



The Magazine

November 2023

Introduction

Hello PiBM network members!

Following a quiet month, academic activities are now humming along nicely. As such, we have quite the newsletter in store for you. There are many interesting PiBM events to be aware of, either in the recent past or near future, more exciting post-doc opportunities, interdisciplinary publications, and even reports from new alliances and global connections. The world of PiBM is clearly not confined by geographic borders and is spreading throughout the world. Now, will it accompany us as we terraform other planets? Time will tell.

Enjoy!

Post-graduate Opportunities

[Visiting Fellows and Postdoctoral Fellows for 2024-2025, University of Pittsburgh](#)

The Center for Philosophy of Science at the University of Pittsburgh is accepting applications for both programs must be submitted by **December 10th, 2023**. Please be sure to read through the program overview and requirements on our website.

For more information on the Visiting Fellows Program, including information for how to apply, please use this link: <https://www.centerphilsci.pitt.edu/programs/visiting-fellows/program-overview/>

For more information, including for how to apply, please visit this website: <https://www.centerphilsci.pitt.edu/programs/postdoc-fellowships/program-overview/>

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Post-graduate Opportunities (cont.)

[Postdoc at Minnesota Center for Philosophy of Science, University of Minnesota](#)

The Minnesota Center for Philosophy of Science (MCPS) in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota invites applications for a full-time postdoctoral fellowship for a period of two years starting at the beginning the 2024 academic year (late August 2024). The aim of this position is to support researchers within five years of their doctorate in alignment with and contributing toward the mission of the Minnesota Center for Philosophy of Science: to promote excellence in research and training in philosophy of science, related empirical studies of science, and science itself. This support is dedicated to a project in philosophy of science (broadly construed) that the applicant proposes.

Applicants will have been awarded a doctorate in philosophy or history and philosophy of science within five years of the starting date of the position. Additionally, applicants must have had a dissertation project on or substantial publication in some topic in philosophy of science. Scholars working in all areas of philosophy of science, inclusive of philosophical approaches to logic and mathematics, are eligible.

Deadline for full consideration: **December 3, 2023, 11:59pm EST**. For more details about the job advertisement: <https://philjobs.org/job/show/24638>

To apply, visit: <https://hr.myu.umn.edu/jobs/ext/357983>

CFAs / CF Posters

[6th Philosophy of Cancer Biology Workshop](#)

The 6th Philosophy of Cancer Biology workshop will be held in Bordeaux, France, from **March 4th to March 6th, 2024**. Invited speakers include: Ilaria Elia, Andrew Ewald, Peter Friedl, Cristina Lo Celso, Guillaume Montagnac, Julie Pannequin, Maria Rescigno, Gregory Sepich-Poore, Eric Solary, and Orsolya Vincze.

(More details on next page...)

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CFAs / CF Posters (cont.)

More information can be found on this website: <https://www.philinbiomed.org/event/sixth-philosophy-of-cancer-biology-workshop/>

Invited talks will focus on the two topics of cancer microbiome and cancer metastasis, but the call for abstracts is open to all emerging conceptual and theoretical issues in cancer research. Selected abstracts will have 15 minutes allocated for their talks followed by 15 minutes of discussion.

Abstracts must be submitted here (<https://forms.gle/CZ0357M524Qy5mVu7>) by **December 5th**. They will be anonymized and evaluated by the scientific committee. Notifications will be sent by December 22nd.

The abstract must identify a clear biological and/or medical problem and provide an answer to that problem using conceptual, theoretical, and/or philosophical tools. The scientific committee particularly welcomes interdisciplinary submissions as well as submissions that state explicitly what difference their proposal makes to scientific and medical practices.

The conference is free and open to all researchers.

Young researchers can apply for a grant to help cover the cost of their travel and accommodation, if their own institution cannot cover such costs. Please contact [Thomas Pradeu](#) and [Lucie Laplane](#) if you are interested.

