Insofar that we have reason to (try to) do what is best (which seems plausible), (iii) has the potential to change common-sense beliefs about how we ought to act. Thus, it is warranted to evaluate whether – and if so to what extent – consequences matter for the value of actions, as well as (i)-(iii). I argue that even if consequences are not all that matters for the value of an action, the consequences of an action are at least part of what determines the value of the action. I proceed by discussing and clarifying (i) and (ii), arguing that they are both intuitively plausible. Lastly, I evaluate the plausibility of (iii), arguing that its plausibility depends on what is meant by 'best'. I conclude that if we adopt an impartial, objective, value-based understanding of 'best', it is rational to place a non-zero credence in the view that the primary determinant of which actions are best is the effects of those actions on the very long-run future.

Christoffer Skogholt – The Metaphor of the Selfish Gene: A Critical Analysis

Uppsala University

Abstract:

In this paper I will analyze the metaphor of the selfish gene, and Dawkins use of it in The Selfish Gene ([1976]2016). In the secondary literature it has become almost a commonplace to say that this metaphor has been misunderstood, a complaint that Dawkins himself has aired several times. Others, however, contest the claim that Dawkins has been misunderstood (see Gintis, Bowles, Boyd, Fehr 2003). I think some clarification of the debate is possible if one distinguishes between a weaker and a stronger thesis in The Selfish Gene. The stronger thesis is that since natural selection only favors genes that are (metaphorically speaking) selfish, we should expect organisms that have evolved through natural selection to be selfish in the vernacular sense. (Dawkins 2016, p 5 and other passages). The weaker thesis is that natural selection exclusively works at the level of genes, as opposed to group-selection theories according to which natural selection can select traits that are advantageous for group fitness but not for the individual's fitness. In The Selfish Gene the weaker thesis is, I will argue, presented as an argument for the stronger thesis, a claim that is problematic. This is arguably the reason for Dawkins' wish to retreat to the weaker thesis in the discussions; the stronger thesis is explicitly stated in the book, which is hard to explain if Dawkins never entertained it. If, however, Dawkins is read as only putting forward the weaker thesis, another problem arises: The pedagogical purpose of a metaphor is to illuminate something less known or understood through a concept or image that is clearer, better known or understood. If Dawkins is merely advocating the weaker thesis, then the metaphor of the selfish gene becomes misleading, because what a gene must be like in order to qualify as selfish in Dawkins sense bear little resemblance to the vernacular concept of selfishness.

Rachel Sterken – Speaking Authentically

University of Oslo

Abstract:

In this talk, I provide an analysis of authentic speech. In addition, I pose and answer various questions about authentic speech: What are paradigm examples of authentic speech and inauthentic speech? Is authentic speech valuable? What are its purposes? Is authentic speech possible? How does authentic speech differ from sincere speech? Do any speech acts have authenticity conditions?

Andreas Stokke and Nils Franzén – What Is Infelicity?

Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study, Uppsala University

Uppsala University

Abstract:

Arguments appealing to the infelicity of particular utterances loom large in many areas of contemporary philosophy, including philosophy of language, epistemology, ethics, and metaethics. It is often taken for granted that judgments about infelicity – standardly marked by "#," "?," or more rarely, "!" – are shared and readily available. Yet there is surprisingly little work on what constitutes infelicity in an utterance. This paper assesses different notions of infelicity, and offers some evaluation of what role they are apt to play in philosophical arguments. The paper proposes a working distinction between semantic and pragmatic infelicity. The former are cases in which what is said is inconsistent, as in (1).

    (1) a. It was James who ate the cake. #But no-one ate the cake.
           b. #Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.

If it was James who ate the cake, then it cannot be true that no-one ate it. Similarly, nothing can be both colorless and green. By contrast, according to this broad delineation, cases of pragmatic infelicity are cases in which what is said generates a conflict in contextual assumptions, as in (2)-(3).

    (2) It's raining. #But I don't believe it's raining.
    (3) A. I'm out of gas.
           B. There's a gas station around the corner.
           A. Oh, do you think I can get gas there?
           B. #No.

A number of problem-cases are discussed in terms of this broad divide, including negation of conventional implicatures, as in (4), cases involving indexicals and demonstratives, as in (5), and cases involving non-assertoric speech-acts, as in (6).

    (4) Ames was, as the press reported, a successful spy. #But the press never reported on Ames.
    (5) *Looking at a field full of cows, without gesturing*: #That one needs milking.
    (6) What's on the menu? #I don't want to know what's on the menu.

We discuss some questions concerning what kind of conclusions are legitimate given these different kinds of infelicity.

Elisabeth Swartling – How Do We Account for Complex Psychological Attitudes to Fictional Events? A Response to Walton's Fearing Fictions

Uppsala University

Abstract:

In Fearing Fictions Walton argues that when we encounter something horrible in a fictional universe such as aliens or slime, we do not actually experience fear. Instead, we experience something he calls quasi-fear, which is the result of us engaging in make-believe. In other words, we know that the events depicted in Jurassic Park are fictional and therefore our psychological attitude to the film can be described as pretending to experience real fear when we see a velociraptor on the screen. Yet, I argue that while Walton's notion of quasi-fear can be applied to slime and fictional dinosaurs, it does not explain why we have more complex psychological attitudes when indulging in other types of fiction. After all, our psychological attitude to the slime is different from the one which we have when listening to Verdi's La Traviata. My aim is to enquire into what type of fictions incite more complex psychological attitudes and how they differ from fictions which incite quasi-emotions. Firstly, I will examine Walton's notion of quasi-emotions and what type of fictions he uses to illustrate his point. Yet, since Walton mainly refers to fictions which do not portray events which are likely to trigger any complex psychological attitudes. I shall revisit On the Standard of Taste in which Hume argues that some artworks stand the test of time because they discuss themes which continue to be universally relevant. I will argue that works of fiction which have stood the test of time are more likely to incite more complex psychological attitudes because of the existential questions they deal with. Furthermore, I argue that fictions that have stood the test of time, incite complex psychological attitudes because they refer to something we experience in the real world. Yet, we do not believe that the fictional events are a part of the real world. Thus, I will conclude that Walton's account of our psychological attitudes towards fictions is too general.

