Philosophy of Science in Practice
Newsletter
№ 10

SPSP 2018 in Ghent Preview

Focus on Young Career Scholars with Jessey Wright

Teaching Spotlight "Reflection on Science Technology and Society"

Philosophy of Science in the African Context

Proust Interview with Sabina Leonelli

See page 7 for an interview with Miles MacLoed and Koray Karaca on teaching engineering students

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SPSP newsletter meeting!

The SPSP Newsletter group would like to invite all interested to a lunch meeting on Monday July 2, from 12.40-14 in Aud 4 – Jaap Kruithof. We hope that some of you may be interested in joining the group or give us inputs to help us shape future newsletters.

From the Editors: Looking forward!

In the previous SPSP newsletter we looked back at the first 10 years of SPSP, now we look forward to the 7th biennial SPSP meeting in Ghent and we hope that this newsletter will help you warm up for the conference. To welcome you in Ghent, the local organizers give you an introduction to the city, the university and the Centre for Logic and Philosophy of Science. We should all remember to thank the organizing committee and local organizers for all the work required to organize such a big meeting.

A focus point in the previous newsletters was how to get in contact with-practicing scientists. In this newsletter, Jessey Wright reports on his experiences with an interdisciplinary graduate program that combined philosophy of science and neuroscience. Another approach, developed for students at bachelor level, is called the Twente Educational Model (TOM). Sophie van Baalen has interviewed Miles MacLeod and Koray Karaca about their experience of teaching philosophy of science in engineering bachelor programs.

Importantly, this volume also looks outside the European continent. Saana Jukola reports on the exciting things happening at the African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science (ACEPS), which was launched at the University of Johannesburg in May 2017.

We look forward to seeing you all in Ghent, Sara and Bart.

Contents

Contributors

Sara Green
University of Copenhagen

Sophie van Baalen
University of Twente

Saana Jukola
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Norwegian University of Science & Technology

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Welcome to SPSP at Ghent University, 30 June – 2 July 2018

by Erik Weber & Inge De Bal

The city of Ghent, capital of the province of Eastern-Flanders, was named "Europe's Best Kept Secret" by the Lonely Planet, because of its rich history combined with its pleasant, lively atmosphere. The city grew at the merging point of two important rivers, the Schelde and the Leie. Because of this, Ghent was a metropolis during the Middle Ages - the biggest in the world after Paris. Its economic importance was considerable and the expertise high. In particular, the production and export of luxury wool blankets was responsible for unprecedented growth from the 13th to the 15th century.

Currently, Ghent is a bustling, energetic spot where it is a pleasure to live, work and study. Its rich history is still omnipresent throughout the city center. The skyline is marked by Ghent's famous three towers: Belfort, Sint-Niklaaskerk and Sint-Baafs Cathedral. Other authentic monuments such as Gravensteen, Oude Vismijn, Duivelsteen, Sint-Pietersabdij and Graslei are all just a stone's throw away from one another and will instantly transport you back to the past. Ghent combines the old and the new – a perfect fit.

Ghent University is was founded in 1817 as a Latin-speaking State University by William I, King of the Netherlands. After its independence in 1830, the Belgian State was in charge of the administration of Ghent University; French was the new official academic language. In 1930 Ghent University became the first Dutch-speaking university in Belgium. Ghent University is now one of the major universities in Belgium. Our 11 faculties offer a wide range of courses and conduct in-depth research within a wide range of scientific domains.

The Centre for Logic and Philosophy of Science which organises SPPS2018 is part of the Department of Philosophy and Moral Science. Our department offers a bachelor and master programme in philosophy, and a bachelor and master programme in moral science. Our philosophy programme covers the traditional topics: history of philosophy from ancient to contemporary philosophy, epistemology, logic, philosophy of science, metaphysics, philosophical anthropology and theoretical/applied ethics. The aim is to give our students advanced knowledge and a grasp of theories, methods and skills in these fields. Our programme in moral science has a different focus: it contains less logic, epistemology, philosophy of science and history of philosophy. Students in moral science are trained in empirical research methods, which allow them to study moral phenomena in a descriptive way (as opposed to the normative approach in philosophical ethics) and get a substantial background in the social sciences and psychology.