[Understanding Life in a Changing Planet: 20+2 Years of Egenis, the Centre for the Study of the Life Sciences, University of Exeter](#)

Egenis, the Centre for the Study of the Life Sciences at the University of Exeter invites proposals for posters on the philosophy, history and social science of the life sciences. The conference takes place on **April 17-19 2024**. Successful submissions will be displayed throughout the event and there will be a poster session on the 18th of April.

See [here](#) for more details including the event's programme. (More details on next page...)



CFAs / CF Posters (cont.)

Proposals should include an approximately 250-word abstract, a 2-page CV, and an indication of whether a stipend is required. These should be emailed to a.currie@exeter.ac.uk. Proposals should be **received by the 15th of December** and successful applications will be announced by the 15th of January.

Posters from researchers from any career stage are warmly welcomed. Registration will be waived for successful applicants. Pending funding, stipends towards travel and accommodation costs may be available for early career researchers.

For any information or queries email Adrian Currie at a.currie@exeter.ac.uk.

Other details can be found here: <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/events/details/index.php?event=13383>

[The Semantics and Philosophy of “Cancer” \(SPoC\), UCLA Luskin Center April 25-26, 2023](#)

Featuring keynote speaker: Anya Plutynski, PhD

The organizers are soliciting one-page abstracts for 40-minute talks on the meaning of the word “cancer”. They are interested in talks that incorporate methods or perspectives from linguistics, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, or communication sciences on how language-users understand and intend the word “cancer”, and how these concepts of meaning might vary across populations (especially demographically, or between physicians and their patients). Several topics we expect will be represented in the conference include:

- the metaphysics of cancer as a (non-)natural kind, especially as it pertains to nomenclature;
- the ramifications of standard definitions of cancer (e.g. the Hallmarks) for the philosophy of science;
- accounts of the meaning of “cancer” in linguistic semantics or philosophy of language;
- sociolinguistic or corpus studies of cultural variation in the understanding of “cancer”;



CFAs / CF Posters (cont.)

- cross-cultural or cross-linguistic variation in labels for cancer, or interpretations of the word “cancer”;
- discussions relating the semantics of “cancer” to the issues of overdiagnosis and overtreatment.

Abstracts must be no longer than one page (11pt, 1in margins), not including references. Abstracts must be sent to semanticsofcancer@gmail.com by **January 14, 2024, 11:59pm PT**. Please direct any questions about the call for abstracts or the conference itself to the same email address.

Publications

Gross, F. (2023). Do Single-Cell Experiments Challenge the Concept of Cell Type? *Organisms. Journal of Biological Sciences* 6 (2). <https://doi.org/10.13133/2532-5876/18131>.

Hazelwood, C. (2023). An Emerging Dilemma for Reciprocal Causation. *Philosophy of Science*, 1-43. <https://doi.org/10.1017/psa.2023.124>

Horwitz, A. V., & Wakefield, J. C. (2023). The two sides of depression: Medical and social. *Daedalus, Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 152 (4), 212-227.

Kostić, D., Halffman, W. (2023). Mapping Explanatory Language in Neuroscience. *Synthese* 202, 112. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-023-04329-6>.

Milkowski, M., and Kostić, D. (2023). Forging Connections: Uniting Neuroscience and Philosophy of Science. eLetter, Levenstein, Daniel, et al. “On the role of theory and modeling in neuroscience.” *Journal of Neuroscience*, 43.7 (2023): 1074-1088. <https://www.jneurosci.org/content/43/7/1074/tab-e-letters#forging-connections-uniting-neuroscience-and-philosophy-of-science>.

Wakefield, J. C. (2023). Alcune riflessioni sulla nuova diagnosi del DSM-5-TR di “Disturbo da lutto prolungato”. *Psicoterapia e Scienze Umane*, 57(4), 563-584.

(For non-Italian readers, this is a critical discussion from various viewpoints of the new DSM category of “prolonged grief disorder”).



Publications (cont.)

Wakefield, J. C. (2023). Anti-Oedipus from philosophy of science and Foucauldian knowledge-power perspectives. *Analysis: Transdisciplinary Journal of Psychoanalysis and Science*, 7 (100378), 1-7.