Erik Svärd-Bäcklin – Must Reasons-for-Action Be Able to Motivate Us?

Umeå University

Abstract:

I will consider an argument often discussed as potentially supporting internalism about normative reasons-for-action. This argument posits a motivational requirement – according to which we must be able to be motivated by the reasons that truly apply to us – and adds to this a humean theory concerning which considerations that we can be motivated by (those that, if true or obtaining, explain or establish why some action promotes satisfaction of the agent's pro-attitudes), in order to derive internalism (the idea, roughly, that putative normative reasons must be considerations that, if true or obtaining, explains or establishes why some action promotes satisfaction of the agent's pro-attitudes). I will maintain that if the argument is given the interpretation that I propose, it is plausible though not incontrovertible. However, the main point I wish to make about the argument is that, surprisingly, the typical "externalist" (who rejects "internalism") can accept and accommodate the conclusion of this argument in a plausible way. We can recognize this if we make a distinction between notional and real reasons – a distinction that seems plausible on independent grounds. A notional reason, I propose, is a consideration that possesses a latent reason-giving force that is compatible with there being further conditions that are necessary for turning this consideration into a real, full-blooded, reason. One of these conditions might be the capacity to motivate. From here, my argument is that the typical "externalist" probably should be content with asserting that the latent reason-giving force of a consideration like F-ing would save a life is independent of pro-attitudes, while the typical "internalist" probably should be unhappy about accepting even this, and so seek to argue that even the status of a consideration as a notional reason is dependent on pro-attitudes – a conclusion that the motivational argument does not seem well-placed to support.

Nils Säfström – Against the Distance Solution to the Partiality Problem for the Fitting Attitude Account of Value

Stockholm University

Abstract:

According to the fitting attitude account of value (FA), value is to be understood in terms of fitting attitudes. Very roughly, for something to be good(bad) is for it to be fitting for us to (dis)favor it, i.e.to have a pro-(con-)attitude toward it; for one thing to be better(worse)than another is for it to be fitting for us to (dis)favor the former more than the latter; for two things to be equally good(bad)is for it to be fitting for us to (dis)favor both equally much. A problem for FA is the existence of cases in which two things seem equally good(bad), but because we stand in a special relationship to one of the things, it seems fitting for us to (dis)favor that thing more than the other, rather than to (dis)favor both things equally much, which is contrary to what FA would imply. For instance, if Abe suffers equally much as Bea, then Abe's suffering seems equally bad as Bea's. FA therefore implies that it is fitting for us to disfavor Abe's suffering equally much as Bea's. But, if Abe is our child whereas Bea is an utter stranger, it does not seem fitting for us to disfavor Abe's suffering equally much as Bea's; on the contrary, it seems perfectly fitting for us to disfavor Abe's suffering more than Bea's. Cases like this create what is known as the partiality problem for FA. Many solutions have been offered to this problem, and in this talk, I will examine one of them, namely Graham Oddie's distance solution. This solution relies on a version of FA(FAD) that allows distance to make a crucial difference to the degree of disfavor that it is fitting to display vis-à-vis things that are equally bad. If Abe's and Bea's sufferings are equally bad and at an equidistance from us, then FAD would imply that it is fitting for us to disfavor them to the same degree. However, if they are equally bad but we are closer to Abe's suffering than to Bea's, then FAD implies that it is fitting for us to disfavor the former more than the latter, which is the intuitively correct implication. Despite its initial plausibility, I will argue that the distance solution ultimately fails. The notion of distance upon which it relies is metaphorical, and once we start to unpack the metaphor, problems loom.

Orlando Téllez – Husserl, Sellars, And the Myth of the Given

LMU München

Abstract:

The aim of the talk is to outline a sketchy account of perception by means of a critical reflection and evaluation of the protean notion of givenness. In the first part of the talk, we shall bring Wilfrid Sellars's critique of the Myth of the Given to the fore. Following this line of thought, Ray Brassier (2014) and Carl Sachs (2014) claim that Edmund Husserl's static phenomenology is committed to a version of the Myth of the Given, if it holds that "epistemic and semantic roles can be constituted independently of, and prior, to language or any other kind of conceptual consciousness" (Sachs 2014, p. 157). In the second part of the talk I shall submit my own arguments to criticism and defend the view that we can carve out an alternative position, which does not succumb to some versions of the Myth of the Given, by taking into account Husserl's neglected work "Experience and Judgment" (1939). In order to flesh out this claim I shall focus, especially, on the central of active constitution which takes place in the sense formation (Sinnbildung) of perceptual objects. To conclude I shall try to substantiate the claim that Sellars's conception of postulated scientific frameworks can be thought of as a result of idealizations which presuppose a method of naturalization.

Olle Torpman – Utilibertarianism

The Institute for Future Studies

Abstract:

Utilitarianism and libertarianism are rivals in the normative ethics debate. They provide mutually exclusive rightness-criterions and, hence, inconsistent moral prescriptions at a fundamental level. While utilitarianism prescribes maximizing utility, libertarianism prescribes respecting people's liberty. In this paper, I argue that the core ideas of the two views can nevertheless be combined into one single moral theory: Utilibertarianism, as I call it. The basic idea of Utilibertarianism is that individuals are free to do as they want as long as they do not restrict the liberty of others, given that they maximize utility if they use external resources. As a rightness-criterion, it can be formulated more precisely as follows: An act is right if and only if: (i) it does not violate anyone's rights, and (ii) if it involves the use of external resources, these resources are distributed so as to maximize utility. The main argument for Utilibertarianism is that it is better than both utilitarianism and libertarianism, respectively, at explaining our moral intuitions. For instance, it manages to explain both the intuition that people should be free to do nothing at all, and the intuition that people's obligations to help others increases with the amount of resources that they have (since the more resources a person has, the more good she can do). Hence it also avoids some of the counterintuitive implications of both utilitarianism and libertarianism. For instance, it does not (as utilitarianism does) allow us to kill one innocent person in order to use his organs to save several others, and it does not (as libertarianism does) allow us to waste our food when others are starving.