The Centre for Logic and Philosophy of Science was founded in 1993. Most of the research that is done at the centre fits into three research lines:

- Logical analysis of scientific reasoning processes
- Methodological and epistemological analysis of scientific reasoning processes, and
- Integrated history and philosophy of science.

Examples of specific topics that fit into the first research line are: logical analyses of paraconsistent reasoning, reasoning under uncertainty, defeasible reasoning, abduction, causal reasoning, induction, analogical reasoning, belief revision, theory change, conceptual change, etc.

Examples of specific topics that fit into the second research line are: methodological and epistemological analyses of causation and mechanisms, scientific discovery, the structure of scientific theories and models, experiments and thought experiments, theory choice, theory dynamics, rationality, etc.

The research in integrated history and philosophy of science includes work on scientists and philosophers such as Descartes, Euler, Galilei, Leibniz, Mach, Maxwell, Newton, Poincaré, and Stevin.

The local organising team for SPSP2018 consists of Erik Weber, Inge De Bal, Roxan Degeyter, Leen De Vreese, Stef Frijters, Julie Mennes, Dingmar van Eck and Dietlinde Wouters. We look forward to welcoming you in Ghent!

Focus on Young Career Scholars

Sara Green

Sara Green talks to Jessey Wright about collaboration with scientists

In previous newsletters, we have talked to SPSP'ers about how to get in contact with practicing scientists. A question that often comes up in discussions within the community is whether and how we can develop institutional structures that support such interactions. We have asked Jessey Wright, who is currently postdoctoral scholar at Stanford University and conducting philosophical research from within science, about his experiences with an interdisciplinary graduate program that combined philosophy of science and neuroscience.

To begin, perhaps you can tell us about the relation between philosophy of science and scientific practice in your work?

I am officially appointed to Psychology, and my office is one of many in the Poldrack lab at Stanford. A neuroscience lab that splits its efforts between neuroimaging experiments ('actual science' as they say), and infrastructure development (such as databases, analysis pipelines, and data organization standards which are all made open source and shared with the community). My project aims to examine how the development and promotion of infrastructures influence the use of those tools, and the epistemic priorities and shape of the community of neuroimaging researchers. Additionally, I am conducting my research from the view of an auxiliary and participant in these projects. I am not only learning about the practices of science, I am also influence (the local) practices.

Have these aims been supported by your doctoral training?

Yes, I see my current position and work as a natural continuation of my doctoral training. The very idea that a philosopher of science could influence science (or even contribute to science) was made apparent to me through my graduate student training at Western University. There I joined the Rotman Institute of Philosophy in my second year, an organization with the stated aim of 'engaging science'. Just before I became involved in the Institute, several faculty members had begun the Lab Associates Program (LAP), building on existing relationships between Chris Viger and a number of neuroscientists. The LAP was made for graduate students with an interest in philosophical topics about, relevant to, or informed by, neuroscience. One of the founding ideals was that you cannot fully understand the practices of science by peering through windows,

but instead must (at minimum) talk to scientists in the course of your research -- this kind of ideal is what drew me to the Institute in the first place, and so I joined the LAP. The program went one step further and placed graduate students within neuroscience labs at the Brain and Mind Institute. Once placed, the graduate student would be invited to attend weekly lab meetings, lab outings, and engage with the lab to whatever degree they found comfortable. I collaborated on ongoing an research project, and headed up the writing of a small grant proposal. Others just attended lab meetings.

How was the program designed?

Once the graduate students joined the program, participants took a one term crash course in the neurosciences. This was not for-credit. Instead it took the form of a reading group that met every other week. The purpose of this was to ensure participants arrived in labs with some knowledge of the neurosciences. After the 'course' participants were provided with a list of labs open to philosophers, and selected one to be placed in. They read about that lab's research, presented it to the LAP reading group, and then were put into contact with the lab coordinator.

How did you experience the scientists' interests in interactions with philosophers?

