



EDITORIAL

Spring is in the air at Ås and UMB is proud to announce its newly established PhD program in philosophy. The process of hiring the first PhD students for this program has already begun and we received 31 applications from all over the world.

The CauSci project has also organised its first open event at UMB this month: the newly established PhilSci Forum successfully kicked off last Thursday with an engaging lecture by Stephen Mumford. The forum's next speaker is interviewed in this issue.

CauSci Newsletter / March 2011



NEWS

PHD PROGRAM IN PHILOSOPHY Last Friday the UMB Research Board decided to establish a new PhD program in philosophy at the UMB School of Economics and Business. Thanks to Frode Kjosavik, Eirik Romstad, Ragnar Øygard, Roger Strand and Stephen Mumford for making this happen.

31 APPLICANTS We received 31 applications for the two PhD-positions. Next week the committee will meet for the short-listing of the candidates.

OPENING PHILSCI LECTURE Stephen Mumford gave the first talk of the new UMB PhilSci Forum last Thursday for an audience of 45, some of whom had travelled in from University of Oslo. The discussion was lively and the chair reluctantly ended it at six.

PHILSCI PODCAST Mumford's lecture is now available as a podcast at www.umb.no/causci/article/philsci-forum, thanks to the UMB Communication Unit and Øyvind Graham.

NEXT PHILSCI FORUM Svein Anders Noer Lie will give the next talk at the PhilSci Forum: 'Naturlig Genteknologi?', Wednesday 13 April, 12:15 – 14:00 in Tårnbygningen room T401.



EVENTS



CONFERENCE Putting Powers to Work, 28 - 30 April, St. Louis:
http://web.me.com/jonathandjacob/Putting_Powers_to_Work

CONFERENCE Third biennial conference of the Society for the Philosophy of Science in Practice, 22 – 24 June, Exeter:
<http://www.philosophy-science-practice.org/>

MINISYMPOSIUM Mennesker Studerer Komplekse Systemer, 4 April, Trondheim:
http://www.kjemometri.org/nyheter/Symp2011/Minisymposium_og_generalforsamling%202011.pdf

GUEST LECTURES Roy Bhaskar is giving 4 guest lectures at Lillehammer University College on 2 – 3 May on the following topics:

- 1) Critical Realism and the Social Science,
- 2) Critical Realism, Interdisciplinary Studies and Well Being
- 3) Critical Realism and Metareality
- 4) Critical Realism and Eco-philosophy

Contact person:
Trond.Jakobsen@hil.no

PRESENTING: SVEIN ANDERS NOER LIE

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHICAL MOTIVATION? When I was 19 I believed that issues surfaced as environmental problems were rooted in some philosophical ideas and that philosophy therefore was the right arena for anyone engaged in the environmental issue. It's an optimistic thought that I have my doubts about today. Nevertheless, most of the things I engage in philosophically have some connection to the environmental issue.

IS PHILOSOPHY IMPORTANT FOR SCIENCE? Yes, very. The scientist is often guided by a philosophical idea which is taken for granted, but shouldn't be. Many scientists believe for instance that something is explained whenever the phenomenon is reduced to "its proper parts" and that doing science amounts to this. Medicine exploiting properties on a biochemical level, gene-technology and synthetic biology would almost fall apart without the support of Locke's metaphysical view of "real essences". A different ontology would typically make the scientist work in a different direction. On the other hand, I think philosophers have a poor understanding of science, scientific practice and the importance of external factors such as money.

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN CAUSATION? It's fundamental, and the way we understand the world can therefore turn out to be fundamentally wrong. When it

"When it comes to causation we are still haunted by the 16th century"

Who? Philosopher of Biology, Ecology and Technology from University of Tromsø and GenØk.

Why? Svein Anders is our next speaker at the UMB PhilSci Forum.

comes to causation we are still haunted by the 16th century. We still think that causation involves an active and a passive part, which has lead to what Ellis calls 'passivism'. The question of causation has to adjust to the way we understand beings and the way they are related. If we think that beings are not related in the first place, we would think that causation is the "thing" relating them, and that causation is deadly important in that sense. But I think that it is the *metaphysics of discretea* that is the most important issue, because I believe that it is the *metaphysics of discretea* that gives us the false ideas about causation.



PEOPLE

ALEXANDER REUTLINGER ALLEN
STAIRS ANDREAS HÜTTEMANN
ANITA LEIRFALL ANNE INGEBORG
MYHR BIRGER SVIHUS CAMILLA
SVENSEN DAGFINN DØHL DYBVG
DEBORAH OUGHTON DOROTHY
DANKEL FERN WICKSON FREDRIK
ANDERSEN FRODE KJOSAVIK GRY
OFTEDAL HARALD MARTENS
JENNIFER McKITRICK JOHAN
ARNT MYRSTAD JOHANNES
PERSSON JOHN DUPRÉ JONAS
JENSEN JONATHAN JACOBS
JONATHAN WEBBER KRISTINA
ENGELHARD MAGNI MARTENS
MARKUS STEPANIANS MAURICIO
SUÁREZ MAX KISTLER RANI LILL
ANJUM REBECCA CARVER ROGER
STRAND RONNY SELBÆK MYHRE
RUTH GROFF SIGURD TØNNESSEN
RYAN WESLEY STEIN HOLDEN
TOR EGIL FØRLAND STEPHEN
MUMFORD STIG OMHOLT SVEIN
ANDERS SVEIN ANDERS NOER LIE
TERJE KVILHAUG THOMAS BØHN
THOR EIRIK ERIKSEN THOR
SANDMEL TORILL CHRISTINE
LINDSTRØM TROND JACOBSEN
TROND SKAFTNESMO HENRIK
ZINKERNAGEL