



PhilInBioMed

# The magazine

March & April 2021

## New positions

Egenis is recruiting two Research Fellows for 44-months-long posts starting 1 January 2022, to work with me on the ERC project “A Philosophy of Open Science for Diverse Research Environments”. One of the fellows will be working on epistemic injustice, the other on the notion of research environments.

The project will be very collaborative and have lots of interesting partners from around the world, and it aims to exemplify and push forward the philosophy of science in practice. Further details below. Sabina Leonelli would be really grateful if you could pass this on to potential candidates in philosophy, history and social studies of science, She is very happy to answer inquiries of course!

[Research Fellow 1](#)

[Research Fellow 2](#)

## New publications by the PhilinBiomed network members

Konsman, JP. [So Many Faces, Phases, and Facets, Sickness Behavior Beyond Disciplines](#). Front Psychiatry. 2021 Feb 25;12:630331.

Sholl, J. [Can aging research generate a theory of health?](#) HPLS 43, 45 (2021).

Sholl J., Mailing LJ., Wood TR. [Reframing nutritional microbiota studies to reflect an inherent metabolic flexibility of the human gut: a narrative review focusing on high-fat diets](#). mBio 12:e00579-21. <https://doi.org/10.1128/mBio.00579-21>

Lyne A-M., Laplane L., Perié L.. [To portray clonal evolution in blood cancer, count your stem cells](#). Blood 2021;137(14): 1862-1870. <https://doi.org/10.1182/blood.2020008407>

Strauss B., Bertolaso M., Ernberg I., Bissell M.J., [Rethinking Cancer: a new paradigm for the postgenomics era](#). The MIT Press. 2021.

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## Forthcoming events

### PhillinBioMed Seminars :

**28th April 2021 5PM** : Emanuele Ratti (Institute of Philosophy and Scientific Method, Johannes Kepler University Linz), [“Explainable AI and medicine”](#).

**20th May 2021 6PM** : Marie I. Kaiser (Department of Philosophy at Bielefeld University, Germany), [“Individual-level Mechanisms in Ecology and Evolution”](#).

[Philosophy of Plant Biology Workshop by Egenis \(online, registrations open and free\)](#) on **5 - 6 - 7th May 2021** :

Plants are very interesting organisms. They implement unique internal processes and modes of interaction with their environments. Needless to say, as the primary harvesters of solar energy they are vital parts of ecosystems. Serious attention to plants provides novel and interesting perspectives on many topics in philosophy of biology, including individuality, organisation, cognition, and disease. For example, the growth of plants requires us to stretch the concept of organism. If vegetative spread, for example via suckers from roots, is counted as mere growth, a forest can be considered a single organism, as is the case with ‘Pando’, a *Populus tremuloides* forest in Utah. And although there seems to be no centre of the coordination in a plant body as in animals, there is usually a highly-tuned coordination of the body parts that has led some theorists to attribute cognitive capacities to plants.

On **30th April, 7th May and 14th May 2021** the **University of Cincinnati Center for Public Engagement with Science** will host an NSF-funded online workshop about what philosophers of science have to offer public engagement with science. Workshop information and registration here: <https://ucengagingscience.org/workshop/>

**June 14-18: SMAC 2021 - [Statistics, Philosophy and Health](#)**. The **SMAC** (statistics and mathematics applied to cancerology) 2021 days will be held online from June 14 to 18, 2021. This will be the tenth edition of the SMAC days. On this occasion, we have built a very particular program entitled «Statistics, philosophy and health». Three main topics will be addressed by statisticians and philosophers of science during this «SMAC week»: Bayesianism, Agent based modeling and Causality. We will conclude this week by a very special round table animated by Erica Moodie.

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## Forthcoming events

Call for contributions - Online workshop on the foundations of randomization,

June 8th and 9th 2021.

Randomized controlled trials have been much discussed in the last 20 years for the status they are granted within evidence-based medicine, usually at the top of hierarchies of evidence. Their importance has also been repeatedly underlined in the context of the pandemic. These discussions, in philosophy, in science and in the public debate, often presuppose, more or less explicitly, that the epistemic reasons to randomize are clearly identified and well-known. But this is not the case. The foundations of randomization fail to be consensual even in the one context where it may seem obvious that randomization is the best way to go - that is, to determine whether a given medical intervention has a causal effect on a disease. The most common view, targeted by most criticisms of randomization, is that randomization is a means to balance confounders, known and unknown, between parallel groups, and thereby to ensure that any difference between groups can be interpreted causally. However, Fisher rather introduced randomization as a device making it possible to calculate the probability of the different possible observations and to determine whether the observed difference is statistically significant. What are the different justifications of randomization and how do they compare to each other? In which situations do they hold and, for that matter, should we randomize at all? The workshop will investigate these questions, which are particularly urgent in the current, pandemic context, where we need to make informed methodological choices as regards the assessment of preventive or curative treatments. How questions about randomization relate to other topics in the philosophy of statistics - primarily the opposition between frequentist and Bayesian approaches - will also be explored.

The workshop will bring together philosophers and practitioners to think about these issues. Invited speakers will include: Maximilian Kasy (economics, Oxford), Jonathan Fuller (philosophy, Pittsburgh) and Stephen Senn (statistician consultant). Both invited and contributed talks will be allocated 45 minutes in total, for presentation (up to 30') and discussion. The workshop will be held online and upon registration.

Abstracts of 500 to 1000 words should be sent to [randomization2021@gmail.com](mailto:randomization2021@gmail.com) by May 9th. Decisions will be made by May 18th.

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