Inge-Bert Täljedal – From Where Does Antonio Rosmini Obtain the Idea of Similarity?

Umeå University

Abstract:

According to the Italian philosopher Antonio Rosmini (1797–1855), there is one and only one innate idea: that of essere (being). Perceptions and ideas of particulars arise when the mind somehow combines the idea of essere with physical sensations, making the judgment: 'There is something which modifies my senses'. Universals are formed by further judgments about the ideas of particulars. Rosmini rejects the Kantian categories as subjective conditions for knowledge but recognizes a similar set of concepts as denoting objective properties of real things. Because things cannot exist without such properties, e.g. unity and number, Rosmini regards them as 'elementary concepts' 'contained' in essere. The relational idea of qualitative identity (similarity), i.e. the idea of being similar to something else, is not mentioned among the elementary concepts. As the formation of universals requires access to similarity, either Rosmini is inconsistent in claiming that essere is the sole innate idea, or similarity can be properly added to Rosmini's list of elementary concepts or derived from perceptions. This problem will be discussed. (Time permitting, a few comments might also be made on Erik Olof Burman's account of Rosmini's philosophy in Burman's essay Den nyare italienska filosofin, 1879).

Bram Vaassen – Causal Exclusion Without Causal Sufficiency

Umeå University

Abstract:

Some non-reductionists about the mind claim that so-called "exclusion arguments" against their position rely on a notion of "causal suffciency" that is particularly problematic. I will argue that such concerns about the role of causal suffciency in exclusion arguments are relatively superficial, since exclusionists can address them by reformulating exclusion arguments in terms of Strict Nomic Sufficiency. The resulting exclusion arguments still face familiar problems, but these are not related to the choice between causal sufficiency and strict nomic sufficiency. The upshot is that objections to the notion of causal sufficiency can be answered in a straightforward fashion and that such objections therefore do not pose a serious threat to exclusion arguments.

Jan-Willem Van Der Rijt – Self-Respect and Toleration

Umeå University

Abstract:

One of the most prominent open questions in the philosophical literature of toleration is that of determining its limits in a non-ad-hoc fashion – a question that has proven so vexing that it is sometimes called a paradox. Though toleration is widely seen as a laudable practice, it is a truism that not everything can be tolerated. However, as only things that are perceived as wrong can be the object of toleration in the first place, the mere wrongness of an action cannot by itself be the reason it should be regarded as intolerable. What other grounds, though, could then be offered to distinguish the tolerable from the intolerable?

In this paper I develop a solution for this problem by scrutinising the (in)compatibility of toleration and self-respect. Unlike many existing analyses of toleration, my primary focus is not the self-esteem of the tolerated, but the self-respect of the tolerator: someone who is too tolerant (an example is the stereotypical 'human doormat') can be accused of a vice akin to servility. Thus conceived, self-respect equates to respect for one's own dignity. Relying on a broadly Kantian notion of dignity as moral lawgiving status I developed in other works, I first argue that the question of the limits of toleration can be recast as one of proper respect for one's own lawgiving status.

Subsequently, I examine each of the classic toleration conceptions (grace/permission, coexistence, respect, esteem) in their relation to the lawgiving status of the tolerator in turn. Respect-based toleration, for example, is shown not to affect the tolerator's lawgiving status, as it can be regarded as recognition of the tolerated's right to do wrong. Most importantly, though, I argue for a re-appraisal of the grace conception of toleration – a conception often considered outmoded and/or inappropriate in contemporary debates. I claim that grace-based toleration is similar to a Kantian wide duty, provided two conditions are met: (1) it is only permitted when it poses no threat to one's own standing, and (2) it must be motivated by a regard for the dignity of the tolerated. Lastly, I show that this implies that though the limits of toleration cannot be drawn without taking circumstances into account, their drawing need not be fully ad hoc either.

François-Lucien Vulliermet – Achieving Global Justice Reconsidering North Korea

Linköping University

Abstract:

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) more commonly known as North Korea, is widely considered as one the most dangerous countries and the worst government on Earth. Seen as an international threat for peace and the stability of the region, debates still occur on the proper course of actions to adopt dealing with it, between sanctions and negotiations. Yet, in 2018, North Korea took the world unexpectedly. After joining the PyeongChang Olympic Games under a reunified banner along its Southern neighbor, the first-ever meeting between the leaders of the United States, President Trump and the DPRK Supreme Leader, Kim Jong Un, took place. The effects of this historic meeting have yet to be known and measured before proving the talks were not another line to the long list of broken promises in the relationships between North Korea and the international community. However, more than ever it may be the sign North Korea is willing to act to peacefully join the ranks of the international community and to adhere to some of its global standards such as human rights. In this article I try to give a better understanding of the DPRK and what an appropriate moral course of action to integrate North Korea could be. To do so, I use one of the most prominent works when it comes to global justice: Rawls' Law of Peoples, which main aim is to achieve global peace and just relationships between societies. While I argue North Korea is an outlaw state according to the different types of societies he recognizes, I join authors who have criticized Rawls' ahistorical approach. I argue that considering the peculiar historical conditions that have given birth to North Korea, not only is North Korea an outlaw state, it also has features of what Rawls calls "burdened societies." A society that has faced unfavorable condition making it hard for it to fulfill the conditions allowing it to join a society of peoples.