Zach. M. (2023). On the Relationship between Asymptomatic Infections and Diseases. *Philosophy of Medicine*, 4(1): <https://philmed.pitt.edu/philmed/article/view/171>.

Reports from recent PiBM events

PhilInBioMed Seminar Series

Alan Love & Günter Wagner

For all those who missed it, or simply want to rewatch it, the video of the recent PhilInBioMed talk by Alan Love (Minnesota) and Günter Wagner (Yale) on “The Hierarchical Basis of Serial Homology and Evolutionary Novelty” is now available online: <https://www.philinbiomed.org/event/alan-love-gunter-wagner/>

David Raubenheimer (University of Sydney, Australia): “Beyond empiricism: the need for framing and philosophy in nutrition science”

David Raubenheimer is Leonard P. Ullman Chair in Nutritional Ecology at the Charles Perkins Centre, the University of Sydney, and explores how animal biology interacts with food environments via nutrition and the reciprocal influences of these interactions on biology. David is one of the best experts on nutrition internationally. David is a member of the PhilInBioMed Network. His talk occurred on November 22.

(Abstract on next page...)



Reports from recent PiBM events (cont.)

Abstract:

The global crisis of obesity and other forms of malnutrition has continued to rise despite redoubled research effort and increasingly sophisticated technology for collecting, curating, and interrogating research data. This suggests nutrition science could benefit from fresh approaches to using data and directing empirical research. Considering the range, complexity, and interconnectedness of relevant factors, from chemistry and molecular biology to psychology, economics, and many sociological issues, in this talk I suggest more attention should be focused on conceptual framing in nutrition and its research. I discuss a framework from nutritional ecology that draws on basic biological theory (ecology, evolution, and homeostasis), and show how it provides a systems perspective for tackling the complexity of nutrition. I illustrate its application, firstly, in tightly controlled experimental studies of captive insects, which provide confidence in causality, and thereafter in observational studies on wild primates, which establish that the biological mechanisms are relevant in ecological contexts. I next demonstrate how the findings from non-humans have helped direct the application of the nutritional ecology framework in human nutrition and led to a new understanding of obesity. Counter intuitively, this model situates protein as the key “difference maker”, rather than carbohydrates or fats. In the final section I show how the protein-centred view has, in turn, helped integrate more broadly across food systems, from biological signalling molecules to global sustainability. Along the way, I show how this nutritional program contacts issues relevant to philosophy, by raising questions that would benefit from philosophical analysis or exposing fertile empirical grounds for developing and testing questions of interest to philosophy.

Upcoming talk in PiBM Seminar Series

The next talk in this series, on December 15, will be given by [Joseph LeDoux](#), who is Director of [The Emotional Brain Institute](#), NYU, Professor of [Neural Science and Psychology](#), NYU, & Professor of Psychiatry and Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, NYU Langone. He is also a world expert on emotions. His talk will be entitled “The Four Realms of Human Existence”. The abstract and Zoom link for the talk will be advertised soon.



Reports from recent PiBM events (cont.)

[Inaugural Sino-Australasian Philosophy of Life Sciences Network \(SAPoLSN\) workshop Sydney, 23–24 November 2023](#)

Speakers from The University of Sydney, Macquarie University, Peking University, Fudan University, Shanzi University, the Philosophy Institute in the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CASIP), the Australian National University, and the University of Wollongong.

TMB staff have collaborated with or mentored individuals at several Chinese institutions represented at the inaugural workshop. The Network is the next stage in developing these strong and longstanding links.

Program is available at: <https://tmbiosci.org/events/>

Other Events in the World of PiBM

[A Soon-To-Emerge PinS PhD](#)

[Simon Okholm](#), supervised by Maël Lemoine and working at ImmunoConcept in Bordeaux, will soon be defending his PhD. His thesis is entitled: “Philosophy for Geroscience: An investigation into the historical, theoretical and conceptual issues concerning the geroscience hypothesis”.

Short description: The philosophy of aging is an emerging field without well-established questions that are central to it. This dissertation provides one path of direction for this field, characterized by a close engagement with the aging sciences and in particular geroscience with the aim to contribute to the production of scientific knowledge, using philosophy as a toolbox, in addition to raising certain questions that could serve for a philosophy of aging.