In general there are more labs looking for a philosopher than there are graduate students to place. Neuroscientists, in my experience, recognize value in philosophical ways of thinking and are very open to collaboration and cross-disciplinary training. Indeed, one request the program is still working towards satisfying is for a philosophy course to be provided to neuroscience trainees. My lab's principle investigator, for instance, explained that he appreciated having me in the lab because I helped his trainees see value in stepping back from the computer and taking time to think things through and to think about bigger problems than the immediate practical ones facing them every day.

As an example of this, my contributions to the papers I am co-author on involved thinking through what claims machine learning analyses can actually support (in contrast to the kinds of claims they are often used to support in the neuroscience literature) and articulating the assumptions implicit in different inferential moves. From these conversations an ongoing project at the boundary of philosophy and neuroscience has emerged. Machine learning techniques are often used to make claims about what the brain is 'representing', but we realized that the way the term 'representation' is used suggests that its meaning is at best variable, and at worst underspecified. My 'method' for identifying assumption implicit in inferences from machine learning was to start with a clear concept of 'representation' (informed by philosophical work on representational systems). This starting point made the assumptions relatively easy to identify, and even helped us to find empirical strategies that might be used to test, or even avoid, those assumptions. This lead to the insight that conflicting results in research on representations in the brain may be grounded in different theories of representation which at present are implicit and unspecified. The hope of my side-project on representational theories, is that by starting from philosophy and developing robust theories of representations, neuroscientists will be able to get closer to the theoretical claims they want to be able to make about representations that are presently outside the scope of neuroimaging evidence.

What kind of structures were developed to support these interactions?

Once participants were placed in a lab, they started attending lab meetings. This informal structure worked well for getting things started, but eventually the program was given a review. After the review, we added a bit of structure to support participants after placement. In particular, we created a reading group that was lead by the program participants. In a rotating schedule they would provide 3 papers for the group to read, related to their project, and we would discuss how their lab experiences might inform their philosophical work. We also paired new program participants with senior mentors. Finally, one summer Jacqueline Sullivan created a small working group with a focus on each participant preparing, receiving deep feedback on, and submitting a single article by the end of the summer. We adapted this working group to the program, and had new participants prepare conference talks, and senior participants

prepare papers or dissertation chapters. All of these changes supported one central aim: helping participants figure out how to channel their lab experiences into a completed dissertation. This reflects one persistent challenge the program has: graduate students in philosophy must produce philosophical work, and translating lab-experiences into philosophical insight is neither trivial to do nor trivial to teach how to do.

How did enrolment in the program affect your work and contributions?

In my case, the program was crucial for my dissertation. My research was well suited to it as the questions that interested me were questions that could only be answered by looking at day-to-day research practices. In the process of conducting my research I contributed to science. I should stress, my contributions did not involve the typically recognized scientific practices. I did not analyze data, or design and run experiments. I was present for these activities, but mostly I discussed the interpretation of results, challenged the assumed meaning of concepts, raised concerns about inferential risks and otherwise brought my knowledge of philosophical debates and views to bear on the research. My dissertation project was inspired in no small part by my lab experiences, as I noticed a stark contrast between the way philosophers of science described the interpretation of neuroimaging data, and the way that process unfolded from my viewpoint within the lab. In experiencing the potential for philosophy of science to be conducted in a way that contributes to both philosophy and neuroscience, I pursued a postdoctoral appointment that would let me continue to work in this way.

A final question: If you had funding to develop a program or summer school similar to LAP, how would you like to do it?

First, I feel it important to make readers aware of Duke's Summer Seminars in Neuroscience and Philosophy (SSNAP) program, which is a summer school that may be hard to top. They invite philosophers and neuroscientists for two weeks of intensive cross-disciplinary training, and then provide opportunities to identify and lay the groundwork for collaborative research projects - which they may then provide funding for. I would, if working on a summer school, learn from the SSNAP model (and I do think there's room for more than one!). As for developing a program, in my experience successful cross-disciplinary programs require mutual interest and respect as a foundation. The LAP program was only possible because scientists at the BMI had productive relationships with philosophers in the Rotman Institute. The first step would be to find a place where such a relationship existed, or could exist. Then, with sufficient funds, establish a program built upon for-credit courses, and that explicitly develops the skills necessary to collaborate across disciplines, gain insights and use those insights to inform philosophical work.