Anna Wedin – The Normative Component of 'Doing Nothing' in the Time of Climate Change

KTH Royal Institute of Technology

Abstract:

This paper investigates the normative component of 'doing nothing' in the context of climate change. There are two main responses to climate change: mitigation and adaptation. The former concerns limiting climate change itself by decreasing net emissions, while the latter involves the different measures that will increase our capacity to cope with the negative consequences that climate change will have on society. Among climate change scientists there is a consensus that action is necessary and that we need it sooner rather than later. However, some challenges cannot be addressed immediately but must for practical reasons be postponed. The postponement of action on climate change raises a number of questions: what, if anything, distinguishes postponement from 'doing nothing'? And what does 'doing nothing' mean? The most common understanding of 'doing nothing' is what can be called 'business-as-usual' and is generally undesirable in the context of climate change policy, particularly when addressing mitigation. Yet, in other contexts, 'doing nothing' can be considered as a precautious and even sensible strategy. For example, when determining a suitable healthcare strategy for future heat waves, where we might need to gain more knowledge before making a decision. Moreover, literally 'doing nothing' would mean not contributing more to climate change. This indicates that 'doing nothing' and postponement are not normatively neutral concepts, and this in turn ties in with the discussions on doing and allowing in moral philosophy, and on acts and emissions in action theory. Understanding the implications of positive and negative under-standings of 'doing nothing' in the context of climate change mitigation and adaptation will help in formulating a rational and ethical temporal strategy for climate change policy.

Eleanor Whitehead – How to Respond to The 'Post-Truth' Era

Linköping University

Abstract:

Immanuel Kant would be turning in his grave were he to witness the poetic truths, favourable perspectives, small fibs and outright lies that pollute the media and worm there way into the lives of people living today. A recent poll showed that 72% of Americans believe that news outlets knowingly publish untrue stories. During the divisive 'Brexit' referendum in Britain, voters were lead to believe that the UK would benefit by £350,000m a week, if it left the European Union, a figure that was found to be incorrect yet hugely influential in people's choice to leave. And in 2016 the Oxford Dictionaries word of the year was 'post-truth'. Cases of 'truth' choosing are prolific in areas such as politics: President Trump began his presidency with false claims about the number of people in attendance at his inauguration. When questioned he branded media claims as 'fake news'. A central issue in the discussion of post-truthfulness is rapidly changing technology and media through which we receive information. With so many conflicting sources of information, just one click away, who is to say which correct? I believe the notion of 'post-truth' proves poignant when discussed in relation to ethics and policy making. Often it is not expert opinion but claims that match the intuitions of the reader or policy makers that are accepted as truth. In issues of immigration, penal correction, drug legalization and distributive justice evidence can be found that contradicts the widely held beliefs that inform policy in many western societies. In the ever changing landscape of truthfulness I believe a renewed vigour for reliable research and an embracing of evidence, coupled a healthy scepticism for dubious claims, is required. In my proposed discussion, I examine some of the psychological reasons for why we so willingly accept what everyone 'knows' (or hopes) to be true. Additionally, I highlight some of the many cases where strong evidence contradicts conventional wisdom.

Robert Williams – Persistence and Representation

University of Leeds

Abstract:

The metaphysics of representation seeks a theory of what grounds representational facts—for example, facts about what an individual believes or desires. The metaphysics of persistence seeks a theory of what it takes for something to persist through time. The grounds for representational facts about a person at a time may include facts about that person's circumstances or behaviour at earlier times. The grounds for persistence over time may include appeals to the contents of psychological states of temporal parts of a person. This threatens circularity. The paper will formulate the threat and offer a response.

Timothy Luke Williamson – Causal Decision Theory and Determinism

Australian National University

Abstract:

Many philosophers believe that Causal Decision Theory (CDT) is the correct normative theory for agents whose choices provide them with evidence about the causal structure of the world. There has been growing pressure to revise this belief. One of the most serious causes of concern is that CDT is supposed to go badly wrong in deterministic cases (that is, cases in which certain states in the decision situation are incompatible with certain acts being performed). Indeed, it looks as if the very reasoning that yields the verdict that you should Two-Box in Newcomb's Problem commits the causalist to absurd courses of action in deterministic cases. For example, CDT appears to say that you should bet on the proposition that God has foreordained that you will never bet. Arif Ahmed has recently argued that there is no way for the defender of CDT to handle deterministic cases, and so CDT should be rejected. We think that CDT can deliver the correct recommendations in deterministic cases. Or, more carefully, a modest generalisation of David Lewis' CDT can deliver the correct recommendations in deterministic cases. We diagnose the fault in CDT as arising from a misuse of counterfactuals; standard CDT wrongly requires agents to deliberate counterfactually about outcomes they are certain are not in their power to bring about. Rather than reject counterfactual deliberation in general, however, we claim that deterministic cases show that agents must be careful about which counterfactuals they take as relevant for the purposes of practical deliberation. In particular, agents should give no deliberative weight to outcomes that could only be brought about by breaking the laws of nature (or logic, or metaphysics). This policy 1) is compatible with an independently plausible form of compatibilism, 2) respects the key motivation behind CDT that difference-making matters to rational decision, 3) can readily be formalised within the Lewisian framework for CDT, and 4) yields plausible verdicts in a range of decision problems, including those raised by Ahmed. CDT remains the correct normative theory, even for determinists.