Simon’s defense will take place on the **5th of December**, from 14:00-18:00, at the Amphitheater in Bâtiment Bordeaux Biologie Santé, 2 Rue Dr Hoffmann Martinot, 33076 Bordeaux, France. The event is open to the public and it will be possible to participate virtually via Zoom. If interested, please contact Simon at sokholm@immuconcept.org.

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Other Events in the World of PiBM (cont.)

Developing Bordeaux-Sydney Connections

[Jonathan Sholl](#) (Université de Bordeaux) just returned from his nine-month research visit at the [Charles Perkins Centre](#) (University of Sydney) and had this to report:

While in Sydney, I was primarily involved in developing a research program around the philosophy of/in the nutrition sciences, exploring the question: how can philosophers help advance nutrition research and practice? Along with discussing my work and ideas with many excellent philosophers in Paul Griffiths and Pierrick Bourrat's *Theory and Method in Biosciences* team, (currently) situated in the Charles Perkins Centre, I was extremely fortunate to collaborate with nutritional ecologist, [David Raubenheimer](#), whose fascinating work on creating ecological frameworks and models for nutrition has been incredibly influential on my thinking. Over these months, and many pleasant conversations, David and I developed a shared philosophical-scientific language to identify key problems facing nutrition research and practice.

We started various projects during this visit, which you will hear more about in the coming months. So far, one exciting outcome has been the acceptance of an article addressing some misplaced criticisms of “reductionism” in nutrition research. While (soon to be) published in a philosophy journal, we both feel that the questions we addressed are of a thoroughly interdisciplinary nature that benefited from our unique philosopher-scientist collaboration. This collaboration also advanced my own thinking about how to collaborate with scientists and the various ways in which philosophers can contribute to science.

Through this collaboration I developed a more nuanced view of the kinds of “scientific problems” to which PinS research aims to contribute. While some scientific problems are more clearly answered experimentally, other problems, e.g., determining the relevant level of analysis for nutritional models and their public health translations, are inherently interdisciplinary questions requiring interdisciplinary collaborations. (cont...)



Other Events in the World of PiBM (cont.)

Such questions are not specific to nutrition, but they are particularly pressing in that field and reveal an exciting opportunity for philosophers.

While there, I also discussed my interests in the science of obesity (and related challenges around weight stigma) with scientists at the University of Sydney, e.g., pediatric obesity researcher, and current president of the World Obesity Federation, [Louise Baur](#), and public health nutrition researcher [Timothy Gill](#). Sydney is quite the hub for research in the health and biomedical sciences and it was a privilege to learn from that environment.

Importantly, I was very fortunate that this visit was made possible by my excellent colleagues at Bordeaux, who kindly helped reorganize our teaching assignments and pulled the right administrative strings, and the generosity of Paul Griffiths, whose research funding allowed me (and my wife!) to stay in Sydney for an extended visit. Paul, the consummate host, even took us on many adventures through the Australian “bush” and into the ocean to meet the diverse and fascinating Aussie plant and wildlife. If anyone has been on a “hike” with Paul, you know that it will be equal parts exhausting and exhilarating – even if he says it’s for beginners!

Overall, it was a life-changing experience, personally and professionally, and I’m excited to share the various outcomes of it as they emerge. Working in a research center with nutrition science as a core focus (the CPC) helped advance my ideas about how to make the philosophy of/in nutrition science into a viable field of research and I am happy to discuss with you about ways to make it grow. On a final note, if you ever get the chance to visit Sydney, I cannot recommend it highly enough. It is at the top of our list of the most beautiful cities to live (and work).

(On the next page, the first picture is Jonathan, his wife Celia, and Paul Griffiths at Byron Bay. The second picture is Jonathan and David at the Royal National Park. Both capture philosophers (and scientists) hard at work!)



Looking ahead...

That's it for this month. Thanks for spending your morning, afternoon, or evening with us. We look forward to more exciting PiBM events, publications, and announcements to come!

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