Readers interested in knowing more about the research activities at the Rotman Institute can visit their webpage: http://www.rotman.uwo.ca/activities/research-projects/.

The Poldrack Lab at Stanford.

Teaching philosophy of science in engineering bachelor programs

Sophie van Baalen

An interview with Miles MacLeod and Koray Karaca

A few years ago, University of Twente introduced Twente Educational Model (TOM) to all bachelor programs, with the aim of preparing students to function in three roles: as researchers, as designers and as organizers. TOM is about student-driven learning, and 10-week modules are organized around a single project. One aspect of TOM is that each bachelor program should provide a substantial amount of so-called RESTS (Reflection on Science, Technology and Society) teaching during the whole program. Together with the departments of Philosophy and Science, Technology and Policy Studies, each bachelor program has developed one or more RESTS courses that are well integrated with the content of the program. These courses could focus on ethics, history, sociology, philosophy of technology or philosophy of science (or a mix), but always in the context of the bachelor program or a specific module. We have talked to Miles MacLeod and Koray Karaca, who are both involved in RESTS teaching of philosophy of science.

Miles: "At the moment I teach civil engineers and applied mathematicians, all of them third year and preparation for their bachelor's thesis project. The most important part of this teaching is adapting philosophy of science for their precise context. It has to be relevant for their bachelor, which is really, really hard. The starting point, I have learned, is that you have to have a pretty good understanding of what they need to know, which means understanding the field.

One thing that stands out for civil engineers is that they use a diverse range of methods, they have very few constraints on what they do. Some of them will be doing very high level of mathematical modeling of water flow, and some of them will be doing surveys of bikers, straight of the street. That's a huge range, from highly mathematical, theoretical to highly empirical, statistical stuff. Which means they have a very good interest in comparing and understanding methodologies, so that's more or less what I focus on. And in addition to that, civil engineering is highly contextual. Civil engineers intrinsically know that they will be in situations that are highly political and social. So you can talk how values play a role in scientific reasoning. On top of that you can talk about paradigms which is very topical in civil engineering. Do we deal with water management in very restrictive ways or do we have a more open, adaptive understanding of how we deal with water?

Originally, I focused on modeling, but I then realized that most students weren't doing any modeling. A lot of them were doing basic empirical work. Interviewing people, doing surveys, collecting data, analyzing data. But they're never really trained in scientific methods: somebody says 'use this, use that', they pick it up, they don't really understand it. That leaves space for me to come in and talk about what the grounding principles of these different ways of approaching situations are. I think that always has to be the way you work. So, certainly in the bachelor thesis context, just standing up and teaching generic philosophy of science failed completely. Straight away they would be like 'why is this relevant?' They talk about falsification principles, and realism and have no real connection to it. So that doesn't work. And it probably doesn't work in any scientific bachelor. A lot of it is border line between basic scientific skills training and philosophy of science. But we come at if from a philosophical direction. It's not just 'do these exercises'. It's always put it in a context, they must always give examples, and go a bit deeper into reasons behind it.

Civil engineers are quite easy to teach. The applied mathematicians is totally different. They're also preparing for bachelor's thesis, but they're all doing pretty much the same. I'd say 50% of them are doing a modeling project, and 50% are just solving a mathematical problem. That makes it very difficult, there's not much to say as far as

philosophy of science is concerned about solving mathematical equations. So I've had to adapt the course. Again, I started with a very modeling-heavy focus. Realized that's not going to interest them. So now I kind of tried to generalize the course and focus on the general issue 'how does mathematics relate to the world'. So we start by discussing 'what is applied mathematics', well it's something like 'mathematics in applied contexts', a bit about what Mieke's [Mieke Boon, SvB] basic idea about wat engineering science is. And then we think about what are those contexts? How does mathematics relate to the world? When does it not relate to the world? What kinds of problems come up in the course of doing mathematics? That's maybe something they can see as relevant to their bachelor's thesis. We look at some fundamental problems that mathematics has, for example highly computational models, getting data, interdisicplinarity.