Lars-Daniel Öhman – On the Equivalence of the Principle of Induction and the Well Ordering Property

Umeå University

Abstract:

A commonplace claim in mathematics textbooks on various topics is some version of ``the principle of induction is equivalent to the well-ordering property for the natural numbers''. Less commonplace is a closer specification of what base set of axioms this claimed equivalence is related to. In this talk, we shall (i) briefly account for different ways of introducing the natural numbers, (ii) clarify for which of these ways the claim is correct, incorrect, or not even meaningful, and (iii) indicate possible historical origins of the confusion on the matter. Expanding on (i), some historically occurring variations on the Peano axioms will be treated, in particular an alternative axiomatization first stated by Pieri. On (ii), we will among other things let Dedekind speak on the matter. Finally, on (iii), we will give examples from the literature with less fortunate presentations of the claim, and indicate some influential sources which may have contributed to the confusion.

Sebastian Östlund – Developing a Hybrid Answer to the Capabilitarian Question of the List

Umeå University

Abstract:

Proponents of the capability approach argue that we should focus on distributing substantive freedoms (called 'capabilities') to achieve states of being and doing (called 'functionings'). The debate about which capabilities and functionings matter morally for promotion is known as "the question of the list" and it divides capabilitarian scholars (Robeyns 2005, 105–7, 2017, 169). Distributing capabilities to jump off steep cliffs is a foolish idea. In contrast, distributing capabilities to pursue rewarding careers seems to be a good one. However, explicating why this is the case requires that we compare the capabilities against some evaluative standard. In this paper, my aim is to argue for a family of such evaluative standards that help us answer this question in what Morten Fibieger Byskov (2017) classifies as a mutually reinforcing and non-dichotomous way.

Until recently, there have been two main strategies for designing these evaluative standards, stemming from Martha Nussbaum and Sen. Rutger Claassen (2011, 491) calls Nussbaum's strategy "the philosophical position" since it considers the activity of philosophical reflection the "legitimate place for list making". Claassen (2011) in turn calls Sen's strategy "the democratic position" since it uses democratic deliberation as the method for justifying capability selections. Nussbaum's and Sen's answers to this selection-strategy problem are typically viewed as mutually exclusive. However, Byskov (2017) has shifted focus and suggests that we combine their two positions. Byskov, however, leaves his position as an underdetermined suggestion. I take up the combinatory task extensively. I argue that a fruitful alternative exists to Nussbaum's and Sen's selection-strategies that satisfies Byskov's desiderata in a stratified way. This hybrid strategy consists in applying the democratic and philosophical positions at different levels of capability selection, instead of employing a single one of them in a wholesale way.

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Workshops

Workshop: Metaphysical Explanation

Organizer: Anna-Sofia Maurin (University of Gothenburg)

This workshop explores a couple of issues to do with the nature and application of so-called metaphysical explanation (a type of explanation that, roughly, explains by citing something on which the explanandum non-causally and (mostly) synchronically depends). The nature and application of this sort of explanation is arguably little understood as the debate is so far in its early stages. By organizing this workshop, we hope to play a small part in remedying that situation.

Explaining Why There Is Something Rather Than Nothing

Andrew Brenner (University of Gothenburg)

It is sometimes supposed that, in principle, we cannot offer an explanation for why there is something rather than nothing. I argue that this supposition is a mistake, and stems from a needlessly myopic conception of the form explanations can legitimately take. After making this more general point, I proceed to offer a speculative suggestion regarding one sort of explanation which can in principle serve as an answer to the question ``why is there something rather than nothing?'' The suggestion is that there may be something rather than nothing in virtue of the truth of certain sorts of subjunctive conditionals.

Appropriate Explanatory Distance

Anna-Sofia Maurin (University of Gothenburg)

In this talk, I explore and tentatively defend the idea that metaphysical explanation, in order to 'obtain', must meet a so far little acknowledge and poorly understood (necessary) condition: *Appropriate Explanatory Distance* (AED). This is a condition requiring of any metaphysical explanation (good or bad), that its explanandum and explanans (or, more precisely, what its explanandum and explanans pick out) *resemble each other to an appropriate degree.* In my talk I will (i) give some reasons in favor of accepting AED; (ii) try to spell out *in what respect* as well as *to which degree* explanandum and explanans must resemble in order for an explanation to fulfill AED, and (iii) discuss some of the consequences of adopting AED for our evaluation of some frequently contested explanations.

Metaphysical Grounding and the Mind-Dependence of Explanation

Alexander Skiles (MIT)

Recent literature on the grounding-explanation link primarily focuses on how to reconcile three independently plausible, yet seemingly incompatible, claims. One is that for a fact to be grounded is just for it to have a distinctive type of metaphysical explanation, a popular view that Michael Raven (2015) has dubbed unionism. Another is that facts about what grounds what are fully objective and mind-independent. And the third is that facts about what explains what are less-than-fully objective and thus to some extent mind-dependent. Existing proposals about how to dissolve to this tension all take it for granted that these three claims are not, in fact, compatible, and consist

in rejecting one or more of them. In this paper, I argue that they are compatible. Instead, I dissolve the tension by arguing that the reasoning underlying it is fallacious—in particular, it requires illicitly substituting co-referential expressions within a non-extensional context.

Armstrong's truthmaker argument for the existence of states of affairs revisited

Robin Stenwall (Lund University)

In David Armstrong's famous argument for why contingent predications require the existence of states of affairs in order to be true it is assumed that the necessity that states confer on truth is essentially related to their truthmaking abilities (1997: 113-16). In this article, I argue against this assumption by showing that the alleged necessity has no explanatory role to play in arguing that states of affairs must be included in the ontological catalogue.

How to be an antirealist about metaphysical explanation

Naomi Thompson (University of Southampton)

It is often assumed by metaphysicians that we should be *realists* about metaphysical explanation. There are some dissenting voices, but (aside from gesturing at something to do with mind-independence) very little has been said about what is characteristic of realism or antirealism about explanation in general, and particularly in the context of the recent interest in metaphysical explanation. In this paper, I first offer an account of what would be characteristic of an antirealist approach to explanation. I argue that such accounts are better placed to model metaphysical explanation than generally seems to be assumed in the literature, and I argue in particular that a judgement-dependent account of metaphysical explanation should be considered a worthy rival to the realist orthodoxy. I conclude by explaining how getting clearer on what should be taken to be characteristic of realism and antirealism about metaphysical explanation can help sharpen our accounts, and hence our metaphysical theorising.

Workshop: Responsibility, Biology and Disability

Organizer: Kristien Hens – University of Antwerp

Capacity responsibility, as defined by Hart, is the responsibility associated with a person's capacity to reason, to foresee harm and to carry out behaviour that social norms require from them. For example, a small child has less capacity responsibility than an adult. A person held at gunpoint is also less to blame for the actions she is forced to perform. Also, having certain mental attributes may imply that one is less responsible for one's behaviour or that one is less capable of adapting one's behaviour. It has been suggested, by philosopher of science Ian Hacking and others, that the more 'biological' a condition is considered, the less the person with this condition is considered to blame for her actions. Hence, biology is exculpating. But capacity responsibility is also linked to *normative responsibility*. Normative responsibility is the requirement to care about what one is responsible for. If someone is considered, because for example she has a diagnosis of a neurodevelopmental disorder, as having permanently restricted capacity responsibility, due to her biology, this may affect what learning opportunities are given to that person. If the possibility that she can learn is low, more effort is put into providing a sheltered environment, rather than trying to get her to adapt her behaviour. In this workshop we will tackle the entanglement of responsibility and (concepts of) biology and disability. Does being able to pinpoint a biological cause for a disorder really dissolves the person of responsibility with regards to behaviour related to the disorder? Is maybe the concept of biology that is presupposed in many discussions surrounding responsibility and biology in itself naïve? What can we expect, with regard to responsible behaviour, of people with a mental illness? Do parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children are as cognitively able as possible, even to the extent of changing their genome? The workshop is organized by team members of the ERC funded project NeuroEpigenEthics, which focusses on questions related to responsibility and neurodiversity.

Responsibility in the CRISPR era

Anna Smajdor –University of Oslo

In 2018, the birth of the first gene-edited babies was announced. The ostensible motivation for the editing was to create babies that would be immune to HIV, by disabling a gene that codes for a specific protein 'CCRG' that the HIV virus exploits. However, the deletion of CCRG has been associated with increased cognitive ability in mice. The prospect of human cognitive enhancement has suddenly become a serious consideration. He Jiankui's experiment highlights a number of problematic distinctions: specifically between therapy and enhancement; between research and clinical practice and between patients and prospective parents. Currently, many regulatory, moral and legal restrictions are premised on the idea of clear distinctions between different categories of procedure, and between formal and social roles. In practice, these categories may overlap; questions of responsibility must be responsive to this 'fuzziness'. In this paper I offer some suggestions as to how this might be achieved.

(An Exploration of) The Implications of Epigenetics for Responsibility

Emma Moormann University of Antwerp

Research in epigenetics indicates that gene expression can be influenced by the social and physical environment of an organism. In doing so, epigenetics challenges ethical theories that are based on sharp distinctions between genetic and environmental factors and between innate and acquired traits. This presentation aims to explore a range of problems that epigenetics poses for

responsibility. First, both individuals and society as a collective seem to have the capacity to influence gene expression. This has implications for their respective normative responsibilities for certain acts or traits in an individual. Secondly, epigenetic changes may be heritable. We will need to discuss to what extent actors have normative responsibility and corresponding moral requirements towards future generations. Finally, we will address how the reversibility of epigenetic changes further complicates the discussion.

Responsibility and neurodiversity. An investigation

Kristien Hens University of Antwerp

Studies with adults with a diagnosis of autism and with parents of children with a diagnosis suggest that a diagnosis of autism is often regarded as an indication that the behaviour has its origin before birth, is genetic and lifelong. As such, the diagnosis absolves the child and her parents of responsibility for difficult behavior, and the bar of what can be expected from the child is set much lower than for typical children. In this talk I will discuss how concepts such as innate/acquired, biological/psychosocial, genetic/environmental affect the ways that professionals and stakeholders (persons with a neurodevelopmental disorder and their families) conceive of responsibility in the context of neurodevelopmental disorder. I will use my own empirical research with autistic adults and that of others. I will also point out possible pitfalls of a deterministic interpretation of the causes of certain diagnoses, and suggest how a more dynamic view on human biology may suggest that a more nuanced view on the attribution of responsibilities.

Impaired wrongdoers: How to err on the side of caution

Sofia Jeppsson Umeå University

We recognize the difference between seeing another person as a fellow adult, or seeing her as akin to a child to be cared for. The former attitude has respect and equality going for it, but it usually brings certain demands. When taking up the latter attitude towards someone, we do not risk placing demands on her that she might be unable to live up to; at the same time, it seems disrespectful, and excludes her from normal, equal, adult relationships. This creates a dilemma, when we interact with people who have mental illnesses or mental impairments that make it difficult for them to live up to ordinary demands, but do not seem to place them outside the ballpark of ordinary, adult relationships. An analogous dilemma arises in regards to ourselves, if we are impaired, how much should I demand of myself? Should I regard myself as a regular adult, or as someone who just can't help doing what she does?

Workshop: Population and the Sustainable Development Goals: An Ethical Evaluation

Organizers: Henrik Andersson, Eric Brandstedt, and Olle Torpman, The Institute for Future Studies

Hösten 2015 antog FN:s 193 medlemsstater 17 Globala mål som en del av agenda 2030. Dessa mål innebär bland annat utrotad fattigdom, reducerade ekonomiska ojämlikheter, allas rätt till utbildning, och ett förhindrande av klimatförändringen. Dessa mål har blivit centrala i såväl det svenska som det internationella hållbarhetsarbetet inom många typer av organisationer – både politiska och ideella. Ett hinder för att nå dessa mål, som ofta försummas i hållbarhetsdebatten, är befolkningstillväxten. Befolkningstillväxten utgör ett hinder för de Globala målen bland annat på så vis att fler människor innebär fler munnar att mätta, större uttag av naturresurser och mer utsläpp av växthusgaser.