I ask them at the start what they're doing. It tends to be pretty technical stuff, some people might be doing logistics modeling. It's really hard to find a philosophical dimension to trying to come up with an algorithm for stacking shelves. So we try to focus on the context. I don't use much mainstream philosophy of science at all, in that context. There isn't much about mathematics anyway. I more use my background knowledge of what is important. That sort of things I've taken out of both courses, because it's not really relevant for them. What's a relevant distinction is whether you're using a hypothetical-deductive method or an abductive method, because it's about how you construct an argument in different contexts. That's relevant for them, so we focus on that. And in the exam I get them to explain why you would trust the reasoning method in that case.

I think the main point of this type of teaching is, it has to be adapted. If you really want them to get something out of it, it has to be adapted to the field. Which means you have to invent philosophy for these guys. I know a lot more about water management now. Still, I get a proportion of students who think it's too abstract and don't really see a need to engage. And it's very hard to engage science students in relatively deep discussions. They're far less willing to throw themselves into discussions, compared to philosophy students. There's a basic kind of immaturity about these kinds of things. And certain students can be very dismissive. A certain group

of them say 'this is bullshit, this is rubbish, why you're making us read this?' But I think, especially in civil engineering, the majority of students are like 'OK, I can get something out of this. I already know what I'm doing in my bachelor thesis, I can pick up that topic when it becomes relevant to me.'

I like teaching these students a lot. I'm always thinking nowadays that I probably prefer it to teaching philosophers or philosophers of science. Because these guys have scientific training. So they have examples in their head, they know what's kind of going on in scientific contexts, so they know how to interpret what you're telling in a much easier way. And of course I'm a philosopher of science in practice, so I'm very much interested in practice, over abstract questions. To me that makes perfect sense, to teach that kind of people."

Koray: "I am teaching philosophy of scientific reasoning and modeling in chemical engineering and electrical engineering, helping students prepare for their bachelor assignments. For this, they need to do research and an important part is critically reading scientific publications. The main aim of the course is to teach them certain skills that will help them to analyze the assumptions in scientific modeling, concerning model construction and validation, error analysis, statistical inference, as well as the evaluation of certain epistemic and societal values and the involvement of these values in the construction and justification of modeling.

The basic structure of the course is that I give short lectures about the methodological aspects of scientific modelling, including confirmation, disconfirmation, validation, error analysis, and statistical inference. I give them an example of an assignment that relates to the lecture material. Usually this is a paper published in the domain of chemical engineering or electrical engineering. There's a set of assignment questions, and I give them an hour to work on these questions. I walk around, I talk to them, I interact with them and discuss their responses. At the end of this session we collectively discuss what kinds of answers are plausible, or reasonable, because most of the time there is no one clear answer and most of the questions are open to interpretations. And then I give an assignment to be graded, very similar questions as we did in the previous hour.

Most of the questions relate to model construction and validation. For example, what is the target system or real-world phenomenon of interest? In chemical engineering, it could be a chemical reactor for example, or in electrical engineering it could be a scientific instrument. And then I ask them to identify the assumptions that are involved in the construction of the model; the parameters that are measured, that are measureable and that are not measureable; the predictions given by the model; and how experimental data is used to confirm whether the predictions are accurate or not. And some questions relate to the experimental process, concerning the identification of the instruments, procedures and techniques being used during experimentation; whether calibration is correctly performed; and to what extent the assumptions used in experimentation are justified. Students should develop a critical attitude, a critical eye on the reading material, on the paper as to whether the theoretical and experimental assumptions are sufficiently and adequately justified.

We have also discussed the role of epistemic and non-epistemic values in model construction and validation. We make use of the literature in philosophy of science on epistemic values, such as explanatory power, predictive power, simplicity, conceptual and mathematical coherency, as well as on non-epistemic values, also called societal values, such as ethical, pragmatic, aesthetic, cultural values. I ask students to identify whether there are any societal or epistemic value judgments involved in the construction and justification of models. In this way they see that model construction is kind of an art. It's not a straightforward, recipe-based process. So, on the one hand we have high-level theories, and on the other hand we have real-world phenomena. How do these high-level theories relate to real-world phenomena? Of course, this is through modeling, but for modeling we need to have certain assumptions, certain considerations, and all these considerations are influenced by epistemic and non-epistemic values.

This year we also have class presentations. We have specified two topics, multiscale modeling and sustainability. Yesterday, we had the first set of presentations on multiscale modeling, and I greatly enjoyed the presentations. I gave them a specific format to get a well-balanced division of labor within the groups. A group has six students, two of them will give the presentation, two of them will receive the questions from the audience and two of them will ask questions to the other group. I wanted to prevent that some students dominate the discussion, and it has worked out very well.

It's not necessarily something I don't like, but I would prefer going a bit more in-depth about philosophical issues. This is something which is very novel to students, they have not been previously exposed to philosophical discussions. And I feel that if I provide them with more philosophical information they would find it a bit boring. I think there should be a right balance between philosophy and the interests and needs of the students. For example, if I teach them realism/anti-realism, really high-level philosophical stuff, most of them wouldn't be interested. And also it wouldn't be relevant to their bachelor assignment. So, the reference point is always, whether this stuff will be relevant to their bachelor assignment. Whether they will help them acquire certain skills that are relevant to their own discipline.

What I like most about teaching these students is that I think I help them acquire certain critical skills that will help them become a better researchers. I think that it's very beneficial for the students to have such a course. From the feedback I received from students, I understand that they also find it relevant. I also take part in the research evaluations for their bachelor assignments and sometimes I see that they apply the skills they have learned in my course, which is really good to see. It's a kind of a concrete outcome of teaching.

And secondly for my own interest, I learn a lot from teaching. I got exposed to an area which is very rich in terms of modelling, which is one of my philosophical interests. Most of the studies in philosophy of science try to relate to physical sciences or biological sciences such as biology, physics, maybe chemistry. But most people are not interested in modeling in engineering sciences, which is something really interesting that I learned from RESTS teaching. I didn't have any idea whatsoever about kinds of modeling in engineering. After I started teaching in these departments, I realized that engineering sciences are much richer in terms of modeling than the hard sciences. Most of the time, high-level theories don't do any concrete work. In order to relate to real-world phenomena researchers need to construct models. And most of the epistemological work is done through modeling. It's been a really good experience for me."

Philosophy of Science in the African Context

Saana Jukola

Social relevance has become the goal for many philosophers of science. Especially for us SPSPers, conducting research that could actually make a difference is an important aim. In addition to research and teaching, many of us see participating in public discussions and changing detrimental practices in academia and society at large as important professional responsibilities.

An organization that has truly taken these duties to the heart is the African Centre for Epistemology and Philosophy of Science (ACEPS), situated at the University of Johannesburg (UJ). The centre was launched in May 2017.

African philosophies have previously had some influence on Western traditions in ethics and continental philosophy. As an example of this one could mention UJ's own Thaddeus Metz who has done work in African ethics and especially the idea of Ubuntu, a maxim that he has in his (2007) article Toward an African Moral Theory formulated as "a person is a person through other persons". Analytic philosophy, however, has overlooked African insights and questions. The mission of ACEPS is to change this. It aims at shaping public discourse and contributing to the way in which knowledge is both produced and applied. The means to these ends are bringing African viewpoints to dialogue with Western philosophy and offering a philosophy of science perspective to current African debates by, for instance, training students in epistemology and philosophy of science, carrying out research, and offering platforms for public engagement. Conducting commissioned work is also one way in which the centre wants to make a difference.

Launching of the ACEPS. Photo courtesy: ACEPS (reprinted with permission).