En anledning till att befolkningsfrågan ofta förbises i hållbarhetsdebatten är att den är politiskt känslig. Många tycker att befolkningsfaktorn skall lämnas orörd av politiker, inte minst eftersom individens reproduktiva frihet annars befaras vara hotad.

Vi har finansierats av Formas för att utveckla ett forskningsprojekt där relationen mellan de Globala målen och befolkningsfaktorn ska utredas. Närmare bestämt utgår vi ifrån följande två forskningshypoteser: (1) befolkningspolicyer bör vidtas som medel för att uppnå de Globala målen, och (2) valet av befolkningspolicyer kräver ett moralisk rättfärdigande.

Fokus kommer att ligga på ett av de globala målen: målet att bekämpa klimatförändringarna. Flertalet frågor måste besvaras för att avgöra om befolkningspolicyer bör antas som ett medel för att uppnå detta mål, bl.a.: Vilken är den optimala befolkningsmängden betraktat ur klimatsynpunkt?; Vem bär det moraliska ansvaret att realisera en sådan befolkningsmängd?; Hur väger de positiva värdena som är knutna till individers reproduktiva frihet i förhållande till dess negativa klimateffekter?

I denna workshop så kommer vårt preliminära arbete med att utforma ett större forskningsprojekt att presenteras. De frågor vi anser vara av störst relevans kommer lyftas och diskuteras men vi kommer också bjuda in till diskussion för att bredda blicken och lyfta fram möjliga förbisedda forskningsfrågor.

Om rätten att få barn

Henrik Andersson, The Institute for Future Studies

Påståendet att vi bör skära ner på vår köttkonsumtion och flyga mindre tycks idag accepteras av fler och fler i vårt samhälle. Påståendet att vi bör föda färre barn tycks dock av många upplevas som ett oerhört provocerande och långt ifrån sansat inlägg i en miljödebatt. Finns det någon filosofisk grund i dessa två skilda reaktioner? I min presentation kommer jag undersöka flera möjliga teser om varför rätten till att föda barn skiljer sig ifrån t.ex. rätten till att få äta kött eller flyga. Konsekvenser av olika ståndpunkter kommer undersökas och ett möjligt rättfärdigande till särstatusen av rätten till att få föda barn kommer försvaras.

Vem bär ansvaret för barnens växthusgasutsläpp?

Eric Brandstedt, The Institute for Future Studies

I en vida spridd och omtalad artikel från 2017 argumenterade Seth Wynes och Kimberly Nicholas att den överlägset mest effektiva handlingen som en individ kan göra för att minska sin klimatbörda är att föda färre barn. Även om artikelförfattarna inte drog slutsatsen själva så menade många andra att studien gav stöd för en individuell moralisk skyldighet att skaffa färre eller inga barn på grund av klimatförändringarna. I presentationen kommer jag problematisera argumentationen för en sådan slutsats. De flesta moralfilosofer är överens om att ett kausalt bidrag i sig är otillräckligt för att etablera moraliskt ansvar. Men jag kommer fokusera på tillskrivandet av det primära orsakssambandet. Vad krävs för att etablera att det är en individs beslut att skaffa barn snarare än barnets framtida beslut att t.ex. flyga som orsakar utsläpp av växthusgaser? Svaret är att både moraliska och pragmatiska övervägande måste tas hänsyn till.

Varför det spelar roll när du skaffar barn

Olle Torpman, The Institute for Future Studies

Det har argumenterats för att det bästa man kan göra för klimatet är att avstå från att skaffa barn. Valet att sätta nya individer till världen är nämligen mer klimatpåfrestande än valet att exempelvis flyga eller äta kött. En för klimatet relevant aspekt av barnaskaffandet, som hittills bortsetts ifrån, har att göra med när i livet man skaffar sina barn. För att se detta kan vi anta två världar. Gemensamt för dem båda är att de har samma initiala befolkningsmängd, med individer som lever i 100 år och som skaffar ett barn vardera (två per föräldrapar). Skillnaden är dock att folk i den ena världen skaffar barn vid 20 års ålder, medan de i den andra världen skaffar barn vid 33 års ålder. I den första världen kommer befolkningen utgöras av fem samtidiga människogenerationer, i den andra endast tre. Eftersom detta påverkar hur många som ska dela på atmosfärens absorptionskapacitet, så spelar det roll för klimatet inte bara hur många barn man skaffar utan också när i livet man skaffar dem.

### *"Bör vi ha färre barn för planetens skull?"*

Sofia Jeppsson, Umeå University

Debattörer har argumenterat för att vi bör skaffa färre barn för att minska den globala uppvärmningen och utarmandet av Jordens naturresurser. Det har invänts att vi kommer att ha en ekologisk katastrof oavsett om vi inte ställer om vår livsstil till en miljövänlig sådan, men om vi gör detta, så är inte flera barn längre något problem. Det är dock troligt att vi lyckas bli något mer miljövänliga utan att därmed göra ytterligare människor helt ekologiskt neutrala, och i så fall kvarstår frågan.