At the moment, the centre has eight members and five research associates whose work is organized under three umbrella projects: Medicine and Health in Africa (PIs Alex Broadbent, Zinhle Mncube, Likhwa Ncube and Ben Smart) explores philosophy of medicine questions in the African context. The project on Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) Project (PIs Mongane Serote and Likhwa Ncube) examines indigenous knowledge on, for instance, biodiversity, liberation processes, and different social issues. The Rationality and Power project (PIs Chad Harris, Veli Mitova and Likhwa Ncube), first of all, analyzes the tension between the scientific worldview and both traditional and contemporary African knowledge, and, second, aims at bringing together epistemological debates on epistemic injustice, ignorance, and responsibility.

The idea to found the Centre came from Alex Broadbent and Veli Mitova, who in 2015 realized that the department of philosophy at UJ had expertise for participating in and analyzing debates on the role of (Western) science and tradition in the African context. Founding of the centre happened In the midst of the FeesMustFall movement, a student protest that began with demonstrations in different cities in South Africa against the increase of student fees but soon encompassed calls for decolonizing universities and even science.

According to Chad Harris, the debates taking place during and after FeesMustFall have made it clear that philosophers of science have a lot to contribute to the discussions occurring in the country. The complicated relationship between the modern science-based positions and tradition has become obvious and the question of how to combine these worldviews – or whether such integration should be attempted at all - is one that philosophers have expertise in answering. For example, consulting both traditional healers and practitioners trained in Western medicine very common in South Africa. Understanding the grounds of this practice and its role in society as well as critically assessing whether it should be confronted or legitimized are tasks to which philosophers could contribute.

Readers interested in how members of the ACEPS have participated in public discussions can take a look at the pieces that the members of the centre have written for the website:

The Conversation: Alex Broadbent on decolonizing knowledge (https://theconversation.com/it-will-take-critical-thorough-scrutiny-to-truly-decolonise-knowledge-78477).

Chad Harris on how philosophical insights on external validity can be applied to analyzing why bike lanes are not well-used in Johannesburg (https://theconversation.com/social-policies-work-best-if-theyre-bespoke-solutions-to-local-problems-78539).

A plea from the editors!

Send us your photos! If you are at a conference and see some fellow SPSPers or if you find a great image in the course of your research, take a picture and send it to Bart at moff0022@gmail.com or Sara at sara.green@ind.ku.dk.

Sabina Leonelli

TAKES OUR PROUST QUESTIONNAIRE

Saana Jukola

The 'Proust' Questionnaire was a game popularized by Marcel Proust who supposedly believed that by answering questions such as those below one reveals his or her true nature. This questionnaire was modernized more recently by James Lipton and 'In the Actors Studio'.

Sabina Leonelli is a Professor of Philosophy and History of Science at the University of Exeter and co-director of the Exeter Centre for the Study of the Life Sciences.

Who are your favourite heroes or heroines? In real life or in fiction.

I have huge admiration for those who manage to live through very different experiences and contribute to the world in a variety of kind, creative and ingenuous ways. I have met many such people over the past few years (not least among SPSP-ers), and hope to continue to be so inspired! Among the blindingly obvious, Marie Curie, John Dewey and Leonardo da Vinci immediately spring to mind, while fictional heroines change every month... musicians, ranging from Glenn Gould to Maria Callas, Leonard Bernstein and Luciano Pavarotti, also feature highly.

What is your favourite food?

I enjoy food of all types from all over the world, but the two things I cannot do without are pizza margherita (I am half Italian after all) and dark chocolate.

What is the most critical academic or non-academic feedback you ever received?

The most critical academic ones are way too long to report here! I live together with my harshest critic, which (sometimes with hindsight ;-)) I am always grateful for.

Where do you write your best work?

At home, in the morning, after periods of travel or exposure to the arts - visiting new places or witnessing a memorable performance function like a double espresso.

What is your favourite entertainment?

Playing music, singing and reading novels.

What profession would you like to attempt besides your own?

Musical theatre. Preferably in the form of political satire (oh yes - Kurt Weill is another hero).

What is your greatest achievement?

Raising my two children - though whether they would agree, I am not sure!

What is your most treasured possession?

Probably photographs, they keep me closer to far-away friends and family.

Where were or are you happiest?

In water. I could live there - it must be my Greek half.