Två viktiga faktorer skiljer dock färre barn från åtgärder som veganism och kollektivtrafik istället för privatbil: För det första så är vår ekonomi beroende av en ökande eller åtminstone inte minskande population på ett mer grundläggande sätt än den beror på, t. ex., fortsatt konsumtion av bilar och animalisk mat. För det andra och absolut viktigast, så är preferensen för att skaffa barn hos folk som vill det rimligtvis ofta *mycket* starkare än preferensen för att, t. ex., köra din egen bil och äta animalisk mat.
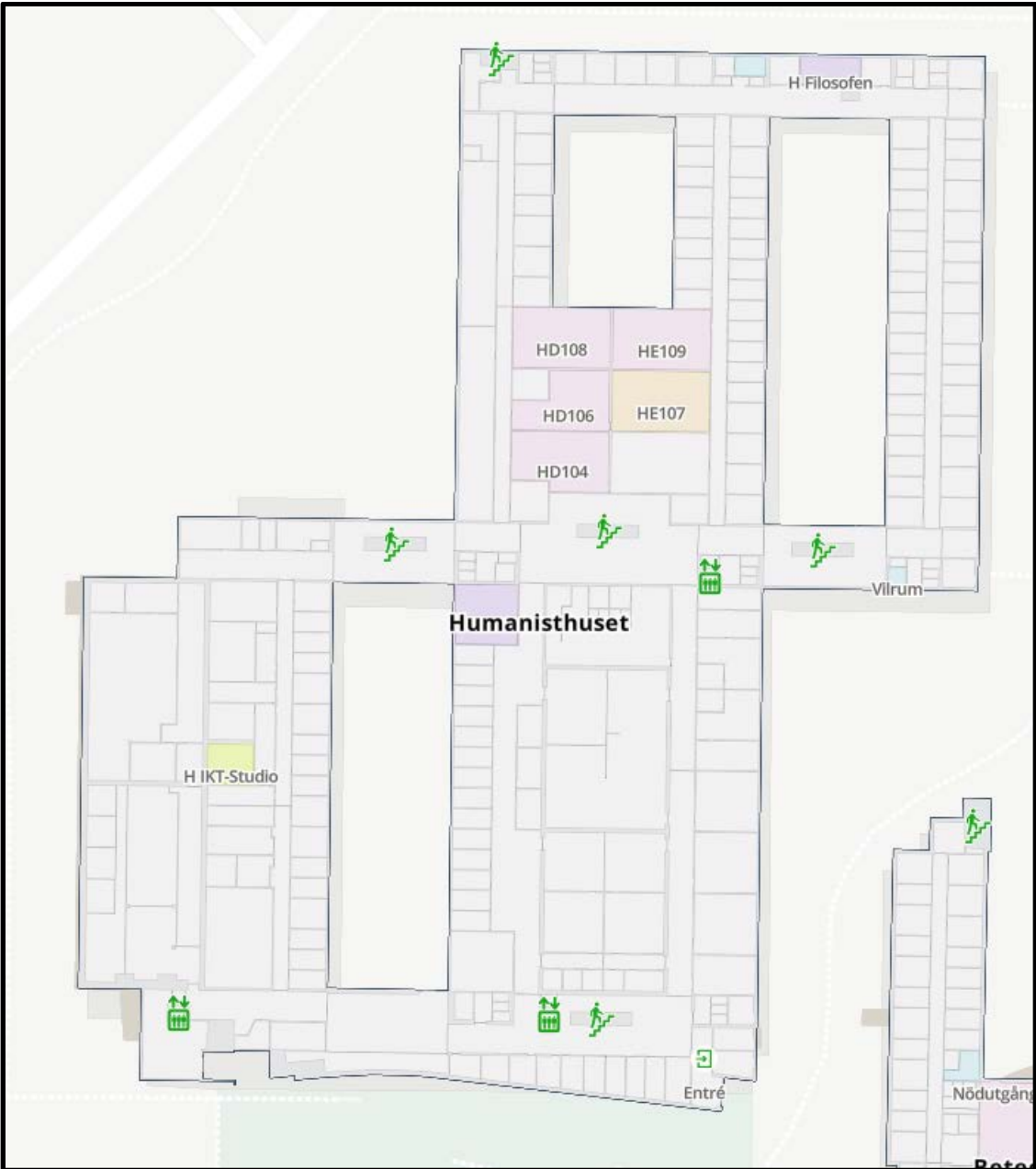
Maps

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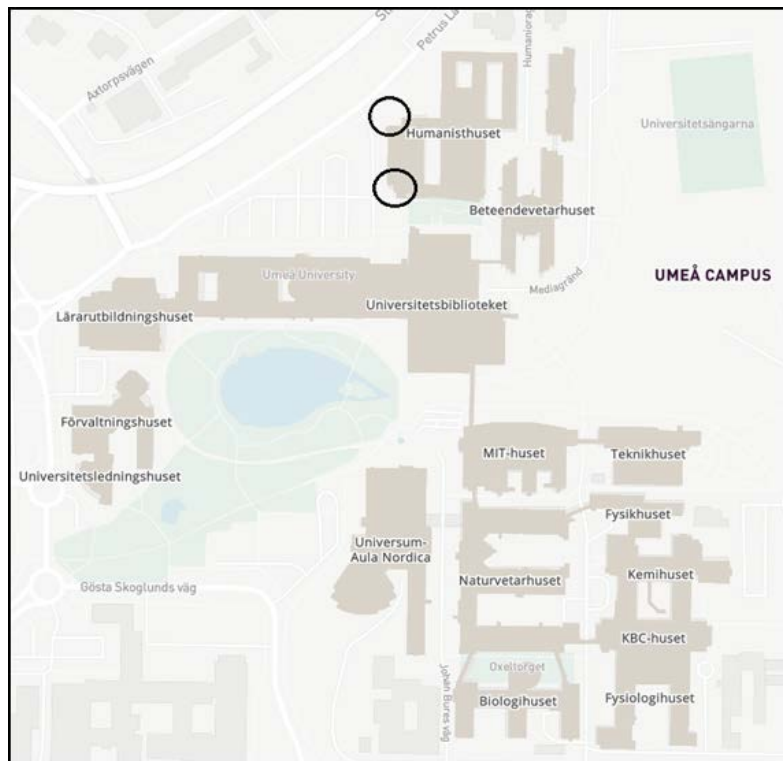
Map of Conference Venue:

Floor 1:

Floor 2: